**UPCOUNTRY ROOKIES DOMINATE KILLARNEY KARTS**

*Rotax Max season opener delivers surprises in the Cape*

The 2023 Rotax Max karting season kicked off with some dominant displays at a perfect day for racing at the opening round of the Western Province championship at the Killarney Kart Track on Saturday. There were also a few surprise rookie winners among class fields bolstered by upcountry visitors keen to get an eye in for the opening National at the Cape Town racetrack in March.

DD2 was the only class where one driver did not win all three races. Locals, SA champion Sebastian Boyd beat Joseph Oelz two races to one to take the day with twice second, Formula 1600 racer Jason Coetzee third from class rookies Ethan Stier and Matthew Wadeley. Jared Jordan meanwhile did the same two-to-one trick to final heat winner Roy Gruer to take the DD2 Masters day, with Bjorn Roos third from Michael Jordan, a troubled Conor Hughes, Robert Peche and Johan Hamman.

For the rest, it was a day of domination. Home hero and South African Polo Cup champion Charl Visser won all three Senior Max heats, leaving Luca Wehrli to fend Deacon and SupaCup racer Tate Bishop off for second. Cole Hewetson emerged fifth from Formula 1600 pilot Storm Lanfear, Gabriele Gazzilli and Zac Laden

Three visiting Gauteng rookies romped to a triple victories on debut in their new school kid classes. Keagan Martin got his high school Junior Max career off on a high note with a triple win over Jordon Wadeley, Luke Hill, Seb Dias, Keagan Beaumont, Nick Lennox, Sebastiano Human and James Nash. Compatriot Ronaldo Koen left local lads Michael Danks and Aiden Beaumont to fight over the second places in under-13 Mini Max, with Ruan Lewis fourth from Rafael de Sousa, Zac Hindley, Ruvan Maritz and Ashaan Reddi.

A third upcountry interloper, Luhan de Wet took all three Under-11 Micro Max wins from Liam Wharton and Michael O'Mahoney. Jayden van der Merwe followed from Mia Hermanus, Slater Smith, Jake Steyn and Qaanit Doutie. And last but not least, the locals were back on top as Yaqeen Gamieldien dominated baby Bambinos with another triple win on the day. He left Caleb Lingeveldt to fend Radhi Harris, Ebrahim Khalpey and Pretoria visitor Aston Verheul off for second.

The KwaZulu Natal and Gauteng Northern Regions Rotax Max Challenge chases kick off over the next two weeks at iDube and Zwartkops respectively. The National season then starts with a bang at that Killarney double header that twins with the 2024 African Open in March. The winners of those wildcard races and the South African champions in each class at the end of the season then qualify to represent South Africa at the Rotax Max Grand Finals ‘Olympics of Karting’ in Italy in October.