

Donington Park—Rounds 6 & 7 incorporating European 2 Stroke Cup

After Daniel Jackson's dominance at the last round of the 250GP National Championship at Pembrey, you would have been forgiven for thinking the 2012 Championship was going to go the way of the Team Sigie Yamaha mounted ace.

Rounds 6 & 7 of the Dunlop, Willis Developments and ACU backed Series headed for Donington Park and this one had a twist! This event welcomed the first round of 2012 European 2 Stroke Cup adding some of the best names from mainland Europe to the party.

In front of packed grid Melksham's Darrell Higgins put his Dennis Trollope Yamaha in pole position after a fraught qualifying session that saw the red flags after just 5 minutes. The unfortunate Carl Hudson became a reluctant member of the Craner club with an aggressive highside, ruling him out for the rest of the meeting. Lee Goddard placed the LLG Racing Honda in 2nd, Dan Jackson in 3rd and Newark's Rich Grinling's stunning TZ – A Yamaha in an incredible 4th.

Round 6 Saturday 2nd June

Lap 1 of round 6 was equally as dramatic as qualifying as "never a dull moment Higgins" took advantage of his start position and took off leading the pack through to the ultra fast Starkey's Bridge section where the Yamaha reminded him it was only lap 1, and tried to throw him over the top. The resulting save and grass tracking demonstration was breath taking with a net result of Higgins rejoining almost last as the 35 strong pack streamed past.

Werrington's Bruce Dunn only survived 300 yards as he retired his TZ Yamaha before turn 1. All this fun left Towcester's Ian Gardner out front with Lee Goddard chasing him down from Rich Grinling, then Jon Stamper – making a very welcome comeback from long term illness on board the File Tuning / FRGB Racing TZ, Adam Hoare's Honda having a very strong day and Mersyde's Michael Hose completely line astern. Series leader heading for Donington was Dan Jackson but his poor start left him with an extra ordinary amount of work to do as he picked off the leader board runners.

Quickest of the mainland European runners was Team Promotion Scandinavia AB Aprilia mounted Hasse Gustafson who picked off some regular front runners to move into 4th by lap 4. Disappointingly though the Aprilia retired to pit lane 1 lap later. Stamper was set to pick up the ride of his career holding a brilliant 2nd throughout, until his final lap run through Craner Curves where he lost the front of the TZ crashing out uninjured.



At the flag, Ian Gardner took a fine win on his first outing of the season by a cool 5 seconds from Daniel Jackson's Team Sigie Yamaha. Adam Hoare kept his cool to collect a superb 3rd on his Honda just squeezing out Lee Goddard by a wheel at the line. Next up was a real bun fight for 5th with 4 riders being covered by 1 second. This battle was won by the ultra fast Darrell Higgins now fully recovered from his lap 1 scare in the performance of the day. 6th saw Mark Linton's TZ, Rich Grinling collected 7th and Michael Hose took 8th position. Roy Keen crossed the line in 9th to collect 1st position in the NG Cup and to move into the lead in the title chase. Gloucestershire's John Lewis rounded out the top 10.

A calculated victory for Ian Gardner (4 above) in Saturday's race.

DUNLOP

250GP

ACU National
Championship
and NG Cup

2nd in the NG Cup behind Keen saw Scunthorpe's Simon Hunt with Charles Hardisty in 3rd. With the Aprilia mounted Gustafson out on lap 5, the top overseas

trophy was awarded to Frenchman Christophe LeChef on board his Yamaha.

Round 7 Sunday 3rd June, Wet cold and windy!

With steady rain overnight and all day Sunday, round 7 was very hard to call with many of the front runners having mechanical problems, added to some very strong performances by one or two riders having their first ride of the year.

NG Cup title hunter Gary Vines to date, had an incredible record with 3 wins and a 2nd however, his MPS Heavy Haulage Ltd RS Honda simply would not run right eating it's way through pistons all weekend, making this one to forget for the Colchester rider.

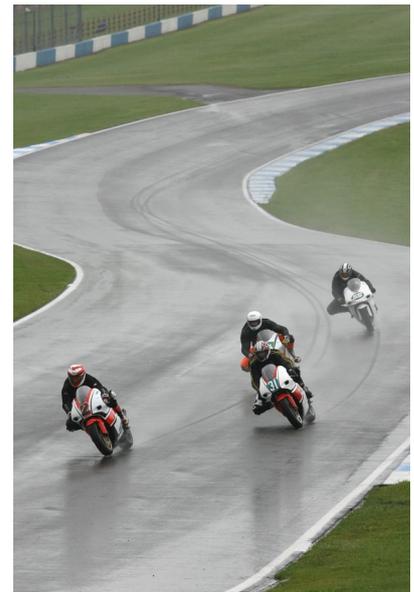
On a high after the previous day's victory, Ian Gardner set off as he left off taking the early initiative, and apparently happy to lead in the atrocious conditions. Mark Linton would not improve on his 6th position in Saturday's outing as he crashed out at Redgate on lap 1, (number 69 below) Next to step off was Lee Goddard on lap 2 at the treacherous Coppice and then Gardner slid out of the lead at Starkey's a lap later. Bruce Dunn took up the lead and having seen Goddard and Gardiner come to grief right in front of him, the warnings were well apparent and heeded. Michael Hose took over the lead on lap 5 and, in a superb display of controlled wet weather riding, stayed out of trouble to the flag, collecting a brilliant win. Adam Hoare came home in 2nd with Dunn in 3rd and a big relief after his round 6 DNF. Darrell Higgins had a strong ride to 4th which turned out to be a good championship pay day as both his closest rivals Goddard and Dan Jackson failed to score, the latter slipping off at McCleans on lap 8.

Southampton's Dave Hapmton took 5th on his J&RB Racing Yamaha. Simon Hunt came home 6th overall which translated into a brilliant win in the Cup. Jon Stamper got the result he was looking for with 7th, especially pleasing after his crash from 2nd a day earlier. 8th was Roy Keen giving him 2nd in the NG Cup, 9th home saw Christophe LeChef who once again collected the award for best over sea's rider after Gustafson crashed out of 5th on lap 6. Completing the top 10 was Mark Olding on his Hi Class Glass Racing TZ Yamaha.

Charles Hardisty collected 3rd in the Cup Championship for the second day running moving him to 3rd in the title hunt.



Linton saved the slide on lap 1, but not the resulting trip into the gravel! Saturday's winner Gardner takes over from Goddard Dunn and the Aprilia of Gustafson.



Through the rain, Dunn leads on lap 8 from Hose, Adam Hoare and Jackson—who crashed out 2 laps later

Dunlop Motorsport kindly support the Performance of the Day award where a rear tyre is awarded to any rider finishing (or not) anywhere but who has put in a performance worthy of recognition. For Saturday's round 6, Darrell Higgins' save from a certain highside at one of the fastest parts of the circuit, followed by his run through the field back to 5th deserved exactly this recognition and reward.

Official Championship photographer and media coverage: EDPphoto.co.uk | press@edpphoto.com

For up-to-date NGRRC results, lap times and race dates please visit www.ngroadracing.org

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For Sunday's very difficult race, where many riders throughout the field came to grief, Abergavenny's Charles Hardisty collected 12th position on the road, his 2nd Cup Podium in as many days after crossing the line in 21st position at the end of lap 1, plus moves to 3rd in the NG Cup title hunt – all under the radar! Keep up the support Mrs Hardisty, Charles is having a very good season and 100% deserves the complimentary rear tyre!

Championship standings after 7 rounds

Jackson 97, Higgins 74, Goddard 69, Hoare 65, Keen 47, Lewis 46, Hudson 45, Snow 44, Vines 40, Hose 33.

Cup Championship standings after 7 rounds

Keen 118, Vines 95, Hardisty 94, Harrison 67, Hunt 45, Lou Goddard 45, Metcalfe 32, Ellis 23, Cox 10, Trattner 10.

European 2 Stroke Cup after 2 rounds

Christophe LeChef 32, Jackson 25, Stamper 25



Mike Hose celebrates victory with his biggest fan at the post race presentation—in the dry!!



With Gary Vines not scoring all weekend, Royston Keen takes over the lead of the NG Cup. Here he leads Gloucestershire's John Lewis out of Goddards in the latter stages of Saturday's race.

Next round Oulton Park 30th June 2012