

International Inkart: 2010

Introduction:

Hello and welcome to the first report of the new Inkart season. Last year's Championship co-ordinator, Scott Taggart is now a distant memory and I am sure everyone would like to thank him for his endeavours last season. After a brief discussion with all the drivers about the new rules and style of format, we were ready to begin the quest for success once more. Unfortunately, the weather played a frustrating part throughout the session, offering nothing more than lashings of rain. Luckily, all drivers performed exceptionally well and used their full repertoire of skill and experience to hold off the adverse weather conditions.

Heats: 5 laps, 3 heats each.

Our first heat of the new season involved the junior drivers, and I must say I was very impressed with the maturity shown by such young drivers; sometimes it is easy to lose calmness when things are not going well. It seemed as though George Dutfield was going to be battling out for 1st, 2nd or 3rd place, however an incident at turn 7 with only 2 laps to go left the young, yet experienced driver with a bitter taste in his mouth. Instead it was Harry Law who took the first chequered flag of the series, staving off tough competition from Ben Irwin (2nd) and Oliver Hinde (3rd).

So after an excellent display of talent and attitude, it was now up to some of the more senior drivers to match their younger counterparts. Due to low numbers for the first round, it was decided that both the heavy and lightweight categories would race together; this avoided small races and made sure there was sterner competition. The race went fluently and it was the usual suspects leading the way. Last season's runner-up, Chris Baker again showed his credentials by finishing 2nd in the heavyweights. However, the race belonged to Josh Booden who in his first race since making the step up to adults stunned the audience by taking the chequered flag. A sign of things to come! A special mention must go to Jack Dutfield. Whose kart unexpectedly broke-down forcing the new heavyweight into an early retirement. Although something tells me we will be hearing more about Jack later.

The next junior heat saw Harry Law and Oliver Hinde take 2nd and 3rd place respectively. Both drivers laying down an early gauntlet suggesting that consistency will be the key to success. However, part of being a Champion also entails character and that was exactly what George Dutfield showed by blowing the competition away. In his previous heat he endured the downside to motor-sport, yet he stayed strong and took the chequered flag to again rap up a nice incident free heat.

Heat number two of the adults saw the return to the helm for last year's Champion Mr. Ty Ogorman. Ty's mixture of intelligence and technique shows it will take a worthy foe to make him part ways with his beloved trophy. Ty was closely followed by Jack Dutfield who did not allowed his early trauma to affect him mentally. Chris Baker finished in 3rd after another solid race. For the lightweights, Josh Booden's reign at the top was abruptly ended by Alec Tucker. A superb, flawless race saw Tucker take the chequered flag and show his ambition for the season. Phil Randall completed the top three after a steady, but affective race.

In the final heat for the juniors, it was two enthusiasts who stole the show. Crowd favourite Charlie Fenton crossed the finish line to a rapturous applause from all spectators to seal a fantastic win and show that hard work and persistence can be rewarding. This was also the first showing of young Josh Hoy's awesome potential as he came 3rd to relay those claims about his bright future. Sandwiched in between Charlie and Josh was the ever humble Ben Irwin, who according to our CO, Tom Clare: "is a fantastic driver with a great attitude." This concluded the heats for the juniors and it was still anyone's guess as to who would take the final in the first round.

The same could be seen for the adults and after the final heat it was no more apparent who would be walking away as the opening day winner. The lightweights had yet another victor as Phil Randall went on to cross the line first. Phil showed wonderful commitment to improve from his last heat where he finished 3rd. Josh Booden's superb heats were capped off with another 2nd place finishing; considering this was Josh's first time competing with adults, he has done himself and his family very proud. Kieron McDonald made up the top three for the final heat showing that there is a wide range of talent in the lightweights this year. The heavyweights' final heat was

made up of some familiar names. Again, Baker and Ogorman were seen crossing the finish line in 2nd and 3rd place respectively. But this time, it was Jack Dutfield who took the prestigious 1st place. Giving him his first ever win in the heavyweight category.

The finals: 10 laps.

The final of the juniors will take some beating, even though this was the first final of the season. Not only did we have a titanic battle between 1st and 2nd, we were also arguably blessed with the best battle for 3rd place in the Championship's history. From the green light to the chequered flag, the junior drivers showed a pugnacious attitude and it was very competitive, yet extremely fair. Firstly, the battle for third was between George Dutfield and Josh Hoy. Many may have seen Hoy as a far outsider, but his critics have been silenced by a display worthy of any Champion. However, cramp at the end caught up with the young warrior and it was the more experienced George Dutfield who managed to claim a podium spot. All credit to George, who showed his experience from last year is going to guide him well. The top two could not be separated for the entire finale and kept the eager audience in suspense until the final corner. However at the final turn, Ben Irwin managed to keep composed and just pip Harry Law to the finish line taking the gold. Hopefully next month's final will be just as good and clean!

The lightweight drivers also gave a fantastic account of them selves, and treated us to another stupendous ending. With more drivers on the circuit it was always going to be more challenging and could have caused controversy. However, all drivers performed with top sportsmanship. Finishing top in the first final of the season is always a great way to send a message out to fellow drivers. And this race certainly lived up to its billing. From the start there were two drivers who stood above the rest in their search for glory: Alec Tucker and the debutant Josh Booden. No one could have guessed which way this would have gone due to the fact that both drivers were tied until the chequered flag was brandished. There was no room for error and at the last turn, both drivers were still married up. However, one final push from Alec Tucker saw him just outdo Josh. Hopefully, it is a sign of finals to come. Finishing 3rd and getting himself

on the first podium of the season was Phil Randall, who had a good day overall. He may be one to watch.

The heavyweights' final was an intriguing encounter as many wanted to see if there would be a new contender to the throne. And it would not disappoint! Today belonged to the new force....Jack Dutfield. Despite an early setback in the heats, he showed that his mental strength is as strong as anyone. This is a fantastic way to show the junior drivers that it is imperative to stay focused and confident. Although this final was not as tight as the others, it still had an element of class and entertainment about it. Chris Baker finished 2nd proving he again, will be challenging come what May. Taking the 3rd spot was Ian Davies, who was not a standout performer in the heats, but really stepped up when called upon.

Conclusion:

Hopefully, today's events will be a sign of things to come. This was my first session as Championship co-ordinator and I must say with all honesty, I was very impressed with not only the talent on display, but also the attitude and application shown by all drivers. This season will be one which will see many shocks and twists. I am extremely excited to see how next month unfolds.

Well done to all drivers, I look forward to seeing you next month.

Kind Regards,
Graham Charters (Championship co-ordinator)