

## SIX SA DRIVERS QUALIFY FOR ASA INTERNATIONAL FREE STATE 500

Six South Africans have qualified for the inaugural ASA Transcontinental Free State 500 at Phakisa Freeway near Welkom on January 31. They are Gugu Zulu, Johan Spies, Johan Cronje, Johan Coetzer and brothers Jaco and Danie Correia.

A joint initiative of the Free State Government and the American Speed Association (ASA) based in Daytona, Florida, the "Battle Between Two Continents" (as the event is being billed) will see a total of 25 drivers from America, Australia and Great Britain compete against each other in the ASA Transcontinental version of America's most popular motor racing formula.

The South Africans, although they included some experienced exponents of local oval track racing, which is held on shorter courses than the 2,5-km banked Phakisa Freeway super oval, all successfully came through a two-day 'training' and qualification course attended by a total of 21 local drivers. During the course they learnt about the protocol of American oval track racing and qualified by lapping the Free State circuit within a target time set by one of the top American drivers. The course was conducted by the California-based Drivetech Training School.

Zulu is the reigning national rally champion in class A5 and a former Sports 2000 and WesBank V8 circuit racer, Spies is the current oval track super saloon champion and the Correia brothers compete in the WesBank V8 championship.

Among the visiting drivers are former NASCAR great and Daytona 500 winner Geoff Bodine and Ron Barfield Jr, a former Nationwide NASCAR driver who owns the ASA member track Dillon Motor Speedway in South Carolina and who will be fielding several of his own cars in the Free State 500. There are two women in the field: Tiffany Daniels from West Salem, Wisconsin and Toni McCray from Highland, California.

Official practice for the Free State 500, which boasts the biggest prize fund of any motor sport event held in South Africa, \$300 000, is on January 29 with qualifying on January 30. The 207-lap 500-km race will be run on Sunday, January 31.

Tickets for the four days of action can be obtained from Computicket outlets countrywide or go to [www.computicket.com](http://www.computicket.com). Prices range from R20.00 on Thursday to R 330.00 on Sunday. Spectacular discounts for Saturday/Sunday tickets are available. All tickets include a 90 minute Pit Walkabout on all days.

Ends

Issued on behalf of the Free State 500. For further information please contact Charmaine Fortune on 011 462 6243 or visit [www.freestate500.com](http://www.freestate500.com). Pics can be downloaded from [www.motorpics.co.za](http://www.motorpics.co.za).

<http://www.racingwest.com/series/asa-transcontie/2010/1/>

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