

SPORT

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AFL RANKS ON THE RISE

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TEAM ASKS: WHY NOT OFF THE ROAD?

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OFF ROAD: The Why Not team went into the Central Queensland Off Road Challenge in good form and lived up to expectations at the weekend.

The team of Mark Thomas and navigator Luke Ingram, Jason St John and Greg Ward plus Brisbane pair Christian Trusz and Terry Kane finished the weekend a winner.

For those people who enjoy a nice, relaxing weekend the Challenge is not for you.

Two days of tough competition in trying conditions makes the event hard on both man and vehicle and is probably the reason why it is increasing in popularity every year.

At Seone Park 20 teams, with three vehicles in each team and two team members for each vehicle, took up the challenge.

Russell Mason was a member of the second-placed team and "over-the moon" about the weekend's activities.

"It (Off Road Chal-

lenge) is getting so big, it is just awesome," Mason said.

To give new teams a chance the challenge is run under a handicap system.

Mason said teams with modified vehicles and equipment were penalised for each improvement made and that meant some of the teams began the event with a negative points to their tally.

“It was a very technical competition

Throughout the meeting points were gained for competing tasks within time limits, but again points were deducted for mistakes.

Such penalties had little effect on those at the top of their game with the winner amassing more than 1600 points while the least-successful team will be reflecting on improvements to be made on a score of negative 1160 points.

"It was a very technical competition, with multiple winches,"



WINNING WAY: Mark Thomas from the Why Not racing team pilots his rig uphill on the way to victory in the CQ Off-Road Challenge at the weekend.

PHOTO: ALLAN REINIKKA AR08/1109/18

Mason said. "The recovery equipment (on each vehicle), almost all of it had to be

used," he said.

For this type of competition it is not just about driving up steep inclines as quickly as possible.

Tasks are set around the course and these included building a bridge to get the vehicles across and then dismantling it quickly and efficiently.

Chances of Mason's team, Loose Nuts and Bolts, winning the event were given a bit of a jolt in just the second heat.

One of the three Nissan Patrols in the team developed fuel issues and stopped. "We had to winch it home," he said.

"There was a hole in the fuel filter."

Mason said that resulted in air being drawn into the system and the vehicle halting.



HEADING HOME: Dodgy Brothers head toward the finish during a stage of the Challenge on Saturday.

PHOTO: ALLAN REINIKKA AR08/1109/21

The extra time getting back to the finishing line saw Loose Nuts and Bolts exceed the time allocated by two minutes and they in-

curred a penalty. Members of the Loose Nuts and Bolts team were Mason, Greg McDonald and Shane Marsden driving while

the three workers were David King, Pete Luttrell and Trent Wust.

Puck Nose, a team with a Moura-based captain, was third.



DONKEY WORK: The team of Dodgy Brothers get to work to ensure one of the team's vehicles gets up a hill during the CQ Off-Road Challenge at Seone Park.

PHOTO: ALLAN REINIKKA AR08/1109/20