

Ricky, Shahan grab pole for championship race in 13th JK Tyre-FMSCI National Rotax Max Karting Championship



Kolhapur, September 24: Senior Max favourite Ricky Donison and Micro Max star Shahan Ali grabbed pole positions for the biggest race-day of the 13th JK Tyre-FMSCI National Rotax Max Karting Championship, winning their respective heats in the fifth and final round with consummate ease here at the Mohite Racing Academy on Saturday.

In the Junior Max, Chirag Ghorpade grabbed the honours by winning the first heat and playing it safe in the second, pulling out of the race to save his wet tyres in the fifth lap. He will hope to take advantage of his pole position to pull off a sensational win on Sunday.

Ricky of BPC Racing showed his class on Day 1 of the championship weekend, grabbing the pole position from Vishnu Prasad in the qualifying and marking his intent right away. In H1, he built a huge lead by the second lap itself and looked untouchable all the way through. He clocked a stupendous 51.320 seconds, amazingly in the last lap to show that he is not going to let up until the final chequered flag comes out on what promises to be a stupendous Sunday.

The Bangalore-based racer was equally imperious in Senior Max's H2, quickly storming ahead of the field and taking the race with elan. He is currently on 324 points, just four behind the championship leader, Vishnu Prasad, and will fancy his chances on the big day, when a full house is expected to turn out to witness the grand finale.

Local hero Dhruv Mohite gave Kolhapur's fans a lot to cheer by snatching P2, and staying in line to pull off a sensational upset. He finished second in the first heat and third in the second to stay in the reckoning. He is on 314 points and knows that two great runs on Sunday can well give him the championship.

He took advantage of a melee in the opening round of H1 itself to jump into the second position from third. In H2 too, he was in his elements, giving Ricky a run for his money. But he lost steam at the midway stage, allowing Nayan to come back into the action. The Mumbai lad will start on P3 while Vishnu of Meco will start on P4.

In Junior Max, almost the entire field opted for a strategic race, not finishing H2 to save their tyres for the last two races just in caesarian plays spoilsport. One after the other, all the top contenders pulled out to give themselves a better chance to go for the kill on Sunday. In the event, the only lady karter Mira Erda of Erda Racing emerged the surprise winner in H2. She was followed home by Aditya Swaminathan and Bhargav Pradyumna, both of Meco.

That will, however, not affect the grid positions for the pre-finals on Sunday substantially. Ghorpade (BPC Racing) will begin at P1 while Mira and Nirmal Umashankar will begin on P2 and P3. Manav Sharma, who will start at P4, remains ahead in the championship race with 334 points. Ghorpade is fourth with 317 points and will try to make the most of this huge advantage tomorrow.



Newly crowned Asian Micro Max champion Shahan Ali (Meco) underlined his skill and temperament by winning his two heats in totally different conditions. Just after lunch, with the clouds still too far away to pose any threat, he built on his pole position to build a sizeable lead in the Micro Max. But the Meco racer had to absorb a lot of pressure in the latter part of the race as Aadityanash (Rayo) literally sat on his tail, looking for an opening to streak past him.

Shahan, however, demonstrated remarkable calm and amazing defensive acumen to ward him off. Expectedly, he recorded the fastest lap (57.505 seconds) in the tenth lap; Aadityanash was just two tenths of a second behind him to show how aggressively he was driving. It was a breeze for Shahan in the second heat though, winning the wet race comfortably in 11.14.584 minutes.

This was a crucial win for him. In the previous round, the slippery conditions set him back. But this time, he tackled the wet race with equal ease and jumped ahead and held on to the lead all the way till the last lap. He could only manage a fast lap of 1:06.604 minutes, coincidentally again in the tenth, but that was good enough to put him in the best position for Sunday's finals. Arjun Nair (Meco) who finished third in the first heat and runner up in the second will start at P2. Aadityanash will be at P3.

SENIOR MAX

Heat 1: Ricky Donison 1; Dhruv Mohite 2; Vishnu Prasad 3

Heat 2: Ricky Donison 1; Nayan Chatterjee 2; Dhruv Mohite 3

JUNIOR MAX

Heat 1: Chirag Ghorpade 1; Manav Sharma 2; Nirmal Umashankar 3

Heat 2: Mira Erda 1; Aditya Swaminathan 2; Bhargav Pradyumna 3

MICRO MAX

Heat 1: Shahan Ali 1; Aadityanash 2; Arjun Nair 3

Heat 2: Shahan Ali 1; Arjun Nair 2; Aadityanash 3

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JK Tyre has always been closely associated with the world of sports. Almost three decades back the company laid down a long term and sustained approach to promote Motorsport. Participating in this form of the sport has helped the company in continuously updating its products to meet the challenges of grueling Indian conditions. The sport at that time in India was perceived for elite but JK Tyre took upon itself to package and redesign the sport to suit the masses. The company not only made the sport affordable but also equivalent to International operating standards. JK Tyre's foray into Motorsport was a well thought out strategic decision to not only use and develop this virgin branding platform but also to realize the dreams of making India a force in the field of motor sport.

In 2011, the company acquired the Formula BMW Series and rechristened it as the JK Racing Asia Series (JKRAS). With this acquisition, JK Tyre created history in Indian Motorsport by becoming the first Indian company to acquire an FIA accredited series. By taking over the series, JK Tyre promises to utilize it as a platform to encourage and support the world's best racing drivers and promote India as one of Asia's motorsport capitals. Thus, JK Tyre has conquered two steps in the motorsport program where the new racing aspirants first establish themselves in

India, then graduate to Asian level i.e. to Formula BMW, which is now JKRAS and then they move to higher levels of racing. JK Tyre now stands closer to achieving its mission of bringing world-class motorsport to the Indian masses.

The Racing and Karting programme by JK Tyre has been the breeding ground for the country's motorsport talents like NarainKarthikeyan, Armaan Ebrahim, Karun Chandhok, Aditya Patel and other emerging talent.

Another pioneering initiative was the launch of the Truck Racing Championship in India in partnership with Tata Motors. The company developed & designed „JetRacing“-the new generation truck racing tyres especially for this application. With this, JK Tyre became the first tyre company to produce truck racing tyres in India. The combination of the Prima trucks fitted with Jet Racing received an overwhelming response from participants and has definitely brought in a revolution in the Indian racing scenario.

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