

# Boles and Butch enjoy South African adventure

## Sports Prototypes Series

TIM Boles and his 1968 Chevrolet Camaro Z/28 'Butch' visited South Africa for the fourth time to compete alongside leading UK drivers David Piper, Mike Knight and Nick Whale in the International Sports Prototypes Series recently

This was divided into two race meetings 1,000 miles apart, one in Johannesburg at a track named Zwartkops (resembling a scaled-up Cadwell Park in layout and Brands Hatch for viewing) and the other in Cape Town.

The Camaro's power steering played up in practice, the upshot of which was poor qualifying times (eighth quickest in the pre-1972 TransAm race) and the prospect of racing without power assistance.

The first race became a test of endurance with crashes and breakdowns all around Isle of Man resident Boles, who had a great dice with a rather waywardly driven Chevrolet Firenza CanAm to eventually in fourth place.

Race two saw another close battle with the Chevie and a Mercedes Pontoon saloon driven by Max Wakefield, eventually seeing off both to finish third. This race was also marked by dice Boles had with the Porsche 911 of Francois Pretorius.

The Killarney race track near Cape Town was an entirely different story, well suited to Butch's long gears and top-gear torque.

With a new power steering pump fitted and other modifications completed free practice went extremely well.

In timed practice Boles and Butch posted a 1 min 28.197 sec time to grab fourth spot on the grid.



**BUTCH GOES SOUTH:** Tim Boles and his beloved 1968 Chevrolet Camaro on their way to victory in South Africa

Race one saw them tailing a very quick Cosworth-engined Ford Escort MkII in third place. Boles managed to pass a 7.7 litre Ford Galaxie on the pit straight and set off in pursuit of the Escort, which eventually blew something terminal.

With oil spewed across the track, control of the Camaro was marginal, but the red flags came out fairly swiftly gifting Boles the win, which was not altogether popular with the partisan crowd.

A tropical thunderstorm made the track extremely wet for race two, for which Boles and Butch were on pole. Again under pressure from Sarel in the big Galaxie, Boles was caught napping at the

start. The beast proved hard to pass, but at the same time a rear-engined Renault Dauphine driven by local hotshot Cindy was also causing major headaches.

With rivers running across the track at certain points, conditions were very difficult in powerful cars such as the Camaro (especially so on a set of worn-out Yokohamas), but the tyres began to respond and work better and on the penultimate lap Boles went for the inside at the end of the pit straight on for Sarel to move over on him.

A second attempt to pass was made at the hairpin and after being on the Galaxie's bumper at the start of the pit straight Boles shortshifted into top to

maximise torque and reduce wheelspin. Sarel overdrove out of the hairpin and fishtailed right, giving Boles the inside line on the kink before the main straight so with the right boot firmly floored he shot over the line to win by 0.047 of a second — the depth of Butch's nose cone.

Sadly, Butch's gearbox noises forced a withdrawal from the final race, while the propshaft let go on Sarel's Galaxie, making the last event something of a non-event for all concerned.

Bole's thoughts now turn to the Manx Classic between April 17-20 in which he and the Camaro won the pre-1971 award last year.