



Switch from bike to buggy paying off for Ulverstone driver

# Payne ready to show some grit at enduro

■ **MOTORSPORT**  
By MARTIN AGATYN

ULVERSTONE off-road racer Darren Payne reckons if he can't win his fifth Caltex Westbury Tasmanian Sand Enduro at St Helens this weekend, he will make it hard for the driver who does.

Payne has returned to off-road racing this year — at least on four wheels — after almost a decade out of the sport.

The St Helens enduro, now in its 35th year, is held at Peron Dunes and is Tasmania's longest running and most prestigious off-road racing event.

Payne started racing almost 20 years ago and won three Tasmanian titles and four sand enduro titles before taking up motorcycle enduro racing.

He competed in a number of major events, including Australia's premier off-road race, the Fincke Desert Rally in the



ALL SET: Ulverstone's Darren Payne with the buggy he will drive in the Tasmanian Sand Enduro this weekend. Picture: Stuart Wilson.

Northern Territory.

"Doing the Fincke on a bike was getting too hard on my body," Payne said.

"Last time it got the better of

me, so I decided to build a new buggy with the Fincke in mind," he said.

Payne's Prolite buggy is one of only two in Australia powered by

a motorcycle engine — in this case, a 1300cc Suzuki Hyabussa.

"I built it with the Fincke in mind, but it's gone very well here in Tassie as well," he said.

Payne has only raced his new vehicle four times and after replacing the differential, which was not heavy duty enough and broke in his first two outings, he has won both the Kellevie 300 near Hobart and the shorter winter sand enduro at St Helens.

"Once I upgraded the diff, I was surprised by how well it's gone," he said.

"I've proven the critics wrong by being competitive with a smaller budget than the blokes racing the big imported American buggies."

"If I can't win this weekend, I'll make it hard for the bloke who does," he said.

The enduro will be raced in five heats over the two days, covering 400km along the picturesque eastern coastline.

■ **BRIEFLY**

**Names needed**

**BOWLS** — The NWTBA urgently needs the names of any bowler under the age of 25 who wishes to play in the development series in Launceston on November 11. Contact the NWTBA secretary on 6427 7120 if you are interested.

**Race abandoned**

**YACHTING** — Wynyard Yacht Club's senior race was abandoned last Saturday after thick cloud blanketed the field. The race was called off by the patrol crew, with GPS directions given to crews who returned safely to shore.

**Calypso queen**

**YACHTING** — Andrew Ayton's new boat, *Calypso*, took line honours in her second race at the Mersey Yacht Club last Saturday. *Calypso* took the honours from *Caz*, with Rob Sly at the helm. The handicap results saw the positions reversed with honours to *Caz* from *Calypso*. The next major is the annual Cock of the Mersey on November 18.

**Free squash**

**SQUASH** — Ulverstone Squash Club is holding a free tuition day on November 25 with all equipment supplied. There will be on-court displays of squash, racquetball and gentle squash. The event runs from 2pm-5pm.



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Odyssey Marine & Max Roach Auto Electrics have merged and changed name to Drive Automotive & Marine Services.

We have a new Marine Mechanic, Sean Cossey, who has recently joined us from W.A. Sean has over 25 years experience in servicing and repairing all outboard motors and sterndrives and is a welcome addition to our existing team. Sean has Mercury, OMC, Yamaha and Mercruiser certification.

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# Iron-men set for eight-hour battle for enduro supremacy

■ **MOTORSPORT**

RIDERS will have to tough it out for a full eight hours at Oldina on Sunday in the Tas Enduro Motorcycle Club's final event for 2008.

The Tom Bentley Senior eight-hour Memorial Enduro will offer riders double points, which should entice plenty of riders to compete.

The top 10 iron-men will also be trying to hold their current positions or better themselves at this event.

With only a few points

separating first, second and third in the iron-men, it will be an important event for all concerned.

Shaun Murfet, of Devonport, was the 2006 No 1 iron-man and is holding that position again ahead of Sunday's race.

Andrew Lethborg, of Bridport, is in second and Derek Grundy of Penguin sits third.

Ryan Flint is in fourth and will be fighting it out to the end to jump up a space.

Other riders to watch are Scott Murfet, of Devonport,

Gene Cumming, of Penguin, and former iron-man Matt Woodhouse, of Penguin.

Younger riders who are also showing signs of becoming future iron-men are 14-year-old Matt Phillips, of Wynyard, who took out an overall win on Sunday at the Sheffield Senior Enduro-X and 16-year-olds Luke Saunders, of Stowport, and Nathan Purton, of Deloraine.

The annual dinner and presentation will be held on December 8 and the junior presentations will be held on November 25.

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