

ACU 250 CHAMPIONSHIP ROUNDS 8 AND 9 DONINGTON PARK JUL 26 AND 27

Chris Martin (Dave Dean Honda) stretched his run of successive wins in the ACU 250 Championship to seven in rounds 8 and 9 at Donington Park and stretch his lead in the series to 33 over his closest rival, Ant Hodson (FCL Yamaha).

Martin, the 33-year-old Yorkshire man and reigning ACU 250 title holder, topped qualifying, but he was less than a tenth of second faster than Hodson, the 37-year-old Lincolnshire racer and just over a quarter of a second better than Phil Atkinson (Declan's Racing Yamaha).

Martin led race one from start-to-finish, beating Hodson by over seven seconds and setting a new NG Racing 250 lap record.

Atkinson, the 31-year-old South African-born racer, now living in Horley, failed to start after someone forgot to turn on the fuel tap!

He came to a halt halfway round the warm-up lap and could not back to the grid in time.

Bruce Dunn (Yamaha), the 46-year-old road tester and journalist from Peterborough, making his first appearance of the season, was third over the line at the head of a four-rider convoy, who were covered by just over four fifths of a second.

Behind him was Dave Hampton (J&RB Racing Yamaha), the 27-year-old from Southampton, Thomas Lawler (CGTL Life and Pensions Honda), the 39-year old from Naas, County Kildare and Adam Hoare (AMH Rail Services Honda), the 37-year-old from Heanor, Derbyshire.

Dunn injured his shoulder badly in an ACU 250 championship round at Pembrey last September and though he has ridden in a few club meetings since, this was the first real test.

Jonathan Stamper (File Tuning/FRGB Yamaha), the 49-year-old from Egerton, Kent, was sixth home in his first appearance since winning the opening two rounds of the series at Brands Hatch in March.

Gary Vines (MPS Enterprises Yamaha), the 24-year-old from Colchester, was a lonely eighth.

Mark Linton (Corky's Yamaha), the airline pilot was celebrating his 37th birthday on the Sunday, but he did not receive any special presents on his first visit of the season to the series.

He was ninth in race one, chased over the line by impressive Marl Strudwick (Lion Hart Racing Spondon Yamaha).

The 16-year-old from Littlehampton, West Sussex was only a tenth of a second behind Linton.

Paul Metcalfe (Honda), the 47-year-old from the Isle of Man, was 11th, taking maximum points in the NG Cup category, a mere fifth of a second in front of Adrian Morris (J&RB Racing/File Tuning Yamaha), the 47-

year-old from Chester. Close behind him was Rich Grinling (RG Carpentry and Joinery Yamaha), the 41-year-old from Lincoln. Martin won race two, grabbing the lead from Atkinson on the last lap, with a brave move that had him riding over the kerbs. Atkinson was five hundredths of a second down in the sprint to the line. Hodson was leading on the penultimate lap, but had to settle for third place just over half a second behind Martin. Hodgson had the consolation of setting a new 250 National lap record. Hampton was fourth over the line, 14 seconds back, with Lawlor fifth and Hoare sixth. Dunn was forced to pull out when holding sixth place, on lap ten of 14, with a split exhaust. Grinling was another early retirement, when his exhaust system broke. With Andrew Sawford absent after suffering an injury in training before the meeting, Grinling lost a good chance of closing the points' gap on his rival. Darrell Higgins (Dennis Trollope Racing Yamaha), the 56-year-old from Melksham, had a meeting he will soon want to forget. He qualified a disappointing 11th and then in race one had two incidents that conspired to drop him from seventh on the opening lap down to 14th. First he made contact with Stamper and then had a coming-together with Adrian Martin. Higgins was seventh at the start of race two, but then went off the track into the gravel at Coppice. He lost a place, but bounced back to finish seventh just in front of Stamper and Vines.

With arch rival, Andrew Sawford absent after being injured in his physical training, Rich Grinling (RG Carpentry and Joinery Yamaha) would have hoped to close the 59-point gap in the Pre 92 class. He won race one, but the exhaust pipe split in the second, leaving him now third in the points, 34 behind Sawford, with Ste Howard (Howard Racing Yamaha), the 24-year-old from Bursclough, Lancs up to second, after finishing 15th and 14th, 16 points down on the leader. Simon Hunt (Ransby Racing Yamaha), the 41-year-old from Messingham, Lincolnshire and clear leader in NG Cup series, crashed out of race one on the second lap, when holding ninth place.

After having a good qualifying session, where he was tenth fastest, Hunt was disappointed after clipping the kerb at Coppice and falling.

With Hunt out Metcalfe went on to take the 25 points in race one, after finishing 11th overall.

Hunt bounced back in the second race to take 12th position, winning the class, 2.7 seconds ahead of Metcalfe.

Hunt now tops the NG Cup standings on xx points, xx ahead of Metcalfe.

Local racer, Hoare won the Dunlop Rear GP Tyre for his efforts in race one, whilst Atkinson was given the same award for his race two performance.

ACU 250 CHAMPIONSHIP

Chris Martin 175, Ant Hodson 142, Phil Atkinson 120, Dave Hampton 106, Darrell Higgins 97, Andrew Sawford 66, Gary Vines 58, Jonathan Stamper 57, Simon Hunt 52, , Rich Grinling 42, Thomas Lawlor 42, Adam Hoare 40, Paul Metcalfe 31, Carl Hudson 28, Ste Howard 25, Adrian Martin 20, Mark Strudwick 20, Bruce Dunn 16, Tom Snow 16, John Lewis 13, Mark Linton 13, Derek Clark 13, David Ibbotson 11, Adrian Morris 10,, Phill Guillou 9, Lee Goddard 7, Neil Smith 6, Tony Russell 2, Rhys Hardisty 2, Alec Cottam 2, Peter Thorne 1, George Murray 1.

Pre-92

Andrew Sawford 165, Ste Howard 149, Rich Grinling 131, Adrian Morris 51, Tom Snow 40, Tony Russell 36, Rhys Hardisty 16, George Murray 13.

100% Suspension NG Cup

Simon Hunt 175, Paul Metcalfe 125, Neil Smith 16.