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Karts in the Slipstream at Streets of Willow



Paul Bonilla (20) and Mike Daniel (14) had the Masters field covered, with Bonilla taking the win.

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(Photo Courtesy: Go Racing Magazine)

August 4, 2009 (Orange, Calif.) --The 1.8-mile Streets of Willow Springs never fails to provide exciting racing, and proved to be no different for the fifth round of the 2009 Gatorz Karting Cup. The Superspeedway of KartTracks lived up to its name with the draft playing a part in the day's racing action, and went a long way towards settling several close championship battles.

MicroMax

After winning last month's race at Calspeed, Jake Drew (CRG) picked up where he left off by taking pole position ahead of Annie Breidinger (CRG) and Nicky Hays (birel).

Breidinger took the lead at the start of the pre-final, but it would only last a lap as Drew took the spot back with Hays jumping up to second. They would run in that order until the end, with Sebastian Elizondo (Arrow) finishing fourth and Toni Breidinger (CRG) finishing fifth.

Hays took the lead at the start of the final, with Breidinger following him into second and Drew falling to third. Much like the pre-final, Drew made quick work to pass Breidinger and Hays to retake the lead a lap later. Elizondo made a pass on Breidinger to take the third spot, and worked up to Hays to make the pass for second. Hays and Elizondo traded the second spot throughout the second half of the race, but running alone at the front at the checkered was Drew as he took his second win of the year. Elizondo kept Hays behind and the two finished second and third.

Reaction Karting Minimax

Defending his victory at Calspeed a month ago, Royal McKee (CRG) took pole position ahead of Michael Davis (birel) and Blake Dunkelberger (Biesse).

Davis and Dunkelberger jumped in front of McKee at the start of the pre-final, with Adam lavelli (birel) slotting in behind McKee. Davis and Dunkelberger broke away from the field, putting several seconds on third-placed McKee as they swapped the lead position nearly once a lap throughout the ten-lap pre-final. Davis drafted past on the final lap to take the win, just ahead of Dunkelberger with McKee a distant third.

But it was Dunkelberger who got the holeshot at the start of the final, jumping ahead of Davis while McKee also moved past Davis into the second spot. McKee took the lead a lap later. Davis then moved into second with a pass on Dunkelberger, and the three ran in that order for several laps until McKee gave up the lead on the eleventh lap with an apparent mechanical failure while he was well in control of the race. Davis inherited the lead and was unchallenged to the end, winning the race with Dunkelberger in second and lavelli in third.

Overdrive Karting Junior Rotax

With recent victories at the IKF Grand Nationals as well as the Rotax Summer Shootout, Lou Pagano (birel) went to Streets of Willow as a favorite in Junior Rotax and put his kart on pole, ahead of Nicholas Silva (Kosmic) and Conner Ford (birel).

Silva took the lead at the start of the race, as he and Pagano were able to break away from Ford in third place and put a gap on the rest of the field. Pagano retook the lead after four laps, but he couldn't shake Silva. On the final lap, Silva took the lead into turn one and held it until the checkered, with Pagano right behind in second and Ford a ways back in third.

The showdown between Silva and Pagano didn't materialize in the final, however, as Pagano pulled his kart off track after two laps with a mechanical problem. Silva simply ran away from the field to take the win – his first of the season – with Ford in second. A battle between Dakota Dickerson (birel), Jeremy Kane (birel) and Roman Lagudi (Maranello) would decide the final podium spot, with Dickerson taking it in the end.

GoBirel.com Rotax Senior

Race Liberante (CRG), in his first Gatorz race of the season, qualified on pole ahead of Joey Licata, Jr. (CRG) and Mike Herda (CRG).

The race got off to an exciting start as contact between Alan Musev (CRG) and Erik von Zeipel (birel), also eliminated Mike Garcia (CRG) and led to an early retirement for Ari Baquet (CRG). Liberante, Licata, and Herda battled for the lead until Licata pulled his kart off the track at the halfway mark. Liberante would lead the race flag-to-flag, with Herda second and Efrain Olivares (birel) in third.



Matt Ostiguy (17) battled with Garrison Masters (6) to take the DD2 class win.

(Photo Courtesy: Go Racing Magazine)

Licata made the most of the start, however, as he leapt up to the lead and showed Liberante a rear bumper for the first time all day. Licata, Liberante, and Herda put on a passing clinic, with each driver taking a turn at the lead while they swapped positions each lap. With only four laps remaining, however, Herda received a mechanical black flag as his rear bumper came adrift of his kart. Liberante was able to break Licata's draft and began to build a lead.

With Herda out, a battle between Baquet (CRG) and von Zeipel (birel) became the battle for the final podium spot. Baquet led von Zeipel into the last lap, and did his best to keep von Zeipel behind with a defensive line into the final corner. However, it ruined Baquet's run onto the front straightaway, and von Zeipel – last year's Masters Class champion – eased by on the front straightaway to take third at the checkered. Despite his DNF, Herda maintains a massive points lead heading into the season finale.

Dave's Performance Rotax Masters

Mike Daniel (CRG) carried the momentum of his win from the Rotax Summer Shootout to the Streets of Willow as he took pole position ahead of Jim Busby, Jr. (Arrow) and championship leader Paul Bonilla (birel).

The field had a clean start for the pre-final as Bonilla lost a spot to Andy Seesemann (birel). However, Bonilla was on a mission afterwards as he took the spot back from Seesemann, passed Busby for second, and then took the lead from Daniel after three laps. Seesemann took third from Busby, but pulled off the track on lap five with a flat tire. Daniel retook the lead into turn one with three laps remaining, and held the advantage to the checkered, with Bonilla right behind in second and Busby in third.

Daniel held his lead at the start with Bonilla, Busby, and Gary Pesner (CRG) right behind. The biggest mover of the first lap was Seesemann. Having to start last after his DNF in the pre-main, he was up to fifth by the end of the first lap. Bonilla made a pass on Daniel for the lead at the end of the first lap, but Daniel stayed right behind and kept the pressure on for the first part of the race. Bonilla, however, began to ease away in the latter stages of the race. Busby ran uncontested in third, while Pesner slipped to sixth behind the battle between Seesemann and Jarrod Bradley (birel).

At the checkered, Bonilla enjoyed a comfortable four second advantage over Daniel and all but secured his season championship. Busby finished in third, with Seesemann fourth and Bradley in fifth.



Nicholas Silva (25) took his first Gatorz win of the season.



Jake Drew made it two wins in a row in MicroMax.

Club

Angelo Ariondo (Tony Kart) followed up his win at Cal-speed by taking pole position ahead of Tom Dolan (CRG) and championship leader Jacob Zamora (birel).

Dolan took the lead at the start but Ariondo took it right back a lap later and built a lead over the battle for second between Dolan, Zamora, and George Patton (birel). Zamora was able to break free and give chase to Ariondo but ran out of time before the checkered fell, and Ariondo took the win ahead of Zamora and Patton. Dolan finished fourth.

The final got off to a wild start as Ian McAdam (birel) got into the back of Patton in the first turn. The resulting contact made a mess of the field and ended Patton's race, and also eliminated Harindra de Silva (birel). Ariondo kept his lead with Zamora second and Phil Grey making his way through the mess to move up to third.

Grey was on a mission, moving past Zamora and then taking the lead from Ariondo on the fourth lap. Zamora and Grey battled for the lead while Ariondo began to drop back with a mechanical problem, retiring from the race after six laps. This left Dolan in third spot and McAdam in fourth but a ways behind.

Grey led most of the race until Zamora retook the lead with three laps remaining. Grey, however, quickly took it back and led as the white flag was displayed. Exiting the 'bowl' turn, however, things went wrong for Grey as he went off track at the exit, spinning through the dirt and ending his race. Zamora inherited the lead and took the win, with Dolan crossing the line in second and McAdam finishing in third.

De La O Motorsports DD2

Matthew Ostiguy (CRG) returned to the Gatorz Karting Cup after taking the overall win in DD2 at the Rotax Summer Shootout, and had a race on his hands as Garrison Masters (CRG) took pole position.

The two battled throughout the pre-final, swapping positions before Ostiguy emerged victorious.

The final was much the same, as the two put on a passing and drafting clinic while picking their way through the back and mid field of the Shifter kart field. The battle ended, however, when the sidepod of Masters' kart came adrift and he received a mechanical black flag. Ostiguy cruised home for his third victory in DD2 of the season.

Shifters

Twenty-one shifter karts showed up for their one chance this season to race at Streets of Willow. Bobby Legate took pole position ahead of Clinton Schoombee and Doug Hayashi.

In the pre-final, Schoombee got the advantage off the line but had a problem on course and fell to last on the second lap. Legate took over the lead and then cruised to the win, with Patrick Cushenberry jumping from fourth to second and Hayashi finishing third.

Off the line for the final, Legate and Cushenberry stayed 1-2 while Jeff Littrell jumped to third with Rob Whitley in fourth and Randy McKee fifth. Hayashi fell to sixth but began to pick his way through the field and was back to third after four laps. While Legate, Cushenberry and Hayashi ran in the top three spots, the big mover through the field was Jimmy McNeil. Tenth after the first lap, McNeil marched through the field and by the eighth lap was harassing Hayashi for third, taking the spot a lap later with Randy McKee taking fourth and demoting Hayashi one more spot. McKee then began looking for a way past McNeil, and on the final lap, snuck by on the inside of the first turn. At the front, Legate cruised home to win ahead of Cushenberry and McKee. However, Cushenberry was a DQ at the scales, putting McKee into second and McNeil into third.

The Gatorz Karting Cup will finish its season in three weeks at the Apex Karting center in Lake Perris, Calif.