

Warren Upton victorious in Round 1 of NSW Off Road Championship

Warren Upton was a deserving winner of Round 1 of the NSW Off Road Championship held at the Dondingalong Circuit on Saturday and Sunday. The Salt Ash racer, who is a member of the Hunter Valley Off Road Racing Association, remained consistent across all five Heats, turning back the challenges of his rivals.

Upton started the weekend on a positive note by winning the Prologue on Saturday, and settled into a torrid duel with Taree's Darren Stocks that would see the two separated by just .05 of a second after the Saturday Heats. Stocks challenge would fade on Sunday however as the tough track conditions took a toll on his machine.

Young Ashtonfield racer Mark Griffith enjoyed a great weekend, rarely making an error, and his disciplined drive would see him finish second outright, less than 30 seconds behind his club mate.

Last years winner Phil Page had problems in Heat 1 losing almost a minute and a half to Upton. Despite some inspired driving in the later Heats he was unable to bridge the gap to the event winner and would finish third outright only 46 seconds down. Page, with new navigator Dustin Baque on board, was the highest placed Kempsey Macleay Off Road Club member, and won the Prolite Buggy Class.

The next highest placed Kempsey driver was Peter Latimore, with Eric Latimore as his navigator. The pair started the weekend badly by missing the Prologue with engine trouble, but returned with a vengeance in the five four lap Heats to place 8th outright and finish third in Sportsman Class. Latimore's form was so good that his best and worst Heat Times only differed by 16 seconds.

Other Kempsey Macleay Off Road Club racers including Tim Baker and Lindsay Collits in 47, Gary Hyde and Tim Zikman 335, Katherine Wellings, Elizabeth Lee, and Mark Wellings 358, Anthony Fittler and Michael Spokes 267, newcomers Matthew Morgan and Bruce Morgan 361, Mick Latimore 136, Murray Bignell 996, and Troy Tisdell 163 were all forced to retire or cruise to the finish in one or more Heat as mechanical problems set in. Kempsey Macleay Off Road Club member Bevan Michel was the navigator for Muswellbrook racer Les Webster and the pair would finish 5th outright and 1st in Sportsman Class.

Carlingford racer Martin Dal-Santo in his lexus powered Toyota Hilux quickly developed into a real crowd favourite as he powered around the course in spectacular fashion.

Despite several members of the Kempsey Macleay Off Road Club succumbing to car problems as the event ran towards its conclusion the host Club was able to perform well enough to head the points table in the East Coast Tri Challenge. The Kempsey Macleay Off Road Club are the defending East Coast Tri Challenge Champions.

Ideal weather conditions attracted a good crowd to the track with the Fundraiser section of the program seeing \$2400 raised for Breast Cancer.

The next local Off Road Race is the annual Wittittrin 200 on June 20th and 21st.

Outright:

1. 952 Warren Upton 44:32.61
2. 937 Mark Griffith 44:58.77
3. 148 Phillip Page / Dustin Baque 45:18.97

Pro Buggy

1. 952 Warren Upton 44:32.61
2. 937 Mark Griffith 44:58.77
3. 17 Jeff Cripps / Raymond Cripps 46:40.01

Prolite Buggy

1. 148 Phillip Page / Dustin Baque 45:18.97
2. 181 Steve Taylor / Samantha McAdam 55:38.12
3. 136 Mick Latimore 28:50.75

Super 1650 Buggy

1. 279 Derek Rose / Michael Densley 46:14.39
2. 217 Laurence Cripps / Rowan Pollard 47:31.39
3. 255 Gary Hardie / Anthony Roberts 48:10.70

Sportsman Buggy

1. 324 Les Webster / Bevan Michel 46:38.57
2. 317 Bradley Bishop / Kylie Bishop 46:51.12
3. 372 Peter Latimore / Eric Latimore 47:27.78

Clubman Buggy

1. 646 Mark Cowie / Brett Blackshaw 38:26.88

Extreme 2WD

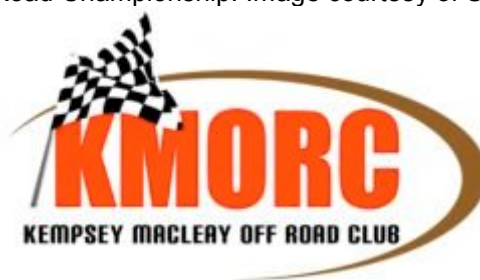
1. 481 Martin Dal-Santo / Shaun Dal-Santo 48:30.43

East Coast Tri Challenge Points after Round 1

Kempsey Macleay Off Road Club 313
Sydney Off Road Racing Association 216
Hunter Valley Off Road Racing Association 190
Crookwell Off Road Club 102
Warialda Motor Sports Club 47
Central North Coast Sporting Car Club 26



ABOVE : Warren Upton battles the early morning wet conditions at Dondingalong on his way to victory in Round 1 of the NSW Off Road Championship. Image courtesy of Sean O'Leary



www.kempseyoffroadracing.net