

Barlow stuns on European debut

Jack is Rotax Winter Cup vice-Champion

Junior Rotax graduate Jack Barlow delivered a superb performance on his international debut at the Rotax Winter Cup, held at Campillos in Spain last weekend (13/14 February).

From the outset the Dan Holland Racing driver was amongst the pace-setters, and in a close timed qualifying session recorded the fifth fastest time. In his three following heats, Jack scored two impressive victories and a second place to seal pole position for the first of Sunday's two finals.

He scored a comfortable victory in the pre-final to again give him the advantage for the main race.

At the start of the final, having made a good start from pole position, Jack headed the 34-strong field - but a bold manoeuvre by the recently-crowned World Finals victor, Japan's Ukyo Sasahara - saw him lose the initiative and several places. Now fifth, Jack knew he had to clear the trio ahead of him quickly if he was to peg the gap to the fast-disappearing Sasahara.

For the spectators it made for an enthralling encounter. Within two laps, Jack was back up to third and closing in on the 2nd placed driver. He then spent the next six tours chasing his quarry down, and once he had bridged the gap, a tight, close private battle unfolded. Neither would yield and as the remaining laps wound down, they repeatedly passed and re-passed each other - trading stickers on their sidepods.

"That was a good race," he said afterwards. "Neither of us was giving each other any room and it was a very equal contest."

Jack eventually managed to gain the upper hand, but could do nothing about Sasahara's substantial advantage and took the chequered flag some six seconds adrift. Nevertheless he expressed his satisfaction with his performance: *"I'm delighted to be on the podium at my first attempt in European competition. I've learned a lot and really enjoyed the experience. It has given me a lot of confidence, especially for Florida next weekend (20/21 February)."*

As part of his prize for winning last year's Formula Kart Stars Mini Max title, the Freeminds-backed driver has been invited to take part in a round of the Florida Winter Tour at the Palm Beach International Raceway.

He says: *"I can't wait. I've always wanted to race in America and now I've got the chance! I really hope I can do myself justice and it would be fantastic if I can repeat the form I showed at Campillos. The organisers have already made me feel very welcome and I'm looking forward to representing Formula Kart Stars, Freeminds and of course, myself in the best possible way."*

The event gets underway on Friday (19 February) with free practice. Timed qualifying will take place on Saturday, with the main action taking place on Sunday. You can follow Jack's fortunes by going to www.floridawintertour.com and clicking on the 'RGMMC Live Timing' button.

You can also learn more about Jack and his racing career by visiting www.jackbarlow.co.uk

FOR MORE INFORMATION, INTERVIEWS & IMAGES

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