**2024 ROTAX GAUTEING STARTS WITH EPIC RACING**

*Multiple winners, fraught dices at Zwartkops’ Round 1*

The Gauteng Rotax Max Challenge karting season got off to a fine start with close racing and some new pecking orders at Zwartkops Intonational Kart Track’s Northern Regions Opener on Saturday. The day also previewed a fine season ahead with all but one class delivering shared heat wins.

Nicolaos Vostanis benefited a slow first heat for DD2 veteran and multiple SA champion

Bradley Liebenberg, to win the opening heat and the day. Liebenberg bounced back to second off second and third heat wins, while Olerato Sekudu came out on top of a seven-way fight with Dusan Radojevic, Karabo Malemela, Jason Coetzee, Sebastian de Villiers, Jorden Moodley and Masters man Bjorn Roos for third.

So fraught was the sixteen-kart Senior Max Action that neither overall winner Kent Swartz nor second man Kian Spies won a heat en route to top honours for the day. Best of the heat winners Muhammad Wally was third after taking the first race, ahead of race 3 winner Ethan Bostander, Mauro Da Luz, Roshaan Goodman, an otherwise troubled second heat winner Jonno Wilson, and Liam Polome.

Kegan Martin won a single high school Junior Max heat to take the day from karting lass Georgia Lenaerts after first and second race winner Hill Luke hit trouble in the final. Another karting girl, Gianna Pascoal was fourth from Junior Max rookies, Reagile Spice Mailula and Rafael Da Silva, Amani Kinyua and Sebastian Dias.

Brodi Dowling was the only triple winner of the day in Primary School Mini Max as he left Ronaldo Koen to fight Durelle Goodman and Tshepang Shisinwana off for second. Rafael De Sousa, Callum du Toit, Zaydaan Hussain and Kiyaan Reddi followed. Matthew Shuttleworth took two under-11 Micro Max wins to take the day from Adriaan Steyn, Luke du Toit, and race 2 winner Luhan de Wet. Retlotleng Thekiso, Alessio Britz, Rendani Netshimboni and Rumaan Hussain were in chase.

Sebastien Shuttleworth took two wins to take the baby Bambino day from Alonzo De Oliveira and Cape interloper, and surprise race 1 winner Radhi Harris. Local quartet Aston Verheul Kiaan Pillay, best of the rookies, Enzokuhle Ncwane, Liam de Beer and Raphael D'Arielli followed in an encouraging 13-baby kart field. Rotax Max South Africa now prepares for the opening round of the all-important South African National, and wildcard African Open at Killarney in Cape town 22-23 March.