

Deepak takes pole; Md. Mikail tops NSF 250R qualifying



Pride of place: Deepak Ravikumar celebrates on claiming the pole position. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

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 pole in the premium Pro-Stock 301-400cc class, with a best lap of one minute, 54.298secs.

Young talent

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 posi-

tions 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.

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