

# Bring on the PROS

**A**T the end of last season, South Africa's national championship motorsport was restructured, which led to the creation of the Pro-Tour Roadshow. The net result is that, this year, for the first time since 2001, there will be a two-tier national championship in place.

"We've put in a lot of hard work, but I think the Pro-Tour Roadshow opens a new chapter of motorsport and has obvious benefits for competitors, circuit owners and, most importantly, the racing fans who have more quality events to watch," said former Shelby Can-Am national champion Neil Lobb, who heads the Pro-Tour organisation.

Heading the Pro-Tour Roadshow line-up are Hollard Shelby Can-Am sports cars and Formula Ford. The latter is now in its 36th consecutive year as a national championship category, while the former is about to undergo a face-lift.

They will be joined in the six-category line-up by the Altech Porsche Challenge, Formula Vee, the Goldwagen VW Challenge and a new motorcycle formula to South Africa, the Kawasaki ZX10 Cup.

The Hollard Shelby Can-Ams, powered by 3,5 litre Nissan engines and with grip provided by massive Goodyear slicks, will enjoy their status as the fastest cars in the Pro-Tour and thanks to some close racing have become a firm favourite with fans over the past few seasons.

The series recently announced Hollard Insurance as its main sponsor and no doubt will attract more attention when the new, sleek Le Mans-styled bodywork is unveiled in March. Also on the cards is a sequential gearbox.

Formula Ford is a class of racing that probably has more heritage than any other form of racing anywhere in the world. Powered by 1 800 cc Ford motors, these slick-shod projectiles are renowned for their precise handling characteristics and therefore produce close racing. With the cars so evenly matched, this is where young drivers learn the fine art of race craft.

A series with even more history behind it is Formula Vee, which enters its 40th year as a national championship category in South Africa. Powered by 1 400 cc VW motors fitted with twin Weber 40 mm carburettors, this class is regarded as the entry level into single-seater racing. Cars are evenly matched and race on semi-slick tyres, all of which results in a spectacle that keeps race fans entertained.

Also part of the tour is the Altech Porsche Challenge. This where machinery, the likes of a ferocious Porsche 956 and 911 GT3 Rs and 991 GT2s, set the circuit alight with their

awesome looks and power. What's more is that the open class isn't only restricted to Porsche machinery. Apart from a plethora of wickedly powerful 911 variants, the series is also expected to attract a number of race-spec Ferraris and other exotics for what could turn out to be a popular event.

The Altech Porsche 924 series is also popular and attracts a full grid of these superb handling, front-engined Porsches, which always provide a great deal of excitement and entertainment for race fans.

The Goldwagen VW Challenge has grown from strength to strength over the past few seasons and so many entries are expected it seems as though the organisers will have to look at splitting the classes to effectively create two events for them. This class is spec-

tacular and each race guarantees action from lights to flag.

On the two-wheel front, an exciting addition to the Pro-Tour will be in the form of the soon-to-be-launched Kawasaki ZX10 Masters Cup. Only 2006 or 2007 Kawasaki ZX10 motorcycles with limited safety modifications are eligible and another major criterion is that riders must be over 30 year old and must not have raced in a national championship for two years.

The reason for this is to prevent a front-runner in this National Superbike Championship from entering. There will also be a class for riders over 45 years of age.

An added bonus for Pro-Tour fans is that each round of the series will be broadcast on Supersport with a comprehensive highlights



package for each category on the three consecutive Wednesday nights following each race meeting.

Round one of the Pro-Tour series kicks off at WesBank Raceway in Germiston on February 18 in what promises to be a day of action packed "racertainment" for the whole family. Admission is R40 for adults and R20 for children. — Supplied.

