

Record Turnout for 2005 Formula Kart Florida Winter Tour

For the 7th consecutive year the Formula Kart Racing Florida Winter Tour has started with a record number of entries. This years Tour, presented by Fittipaldi Racing Karts, boasted 250 entries during the Homestead event-weekend.

With the sound of IRL cars testing in the background, drivers from as far away as Australia made their way around the "new-and-improved" Homestead Karting facility.

MRP Motorsport sponsored Pro Shifter action included participation by **STARS National Champion Alex Speed**. Many expected Speed and his MRP Birel to dominate. He showed class winning times, and checked out on the field on several occasions, but problems during both finals kept him off the top podium spot. Pro Class Cash Payout during the event-weekend totaled \$4,320. A Canadian, First Karts Daniel Morad, was the big money winner, taking home a total of \$1,260 U.S. for his 5th / 1st place finishes. Jan Velez Walter, from Puerto Rico on a PSL CRG, pulled down \$1,160 for his win on Saturday. Floridian Keith Spicer, in his 125cc debut on a DL Racing Tony Kart, was third in winnings, with a 3rd and a 2nd netting him \$700. Other cash winners included Floridian Jonathan Brannam, making his PCR debut, and Californian Alex Speed with \$400 each, Floridian Sean Meir on a DL Tony with \$300, and Michigan's Jordan Dick, on a privateer Birel, with \$100. That leaves \$15,680 of the guaranteed \$20,000 Pro purse to be shared by the remaining Pro Class entrants and points champions.

The largest class was once again **First Kart sponsored Rotax Senior**, with 30 entries providing some great action. Canadian Marc Stehle, on an SH Karting Tony Kart, snagged pole on Saturday, but serious problems in the Final pushed him back to 22nd at the finish, 2 laps down to winner Columbian Ariel Castro on a Fittipaldi. Another Canadian, Eric Gerrits, put his First Kart on pole on Sunday, but in the final faded to 4th behind Floridian Kyle Hedin, Castro in 2nd, and the race winner Costa Rican transplant Stuart Marsell, making his Senior Rotax debut on a CRG. The "EX-LAX MOVEMENT OF THE DAY" goes to DL Racing Tony Kart driver and Floridian Drew Cattell, who drove from 29th to 6th at the finish, just over 9 seconds back of the leader, and less than .06 out of 5th !

Margay Racing sponsored Rotax Junior was 22 entries strong, once again providing the largest Jr group at the event. **STARS National Champion, Columbian First Kart driver Gustavo Yacaman**, was on pole on Saturday, but a DQ in the pre-final pushed him to the back for the start in the Saturday final, where he finished 11th, well back of Florida's Nicolas Silva on a Kart Mini. On Sunday Yacaman redeemed himself with a sweep of the class.

Easy Kart 60 made it's Winter Tour debut, and gave us some of the best, if not the best racing of the event. **Easy Kart 60 National Champion Spencer Pigot** showed us he knows how to win by taking both Finals victories. But not without a serious fight, as Sebastian Ordonez and Daniel Formal kept it exciting with 2 and 3 passes EVERY LAP ! Every race during the event-weekend came down to the last corner of the last lap for these three Florida drivers. Exciting stuff, for sure !!

Other class winners include Floridian Hayden Duerson, on a DL Racing Tony Kart, with wins on both days in **Kart Mini sponsored Junior Shifter**. Duerson was doing double duty, with podiums in both of the Rotax Junior Finals to give him 4 podiums for the event-weekend . Canadian Marc Flood, on a PSL CRG took the win in **PSL Karting sponsored Expert Shifter** on Saturday, with Indiana's Logan Gomez, on an MRP Birel, the winner on Sunday. First Kart driver from Australia Derek Cunningham made the long haul from "Down Under", and made some thunder with a Saturday win in **FK Motorsports sponsored Rotax Senior Heavy** . Floridian Larry Revier, on a Kart Mini, scored his first-ever win during an exciting and event-filled Sunday final. Saturday saw

SKUSA sponsored Masters Shifter won by Floridian Nadir Magsi on a Tony Schroeder Birel, with DC One pilot and fellow Floridian Guido Duerbaum taking the win on Sunday. The "BIG BOYS" of karting in **PSL Karting sponsored Expert Shifter Heavy** saw Floridian Michael Winchester, on a Rysa Racing Birel with the Saturday win, and fellow Floridian Jeff Hudlett on a Shift-Tech DC One take the Sunday win. **Rysa Racing sponsored Stock Moto** made a less-than-stellar debut, with Floridian Leo Maia on a Kart Mini the one entry, but Maia made it interesting by consistently moving his Stocker around the course faster than his combined class participants on highly modified equipment.

In keeping with the "**SERIOUS FUN!**" theme of the Formula Kart Racing Florida Winter Tour, we organized a **Tire-Changing-Competition** on Sunday. Canadian Luke Chiovitti took home the \$100 purse and the accolades of the attendant masses with a new World Record time of 40.10 seconds. Pro Class driver and 2004 F3000 competitor Will Langhorn, back for another run at the Winter Tour, showed he's a winner no matter where he finishes when he handed in the winning ticket for the "100% Raffle", worth \$280 and a set of tires. He then proved what a class act he is by giving it back "so someone who needs it might win it". Floridian Frank Gyuru was the lucky recipient.

Overall an excellent start to the 7th edition of what is becoming a "must-do" part of the North American karting scene. With a record number of entries, multi-national competitors and 3 National Champions in attendance, the "SERIOUS" is definitely here. With great weather, a superb venue, and "it's great to be here" comradery, the "FUN" is too !

KartSport Senior Editor Jeff Franz was in attendance, handing out current issues of KartSport Magazine, and providing a one-of-a-kind KartSport / Winter Tour t-shirt to each of the competitors. Look for complete event coverage in KartSport soon !

Up next : Rounds 3 & 4 at the new Moroso Motorsport Park Karting facility. There will be lot's of "**SERIOUS FUN!**" , on and off the course ! Skip Barber will be running a Drivers School on the road course all weekend, there will be local drags at the drag strip on Friday and Saturday night, and on Saturday night we'll be competing under-the-lights as we move the tire changing contest and the Pro Shifter final into the night ! Don't miss it ! !

For more information about the 2005 Formula Kart Racing Florida Winter Tour, presented by Fittiapaldi Racing, log on to www.floridawintertour.com, or contact Bill Wright at 850-258-0846 or info@formulakart.com