

HKRC 2010 Championships Round 4 – 9th May 2010

Sunday dawned bright and breezy for HKRC's May meeting. A full day's racing was guaranteed, the race programme enhanced by the visit of drivers in the 210 Challenge. Once again, the timed format of the meeting gave plenty of track time with ten lap heats and seventeen lap finals the typical order of the day. The junior classes in particular provided some amazingly close finishes.

Cadet Libre and Honda Cadet: In Cadet Libre Ross Gunn led Connor Jupp, Lewis Taylor, and Ellis Hanks for the first couple of laps. Third time round at the Bus Stop, Jupp went for the lead and Gunn trying to hang on, ended up on the grass which dropped him back to fourth. Taylor moved ahead of Hanks a lap later and sat in Jupp's wheel tracks. Gunn was by now recovering his composure taking third from Hanks and then going past Taylor to challenge for the lead again. With this leading trio circulating nose to tail, any one of them could win it and with three laps to go Taylor was back in second place. In a frantic dash to the line, Taylor won by a nosecone from Jupp who was a similar distance ahead of Gunn! William Pettit won the novice trophy. Honda saw a race long battle between Aaron Drury and Harrison Huggan settled on the line in Drury's favour by one hundredth of a second! Novice Rory Hudson drove a great race, but was just pipped to third place by James Hillery.

Junior TKM: Another closely contested race saw Alex Nuttall leading Tom Seddon and Liam Murray off the line. Murray was quickly past Seddon and close to the leader's rear bumper. Meanwhile Jack Partridge was making rapid progress through the field and by half distance was closing in on the leading pair. Sweeping past both Murray and Nuttall on successive laps, Partridge went on to win. Nuttall and Murray continued their battle right to the line with Nuttall just making it home in second. Matthew Hayes won the Novice trophy.

Mini Max: Luke Hughes led all but two laps of the Mini Max final, one of which proved to be very important. James Webb was initially second, but he was overtaken by Jai Nijjar and Brett Ward on lap two. Hughes now led by a narrow margin from Nijjar, Ward and Webb with Harry Smith and Ben Matthews close behind. By half distance, Ward had had enough of watching the karts in front of him and made his move for the lead. This gave Hughes a wakeup call and he was back in front a lap later. Webb had now got the wind behind him and demoted Nijjar to third. Going onto the last lap Webb took second from Ward at Stow and then got a great run to the line to snatch the win from Hughes by one hundredth of a second.

Junior Rotax: Liam Ferguson and Jean-Luke Laister beat Bobby Neil to the first corner, but Neil was soon into second and in a couple more laps took over at the front. Ferguson wasn't going to take this lying down and he tried to squeeze his kart down the inside at the Bus Stop. Neil kept the power on leaving Ferguson on the outside of the right hander and suddenly heading to the grass behind the marshal's post. He returned to the track in sixth. Now Neil had to work to keep Laister behind him. With three laps left, Laister made a late move at Stow. Neil tried to fend him off, but a puncture put him out of the race. Chad Shiner was now closing on the leader, and a huge effort on the drag to the line just failed to pay off, Laister winning by six hundredths of a second. Ferguson recovered to take the last podium position. Ashley Wilson won the Novice trophy.

210 Challenge: Lee Plain had been unstoppable all day and his dominance continued in the final. Leading from start to finish, he cruised home with a nine second winning margin. Dan Bury had made a great start to run second, but his race came to a premature end early on. Neil Hancock made it past Neil Callaghan by lap four to claim the runner up spot with Matt Cardwell moving into third.

Senior Rotax: Craig Hook and Adam Shepherd emerged ahead of the field as the front row men lost out on the run down to Stow. Andy Foskett, James Corpe and Peter Masters were also in the picture, pitching into the top five. From his mid-grid start, Andrew Winter emerged as a force to be reckoned with. He gradually picked off the top places moving into the lead with one lap to go. Hook had to settle for second and Corpe ended up third. Thomas Lamb recovered from a setback on lap eight to snatch the Novice trophy from Justin Harwood's grasp by seven hundredths of a second!

Rotax 177 Masters: Steve Sawford was straight into a lead that no one was able to take off him. Martin Reader did his best to press Sawford into a mistake, but the leader was always able to respond. Martin Gadd kept Wayne Smithers behind him for the first half of the race, but had to relinquish the place on lap nine. However with Reader excluded during post-race scrutineering, Smithers was promoted to second and Gadd to third. Nigel Geraghty won the Novice trophy.

Gearbox 125 and 250: Chris Thexton was first away in 125, but polesitter Stephen Lane made a poor start and saw several karts go past him. Lane's race then came to an abrupt end at Hanger without him completing a single lap. This was singularly disappointing as he was the only one who looked capable of giving Richard Palmer a run for his money. Palmer was duly soon into the lead and his main problem from thereon was dealing with backmarkers. After his fast start, Thexton had an easy run to second, whilst Dane Smith got things together as the race progressed and made it past Andrew Brunton to take third. In the 250 class, Adam Tanner looked set to romp away, but he came to a halt on lap twelve leaving Ron Stamp to inherit the win. Stamp lapped the whole of the 250 field such was his pace, with Nicholas Flint the best of the rest followed by Vernon Whitaker.

Rotax 177 and TKM Extreme: In 177, Lee Torrie set out on what looked set to be another dominating performance, but Andrew Gosling had different ideas and having passed Matt Barnes was soon challenging for the lead. Success was achieved at half distance and despite Torrie's best efforts to reverse the positions; Gosling was first over the line for a well deserved win. Scott Clee dropped down the order on lap one, but worked his way back to finish third. Guy Bowden took the Novice trophy. TKM Extreme was an unusually processional affair. Sam Grogan was seemingly having an off day and he retired just after half distance. Michael Cornell was already well ahead by this time, so Shaun Abbott had to be content with second and novice John Stafford finished third.

Results round up	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	Novice
Cadet Libre	Lewis Taylor	Connor Jupp	Ross Gunn	William Pettit [16 th]
Honda Cadet	Aaron Drury	Harrison Huggan	James Hillery	Rory Hudson [4 th]
Junior TKM	Jack Partridge	Alex Nuttall	Liam Murray	Matthew Hayes [13 th]
Mini Max	James Webb	Luke Hughes	Brett Ward	-
Junior Rotax	Jean Luke Laister	Chad Shiner	Liam Ferguson	Ashley Wilson [12 th]
210 Challenge	Lee Plain	Neil Hancock	Matt Cardwell	-
Senior Rotax	Andrew Winter	Craig Hook	James Corpe	Thomas Lamb [19 th]
Rotax 177 Masters	Steve Sawford	Wayne Smithers	Martin Gadd	Brad Strahm [11 th]
125	Richard Palmer	Chris Thexton	Dane Smith	-
250	Ron Stamp	Nicholas Flint	Vernon Whitaker	-
Rotax 177	Andrew Gosling	Lee Torrie	Scott Clee	Guy Bowden [12 th]
TKM Extreme	Michael Cornell	Shaun Abbott	John Stafford	John Stafford [3 rd]