



Tasmanian four-wheel-drive mud racer Scott Rockliff, of Sassafra, has created Tasmanian motorsport history by becoming the first local driver to win a round of the Australian Championship.

Rockliff and Launceston driver Tont Streets outclassed their mainland opposition at Maroopna, near Shepparton (Victoria) in Sunday 22 November, finishing first and second

Tasmanian wins first round of Australian Mudrun Championships

respectively in the premier division for V8 unregistered vehicles.

Reigning Australian Champion Sammy Xuarub, of Victoria, finished third.

Competitors were required to race over the 800m course against time in two heats, with the top five making the final.

Rockliff's winning time in the final was 41.0 secs, in what was the first competitive outing for his vehicle - named "Mud Muncher" - since rolling it on his home track at the La Trobe Mudbowl during a Devonport Four Wheel Drive Club event in June.

Mud racing is a relatively new form of motorsport, but has attracted

wide interest and large spectator crowds since its inception.

The sport has divisions catering for road-registered street-going four-wheel-drives through to highly modified, high-powered, specialised vehicles like Rockliff's mid-mounted Cadillac GM-powered Hi-Lux utility and Street's rear-mounted 265 Valiant Hemi-powered Rodeo utility.

Both Rockliff and Streets will complete in the next round of the Australian mud racing title on the Mornington Peninsula (Victoria), on January 22 and intend to contest the full championship series in a bid to secure the title crown. □

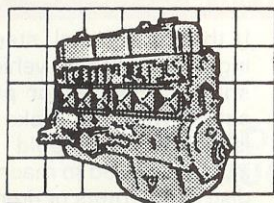
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