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Northwest Gold Cup/ Rotax Max Challenge Series Round One Doesn't Disappoint!

Article By: NorthwestKartingnews.com

With 156 entries present and accounted for at the 2010 opening round in Richland Washington, it was clear Saturday morning that Northwest Gold Cup racing was alive and well.

Saturday's weather was spectacular and the energy throughout the pits was apparent. For most, it had been a long off season, and on this day, one quickly realized, it doesn't get any better than this.

The Italian Motors USA team was in town to support the newly formed IAME Cup series and as always they brought their "A" game. With drivers such as Jurca, Blair, Valiente, and Hargrove among others everybody knew they were in for some incredible racing.

Tri-City's race track is a special place, it's unique blend of track configuration, landscape, and onsite facility's make it arguably one the circuits best. The club and it members represent "well" all that is important about grass roots, community sponsored racing.

Throughout the weekend, planned events, and races took place without a hitch. Under the Direction of Bam Racing, Bill Hettick and crew once again set a high standard. Announcer Terry Bridges of Pro Sound Audio brought the races to life for the large contingent of spectators.



Saturday's festivities closed with live entertainment and barbeque. Both were great, just another day at the track, are we lucky or what.

Sunday was all business, round one would be decided here, today. The weather was changing, and word went through the pits, there would likely be rain before the day was out.

As I did my best to watch the many races taking place this day, several things struck me:

1) I had just witnessed a truly exciting display of kart racing, one that had spectators on their feet applauding. That being the IAME Cup Senior main, this was a incredible display of driving put on by team IM USA which unfortunately ended with a spectacular crash in turn two. Driver Johnny Blair walked away from the incident and was reported to be ok, suffering only a sore neck and headache.



2) The fight put up by local racer Joey Mcguire, who simply refused to bow to the will of a hard

charging and determined Phillip Arscott, while a disappointed Andrew Zimmer could do little more than look on after an unfortunate spin in turn one left his kart, himself, and any hopes of a victory in the Rotax senior final off in the grass for the remainder of the race.



Finally, and perhaps most importantly: The young and upcoming talent, names such as Wick, Byers, Zamora, Poyner, Wallin, Carpenter, Helmuth, Gannon, O'neil, and a Stingray called Robb, just to name a few of the many. I realized karting in the northwest is doing just fine.

There is no question that the 4 Stroke classes were in full force this past weekend, when it came to close competitive racing, they provided it.

Saturday 4 Stroke:

JR 1 Briggs Animal Light, one of the larger JR classes for the weekend brought some steep competition as Brittney Zamora and Sting Ray Robb were in the hunt to capture their first win of the season. Both drivers were headed to the checkered when contact happened allowing Devan Smith and Justin Demars who were close behind an opportunity to score 1st and 2nd. Following was Bryce Peterson, Kyle Adams, Gaetan Ertle, Thibaut Ertle, Sting Ray Robb, Brittney Zamora, and Kellen Dean rounding out the field.

F200, a Grand National class for the 2010 IKF Grand Nationals has brought out some of the local and national talent as 10 Drivers took to the grid with the high revving F200 engines. The racing was close and intense as Alan Cathey, top qualifier, and David Dean traded places in the first couple of laps. After lap 5 Cathey had the lead and comfortably distanced himself for the win but the race was for 2nd thru 5th, as Joey Miller, Corey Poyner, Michael Croft and Brooke Poyner traded spots throughout the race to round off the top five positions.



The JR 2 IKF Briggs World Formula class for 2010 has seen some growth as several new faces have appeared on the grid for the first race of the season. Tiffany Brown, a local favorite, showed the way with the number one qualifying position, but it was Michael Gutenberger moving up from JR 1 who was able keep the pace and get through in the main to stay in front of Tiffany Brown for the win. David Schorn, Nick Ferguson along with new comers Max Mulkey, Jonathon Brown finishing out the field. In the same group were your JR 2 Briggs Animal Podium finishers of Myles Pederson, Logan Livesay, and Hailey Groff.

IKF Briggs World Formula Heavy, gridding the largest class of the weekend was full of excitement as the Lawrence brothers Terry and Tim had most of the field covered. With a quick jump in the main, Terry Lawrence cruised on his way for the win with Tim coming from 5th, moved up to 2nd by lap 8. The excitement was the run for 3rd place. Chris Hatch tried but couldn't hold off the combo of Scott Barlee, and Austin Moon, as they teamed up to get by

Hatch with 3 laps to go in the on the front straight away. Bryan Green feeling lucky made his move on Hatch on the inside straight to finish out the top five.

Sunday 4 Stroke:

Briggs Gas Animal was a race of musical chairs with the music stopping in every corner and lead changing with it. It was anybody's guess as to who was going to win this one. Just when you thought there was a clear leader, 3 more hungry animals would line up and move on by in the turns and, no one place on the track was safe from a pass. With the lead changes happening every 10 seconds there was no way to keep track until the checkered flag. With Corey Poynor taking the win, following up with Brett Lucas, Joey Miller, Kelly Poynor, and then Brooke Poynor in the action with a 5th spot finish.

JR 1 Animal Heavy, came a new day with Sunday's race and it was a good one. Race winner Sting Ray Robb was driving for his life on this day as Devin Smith and Brittney Zamora breathing down Sting Ray's Bumper the whole time working him over looking for the that inch of room to make the pass. Sting Ray didn't let the pressure get to him as he ran a nearly flawless race holding of his competitors. Close behind the lead group were Bryce Peterson, Justin Demars, Thibaut Ertle, Kyle Adams, and Gaetan Ertle



JR 2 Brigg Gas Animal Heavy saw a tight group at qualifying and some great racing in the heat race. David Schorn was able to get a good start in the main and keep a safe distance for the most part of the race. Michael Gutenberger and Myles Pederson had contact in lap 3 but Michael was able run Schorn. Pederson, Livesay



To make Medium the grid action for

Lawrence were the fast ones in Medium but there were some serious threats by both Brett Lucas and Scott Barlee throughout the race. World Formula Masters, another tight race of the top 5, saw Chris Hatch get the early jump on Schorn at the start and was able to hold off any advances by him. Gabriel Kajdy, right behind, just waited for the opportune time and was able to make a pass around Schorn late in the race with Bryan Green and Dana McDonald bringing in the rest of the top five for the race. And what a race it was all weekend long for the ever so competitive 4 Stroke classes!

the day finish in a timely manner, World Formula and World Formula Masters are ran together filling with 18 karts. With that in mind there is racing position all over the track. Both Tim and Terry

Shifters:

The Italian Motors USA Team displayed their racing talent yet again in the Shifters class throughout the weekend with Michael Valiante setting the pace on Saturday with a fast lap of 39.28, putting him on pole, followed by Scott Hargrove in 2nd, Kelly Baker in 3rd, and Antony Halcrow in the 4th place qualifying



spot. The racers went back and forth all weekend long displaying some amazing driving. In Heat 1 Michael Valiante took 1st place, followed by Kelly Baker in 2nd, Scott Hargrove in 3rd, and Antony Halcrow in 4th. In the end, a very fast Michael Valiante took home the win, with Kelly Baker in 2nd, Scott Hargrove in 3rd, and Mike McGowan in the 4th place spot.

IAME Leopard Jr 3:

Artie Carpenter was the guy to beat in IAME Leopard as he qualified on pole with a fast lap of 39.96. Tanner Dates qualified 2nd, followed by Paige Wallin in 3rd, and Colton Shultz in 4th. In Heat 2 a disappointed Artie Carpenter had to pull off the track due to a mechanical failure, as a very eager Paige Wallin made her way to the front for the win. Tanner Dates followed with a close 2nd, and Colton Schultz in 3rd. For the main, Artie Carpenter was able to get his kart back together, and took home the win for the IAME Jr class. Colton Schultz made his way up for the 2nd spot, followed by Tanner Dates in 3rd.

Rotax Mini Max:

If there was any way to win in this class, a rope would need to be thrown around the #9 of Kyle Wick. He dominated all weekend starting with a fast qualifying lap of 42.16 to put him on pole. Other up and coming young guns to watch out for; Tyler Brown qualifying in 2nd, Sting Ray Robb in 3rd, and Marco Eakins in 4th. Kyle Wick took the first place spot in Heat 1, while Sting Ray Robb eagerly made his way up to 2nd, Tyler Brown followed in 3rd, with Marco Eakins in 4th. These young talents went back and forth in Heat 2 to make for a great race to watch, as a disappointed Tyler Brown was only able to complete 5 laps. Kyle Wick finished in 1st, a fast Sting Ray Robb in 2nd, Marco Eakins in 3rd, and Cole Franchinni in 4th. In the main event Kyle Wick took home first place, with Tyler Brown coming in 2nd, followed by Marco Eakins in 3rd, and Sting Ray Robb in the 4th place spot.

Rotax Junior:

It was Artie Carpenter who dominated the Rotax Junior class throughout the weekend starting with a fast qualifying lap of 39.86 to place him on pole. Mathew Moniz qualified 2nd, followed by Kyle Byers in 3rd, and Tanner Dates in 4th. In Heat 2 Artie Carpenter took 1st, with a determined Kyle Byers making his way up to 2nd, with right behind him was Austin Hudson making his way up to 3rd, and a fast Molly Helmuth who made her way up to 4th. It was quite the



show to watch these talented racers make their moves bound and determined to get to the front. In Heat 2 it was apparent that CJ Gannon was looking for a piece of the action as he eagerly made his way to the forth place spot. Half way through the main event, the crowd watched as karts started to spin off the track right and left due to the rain that began to fall. The drivers were all given the high sign to come into the pits to switch to rain tires. Everyone frantically ran to their trailers to gather rain set up equipment. The juniors returned to the track and started the remained of the race single file in the order of the last completed lap. It was then made clear Kyle Byers' ability to charge hard in the rain as he passed Artie Carpenter for the lead never looking back. The rain continued to come down hard as Kyle Byers took the checkered for 1st place. Artie Carpenter came in 2nd, Mathew Moniz 3rd, and CJ Gannon in 4th.

Rotax Micro Max/ Gazelle cadet:

Seth Appel set the pace for the Micro Max/ Gazelle class qualifying on pole with a fast lap of 46.68. Deirdra O'neil qualified in 2nd, with Job Kandris in 3rd, and Sara Brinkac in 4th. Deirdra O'neil drove hard and had a great race weekend making her way up to 1st place in Heat 1 never to look back, with Seth Appel in 2nd, Sara Brinkac in 3rd, and Mason Morgan in 4th. Mason Morgan was a man on a mission as he made his way up to the second place spot in Heat 2. But at the end of the day it was Deirdra O'neil who kept the lead taking home the win, followed by the very fast Job Kandris who drove hard to the 2nd place spot, putting Mason Morgan in 3rd, and Seth Appel in 4th.

One for record books, this weekend was truly a winner!

NWKnews Congratulates all the competitors who turned out to support their region! A region steeped in history and tradition.

See you all Friday April 23 – 25 in Richland, WA. when the Seattle Kart Club will host Round two.