



Banks Holdings Limited

August 24th, 2013

PRESS RELEASE

BOURNE BACK IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

PAUL 'THE SURFER' BOURNE is back!

After enduring a summer filled with technical malfunctions and logistical delays, 'The Surfer' returned to competitive action in mid-August, securing a well-deserved podium finish under the cover of darkness in the Barbados Rally Club's Summer Nights Tarmac Sprint.

Behind the wheel of the largely rebuilt Banks Beer/Chefette/LIME/Castrol Ford Focus WRC07, Bourne finished third overall on a slippery Hangman's Hill to Lion Castle single-venue stage contested in the heart of St. Thomas.

He was just three-thousandths adrift of chief rival and second place finisher Roger 'The Sherriff' Skeete in his Sol/Michelin/Simpson Motors/Da Costa Mannings Auto Centre/WTI Subaru Impreza WRC S12.

The event was won by a hard charging Neil Armstrong who conquered the course in his Monster/Sol/Chefette/Digicel/Virgin Atlantic/Gunk/Hankook Tyres/Redline Fuels/Simpson Finance/Simpson Motors Suzuki SX4 WRC.

"It was my first drive without a mechanical failure since April," said Bourne.

"But I was never really settled and the event was a tricky one, with the rain coming and going without warning and the surface changing from damp to dry to wet. But at least the car is good and I can focus on driving it properly again. All in all, I'm pleased with the result."

Bourne started the year impressively, with the only blemish to an otherwise perfect season coming in late April when he retired on Stage 2 of the Valvoline Rally with an overcharging alternator.

Following his results - and his outstanding turn of pace - he was widely installed as the pre-race favourite to win Sol Rally Barbados, the Caribbean's largest annual motorsport International.

He had last won the Barbados Rally Club's blue ribbon event in 2007 and had been knocking on the door ever since, finishing second to Roger Skeete in 2010 and 2011, and second to Paul Bird, the former British champion, in 2012.

But things quickly took a turn for the worse.

A spate of technical issues - the worst of which included a contaminated hydraulic system for the Focus' paddle-shift gearbox - followed by a public spat over the use of spare parts, saw 'The Surfer' side-lined for the two-day, all-tarmac event.

Upon reflection, he described the run up to Sol Rally Barbados – and the subsequent disappointment – as a turning point in his motorsport career.

“I endured nearly two months of challenges that I could never, in a million years, have predicted,” he said.

In all, he had missed four consecutive events since mid-April: the Valvoline Shake-Down Rally, the Scotiabank King of the Hill, Sol Rally Barbados and a speed event at Stewarts Hill.

“But when challenges arise, you have to deal with them. This is the nature of the sport and indeed, life itself,” added Bourne.

Charles Walcott, category manager for Banks Holdings Limited, praised 'The Surfer' for his unwavering commitment to the sport in the face of adversity.

“Motorsport is in no way a cheap or easy undertaking, however, Paul went above and beyond in his efforts to get to the starting line,” he said.

“He is a true competitor and we are pleased to have him represent the *'Beer of Barbados'*. We wish him the best of luck going forward as he continues to chase the top step of the podium.”

Bourne will again be in action this weekend after confirming his participation in the Motoring Club of Barbados Inc.'s 'Just Bring It' speed event, scheduled for September 1st at Dark Hole.



CAPTION for attached photograph:

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