

## GT3 supercar racing headed for SA tracks

GT3 racing finally comes to South Africa following the announcement that the South African GT Challenge will race over seven rounds around the country in 2017. The new series will run in tandem with the South African Endurance Championship, all of which comes on top of news of several new cars set to come to South Africa to join a growing racing supercar grid.



"South Africa has been begging for a proper GT3 series," SA GT Challenge coordinator Charl Aranges explained. "Now we will have a real championship catering for GT3 racing supercars and run to the same rules as the world's leading GT3 series, which means that South African teams can invest in a class where they can race the finest cars in the world."

### From Ferraris to Corvettes

The South African GT Challenge will comprise of three classes to start with - GT3 at the top end catering for latest or recent model GT3 racing supercars running to international regulations and Balance of Performance similar to the Blancpain, IMSA, ADAC and FIA World Endurance among other series. Those cars will be backed up by a Challenge class catering for the significant number of eligible lesser-spec GT race cars in the country, as well as a new GT4 class.

GT3 racing caters for a wide variety of supercars from Ferrari 488s, 458s and similar models, Lamborghini Huracan and Gallardo, McLarens, Porsche 911s, Audi R8, Bentley Continental as well as Mercedes-AMG SLS and GT. Other cars allowed include race version of the Corvette, Viper, Aston Martin V8 Vantage, Nissan GT-R and many other eligible cars. Several of the above machines are already racing in South Africa while a number of new cars are quite literally on the water.

The Challenge class will cater for older models of the above vehicles while GT4 is open to the likes of the Audi TT, BMW M3, Ford Mustang, Ginetta, KTM, Lotus Evora, Maserati Granturismo MC, Mazda MX5, Nissan 370Z, Porsche Cayman GT4, SIN R1 and Toyota GT86 GT4.

The South African GT Challenge will feature two races every meeting with a 10 to 12-lap Sprint before a 4 minute to 1-hour Feature, which will include a mandatory pit stop and an optional driver change. All SA GT:

Challenge races will be live streamed with the class also being the focus of a high-profile media campaign. The SA GT Challenge will form part of the new South African Endurance Championship roadshow, with endurance races running on the same days as the GT rounds.



## Regional rounds

The South African GT Challenge will commence at Phakisa in the Free State on 25 February, before moving on to Killarney in April and then on to the super-quick East London Grand Prix Circuit end-June. Those races will be followed by a change of pace as the GT Challenge heads up the coast to the tight and tricky Dezi Raceway on the KZN Natal South Coast mid-August. From there it's back down to Port Elizabeth in October before winding down at Phakisa in November, with the season closing at Kyalami early in December.

Series bosses are also committed to making the South African GT Challenge a top international destination while at the same time attracting the best local talent to race in SA. "We have our best local talent racing in overseas GT3 championships," Aranges concluded. "But we already have enough machinery here, along with several newer cars on the water and headed for South Africa to justify a local brilliant new South African GT3 supercar racing series catering for the best drivers, teams and cars from across the globe."

According to the organisers, we can expect several other exciting sponsorship, car and team announcements in the lead up to the opening South African GT Challenge race in February.

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