



2011 Ventkhana Wrap

Scouts aged between 14 and 17 years old are known as Venturers. Teenagers that become Venturers do all of the normal scouting things like camping, hiking, tying knots and are also able to compete in motorsport. A special motorsport event is organised for Venturers called Ventkhana. Ventkhana is an opportunity for teenage Venturer Scouts to experience motorsport that they otherwise wouldn't be able to do unless they directly sought out a car club. Venturers belong to groups called units and some of the units have a car (or two) that is communal for all Venturers in that unit to drive. Most of the time, the car is a bunky that needs some work to either get it going or keep it running. The cars are restricted to 2WD and must comply with all the normal CAMS requirements. A list of technical specs is also provided to the Venturers, to assist in getting the cars up to the right CAMS standard before scrutineering. The Venturers usually prepare the car(s) themselves with the assistance of leaders and enthusiastic parents.

Building on the success of last year's event, Ventkhana 2011 was much bigger. This year 55 Venturers and 12 leaders (who sat beside the Venturers at all times) lined up in 12 different cars to compete. Whilst most of the teams lining up were from the Perth metro area, one Venturer Unit from as far south as Bunbury entered too.

After arriving Friday night, scrutineering and documentation started early Saturday morning, followed by a thorough driver's briefing to give some idea of what to expect. For those Venturers who had competed last year, they knew the format and had some experience with the roads and surfaces. For the "newbies" Ventkhana was going to be nerve racking at the start.

The Venturers were split into teams of four, all sharing the driving. The first few timed sections of the weekend were traditional Motorkhana tests, starting with the straight Slalom. Each of the Motorkhana tests was won by a different team, which was an encouraging start. Some cones were knocked down here and there and some struggled with test 3 which resulted in a few wrong ways. By the time the first four tests had been run, the Peel Laser led the event. Next the leaders got to jump in and compete, showing off their driving skills. Several found it was not as easy as it looked.

As the day progressed, the competition shifted from Motorkhana to Khanacross. Each test was run in both directions and again a variety of teams won the tests. With the overcast conditions of the day, the light started to fade in the late afternoon. The leaders quickly swapped seats with the Venturers and blasted through the last test for the day.

As the results were posted, Venturers and leaders huddled around to check their times and their position on the results board. Many realised that they were mere seconds from other teams. Some were planning to mount a charge on day two, whilst others were looking to defend their positions. Unlike last

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year's Ventkhana, where times were separated by minutes, the race was on this year and the times were close.

Day two of Ventkhana dawned overcast, however the wind had slowed from the previous day. Light rain over night had also damped down the dust slightly too. Further into the morning some steady rain continued to hold the dust down and helped compact the surface, however the teams were finding that road tyres did not offer the best grip. The first tests of the day were more open, before moving into the tight twisty forest for the last tests of the weekend.

Tactics were now becoming part of some teams' strategy. Driver order was being swapped to suit the tests and others were looking at the best driving style to for each section.

It did make a difference for some of the teams and also heeding last year's lessons and advice of keeping driving lines neat was paying off too. Others were still learning that speed wasn't everything. Pelican Point in particular found their old Magna was not quite up to the Motorsport challenge.

The last test of the weekend was again the honour of the leaders. All the times were close with Peel and Kalamunda separated by just tenths of a second.

After two days of competition and 17 tests, the overall results were in.

Bullsbrook in their "Buginator" Pulsar made a tidy 10th place on their first Ventkhana, Bunbury also in their first event had a credible drive to be 9th. Warwick's Festiva and Excel took 8th and 7th respectively behind the rear wheel drive Celica of Beechboro in 6th. Pelican Point managed a top 5 finish for the event in 5th, however the last two tests were run in a borrowed car after their Magna did not make it past test 15. Peel took their Laser TX3 to 4th place, having won 3 tests during the weekend. With wins on four tests and on the podium in 3rd place, was Roleystone with their "Black Betty" Suzuki Swift. A great drive by Kalamunda saw them win 6 tests with their Excel and in doing so, a reward of 2nd place. Proving that consistent and neat driving is the key to winning events, Warwick's Laser won just two tests during the weekend, however took first place outright. In the end the margin between first and second place came down to just 7 seconds. The difference was as close as any Khanacross or Rally where experienced competitors battle it out.

Another successful Ventkhana has been run and won. Many thanks must go to the parents and leaders who assisted greatly with the event and encouraged young drivers to get behind the wheel and enjoy motorsport in a safe and fun environment. With the popularity of the event, plans are being drafted to run a second event for 2011. Watch this space for more information.

Results can be found online here: <http://rallyaction.com.au/motorsport.html>

A video of Ventkhana can be found here:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zItGR06LvKQ&feature=youtube_gdata

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