

NG Road Racing... Castle Combe Race Report.



Round 3 | Castle Combe | 5th and 6th June 2021

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Day returns to regain the Kings Crown.

Josh and the victorious Dayo Race Team.

The Castle Combe Grand National event is normally a festival of bikes and biking stars, with riders like Freddie Spencer, Guy Martin, John McGuinness, Graham Crosby and Bruce Ansty guesting in recent years. However, with the current restrictions the stars had to be put on hold and the focus was fully on the racing, and in particular the Phoenix Open that would be contested for the King of Combe Trophy.

The battle for that Rodney Gooch King of Combe title was always going to be a fight between two men. Josh Day and Daniel Cooper, both have lifted the title three times. Day in 2017,18 and 19 and Cooper 2015,16 and 2020 making him the current King. Dan had his regular DCM CBR 600 Honda, but Josh had to borrow back his old R1 Yamaha from it's current owner who had made a few modifications to the bike since Josh last raced it including fitting a thumb operated rear brake (that Josh could not get to grips with !!!).



The event was a triple header giving an aggregate winner and each one followed a similar format..... Cooper would make the hole shot on the 600..... Day would out drag the 600 using the R1's extra grunt with Cooper then riding the wheels off the little 600 to cling on. Day despite struggling to master the new rear brake would then take half a second or so out of Cooper on each lap to take all three wins with Cooper keeping the pressure on until the end, meaning Josh regained the coveted title of the King of Combe. Max Symonds took three third placings with Bob Collins, Chris Pope, Dave Mackay and Richard Dodson fighting it out to be the best of the rest.

Day now turns his focus to the Ducati Tri-Options series in an attempt to win that for a third year. Cooper himself a former British champion has his eyes firmly set on taking the NG Open and 600 titles, currently leading both points tables and doing his chances a power of good this weekend with the three runners up spots in the open and three wins in the 600 class over Bradley Richman and Owen Hunt with Lewis Jones and Daniel Nelmes having strong races. Newcomer rider George Edwards impressed many getting quicker all weekend finishing all races in the top ten with a best of sixth on his R6.

Combe can be a difficult circuit to master with its changes in camber and undulations, but when you get it right it feels good. Hence a series of riders taking a hat-trick of wins including Dan Harris (Mini Twin), Ben Harrison (F400), Finn Smart-Weeden (JSS), Josh Day (Powerbike), Daniel Nelmes (700 Streetstock) and Sam Neate (1300 Pre-Injection).

Race Round-up.

With our results round up we will start with the Junior Super Sport where 14-year-old Finn Smart-Weeden dominated proceedings on the KDC Coatings EX400 Kawasaki heading home Jacob Stephenson on each outing. The F400 was a win fest for Ben Harrison who is known to enjoy Combe anyway. He took his BH Racing/Stuart Soanes ZXR to three wins over series leader Tim Bradley. Bradley though, in typical Bradley style despite not taking a win here left with an increased points lead for the season long championship. Shaun Wynne was having a great weekend with two podiums in the first two races but took a heavy tumble at Bybrook in the third coming off second best after a fight with the Recticel. He suffered a suspected broken collarbone..... But still ended up posting Facebook pictures on Sunday night from his hospital bed with that trademark grin whilst under the influence of (medical grade) morphine !!!!

6 wins from 6 starts for Ben Harrison.



Ben Harrison was not content with his dominance in the F400, he notched up all three 500cc wins too on the old ZXR. Despite James Seath not having the best of weekends he battled away for points over both days and came away with an extended series lead on his ZXR..... as we said earlier, Combe takes some learning.

Dan Harris continued his winning ways in the Mini Twins on his HP Racing SV Suzuki, and again as at Donington last time out it was over his brother Richard. The brothers now also sit 1-2 in the championship table. Defending Super Twins champion Paul Wardell headed up the field in their first two races of the weekend on the Bee Lighting ER6 Kawasaki but missed out on making it three wins over Charles Hardisty as his Kawasaki slowed on lap 2 of Sundays final race dropping him right out of contention. His ER6 then chimed back in, and he set about the chase, amazingly getting back to second place but there was no way Hardisty on the Gas Assessment and Training ER6 was going to be caught and took the win.



Local lad Chris Oliver took his Garage Trowbridge R1 to two wins and one second in front of his local supporters but was denied a third by Jon Wright who pipped him on the Controls and Safety Kawasaki by just a bike length at the line for the 1300 Streetstocks. The 700 class had a resurgent Daniel Nelmes on his Paul Saunders R6, determined not to be bested again by Kurtis Butler. Butler has taken five wins in a row and Nelmes wanted to get back on the winning trail. After three hard fought races Nelmes took three wins with Butler getting closer with each race at the unfamiliar circuit to him, however Butler got the honour of setting the fastest lap of the weekend for the small Streetstock machines.

45 | Daniel Nelmes..... Streets ahead

True Heroes teamster Benjamin Falla is enjoying his rides on the 959 Panigale and grabbed victory on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning both times over Owen Hunt, but Hunt knew that a good finish in the third outing would see him top the Sound of Thunder points table and was never headed on his 675 Triumph taking a hard-fought win over Falla and Sam West on the stunning metallic silver liveried Louigi Moto 999 Ducati.

The Powerbikes went as expected with the wild-carding Josh Day on his Dayo Racing R1 taking all three, but Max Symonds rode with his head following Day home each time to extend his series lead. Max's nearest challenger for championship glory is Chris Pope on the AFB R1. Pope loves Combe, but Combe did not love Popey as he had a huge high side coming out of Tower destroying his Yamaha. He raced the teams' spare bike in the final race to grab a few points and came home a respectable sixth as Bob Collins grabbed his second podium of the meeting.

The 700 Pre injections was one class that did not have a single dominant rider and saw the wins shared between Harley Prebble on his Redneck Racing Bandit, Scott McGuire with his SBM CBR 600 and Tom Harrison now riding under the WSC Performance banner on his 600 Honda. However the same certainly could not be said in the 1300cc category as Sam Neate took his stunning RC30 (...yes I'm jealous !) to a string of wins over Phil Webber, Paul Williams and series leader Richard Stather. Stather though left Combe with a very much increased championship lead as his nearest rivals David Fearnley and James McHardy did not click with the Wiltshire circuit finishing down the order in all three races.

125/250GP ACU National Championship.

Local BSB Moto 2 star and former British Moto 3 champion rocked up on the E3 Motorsport KTM RC250 heading home all the 250 2-strokes that regularly fight it out for the national title. Gavin Mills the former 125 National winner now has his TZ250 sorted and took Saturdays win after series leader Phil Atkinson retired with mechanical issues. Mills headed home Nick Sansome and Steven Neate on Saturday, but Neate was in hot form on Sunday taking both races with Sansome, Atkinson and Chris Moore all making visits to the podium.

The 125 series was a battle between team-mates Ant Hodson and Tom Hayward on TSM/MDJ Hondas. Hayward has had the upper hand so far this year, but Hodson has more Combe racing miles under the belt and got the better of his rival in two of the three outings. Sian Brooks posted three more podiums to keep her points tally rolling.

86 | Charlie Nesbitt tucked right it !



Suzuki Bandits and Formula Prostocks.

Formula Prostocks include the Motul Suzuki Bandit challenge, as well as the FP1 / 2 / 3 and 4 for Classic Superbikes, and Battle of the Twins machinery.

Harley Prebble continued his 2021 winning streak to make it nine from nine, but this weekend was not an easy one for the defending champion as Ian Agnew, Gary Cutts, Lee Marks and Dave Crampton really put the pressure on. Ian Agnew was in red hot form and could so easily have taken his maiden win on Sunday belying the fact that he is still a Novice.

Mick Godfrey was the best of the FP1's on his Harris F1, with Sam West topping the FP2's on a 999 Ducati, Tom Vear headed up the FP3's, each of them setting a new class lap record during Sundays events.

To find out more about the Formula Prostock Series: www.formulaprostockracing.co.uk

Bandits waiting to be set loose. (Cutts, Agnew, Prebble)



Ducati Desmo Series.

The Desmo Due Ducati's have two classes, class A for 620cc fuel injected models and the B class for the older 600cc carburettor fed machines.

Scott Wilson and Steven Mason had three close fought affairs in the A class with Mason taking two to Wilson's one. It was a similar story in the B class with current series leader Brian Tipple taking one win, but his nearest rival Floyd Moody took two to close on Tipple in the title chase.

To find out more about the Desmo Due Series: www.ducatisportingclub.com

GP Originals.

The 1970s and early '80s was an exciting time for motorcycle Grand Prix – probably the last time privateers had a genuine chance of mixing it with works bikes. GP Originals presents the sights, sounds, and smells of this Post Classic racing era.

The Series highlights post-classic racing motorcycles such as the ubiquitous Yamaha TZ250 and TZ350 with a wealth of frame-makers, including Maxton and Harris involved. Naturally, the series also includes customer and replica machines that embrace the concept of our Series.

Philip Atkinson and Ant Hart shared the wins in the 350 class. Nigel Palmer was on target to take a hat trick of wins in the 250 but fell at Bybrook whilst leading in the final race letting Mark Linton take his first win of 2021.

To find out more about the GP Originals Series: www.gporiginals.co.uk

Newcomers.

As ever NG give the newcomers to racing their own dedicated races and championships running three categories for the Open, Mini-Twin and 500cc bikes. George Edwards took his R6 Yamaha to victory in the open, whilst Darren O'Leary topped the Mini Twins on his SV with Andrew Glasgow taking honours in the 500 class on his TZ 250 Yamaha.

Castle Combe Performance Award Winners.

At every NG round one lucky rider is selected for the Wiz Sliders Performance award, but for Combe former racer and sponsor Clive Flood along with his wife Pam also put up some special performance awards, as did this year True Heroes Team rider and NG regular Dave Mackay. This meant we could reward three riders who stood out on track Thank you for your support.

This meetings winners were:

Finn Smart-Weeden

Daniel Nelmes

Ian Agnew

74 | Finn Smart-Weeden. 14 years old and fast as !



Images courtesy | Hairy Beast Pix | www.hairybeastpix.co.uk

Next Round: Cadwell Park | 17th and 18th July.