



## Press Release

Wackersdorf, Germany - 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2012

### Series leaders change at Wackersdorf as the ROTAX EURO CHALLENGE gets more competitive

Round 2 of the 2012 ROTAX MAX EURO CHALLENGE held at the 1,275 metre ProKart Raceland circuit at Wackersdorf in Germany was made even more interesting over the weekend as the typically changing Bavarian weather and consequent track conditions fuelled some exciting racing. Now in its ninth season, the international championship organised by RGMCC has new series leaders as the competition grows stronger.

In **Senior Max**, Edward Brand found the pace he needed to take a convincing win in the final as the fastest on track and claim the lead in the European Rotax championship after beginning with a disappointing qualifying session Friday. It was Charlie Eastwood of Ireland who secured pole position by the narrowest of margins (0.001) to start on P1 for all four heats, but Brand who eventually topped the ranking in the 72-kart field at the end of Saturday's racing to start alongside second quickest in the timed practice, Pierce Lehane, all the way from Australia on his Euro debut.

Fellow British driver Harrison Scott was looking confident to take the honours following his impressive 3-wins-from-4 in the heats, plus victory over Brand in the pre-final. Although last year's Euro number 3 was caught up in an incident early in the final, Brand chased Scott down and overtook him just after half-race distance, before stretching his lead to almost one second by the chequered flag. It was another excellent Max final, as it was at the opening round in Belgium, which saw class rookie Philip Morin take 3<sup>rd</sup> and step up for his maiden international senior podium. Bas de Laat was 4<sup>th</sup> and Thomas Benisri 5<sup>th</sup> as they crossed the line to win the close battle for minor placing's inside the first 15.

Another new championship leader arose from the German edition of the 2012 Euro Challenge, when **Junior Max** Dutch driver Janneau Esmeijer made a totally clean sweep of the proceedings across the weekend to equal the points standing of round 1 winner Harry Webb. He took pole by 0.2 seconds over series newcomer Joseph Burton-Harris during the qualifying, after the young Aussie clocked best lap in the first group. Esmeijer then won all three of his heats to start on grid 1 for Sunday's pre-final, where the recently-turned 15-year old took a comfortable win.

The final turned on some great racing for the many spectators who travelled to the Bavarian region for the event. Even though the results don't tell the story as it unfolded, the juniors proved they could also please the crowd. The first five places constantly shuffled until Esmeijer found a small gap to steal the lead from Webb trying to defend his line in the closing laps. He was also overcome by Sam Schippers and tiny rookie Lando Norris, to be relegated back to 4<sup>th</sup> after leading several of the 14 laps. Apart from Webb dropping two positions, the leading pack consisted of the same five drivers in both finals, with Lars Lamborelle in a close finish for 5<sup>th</sup> over Josh white, who now sits 3<sup>rd</sup> overall.

2012 Rotax Winter Cup champ Xen de Ruwe had out-paced series leader Miika Laiho in Friday's qualifying, but then fell out of the top 10 ranking Saturday in the **ROTAX DD2** class following one poor result in the heat races. The Belgian may have appeared to be momentarily out of contention when the likes of Sandro Lukovic new on the scene in the 2-speed gearbox category topped the chart Saturday for pre-final pole, two points ahead of round 1 winner and last season's vice champion Mathias Detige, who won the pre-final with a gap of 1.68 seconds running his new MOJO tyres prior to most others.

However, De Ruwe came home strongly in the final to take 1<sup>st</sup>, saying he took no risks on his way through to lead by lap 9 of 18 and has now moved up to 5<sup>th</sup> in the series points. Detige was clearly 2<sup>nd</sup> ahead of British champ Lucas Orrock finding his previous race form once again. Rotax International Open title holder from 2011, Antoine Lepesqueux, had the advantage of a last lap incident to gain two places for 4<sup>th</sup> when Lukovic attempted to pass Patrick Pearce, which also allowed Laiho to make up lost ground for 5<sup>th</sup>. He's now 4 points behind Detige in the overall classification with two rounds remaining in the championship – Sweden and France.

The best time in qualifying in the **ROTAX DD2 Masters** was set by Russian Igor Mukhin, but his podium hopes disappeared in the latter part of the final while attempting a pass on the Masters class race leader Florent Lambert. At the flag, it was Tamsin Germain who succeeded in winning two from two rounds in 2012 now, taking the honours ahead of Dennis Kroes and fellow Dutchman Bart Nuy in 3<sup>rd</sup>. Lady Luck was with the British driver in Germany to lead the series now by 13 points.

All results from round 2 of the 2012 ROTAX MAX EURO CHALLENGE as well as the current championship standings, latest news and more information can be found on the official homepage of the event - [www.rotaxmaxeurochallenge.com](http://www.rotaxmaxeurochallenge.com)

Jenni Wade  
Media Communications  
Email: [jenni@rgmmc.com](mailto:jenni@rgmmc.com)  
Web: [www.rgmmc.com](http://www.rgmmc.com)

RGMCC Establishment  
An de Halde 3  
Triesen 9495  
Liechtenstein

