

Distinguished entry for 34th Total Economy Run

The 34th Total Economy Run, organised by the Pretoria Motor Club, has attracted a strong field and a distinguished driver/co-driver line-up.

The three-day event, which starts at Black Mountain Hotel at Thaba 'Nchu in the Free State with documentation and scrutineering on Thursday afternoon, September 9 and finishes some 1 100 km later back at Black Mountain Hotel on Saturday afternoon, September 11, will be contested by an entry of 43 vehicles in 16 classes.

The field is made up of 18 different makes including Alfa Romeo, Audi, BMW, Citroen, Daihatsu, Fiat, Ford, Geely, GWM, Jaguar, Lexus, Mazda, Mercedes-Benz, Peugeot, Subaru, Tata, Toyota and Volkswagen.

"The relevance of the Total Economy Run was never more evident than it is this year, with fuel prices continually rising, and this is born out by the excellent field we have assembled," said clerk of the course Zybrand Wepener. "This is a big endorsement from the South African motor industry.

"We are very grateful to Total South Africa for their continued support of this important event. As always, competitors will be using complimentary Total Evolution fuel and Total Quartz lubricants throughout," added Wepener.

Among the drivers and co-drivers are several former winners of the prestigious Index of Fuel Efficiency Award (considered the overall winner) as well as former class winners. Willie Nel (seven times winner in the petrol category) will be partnered by son Willie Jnr in a Toyota Prius. Nel Snr has competed in each of the past 33 Total Economy Runs and has more than 20 class wins to his credit.

Louis van Rooyen and Johan Burger, who will crew a Mercedes-Benz and share the unique distinction of being the only team who have competed in every Total Economy Run since 1977.

Road safety expert and paramedic Philip Hull and rally personality Willie du Plessis will be in a Jaguar XFS. Other past winners include Roger Hills (competing this year in a Ford Fiesta 1.6 TDCi), Roger Rouessart (teamed with off road racing co-driver Andre Vermeulen in a Jaguar XFS) and Gordon Noble (who will be in a Mazda6 2.0).

The event is also distinguished each year by the support it receives from many of South Africa's leading motor sport personalities and competitors.

Former top rally team and husband and wife Ben and Isabel van der Westhuizen will share a Lexus, while Total Economy Run regular Geoff Mortimer, a former national rally and saloon car racing champion, will share a Peugeot 3008 TDi with former national rally co-driver champion Gerry Gericke.

Wynter Murdoch, former chairman of the Guild of Motoring Journalists and editor of *automobile* magazine, is also a Total Economy Run regular and former class winner and will share a Daihatsu Charade 1.0 with colleague Leon Schnell.

The South African Guild of Motoring Journalists is officially represented by its two highest scoring members in the Guild's Advanced Driving Skills Course. They are off road driving expert Geoff Dalglish of Baobab Adventures and Jeanette Kok-Kritzinger of Radio Tygerberg, who will both drive BMWs. Kok-Kritzinger is a former salon car racer and holds the South African land speed record for a woman driver.

Other motoring journalists competing include motor racing commentator and radio presenter Roger McCleery and *Automotive Business Review* editor Graham Erasmus in a Geely MK2 and Thomas Falkiner of the *Sunday Times* in a Toyota Yaris.

"We're very pleased with the entry for this year's event," said Wepener. "The fact that so many manufacturers and importers are officially represented is an indication of the importance fuel efficiency has as a sales factor at a time when the fuel price is so high and regularly escalating. The Total Economy Run is of major significance for vehicle owners and potential buyers and the manufacturers and importers, and their dealers, recognise this.

"As it has done over the past 33 years, the event provides the man in the street with a valuable yardstick of the fuel efficiency of properly prepared and driven vehicles. Controlled conditions and the wide variety of road surfaces and terrain that the event covers, produce accurate fuel consumption figures and are an important sales and marketing tool for the South African motor industry."

For further information please go to www.totalmotorsport.co.za.