



Press Release

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THE SECOND EDITION OF THE 2009 ROTAX EURO CHALLENGE GOES ITALIAN

Following an exciting season-opener in Spain last March, the *Kart Planet* circuit in Italy is the selected venue for the anticipated second round of the *Rotax Euro Challenge* this week. With just over 140 competitors from 26 different countries making their way to the Province of Cuneo 70km southwest of the Winter Olympic city of Torino, the event is gearing-up to be nothing short of fantastic if round 1 was any indication of what's in store.

Kart Planet is yet another of the new locations introduced into the Rotax Championship in 2009, offering an alternative location to the previous tracks that have provided some impressive racing over the past five years. Considered a fast and technical layout, the 1450 metre anti-clockwise circuit will challenge the drivers to work hard. Built in 1998 in the Italian municipality of Busca, not far from the French border and glamorous Monaco, the combination of a compact, tight part on one side of the track and contrasting speed of the more flowing section, is expected to see the quicker Rotax DD2 gearbox karts circulating around the high 58-second mark, while the Senior and Junior Max will be fractionally off that lap time with the various regulation MOJO tyres.

The owners of the complex are the Speranza-Imani family, who are very much looking forward to hosting their first ever *Euro Challenge* event in association with series organisers and promoters *RGMMC Establishment*. To date, *Kart Planet* has been the chosen venue for the International Kart Open Masters, together with the Supermoto World Championship for the past three years. Like so many other kart tracks today, it offers an ideal location for more than one form of Motorsport. The brand new trackside building which includes a superb restaurant/bar, plus offices for event administration, race officials, timekeeping, race commentator, press room and more, delivers the expected standard of facilities that's become an integral part of the *Euro Challenge*. The viewing areas and grandstands are perfect for spectators and supporters.

As the second of four rounds in the series, Busca is creating a lot of interest due to the growing competitiveness of the championship, as already seen from the Spanish round last March. Significantly, Tony Kart dominated the Senior Max podium, as well as having British driver Josh Webster comfortably claim the junior victory. The 15-year old running with the Strawberry Racing Team has been at the Italian circuit twice for some crucial testing leading up to this week's event and says he's admittedly quite confident coming into the second round.

"Winning the first race in Spain [and finishing 3rd at the Rotax Winter Cup] has given me a good feeling about this year's championship, so I'm confident that I can do well here in Italy. The track is not the easiest and possibly going to be very demanding for drivers who are not that fit, which will become obvious as there's more grip. Our team has a personal trainer and we follow a special program to help build up our strength and fitness for such long races like we have for the Euro finals. I'm hoping to qualify better than I did in Zuera and get a good starting grid position or the first corner could create some problems otherwise. We'll see what happens."

Fellow senior team mate Luke Varley has apparently been spending a lot of time in the kart in preparation for his Euro assault, having taken the honours at the first round as well. The former British junior champ is going to be one of the hot favourites no doubt, but he has some tough Max rivals to contend with; almost 60 drivers are entered for the senior class, including a long list of highly international-ranked competitors. Frenchman Jerome Bourquard returns as the series leader in the Max Masters, looking to secure another win to strengthen his European campaign. Ralph Odendaal is keen to fly the South African flag above the top step of the podium in the DD2 as he did at round 1, where he was unbeatable on finals day. It's inevitably going to be great racing.

To stay updated as the action unfolds from Friday's unofficial timed practice and qualifying, right through all of Saturday's heat racing and the finals Sunday, just go to the official homepage of the *Rotax Euro Challenge* at www.rgmmc.com. Click on the link to the *Kart Data Live Timing* to follow every track session, accompanied by the live commentary and track snapshots from the Busca circuit over the entire weekend.

Check out the latest innovation to the Euro Challenge at **RGMMC TV** – also by going to the homepage, where you can watch interesting interviews and short videos from around the paddock during the course of the Italian event on the increasingly popular IP-TV, brought to you by *RGMMC* direct from the 2009 Euro Challenge.

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