



Pride of place: Deepak Ravikumar celebrates on claiming the pole position in the Pro-Stock 301-400cc class. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Deepak takes the pole

Fourteen-year-old Md. Mikail tops the NSF 250R qualifying

MOTORSPORTS

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The second round of the MRF MMSC-FMSCI National motorcycle racing championship was off to a roaring start at the MMRT here on Friday, with the FIM Moto3-spec Honda NSF 250R bikes, participating in the Idemitsu Honda Talent Cup, raising the standard bar in a stunning fashion during the qualifying sessions.

The top five qualifiers in the NSF 250R were quicker than TVS Racing's Deepak Ravikumar who took the pole position in the premium Pro-Stock 301-400cc class, with a best lap of one minute, 54.298secs.

As against this, Chennai lad Md. Mikail, only 14 years old, topped the NSF 250R

qualifying, clocking 01:48.889, with fifth-placed Kavin Samaar Quintal posting a best of 01:53.111.

Also grabbing pole positions in their respective categories were Mathan Kumar of Erula Racing in the Pro-Stock 201-300cc (01:59.786), Bengaluru's Samuel Martin (02:11.964) in the Idemitsu Honda Talent Cup CBR 150 and Venkatesan from Chennai (02:10.859) in the TVS RTR 200 (Novice).

Venkatesan (02:09.660) also took pole position in the Novice (Stock 165cc) class while Ann Jennifer of Sparks Racing topped in the girls' (02:12.289) category.

Under scrutiny

Undoubtedly, the Honda NSF 250R bikes came under considerable scrutiny in their debut outing in India, and they exceeded expecta-

tions with all their eight riders, in the age-group of 12 to 18 years, putting in impressive performances.

Not the least was Sarthak Shrikant Chavan, the 12-year-old schoolboy from Pune who qualified eighth in the NSF 250R class with a flying lap of 02:01.753.

It was his maiden outing in track racing after having won a junior motocross event recently.

While the timings from Free Practice dropped noticeably in the qualifying sessions, Mikail, who raced in Thailand recently along with Karthik Vasant Habib from Gadag, Karnataka, improved by nearly three seconds to take the pole position.

Habib qualified second in 01:51.091, ahead of Chennai boys Varoon Sadasivam (01:52.435), and Geoffrey Emmanuel (01:52.801).