

Daytona Milton Keynes Inkart Championship 2012

Round two:

So after the excitement and racing produced in round one, it was time to see if round two could deliver a similar standard. Of course a Championship is a marathon and not a sprint but these early rounds can still produce some fantastic, competitive, displays and round two certainly did not disappoint....

Juniors; Heat one:

Heat one of the second round was a fierce contest between two of the championship's more experienced drivers. Tom Harbottle and Mathias Read-Simpson have graced us with many brilliant displays and this heat would be the catalyst for a competitive day in the junior round. On this occasion, Tom was the man who would collect the golden 50 points clocking up an impressive 1:11:096 in the process. However he was pushed very hard by Mathias who finished an agonising 0.628 seconds off the top spot! A true sign of just how competitive this category is. The ever consistent Dan Bull managed to keep the rest of the chasing pack at bay and he took third place with a solid first heat drive.

Heat two:

Heat two saw the resurrection of a familiar face. Josh Hoy (who had been on sabbatical) returned to the fold to produce a scintillating display and dominate the heat. Josh's confidence grew as the heat progressed and by the time he took the chequered flag he was nearly 5 seconds ahead of his nearest rival – Owen Pearce. Owen had been a worthy adversary to Josh, but unfortunately had to settle for second spot. Aaron Kidd, a graduate from last year's North Circuit Championship, had a fine drive and came in third to earn some invaluable points.

Heat three:

Josh's performance in the last round must have angered the drivers because the final heat before the grand final delivered a breath-taking three horse race. Tom Harbottle, Jordan Albert and James Ives gave the on looking crowd a race to remember and it was literally a photo finish at the end. Harbottle, who used all of his experience to really hold his nerve, managed to just edge the other two drivers and his celebration at the end certainly told the story of a relieved man. Albert finished 0.210 seconds away from Tom with Ives coming in third only 0.457 seconds away. The extremely close times are clear evidence of how close this heat was. However, all drivers can be delighted with their efforts throughout the heats.

The Grand Final:

After some fantastic displays in the heats, Harbottle started on pole position and he was in no mood to let his lead slip. Tom has grown over the years into a fine racer and this year he is certainly one of the early favourites to take the top prize. He was pushed all the way by two of his closest rivals: Dan Bull and Josh Hoy. In fact, this race was even closer than the previous heat. Dan and Tom were side by side coming into the final turn and both

drivers were seen shuffling all the way to the finish line in hope of making the miniscule amount of difference that would see them be crowned winner. However, Tom had the edge, and capped a fine day with a final victory. Bull had to settle for second with Hoy finishing a close third. A special mention must go to two other drivers. Oscar Riley was the unfortunate driver to pick up a black flag in the final for an ABC (Advantage By Contact), and Ryan Ould was the victim of some minor kart issues that restricted him from really making his mark on the final. Ryan and Oscar both showed wonderful maturity and sportsmanship when both must have been extremely disappointed. All is not lost however.....They have next month to show what they are capable of!

Lightweights; Heat one:

It felt like Groundhog Day after the first heat of the lightweights; last month we witnessed Alex Damian secure a win in the first heat and this month would be no different. Although being pushed to the limit by George Wilson and Chris Anderson, Alex showed his intelligence and talent by working his way to the top spot. After initially starting sixth, Alex produced a patient display and the move that saw his rise to the number one spot was nothing short of genius. Placing fourth with just two laps to go, Alex manoeuvred his way through three of his rivals to overtake leaving his shell-shocked competitors perplexed as to how to beat him. Whilst Alex took the heat, the top five were only separated by less one second! Alex, George and Chris may have taken the top three spots, but Thomas Davis and Dominic Tucker pushed them all the way.....A great start to the first heat! Surely it can't all be this good, can it?

Heat two:

Heat two would show the amount of talent in this year's Championship as the top five from the previous heat were nowhere to be found come the conclusion of heat number two. Daniel Truman, making the step-up from the junior category, felt that heat two would be the perfect time to send a strong message to all drivers. Much like Alex in the previous heat, Daniel rose from mid-pack to capture the chequered flag. A solid, technically perfect drive was rewarded and surely this was the springboard Daniel needed to get the attention of his fellow drivers. Harry Law took the second spot with a great drive, and Kam Ho completed the top three. Both drivers were very ambitious throughout and it was a great sight to see all three drivers shake hands once they returned to the pit-lane.

Heat three:

Truman's confidence was now in full flow and after being randomly placed on pole for the final heat he did not look back and virtually recreated heat number two. Not only did he recreate it, he completely blew the competition away. Daniel finished a clear seven seconds clear of his nearest rival – Anthony Jordan or 'ADJ' as he's known. ADJ had a great debut round and he proved it was no fluke by showing great determination to finish second. Vaughan Roberts had to settle for third, but I don't think he could have any complaints due to the talent on display. Third spot, certainly in this category, should be hailed as a great achievement when you consider the amount of different drivers to finish in the top three today.

The Grand Final:

Daniel Truman's superb heats meant he had rightly earned the number one spot going into the final. The only question that needed answering was could he go all the way with the pressure on? Silly question really. A sign of a true competitor is being able to mentally and physically sustain the onslaught from your rivals and Daniel did that showing today that he's here for the long run. Hitting a best lap-time of 1:09:999 he soared into an uncatchable lead and credit must go to second place George Wilson who really turned up the pressure on Daniel. Daniel (first) and George (second) finished 7.3 seconds clear of third place Harry Law, who in his debut season at adult level can be proud of his contribution in the first two rounds.

Heavyweights; Heat one:

The heavyweight category today did not witness as many drivers as the juniors and lightweights but that did not stop it from showing the same class and talent. Much like the other two categories, one man kept the 'domination' trend going. Stuart Shearman blitzed his competition in the first heat by a staggering twelve seconds to send shivers down the chasing packs' spines. Martin Smith was rewarded for a steady, but tactically skilful drive with second spot and Andy Whymark came in third. Judging on how much confidence Truman and Harbottle drew from successful heats, the heavyweight category must have been nervous to see if Shearman could continue his early form.

Heat two:

Those nerves soon turned to reality as Shearman again dominated the category by taking the maximum points. He was however run close by Whymark who improved on his previous third place finish by taking second. This time the gap was only two seconds, but it was still Shearman who was laying down the early gauntlet. A newcomer to this year's Championship, David Scott, secured third spot with a very controlled drive. David has shown wonderful commitment and patience this year and it would be fair to say everyone was delighted to see him take third.

Heat three:

Stuart Shearman must have been confident of making it a hat-trick of wins in the heats but he would have also realised he had a big red target on his back. Unfortunately for him his rivals were in no mood to give up and every driver managed to conquer Stuart's 100% run. First place for the final heat went to Andy Whymark who had finished third in his first heat and second in his second heat, so taking the first place made it a perfect end to very successful heats. David Scott maintained his early form by capturing second and third spot was taken by Martin Smith. Wayne Robson, just narrowly missed out on the top three spots but can still be delighted with a fourth place finish.

The Grand Final:

Despite not winning the final heat, Shearman still started pole for the grand final and drove like a true professional to see off the competition; it is very easy to become complacent after success, but Stuart was fantastic throughout and I do not think any driver would deny Stuart his first place success. Martin Smith ended a good day by finishing in second spot and taking some precious points in the process (even at this early stage, every point counts). David Scott wrapped up a superb day's worth of racing by completing the 1, 2, 3 with a best-lap time of 1:13:058.

Conclusion:

Another stunning round that produced some brilliant displays and extremely close racing. The first two rounds have been a fantastic advertisement for the Championship and hopefully it continues until the end. One thing is for certain, it is going to be very tight to pick an early favourite in all three categories due to the high standard set by all drivers.....

Kind regards,

Graham Charters

Championship co-ordinator.