

**IMAGOLIVE**

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**Grand Prix of South Africa**  
 July 15-16, 2006 - Sun City



## SUN CITY: IS THE BIG JOURNEY GOING TO GIVE AN EXTRA MOTIVATION TO MX1 RIDERS?

The way to the end of the season passes through South Africa, actually through Sun City.

It is a long journey to get to the venue of the tenth round, almost as long as Everts' advantage in the championship: 114 points ahead of Strijbos, Everts is dominating the season thanks to the 9 wins he got out of nine races.

It looks like there is no room for the others and people already think of 2007: De Reuver and Coppins signed for Yamaha Rinaldi while Leok and de Groot agreed to be together for other two years.

But next year Stefan will not be there racing: here is why the challenge is more interesting now.

2006 is the last chance to beat such Champion. Ramon almost made it in Uddevalla but in the last laps he was too tired to keep his pace up; on the other hand Everts has consistency, experience and a strong motivation in what he does. Win win win, that is all about it.

Neither Coppins is different but he needs some more time to get 100% comfortable in races. The GP of Sun City is going to be his third race after he came back in Matterley Basin and we will see if such time is enough for him.

His CAS Honda team mate De Dycker is fifth in the standings, just two points behind Ramon and Leok sharing the same score: 294 points.

Leok has 328 and lies second in the Championship. Actually the fight for second place looks quite interesting and is going to continue for the rest of the season while first place gets harder and harder to reach. Someone who won 16 motos out of 18 does not look so easy to pass but coming down to Sun City is a big effort: will people try harder so?



CAS Honda rider Joshua Coppins

Red plate holder Christophe Pourcel is not in the same situation of his colleague of the upper category. When you are first 46 points are a good advantage unless second place holder makes to put together three consecutive wins. And Philippaerts did make it; the Italian looks totally fit and comfortable on the KTM machine and enjoys the atmosphere of his new team headed by Georges Jobe. He showed both strength and strategy in Uddevalla: in the first moto he did not give up the fight with Cairoli until the very end of the race and he won it; in the second one he raced for the GP win and let Pourcel go for the win. But Christophe was really fit and fast. And he still is.

Cairoli is not too far either, being in third place with 302 points: only 2 points behind Philippaerts. His extra motivation is the title he defends; current World Champion has De Reuver and Rattray behind. The latter is actually looking forward to his home GP and hopes to be fitter for it, maybe like in the beginning of the season when he won the first three rounds. Damaging his ankle did not help him and some technical problems slowed his wrestle for the title down. But something like a home Grand Prix can help in reversing such a situation.

On the other hand Kawasaki youngster Searle is having a very good time after his second podium in Uddevalla and in his same team (Molson Kawasaki) there is the second South African rider, Swanepoel.



The winner of the last three rounds: David Philippaerts

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