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## **SKF Automotive Products take the Chequered Flag**

On-road or off-road, two wheels or four, the SKF name has become synonymous with motorsport through turn-key sponsorships that include products, technical advice and specialised service support.

"Few environments are as challenging as motorsport," says Gary Czapski, who heads up SKF South Africa's Automotive Division (VSM). "Conditions which vary from hot, dry and dusty to cold, wet and muddy, test product performance, strength and durability to the limit. Next to speed, reliability is fundamental to a successful racing season, so the use of proven quality products that are capable of withstanding these stringent conditions is imperative."

The superior performance and reliability of SKF's automotive product offering has been proven over many years in all motorsport disciplines. SKF has a separate 'Racing Division' that is involved in all aspects of technical assistance, design and manufacture for specific motorsport applications. In Formula One, SKF has maintained the longest running technical partnership with Scuderia Ferrari. During the 2013 Formula One season, SKF equipped the majority of F1 cars with wheel bearings, making the company the leader in this bearing application for Formula One single seaters.

From a local perspective, Czapski, who is passionate about all disciplines of motor racing, has been instrumental in securing numerous SKF motor racing sponsorships over the years.

2/...SKF & Motorsport

## 2/...SKF & Motorsport

"Our capabilities extend from the higher visibility categories of Formula 1, Nascar and WRC (Rally), to motorcycles, off-road and all other disciplines of the sport," reveals Czapski

As a global bearings and engineering solutions specialist, knowledge engineering company, SKF, focuses on five core technology platforms (Bearings and units, Seals, Mechatronics, Services, and Lubrication Systems). "The wide range of products and services we supply to motorsport are found in these core technologies", explains Czapski.

"The objectives that originally determined SKF's decision to sponsor motorsport over the years are very similar today and that is why we continue our support," says Czapski who highlights some of these objectives. "SKF has the advantage of tapping into the knowledge gained from long-term technical partnerships; we invest this know-how into product improvement to the benefit of all our customers. Motorsport serves as an excellent 'vehicle' to showcase the exceptional quality, performance and reliability of our products. It also presents an opportunity to prove our technical capabilities and increase our brand visibility to create awareness of our extensive product offering."

Since SKF South Africa's first automotive sponsorship approximately four years ago, which involved the supply of products and technical advice to the Aubrey Race Team (Wesbank V8), the company's local involvement in most motorsport disciplines has been extensive over the years, covering among others, circuit racing (production cars, Forza Ferrari, Owen Ashley Supercars, Formula Ford and GTi as well as motorcycles), off-road (Dakar, Nissan, Toyota), rally and finally karting."

## 3/...SKF & Motorsport

### 3/...SKF & Motorsport

SKF automotive products used in the motor racing world include differential, gearbox and suspension bearings. SKF also supplies lip seals and O-rings, grease and lubrication. "We even supply the simplest gear shifter bearings," adds Czapski.

Czapski emphasises the importance of a clean bearing environment to ensure optimum bearing performance. "This is why we believe that forming a partnership with our customer and supplying a total value adding solution are central to a successful and sustainable sponsorship to the benefit of both parties. We support our customers with the best technical advice and specialised services to back our products." This holistic approach is in line with the SKF vision and philosophy to 'equip the world with SKF knowledge'.

Disclosing SKF's 2014 motorsport sponsorship programme, Czapski says this year will again see SKF support the Toyota team with Dakar and the National Off-Road and Rally Championship. He adds that SKF has been working with Toyota Motorsport Team Principal, Glyn Hall, for over fifteen years now, with some 30 to 40 SKF items fitted on the Toyotas. SKF is also sponsoring the Gavin Wilkins GWR racing team and the Senior Eliminator category of the national drag racing championships.

Realising the popularity of the Legend Saloon series and recognising the value that SKF participation could add to it, Richard Pinard from SKF Authorised Automotive and Commercial Vehicle Distributor, TopClass, approached SKF for sponsorship. SKF has committed to the series sponsorship for the 2014 season under a joint sponsorship with Topclass. The series consists of classic cars older than 36 years old and that have been out of production for a minimum period of at least 10 years.

4/...SKF & Motorsport

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The series opened with the 13th International Passion for Speed event at Zwartkops and Killarney earlier this year, attracting entries from all over the world. This event enjoyed large crowds and extensive media coverage. "With the likes of Sarel van der Merwe, Hennie Groenewald, Leeroy Poulter and Jonathan and Mark Du Toit on the list of talented drivers in the SKF pre-1966 Legends of the 9 Hour Production Cars race, it was a race day to be remembered," remarks Czapski.

Wrapping up, Czapski says, "Our involvement in local motorsport events and sponsorships has always been and will remain an important aspect of our business activities. It is so rewarding when some of our motorsport customers report that because they only fit the best parts, all bearings used are either SKF or OEM. What better proof that our approach to motorsport sponsorship is a winning formula!"

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SKF is a leading global supplier of bearings, seals, mechatronics, lubrication systems, and services which include technical support, maintenance and reliability services, engineering consulting and training. SKF is represented in more than 130 countries and has around 15,000 distributor locations worldwide. Annual sales in 2013 were SEK 63,597 million and the number of employees was 48,401. [www.skf.com](http://www.skf.com)

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