



Press Release

Zuera, SPAIN - 28th March, 2009

EURO QUALIFYING SETS THE PACE FOR THE RACING IN SPAIN

As the temperature rose into the mid 20s, the conditions changed into what was ideal for some but caught a few others out when it came to the official timed practice at round 1 of the Rotax Euro Challenge Friday. There were also a few surprises in the results based on how it was shaping-up in the morning practice.

It appeared that the 2009 Rotax Winter Cup Senior Max winner Joseph Reilly (Strawberry Racing/Tonykart) was a sure thing in the lead-up to qualifying, clearly fastest overall, but ended up only 10th after waiting until late in the session and only completing three laps. He was unlucky on the day, upstaged by fellow British driver Tom Fawcett (RL Race Team/Tonykart) running out of the same awning at Zuera, who was quickest in the first session with 1:03,282.

Fawcett was pleased with his result, saying he knew he had a good chance based on the earlier practice times prior to going out for the qualifying. *"I thought I could take pole but it wouldn't be easy. I knew I'd have to get a slipstream and only had a few laps to make the most of the new tyres. Luckily I did it in the first lap; I got out there and slotted in behind someone immediately, so it was just what I needed to set my quickest time."*

Reilly's team-mate James Greenway (Strawberry Racing) was a tenth off pole to claim 2nd place, as Tonykart dominated the 61-kart field with Frenchman Antoine Barthou (MD Competition/Tonykart) taking 3rd, while Luke Varley (Strawberry Racing/Tonykart) was 4th fastest. Mats Van den Brand (Team TKP/Intrepid) rounded out the top 5, but had been one of the quick drivers in the last two days so will be one to watch in the racing.

Junior Max saw another driver from the UK steal the show to take P1 for Saturday's heat races, when Matthew Parry (Paul Carr Racing/Kosmic) edged out initial pace-setter Aavo Talvar (Team TKP/Intrepid) in the second group by 0.062 seconds, with a time of 1:04,642. Interestingly, Parry set his best time in lap 7 of 9 completed on his new set of MOJO D1 tyres. 3rd quickest in the class of 41 juniors was Raoul Owens (Protrain Racing/Gillard) all the way from South Africa ahead of the leading lady on the track, Beitske Visser (Team TKP/Intrepid), who was first in the opening Junior Max session. Another South African, staying true to their usual good form, Aidan de Nobrega (HRS Motorsport/CRG) took 5th.

Repeating his impressive drive in the 2-speed DD2 qualifying from the Rotax Winter Cup last month in Spain was Ralph Odendaal (Korridas/Intrepid), also from South Africa, clocking the fastest lap of the day 1:02,095. *"I was pleased with the changes we'd made coming into the qualifying session. Before that we were still trying to improve the set-up, but it's good to know we found the pace in time. The track is fast; it's quite different to the others we race on and I'm liking it more now seeing that I'm going better than I was at the beginning."*

Maik Barten (PDB Belgium DFK/Gillard) had the second best lap, 0.050 seconds off Odendaal, then French champion Damien Vuillaume (Freekart Racing/CRG) from Seweryn Szczepanik (Schepers Racing/Zanardi) of Poland 4th. Having made his debut to the DD2 class and the Euro Challenge in 2009 plus some podium appearances, Ian Young from South Africa was 5th fastest.

The Max Masters saw current DD2 Masters World number one Christophe Adams (GKS Gem Sport/Birel) snatch pole setting a time of 1:04,876 from the returning European vice champ Jerome Bourquard (BRK/Sodikart) in his last lap. A late charge by Portugal's Goncalo Gaivao (Sportkart/CRG) split the pair, giving him P2 for the qualifying heats the following day, ahead of the Frenchman. His Sportkart team-mate Nuno Santos had the 4th best lap to fellow Portuguese driver Rui Viera, who featured from his victory in the Rotax Winter Cup in the DD2 class in February.

Live timing and all the race results from the first round of the Euro Challenge in Spain, can be found by going to **www.rgmmc.com** and clicking on the *Kart-Data Live Timing* logo. During the racing, live commentary from the circuit will accompany the timing and the link to *Race Control* brings still pictures from around the Zuera track, updated every few minutes for a glimpse of the action. To watch the *RGMMC IP TV* videos for interviews over the weekend and what's happening around the paddock, click on **www.kartworld.tv**

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