

Prairie Sport Riders Association

Hosts Inaugural Mini RoadRacing Event



June 22 and 23, 2007 Lumsden, Saskatchewan

The Prairie Sports Riders Association (PSRA) hosted their first CMA sanctioned event at K&M Motorsport Raceway, located 20 minutes north of Regina, Saskatchewan. Racers from Saskatchewan Mini Roadracing Association (SMRA) and provincial neighbors Alberta Mini Roadracing Association (AMRA) joined the newest affiliate association for what turned out to be two be days of spectacular racing.

Saturdays practice opened with thunderstorms and unfavorable conditions for the riders, but in true 'mini-roadracing' tradition 'Someone Above' resolved this oversight and soon the Living Skies of Saskatchewan created a beautiful sun drenched day for the pre-race day event. Much to the delight of the racers the K&M Motorsport Track is a tight, technical configuration with two long straights, tight hairpins, challenging corners and a long sweeping corner that will challenge the most experienced racer.

Special thanks to the AMRA for supplying several Blackfoot Motorsports sponsored thunder bikes and privately supplied NSR 50 demo bikes. Canadian National Mini RoadRacing Series sponsor Pitster Pro was on site Saturday with there line up of great formula thunder bikes for all to check out.

Mini Roadracing Star and now Parts Canada Superbike Star 15 year Brett McCormick from Saskatoon came out to sign autographs and support the newest mini roadracing club. Brett showed the crowds on his KLX 125 that great things come from the mini class.

Race day arrives with clear skies, but is soon overcast with morning showers. Tire changes are discussed but as the forecast remains unclear decisions are not easily arrived at. The 'wait and see' plan works out for the best as the skies clear leaving the track dry with ambient temperatures of 22*c.

5 race classes are defined: Spec-Supersport, Thunder, Formula Thunder, Formula GP, and Old School Clash. Demonstrations are provided by the Junior class which will go out between heats.

45 class entries were received for this inaugural PSRA event. Nerves ran high among the volunteers as the riders entered pre-grid for the morning practice session. The extreme quality of the riders with their show of race craft and sportsmanship soon had the volunteers at ease. Spectators were at the edge of their seats as the afternoon promised to be a great show.

Qualifying sessions went off without a hitch. Usual front runner Jay Fox, AMRA President, held the top lap time of 46.87 sec throughout qualifying on his Honda RS 80. The afternoons racing trend was foreshowed when this time was shattered with a 46.3sec lap time set by 11 year old Bodie Edie (SMRA) on his Formula Thunder RM 65 machine.

The afternoon race schedule started with the Spec Supersport Class. Entrants included the Presidents from the three competing clubs and several youth champions ensuring the win would not be easy. Off the line Presidential representative SMRA's John Lenz and SMRA's Geoff Gerbrandt took the lead, followed closely by AMRA's Matt Bagshaw. President Lenz had his work cut out for him for the next 10 laps as Gerbrandt hounded his mentor's heels waiting for just one mistake. Bagshaw maintained a close third, while

young SMRA Bodie Edie and AMRA Conner Matthews diced back and forth competing for fourth place. Despite the efforts of the youth the race was defined in lap 1 with President Lenz earning a well deserved first, Gerbrandt 2nd and Bagshaw 3rd.

Breaking up the schedule the Junior riders took to the track. The female entries outnumbered the male entries, creating a unique challenge of the sexes. Future stars Robyn, Janna and Brook Ham (sisters) along with Logan Schwartz proudly represented the PSRA family; Allyssa Fox represented the AMRA and Teagan Edie the SMRA. Great things are expected from all these youngsters and it is inevitable that they will soon be increasing the competition level, much to the dismay of the 'Over 21' crowd.

The Thunder and Formula Thunder classes were the next to take the line. An early lead was expected by the modified Formula group and Gerbrandt and Edie did not disappoint the crowd, quickly pulling away from the stock competitors. The competition level was huge in the stock class as 2006 National Thunder Champion Fox got the hole shot, only to be hounded by 17 year old Bagshaw. Fox managed to keep Bagshaw behind him until lap three when Bagshaw late-braked into corner 3 easily passing the champion. Angus Mac Neil caught up to the pair by lap 5 and proceeded to apply pressure for the remainder of the heat. Meanwhile the Formula class continued to be dominated by Gerbrandt and Edie. For nine laps 17 year old Gerbrandt kept the 11 year old behind him. Once the white flag flashed Edie immediately stepped it up a notch, passing Gerbrandt in turn three only to have the door slammed in his face. Not to be put off, Edie and Gerbrandt traded position back and forth until the final corner when Gerbrandt emerged slightly ahead. The long straight to the checkers proved to be the final catalyst in Edie's quest for the gold as he managed to pass Gerbrandt for a photo finish.

After the excitement of the previous heat the Premier Formula GP Class had a lot to live up to. While the excitement was still at its peak the riders again formed the grid and eagerly awaited the start. The flag drops and Fox, Edie, Bagshaw, Haynes and Gerbrandt are on top of each other as they round the first corner. No one gives an inch as they continue around the tight hairpin of corner two and slide around corner three to merge onto the long straight in front of the bleachers. The crowds roar as Haynes takes the early lead, but is held close by his rivals. Lap three Haynes slides the back end of his Motard and Fox takes the lead followed by Bagshaw, Gerbrandt and Edie. Lap 4, Bagshaw again takes advantage of his late braking skills passing Fox in turn 3 and pulling ahead by a slight margin. Fox is aware of the pressure placed on him by Gerbrandt but manages to hold him off until lap 8 when Gerbrandt passes him in the same corner where Bagshaw overtook him earlier. Determined Fox forges ahead blissfully unaware that Edie is quickly catching up. The white flag drops and the final moment is played out for the crowd as Edie attempts to take Fox in the same corner that his competitors already have. Fox surprised by the rider that has appeared by side finds a reserve of adrenaline and somehow manages to hold off Edie. Final podium finish: Bagshaw, Gerbrandt and Fox. Lap times reveal that the track record was set by Bagshaw with a 45.7 sec time; honorable mentions are given to Fox, Gerbrandt, and Edie who ran 46.14sec, 46.17 sec and 46.2 sec times respectively during this spectacular heat.

Still one class remains: the Clash Class-run the old school way. A crowd and participant favorite, this class allows all eligible riders to compete head to head regardless of age. Not to be outdone by the excitement of the previous classes, the clash started strong. Familiar names Haynes, Gerbrandt, Mac Neil, Fox, Bagshaw and Lenz slam into the first corner. Each rider pushes the other but no one yields. Haynes slowly pulls away with Gerbrandt leaving Mac Neil, Bagshaw and Fox to dice back and forth with Lenz pushing into the mix. Fox gets left behind as the group pulls away only to see Bagshaw again break late passing Mac Neil bringing Lenz though with him. Fighting for third Lenz pressures Bagshaw but washes out the back end of his NSR coming out of corner 1 and with classic Lenz fashion entertained the crowd with a spectacular high side. Bagshaw pulls away leaving Mac Neil and Fox to fight it out for fourth place. The podium seems set with Haynes and Gerbrandt being a ¼ lap ahead of Bagshaw, but the race is only at the

half way mark. Bagshaw puts his head down and slowly reels in Gerbrandt, by the last lap Bagshaw has closed in on Gerbrandt and applies pressure. The last sweeping corner before the finishing straight Gerbrandt misses a gear and Bagshaw takes advantage earning him a higher position on the podium. Final Standings: Haynes Gold, Bagshaw Silver and Gerbrandt Bronze.

At the end of the day, the riders, the spectators and the volunteers are drained, but are left with a well deserved sense of accomplishment. Not only has the day provided some of the best racing ever experienced by all, but a new club has emerged to join the 'mini roadracing family.'

On behalf of the Mini RoadRacing Associations across Western Canada we would like to welcome the PSRA to the family. We look forward to seeing them on the Mini RoadRacing National circuit for the 2008 season.

Trophies and sponsorship were supplied by Thunder City, Regina, Saskatchewan. A warm thank you is extended to PSRA President Kevin Hamm and his family along with Race Director Bill Bobyk for a huge contribution of time and dedication. As always a special dedication to all the volunteers of which there were almost as many volunteers as there were racers at this event!

For more information on how you and your family can become involved in this great sport contact your local association or contact cnmra@shaw.ca

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