

BEAT THE BREEDE

by Mike Edwards

IT was a hometown victory for local farmers Hasie Lourens and Billy Fraser-Jones (Team Infanta) as they powered their way to a convincing but not altogether easy win on the first ever Breede River Challenge.

After six years of campaigning, race organiser Marius Heyneman managed, with the help of the local authorities, to get the race off its feet.

Early casualties were SA champions in the P550 Class Brett Pagel and Glen McGillivray (Team Aquarius/Tohatsu) who smashed their gearbox in the pre-race recce the day before the start. The P750 team of Jeff Falcke and Wilhelm Saaïman (Team Falmore Developers) found themselves rushing spare equipment from Cape Town the night before the race after breaking both the trunk and gearbox on their motor during the recce.

Day one saw the start just below the Bontebok National Park with eight P750's and 10 P550's competing in the first 56 km stage.

Although the P750 class started before the P550, it was soon evident that the Peter Wise/Geoff Harold's P550 rig (Team Roamer Rand) was quicker through the initial rocky stages of the river as they finished the first stage three minutes faster than the Lourens/ Fraser-Jones team. Second was Team Gemini's Henning Blaauw and Albert Lombard, closely followed by Team Lusitania's Mike Watermeyer/John Basnett who stopped to adjust the height of their motor. Andy Delaney/Gavin Abb were the second P550 class team, closely

followed by Gerhard Muller/Alistair Lockhaird.

On the second day the competitors drove to Robertson to start just above the McGregor road bridge. Lourens and Fraser-Jones shot into the lead again to finish in an overall time of 2 hr 49 min with Blaauw/Lombard seven minutes behind and Watermeyer/Basnett, who'd managed to flip in one of the many

rapids, an hour later in third.

Wise/Harold took the P550 class convincingly by 26 minutes from Delaney/Abb with Muller/Lockhaird third for a Club Zodiac 1-2-3 in the class. Up the Vaalies!

It was heartening to see so many new faces, particularly the teams from the Eastern Cape and Border.

get to grips with Gonubie

IT was a case of Tohatsu power at the first of the national offshore series in East London, where 26 teams gathered in conditions suited more to circuit than offshore racing.

And Tohatsu's were on the winning boats in both classes; a family affair, with Roy Ball/Clinton Hempel (Team Jeckyl and Hyde) winning the first heat only to lose to younger brother Lionel Ball with Francois Coetzee (Team Latima) both using the new Tohatsu 50 hp motors.

Next best was Team Lusitania's Mike Watermeyer/John Basnett who managed two thirds and a second after Roy Ball lost it in the third heat. Henning Blaauw and Albert Lombard (Team Gemini) could only manage a third in the final heat after stopping to untangle a pair of goggles which got stuck in their prop.

Chris Shelver/Brendon Bentley (National Agencies), who had looked very promising, were relegated to the beach after their motor

bracket snapped while leading the first heat.

The P550 class was a clean sweep for Brett Pagel/Glen McGillivray (Team Aquarius/Tohatsu) who lead every heat, leaving the rest in their spray. Next best were Team Chalk Air's Errol and Zane Schonknecht who had a fine tussle with Team Tunstead Marine's Craig Tunstead/Quintus Moolman and Teal Allitack's Philip Robertson/Tony Cameron. It was the Schonknechts who took two seconds to finish in that overall position from Team Tunstead.

Early casualties were Team Robbiduck's Tripney/Du Plessis who flipped in the first heat. No mention will be made of the size of the wave!

Although the conditions could hardly be called ideal for offshore racing, the East London events always seem to have a festive air, but, as most of the P550 three-cylinder boys would agree, it's a pity about those waves!



Above: Mike Watermeyer and John Basnett.
Left: Danie Ochse.

Below: Mike Marais and André Swart.
Photographs by Terry Smit

