

## Carrera Cup Australia Drivers Star Win Prestigious Dubai 24hr Race

Carrera Cup Australia driver Craig Baird has enhanced his driving reputation and that of the Porsche 997 GT3 RSR after leading team VIP Petfoods to victory at the prestigious Dubai 24 hour race at the weekend.

After qualifying on pole the VIP Petfoods team – which consisted of Baird and former Carrera Cup Australia stars Jonathon Webb and Tony and Klark Quinn – powered to the chequered flag five laps ahead of their nearest rival.

It was a brilliant result for the Gold Coast-based team but they weren't the only Australians to shine, with fellow Carrera Cup Australia drivers Shaun Juniper, David Russell and Max Twigg – who were also joined by New Zealander Paul Kelly - finishing fourth overall and third in their class for Juniper Racing in their Porsche 997 GT3 RSR.

The race was another feather in the cap for Porsche as well, with seven of the top 10 finishers driving various versions of the famous marque.

In a race that was marked by highly changeable weather conditions with many rain showers during the night, VIP Petfoods stormed to the lead in the sixth hour and were never headed for the title.

With rain predicted to fall for the majority of the race the weather was expected to play a major role in the outcome and so it proved with the first of many thunderstorms after seven hours.

Throughout the night the clerk of the course had to use the so-called “code 60 rule” (a maximum speed of 60 km/hr for all competitors on the track) to allow stationary cars to be recovered from dangerous places or when visibility and driving conditions were too bad to continue the race at normal speed.

While numerous teams found the going perilous, the two Aussie teams coped extremely well with the water, and they set the fastest two laps of the race on the way to their brilliant finishes.

VIP Petfoods boss Tony Quinn said the team was thrilled with the win.

“We didn't expect to be able to reach such a result, but after qualifying, we knew that we were quick here,” he said.

“We were well prepared for the rain after the few races in Europe in which we have participated. Whether or not we will be racing in the other races of the 24 hour series depends on how much pet foods we can sell but we know the basis is there.”

continued.



The results are the perfect way for Russell, Juniper, Twigg and Baird to begin 2008, with the quartet due to suit up at the first round of Carrera Cup Australia at the Clipsal 500 Adelaide in February.

#### Final Results:

Winner: VIP Petfoods – 504 laps (Porsche 997 GT3 RSR)  
2nd: Bleekemolen 1 Race Planet – 499 laps (Porsche 997 GT3 Cup Car)  
3rd: Delahaye 2 Renault Belgium – 498 laps (Renault Megane Trophy)  
4th: Juniper Racing – 496 laps (Porsche 997 GT3 RSR)  
5th: ORMS Racing – 496 laps (BMW Z4 Coupe)

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