



ROTAX MAX CHALLENGE GRAND FINALS IN PORTUGAL: BATTLE OF THE CHAMPIONS

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At the 2011 Rotax Max Challenge Grand Finals in Al Ain, U.E.A. last November, Ben Cooper, from the United Kingdom, won the title in the Rotax Max class while Pier-Luc Ouellette, from Canada, won the title in the Rotax DD2 class. Cooper secured his participation at the 2012 Grand Finals by winning the Rotax Max class at the Florida Winter Tour last winter in the U.S.A. For the rest of the season, he moved to Canada and raced the whole season in the Rotax DD2 class and battled against the current DD2 champion Pier-Luc Ouellette.

The battle took place in the Eastern Canadian Karting Championship series (ECKC) and at the Canadian National Championship. Many people around the world followed the battle of the champions throughout the summer and especially at the Canadian championship which was broadcasted live over the internet. Cooper won the ECKC series and Ouellette finished second and confirmed his place at the Grand Finals. At the Canadian National, Cooper won as Ouellette, after starting the final race from the last place, finished 4th.

For Robert Gumpenberger/BRP-Powertrain (Rotax), responsible for the Rotax Max Challenge program, the possibility of keeping this battle going at the 2012 Rotax Max Challenge Grand Final next November in Portugal would be a fantastic opportunity to promote the Rotax DD2 class. *“At Rotax, we are very oriented on customer expectations and on the sport and we try to offer to the karting community the best competition we can within our regulation. We decided to use our discretionary power to offer Ben Cooper to move from the Rotax Max class to the Rotax DD2 class and he accepted. Having Cooper and Ouellette, both two times RMC Grand Finals champion, competing in the same class will be something spectacular”.*

Ben Cooper is very happy with this offer. *“Of course, I would like to have the opportunity to become the first driver to win three championships in the Rotax Max class at the Grand Finals but since I discovered the Rotax DD2 class, I really feel as this is the top class to race in. The DD2 is a lot faster than the Max class and when I first drove the DD2 it really did surprise me just how fast it feels. Then when you come into the corner you have 4 wheel braking so you can brake much later and much harder. And with the D3 tyres you have got more grip through the turns. This makes driving the DD2 a hugely enjoyable experience. Due to these characteristics the DD2 is more physical to drive so you have to improve not only as a driver, but physically as well. Then when you come to the racing in DD2 it is close tight and fast racing, where you have to think about all the different aspects of driving such as looking after the tyres over a long race and remembering to change gear when you’re involved in a battle on the track. DD2 for me is a much harder challenge which for me makes it the most enjoyable kart to drive. I understand now why BRP-Powertrain considers this class as their highest class”. I believe in my chances to win the DD2 class at the Grand Finals as I was very competitive against Pier-Luc and Daniel Morad, another former RMCGF DD2 Champion, this summer.*

In preparation of the Rotax Grand Finals, Ben Cooper will participate at the last round of the Euro Challenge this weekend in Salbris, France in the Rotax DD2 class.

The Rotax Max Challenge Grand Finals will take place in Portimão, Portugal, from Nov. 26 to Dec. 1st. For more details visit www.maxchallenge-rotax.com.

Picture: Ben Cooper, 2012 Canadian Rotax DD2 champion (photo credit: Patrick Moreau)
Attachment: Q&A with Ben Cooper