

ROTAX®

Challenge of the Americas



Challenge of the Americas

Phoenix, 2015 Rounds 3-4

NASH MOTORSPORTZ

Sr. Max



Christian Brooks

Nash Motorsportz Senior Max Saturday Report

Chess was the game played during the 15-minute qualifying session for the Senior Max division. Drivers hit the track when the green flag waved, slowing to a crawl as they all jockeyed for position behind Friday fast driver Mason Marotta (Tony Kart). A few near misses occurred with others going full speed to try and lay down the fast lap on the opening circuits. Early on, Luke Selliken (Kosmic) was the provisional driver on the pole position, and was challenged by Round Two winner Brenden Baker (Tony Kart). Selliken fourth circuit put him back on top, and despite a number of

attempts by the rest of the field, his 46.064-lap stood, earning him five crucial points in the championship. Baker ended up back by 66 thousandths, with Marotta in third. Louie Pagano (Tony Kart) and Canadian Bryce Choquer (Kosmic) completed the fast five.

Marotta was able to escape the 17-lap Prefinal with the win after a hard fought battle. Selliken led the field to the green, but was passed by Choquer at the end of the circuit. The inside line got the jump, and Baker suffered, dropping to seventh after the first few laps. Up to fourth by the completion of lap one, it appeared he was the quickest driver on the track. Selliken and Marotta teamed up to get past Choquer for the lead on lap three, as he continued to fall down the order as the race went on. Marotta took over the

top spot and led the remainder of the race as the fight was for second. Both Baker and Brooks took a turn, before Selliken regained the spot back. On the final lap, Baker and Brooks drafted past the Rolison Performance Group driver, dropping Selliken back to fourth at the checkered. Pagano and Jake Craig (Formula K) worked past Stepanova Nekeel (Tony Kart) in the final corner for fifth and sixth.

What appeared to be a lock for Baker, rookie Brooks slid in during the late stages of the race to secure his first victory as a Senior driver, and became the third different winner in the first three rounds. Baker and Brooks pushed away out front early, as a heavy fight for third included Marotta and a number of drivers. Early on, racing contact shuffled up the order with Selliken moving into the



Brenden Baker



Luke Selliken



ekartingnews.com

spot. Baker seemed to have an advantage on Brooks, however, the young driver never gave up. With six laps remaining, Baker's engine lost speed briefly, allowing Brooks to close right back up onto his bumper and slipped past at the end of the straight. From there, Brooks pulled a couple kart lengths with Selliken now pressuring for second. At the line, Christian secured the victory and Baker held on to second, giving Nash Motorsportz another 1-2 finish. It was a second podium on the season for Selliken in the third spot as Marotta finished fourth and Jim McKinney (Tony Kart) fought his way to fifth.

NASH MOTORSPORTZ

Sr. Max

Mason Marotta

Nash Motorsportz Senior Max Sunday Report

The 15-minute qualifying session for the Senior drivers was another cat and mouse act, with everyone looking for a dance partner in the hopes of scoring the pole position. Saturday top qualifier Luke Selliken (Kosmic) was the first to break loose, and ran out front to set the early pace. He was followed by a group of drivers, but it wasn't until he slowed down and went to the back that he was able to use the draft and post a blistering 46.028-second lap. No one came even close to matching that pace, as Selliken waited on pit lane for someone to do better. Mason Marotta (Tony Kart) charged late, working with RPM teammate Stepanova Nekeel (Tony Kart). Marotta only came within three tenths of Selliken's time, but that was good enough for second in the order. Saturday winner and point leader Christian Brooks (Tony Kart) ended up third with Brenden Baker (Tony Kart) and Nekeel making up the fast five.



Selliken led the field to the green flag in the Prefinal, but it was Marotta who showed the way for the entire 17-lap event. A fight for the second spot gave Marotta enough breathing room to run unchallenged to a two-second advantage by the checkered flag. Selliken was shuffled back to sixth on the second lap, as Brooks took over the second spot. The fight for third then heated up, giving the point leader enough space to cruise to the runner-up finish. Pagano came away with the third spot for a time, until Nekeel stole the position for a lap, before the 2Wild Karting driver retook the position. They ran that way until the final lap, when Selliken tried for a move on Pagano in the penultimate corner – turn 11. Both drivers pushed wide and Baker slid past both, crossing the line in third. Selliken finished fourth with Pagano fifth and Nekeel sixth. The fastest kart on the track was actually the Formula K of Jake Craig. After getting shuffled off at the start, he came from 21st to ninth in 17 laps.

The 25-lap Final was setting up to be another showdown to the flag. Marotta and Baker broke away out front, and the two exchanged the lead a few times. This allowed the lead group to grow from five to eight. They settled back down and Selliken helped to push the two away. Selliken got racey, and the trio fought for the lead once again, closing up the top-eight together once again. The fighting continued with Baker and Marotta taking turns at the point. A hard battle for the second spot allowed Marotta to break away, and that was all he needed. On lap 20, Baker and Nekeel made contact fighting for position, and then Pagano and Jim McKinney (Tony Kart) did as well, shuffling up the order. When the dust settled, Marotta scored the victory by just over one second ahead of Selliken with Brooks landing his third straight podium finish to help in the championship chase. Gustavo Menezes (Tony Kart) laid down fast laps all race, and climbed to the fourth position with Josh Kurtz (FA Kart) scoring fifth.



Luke Selliken



Christian Brooks

Jr. Max



Nick Brueckner



Trey Brown



ekartingnews.com

Rolison Performance Group Junior Max Saturday Report

The Junior class on Saturday was all about Nick Brueckner, as the Orsolon Racing Tony Kart pilot set the pace in qualifying. The Texan was the only driver to dip into the 46-second bracket, posting a 46.943-second. NorCal driver Toni Breidinger (Kosmic) recorded her best qualifying performance of her Junior career, ending the session in the second position. Matthew Taskinen (Tony Kart) was third in the order with Michael Michoff (Kosmic) and David Ilavia (CompKart) making up the fast five. Absent from the top of the order was Sting Ray Robb. A chassis change prior to qualifying forced him to start last for the Prefinal no matter what his lap time was. He presented and was set to start 19th.

Brueckner went wire-to-wire in the 17-lap event, but the real

story was Robb coming from the back to the front. Lap after lap, the Round One winner climbed up the order and was able to reach the third position, riding the bumper of rookie Trey Brown (Tony Kart) – who started sixth himself. They finished three seconds back of Brueckner, with Breidinger down to fourth and Taskinen to fifth.

The 25-lap Final was a carbon copy of the Tucson opening race, this time with Brueckner at the point. Robb was into the second position early and on Brueckner's bumper. They ran nose to tail the entire time with Robb trying to find a spot to take over the lead. The opportunity never came, and Brueckner scored his second straight victory of the series. Robb settled for second, as Brown landed another podium again. Taskinen finished a close fourth as Breidinger beat out Zoey Edenholt (Kosmic) for fifth.



Sting Ray Robb

RPG
ROLISON PERFORMANCE GROUP

Jr. Max



Trey Brown

Sting Ray Robb



Nick Brueckner



ekartingnews.com

Rolison Performance Group Junior Max Sunday Report

An exciting battle is brewing in the Junior Max category in this year's Challenge, as two young stars are emerging. Nick Brueckner (Tony Kart) and Sting Ray Robb (Tony Kart) have asserted their positions as the outright leaders in the class, and on Sunday, it was Robb who stepped into the spotlight with a perfect day. Qualifying on the pole began Robb's effort to combat Brueckner's Saturday victory, which he extended his lead in the point standings. Unlike Saturday, when Robb was forced to start at the tail of the Prefinal after switching a chassis ahead of qualifying, the young Idaho phenom bolted away from the pole position to win the 17-lap race and secure the pole for the final.

In the main, Robb got away cleanly and then simply laid down consistent laps to hold Brueckner at bay. A scant half-second lead was all Robb needed, as he and Brueckner were identical on pace, trading fast laps back and forth. In the end, Robb got the much-needed victory, his first COTA win of the year, which brought him closer to Brueckner in the hunt for the championship. Along with the title comes a lucrative ticket to the Rotax Grand Finals, which is the ultimate goal for both drivers. Brueckner did score one important triumph in the final, posting the fastest lap of the race to steal the five bonus points from Robb. The podium was rounded out by a quick young Junior rookie, as Trey Brown (Tony Kart) all but matched the pace of the leaders to finish an impressive third. Michael Michoff (Kosmic) turned things up in the main event to finish a strong fourth ahead of David Ilavia (CompKart).

TEAM
CRG
USA

DD2

RPM
RYAN PERRY MOTORSPORT

DD2

Masters

Sabre Cook



Michael Ilavia



ekartingnews.com

Matt Jaskol



CRG-USA DD2 Saturday Report

The four driver making up the DD2 field this weekend are all right there, with a chance at the win. Qualifying proved that as the four were within 0.162 seconds after the 15-minute session. The two winners from Tucson – Sabré Cook (CRG) and Michael Ilavia (CompKart) were the provisional drivers at the top. Matt Jaskol (CRG) made changes to his PSL West machine, and was finding pace as the checkered flag dawned, but was unable to eclipse the time set by Cook, a 45.342-second lap. Jaskol finished the session in second, back by 23 thousandths. Ilavia was third with Ben Schermerhorn fourth in his first weekend aboard the Kosmic.

Ilavia, looking to gain as many points as possible to cut the small advantage Cook held coming into the weekend, the J3 Competition driver secured the win in the 17-lap race. Cook led the quartet for the early portion of the race until Ilavia picked up the pressure. The CompKart driver tried on lap 11 for the lead but Cook fought him off through the kink portion of the long back straight. Ilavia locked

up the position the following circuit in the same turn eight. Cook retook the position on lap 15, and on the final lap, Ilavia regain the lead and scored the win. Cook settled for second with Jaskol running third, waiting for an opportunity to move forward. Schermerhorn ran fourth, posting his quickest laps at the end of the race to remain within reach of the leaders.

Cook extended her championship lead by just a few points, scoring the victory in the 25-lap main event. You could throw a blanket over the top three throughout race, as Cook and Ilavia fought for the lead early on. Eventually, Cook established herself as the top driver in the end, pulling away to a 1.3-second advantage at the checkered flag. Ilavia held off the late challenge from Jaskol to land second, only losing 15 points to Cook in the championship chase as the CRG-USA driver posted the fast lap of the race. Schermerhorn was able to post laps within two tenths of the leaders once again, running fourth.



DD2 DD2 Masters

CRG-USA DD2 Sunday Report

In Tucson, Matt Jaskol (CRG) was able to post the fast lap in the qualifying session, however, he saw it taken away due to a technical inspection issue. A month later here in Phoenix, the PSL West driver was able to post a fast lap early, and the time stood for the remainder of the 15-minute session. Point leader and Saturday winner Sabre Cook (CRG) closed in late, but came one tenth of a second short. Round Two winner Michael Ilavia was a close third in the order with Ben Schermerhorn (Kosmic) fourth.

For the first time in the four rounds of racing, contact decided the results of a race, with Ilavia scoring the Prefinal win. Jaskol and Cook slotted into the top-two positions after the green flag, and reaching turn eight for the first time, contact was made. Both drivers went off, with Ilavia moving into the lead and Schermerhorn to second. Cook and Jaskol continued on, with Jaskol pulling off after five laps. As the race wore on, Schermerhorn kept Ilavia in his sights, but was ran down by Cook. She continued the fast laps of the race to land on the bumper of Ilavia with four laps to go. They finished that way, with Ilavia first to the checkered. Cook, however, was penalized five seconds for the contact, dropping her to third and putting Schermerhorn on the front row for the main event.

Ilavia led the way in the Final, as Cook and Jaskol fought for the second position. Once Jaskol assumed the spot, he began working on the leader Ilavia. It wasn't until lap 18 that he pulled the trigger, bringing Cook with him. Ilavia fought back on Cook, and this gave Jaskol the breathing room he needed to drive to the checkered flag for his first series victory. Cook was a close third with Ilavia on the podium in third and Schermerhorn in fourth.



Sabre Cook



Matt Jaskol



Michael Ilavia



Paul Bonilla

Cambrian Go-Karts Masters Max Saturday Report

The top spot in the opening qualifying session was sought after by four drivers in Masters Max. Early on, championship leader Paul Bonilla (Tony Kart) was the provisional pole driver until the midway portion when 2014 US Rotax Grand National champ Ken Maxfield (Arrow) took over the spot. The top four came in for changes, including John Crow (Birel). He and his Full Throttle Karting crew made some front end changes, and got quicker. By his third circuit around after the pit stop, Crow took over the pole position with a 47.518-second lap. Maxfield's time put him off the pole position by 16 thousandths, with Bonilla down to third and Scott Falcone (Kosmic) a close fourth. John Breidinger (FA Kart) made up the fast five.

It was a four driver break away from the start of the 17-lap Prefinal with the front two rows getting away. Bonilla was slow as the green flag waved, allowing Falcone to slip to third, but only briefly as the point leader reclaimed the spot. On lap seven, Bonilla tried for the second spot on Maxfield, and the two made slight contact, enough to slow their exit pace. That allowed Falcone to drive around the outside of both for the second spot, and gave Crow a big lead. The positions remained unchanged, with Crow scoring the win as Falcone held off Bonilla for second. Maxfield lost touch with the leaders in the closing laps, but finished fourth ahead of Canadian Christopher Patterson (Tony Kart).

Top four away again in the 25-lap Final, with Bonilla able to score his third straight main event victory. Crow was followed by Bonilla at the start of the race, with Falcone dropping back to third from outside the front row. The field was shuffled up behind them as opening lap contact put a few drivers into the dirt, with everyone able to rejoin the race. Maxfield joined the front three, but lost the draft as the race went on. Falcone kept the top two close, with Bonilla taking over the lead on lap six. From there, Crow could not match the championship leader's pace, with Bonilla taking home a third straight checkered flag. Falcone rounded out the podium with Maxfield fourth and Breidinger in the fifth spot.



Scott Falcone



John Crow

Cambrian
GO-KARTS

Masters



ekartingnews.com



Scott Falcone



John Crow

Cambrian Go-Karts Masters Max Sunday Report

Needing every point possible to get back into the title hunt, John Crow (Birel) secured the pole position once again with another late-session run. Three-time winner Paul Bonilla (Tony Kart) set the pace early on, until Scott Falcone (Kosmic) made a charge for the pole. After pit stops, Crow's pace improved as it did in yesterday's timed session. On his 10th circuit, Crow posted a 47.685-second lap to land on the pole. This eclipsed Falcone's time by nine thousandths, while Bonilla was off by only 57 thousandths. US Rotax Grand Nationals champion Ken Maxfield (Arrow) was fourth, with Chad Wallace (Kosmic) improving to make it into the fast five.

Crow and Bonilla went lap for lap, matching each other's pace throughout the 17-lap Prefinal with Crow earning the win. Bonilla took over the top spot on lap two as the duo pulled away from the field, leaving Falcone and Maxfield running alone on the track. The gap between the two leaders grew and shrunk a number of times, before Crow took over the point with two laps remaining. A pass at turn 11 stuck, with Bonilla not forcing the issue. Crow held it to the checkered flag to finish ahead of Bonilla, Falcone, Maxfield with Wallace holding fifth.

The day ended with a perfect score for Crow, who went wire-to-wire in the 25-lap main event, scoring the fast lap honor as well to put himself in contention for the championship. Bonilla challenged Crow early, but was unable to make any moves. The margin was just one second, with the fast lap of the race separated by eight thousandths. Falcone earned his second straight podium finish, with Maxfield in fourth and Canadian Christopher Patterson (Tony Kart) climbing to fifth.



Paul Bonilla

TEAM
PSL
WEST.COM

Mini Max

Marco Kacic



Sebastian Alvarez



Jak Crawford

PSL West Mini Max Saturday Report

Not surprisingly, the Mini Max qualifying session wasn't decided until the end of the 15-minute run. The importance of the draft cannot be understated, and eventual polesitter Payton Durrant (Tony Kart) was able to tuck behind Austin Torgerson down the backstraight late in the session to steal the pole away from Sebastian Alvarez (CRG) with a 49.133-second lap. Alvarez held onto second as he and PSL West teammate Marco Kacic (CRG) had paired up after the mid-session pit spot to jump to the head of the class. Tucson winner Griffin

Dowler (Tony Kart) was fourth in the final order, ahead of Jak Crawford (Benik).

Durrant appeared to have the Prefinal handled after getting off to a great start, emerging from the opening corners with three-length lead. However, Alvarez was diligent and stalked the Tony Kart driver for the entire 13-lap race, surprising him with a strong move to the inside in the penultimate corner – turn 11 – to steal the lead and the win. Durrant looked back underneath to take the position back, but he was not able to get enough forward bite to outrun Alvarez the right-hander

that leads to the stripe. Kacic lead the next trio, as he was able to hold off Dowler for the spot.

In the Final, Alvarez would lead the way, but it would all come down to the final corners of the race when Kacic tracked down his teammate. The Canadian made a strong inside move in the left-hand hairpin turn 11, coming out with the lead and his first career COTA win. Crawford followed Kacic through to take second ahead of Alvarez. Durrant and Torgerson rounded out the top-five.



ekartingnews.com

TEAM
PSL
WEST.COM

Mini Max



ekartingnews.com

*Payton
Durrant*



Austin Torgerson



Jak Crawford

PSL West Mini Max Sunday Report

A lesson in the fickle nature of motorsports was provided in MiniMax, as the start of the day did not give a true indication of what would be seen on the post-race podium. In qualifying, Sebastian Alvarez (CRG) stole the pole from his challengers on final lap by dropping a 46.682-second lap as Saturday winner Marco Kacic (CRG) and frontrunner Payton Durrant (Tony Kart) found themselves mired in slower traffic during the final minutes of the session, de-

spite having the pace to top the entire field.

After the qualifying drama, the Prefinal played out as expected, with Alvarez running away to the win, although the Final was a much different story. While Alvarez led early, Canadian Griffin Dowler (Kosmic) found his set-up to his liking and he challenged early, making a move in the right-hand hairpin Turn 11 to position himself in front of the field. This honor would last only for a split-second, as Alvarez crossed underneath with the appropriate response

– an over-under retaliation – but he connected with Dowler’s rear bumper, sending the new leader into an unrecoverable spin. Both drivers would fall down the order, having went off into the gravel, and this allowed Durrant to slip through to assume the lead.

As Durrant settled into his newfound point position, Jak Crawford (Tony Kart) closed as the primary contender. There would be no further action for the race win, as Durrant found his pace, settling into a speed that would give him an insurmountable lead and the

eventful win. The Utah pilot laid down the quickest lap of the race as well, moving him to fourth in the overall standings, just 29 markers behind Kacic, who finished fourth behind Crawford and Ashton Torgerson. For Durrant, the win should give the likable Utah pilot the confidence to go out and dominate every session this year.



Micro Max

Diego LaRoque



Motorsports Development Group Micro Max Saturday Report

Even the draft pairing of Josh Pierson (Tony Kart) and Leland Honeyman (Exprit) couldn't hold back the pace of Diego LaRoque (Benik) in Micro Max qualifying. As the field finally dipped below the 52-second mark, Pierson and Honeyman posted low 51.9s, putting them on the top of the timechart. However, in the final laps, LaRoque got a great draft tow from another driver coming down the backstraight and slashed three tenths off his best time to record a 51.566 to secure the pole position for the Prefinal. Tyler Ruth (KGB) and Ashton Torgerson (Tony Kart) completed the fast-five behind Pierson and Honeyman.

After falling back to third in the early laps of the 10-lap Prefinal, LaRoque turned up the wick and clawed his way back to the front to pace the field. Honeyman and Pierson were not going to let him get away, and stuck on his rear bumper. They appeared primed to make several moves to retake the point, but nothing every fully developed. Anthony Willis (Benik) was the driver to watch coming from the back of the grid, starting 16th after trouble in qualifying. Willis attacked quickly, gaining four spots on the opening lap, and they put his head down to close on the next group of drivers. He would eventually catch them as they battled for position in the late going, and he was able to steal eighth on the final lap.

In the final, an early train developed as expected, but once LaRoque settled into the lead, the rest of the field felt apart and decided to race each other. This allowed the Arizona pilot to pull away to a 2.7-second triumph. Honeyman got to the front of the chase pack to take second, while Cole Keith Cotham (Tony Kart) paired up with Willis to get onto the podium in third.

Motorsports Development Group Micro Max Sunday Report

In the last two seasons of the Challenge, only two drivers have won in the Micro Max division. Last year's champion Jak Crawford swept all six main events in 2014, and thus far in 2015, it's been all Diego LaRoque. After dominating the main event on Saturday, LaRoque (Benik) was the driver to beat again on Sunday, qualifying on the pole during the short timed session. Unlike Saturday's race, where LaRoque was able to run away, he and his challengers fought each other all race long. It was Leland Honeyman (Exprit) who assumed the attack position in second with Josh Pierson (Tony Kart), Cole Keith Cotham (Tony Kart) and Anthony Willis (Benik) making up the fast five.

LaRoque won the Prefinal, hounded by Pierson and Honeyman. Willis moved up to fourth with local driver Tyler Ruth in the fifth position. Cotham finished fourth but was penalized five positions following tech inspection. The Final came down to a duel between LaRoque and Honeyman. The two went back and forth until LaRoque secured the position with two laps remaining. It was LaRoque at the line by two tenths for his fourth victory of the season as Honeyman finished runner-up. Pierson won the battle for third over Cotham as Ruth finished fifth, stealing the fast lap honors.



Josh Pierson



Cole Keith Cotham



Leland Honeyman

TEAM
PSL
WEST.COM

Cambrian
GO-KARTS

RPG
ROLISON PERFORMANCE GROUP

TEAM
CRG
USA

M
DG
MOTORSPORTS
DEVELOPMENT
GROUP

RPM
RYAN PERRY MOTORSPORT

maxspeed
GROUP
#MOJO

NASH
MOTORSPORTS

FTK
FULL THROTTLE KARTING

Ribtech 4

AKR
ACCELERATION
KART RACING

K1
RaceGear

N2
IMAGE SOLUTIONS.COM
DESIGN • BRANDWEAR • IDENTITY

So-Cal
ROTAX
Challenge

RACE TECH
development

PKT
AXLES
.COM

HOLE SHOT



2015
ROTAX[®]
Challenge
of the Americas



ekartingnews.com