



Legendary Offroad Tires

presents:

The 2011 New Zealand Offroad Racing Championship

**Media release
25 April 2011**

HALL LEAPS INTO MICKEY THOMPSON CHAMPIONSHIP LEAD

He's been class champion, dominated the Super 1300 class and now Pukekohe offroad racer Nick Hall has leapt into the outright championship lead with a perfect weekend at the latest round, held near Himatangi near Palmerston North in the Horowhenua.

Hall, driving an American-built single-seater race car with a race-tuned 1.3-litre engine, dominated the in-class heats on Saturday of Easter weekend then worked his way up from a start position of fourth to take the lead in Sunday's 150 km endurance race. He now holds a narrow six point lead in the 2011 Mickey Thompson New Zealand Offroad Racing Championship.

Racing against the biggest and most competitive turnout of Super 1300 cars in the 2011 championship to date, Hall was able to dominate from any start position in the three in-class heats despite landing in the fence off the start in the third heat. When another racer moved to the outside off the start line, Hall was unable to avoid the rear of the other car, and both tangled with farm fencing alongside the track. Fortunately, organisers ruled the race should be restarted and Hall carved through the field to once more win.

On Sunday Hall was starting behind the top qualifiers: Donn Attwood, Nick Leahy and Martyn van der Wal, in Super 1600, Challenger VW and ThunderTruck race cars respectively. Off the start line, it was Attwood and Leahy who sped into the lead, dicing nose to tail as the field disappeared into the lanes and forest blocks of the farm course. A lap later Attwood and Leahy were still locked in battle, van der Wal in touch but making no effort to close with the two race cars in front. With another lap of the 30-lap race complete, Attwood had disappeared. The defending champion had gone off the course, allowing Leahy into the lead.

That brought van der Wal up to second, and behind them Hall had been slicing through the cars between him and the front of the race.

Another two laps saw Leahy out with a mechanical problem, van der Wal lading and right on his rear bumper Nick Hall challenging for the outright race lead. The V8 Lexus power of van der Wal's race truck was no match for the more agile Super 1300, and Hall was soon through to the outright lead. It was a position he would not relinquish for the remainder of the race. Establishing a useful gap over the van der Wal truck, Hall was also able to watch for Attwood, who had recovered and was on a fight back through the field in his more powerful Super 1600 car.

The race was taking its toll on the field: a total of 26 cars had started the weekend; around 20 started the enduro; only 11 were running as the race entered its final laps.

Paul McCormack had run close to Attwood in the Saturday heats but broke his car's front suspension at the start of the enduro and was fighting back from a deficit of several laps. The other entry in Bu-Mac Engineering Super 1600 class was Greg Mullins, who had been slowed on the Saturday by fuel supply problems, and was then out of the enduro on the following day when his fuel tank split.

Glenn Turvey had taken maximum points in AFWE class four for sport trucks on Saturday despite a rollover in the last heat, but was out of the enduro in its early laps with mechanical problems.

Then in the closing laps Attwood, who had closed up to challenge van der Wal for second, was out once more, a combination of mechanical issues and muscle cramp putting an end to his race.

Hall powered on to a well-deserved win, dominating leader products class five and taking the championship lead with a total of 122 points across the two northern rounds held to date. Paul McCormack showed the value of persistence, scoring valuable points to move into second in the championship on 116 points ahead of Attwood, who is now on 114.

Other top results went to Wayne Rowe in Coms4U Challenger VW class, now fourth in the championship on 107 points ahead of Nick Leahy whose performance before he went out of the enduro had netted him 98 points; John Gray in AFWE class two for production trucks, who capped a top run at the first round with strong performances on both days at this second northern round to be sixth on 95 points; and 13 year old Taine Carrington, seventh in the championship racing his VW-engined single-seater in Coms4U class 7.

Rex Croskery takes over the lead in AFWE class four for sport trucks with a total of 77 points with Glenn Turvey just one point behind. In AFWE class 6 for Challenge trucks, Jason Delahunty has a commanding 66 point class lead.

South Island racer Dennis Andreassend retains the points lead in Whakatane Commercial Spares unlimited class and is 11th overall in the championship on 72 points. Christchurch-based Andreassend held the outright championship lead for just a week between the Nelson round and Palmerston North; he now has his chance to regain the lead with the next round, the Mainland Challenge at Christchurch on June 11 and 12. Always a highlight of the racing year, the Mainland Challenge features a stadium-style day of short course racing at the club's permanent track at West Melton along with an endurance race on farm land.

-End-

Issued by Veritas Communications Limited for the Off Road Association of New Zealand

For more information please contact

Mark Baker

Mobile: 021 212 0607

Email: veritas.nz@xtra.co.nz