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SUPERKARTS! USA WELCOMES 2018 PRO TOUR CHAMPIONS

Ninth season crowns nine champions in IAME and Honda categories

TEMECULA, CA (October 4, 2018) – Superkarts! USA completed its ninth season of the SKUSA Pro Tour this August. The three-event, six-round championship program traveled from the southeast to the southwest before finishing in the midwest to decide the nine series champions in the IAME and Honda categories. Those drivers who were able to achieve podium finishes throughout the season, earn enough points to be crowned champion or finish the season among the top-three were all able to grab a portion of the near \$100,000 prize package for the 2018-2019 seasons.

Beginning in March, the WinterNationals kicked off the 2018 season at NOLA Motorsports Park in New Orleans. The Phoenix Kart Racing Association then welcomed the SKUSA Pro Tour for the SpringNationals once again in May. The 2018 championship chases were then decided at the New Castle Motorsports Park for the SummerNationals in Indiana in August.

“It has been a busy and exciting 2018 season,” stated Superkarts! USA owner Tom Kutscher. “We began the year with our inaugural SKUSA Winter Series, helping to motivate racers for the SKUSA Pro Tour. Our second season of holding three events for the SKUSA Pro Tour was a success, and I can’t thank the three facilities enough for their support and effort. The racing continues to become more and more competitive, with new names and familiar faces mixing it up each and every on-track session. I’d like to congratulate the drivers and teams who earned the 2018 SKUSA Pro Tour championships.”

The 2018 SKUSA Pro Tour champions and top-three finishers will be celebrated at the Awards Ceremony. The event will take place during the SKUSA SuperNationals 22, scheduled for 8:30pm on November 14, 2018 inside the Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino. The ceremony is open to all drivers, mechanics, teams and family members to celebrate the 27 drivers who earned hardware for the 2018 season – and additional benefits rolling into the 2019 season. The late start to the ceremony is to allow everyone time to exit the paddock from the first day of practice at the SuperNats, and for attendees to make their own dinner plans before arriving. SKUSA is asking those receiving awards to come ‘dressed to impress’ for the ceremony photo sessions to take place that evening.

Honda Performance Development is again stepping up to offer HPD Bucks to the top 3 drivers in all 4 of the Stock Honda categories for this year's Pro Tour, totaling \$1,200. In addition, they are giving away an EU1000 generator to the S4 Master and Super Master champs at the awards ceremony in Vegas.



The IAME USA prize package for the SKUSA Pro Tour is also a generous one. Drivers in X30 Senior, X30 Junior, X30 Master and Mini Swift competed to win the chance to represent Superkarts! USA at this year's IAME International Final in Le Mans, France on October 8-14. The prize package for each of these champions includes funding for an arrive-and-drive team of their choice, as well as a custom-made Team SKUSA/IAME USA suit.

Superkarts! USA stepped up as well for the headline divisions – S1 and X30 Senior. Each division competes on the year for a \$6,000 cash purse, with both champions taking home a \$3,000 payday. Vice-champion earns a \$2,000 check with third place in the championship receiving \$1,000.

The main prize every driver fights for at the SKUSA Pro Tour is to win the title in their respective division. With that, Superkarts! USA then welcomes these drivers into the SKUSA Circle of Champions program. This entitles 2018 SKUSA Pro Tour champions, along with running the SKUSA #1 plate, to complimentary entries, race tires, fuel and oil for the entire 2019 Pro Tour season, including the SKUSA SuperNationals. The SKUSA Circle of Champions for 2019 is worth over \$4,000 to each champion.

For a third straight year, Ryan Norberg will be crowned champion in the X30 Senior division. The season began on a sour note at the WinterNationals, with Norberg recording his first DNF in a Final since the 2016 SpringNationals. He bounced back for a top-five the following day before earning his third straight victory at the SpringNationals event. A third-place the following day put him back into the championship chase. Norberg earned another runner-up finish on Day 1 of the SummerNationals and locked up the third-straight title with a top-10 performance on Sunday. Canadian Samuel Lupien earned the SKUSA #2 plate for the 2019 season, having his best year on the SKUSA Pro Tour in 2018. Lupien stood on the podium three times, once at each event, with a runner-up at the SummerNationals helping to claim the second spot in the standings. SpringNationals winner Dante Yu completed his best SKUSA Pro Tour campaign to finish the year in third. While the victory in Phoenix was his lone podium of the season, it included a total of five top-10 finishes.

AJ Myers became the eighth different champion in the S1 Pro Stock Honda category in the series' nine-year history. Myers began the season as the championship leader, thanks to his victory and runner-up at the WinterNationals. A disappointing SpringNationals dropped him from the lead, but

AJ remained in the hunt. He took the challenge of performing better than his two title contenders on Saturday of the SummerNationals, placing runner-up. Myers then put a stamp on the championship trophy with a perfect sweep of Round Six on Sunday to claim the title. SpringNationals winner Kyle Wick ended his rookie campaign with a total of three podiums, including the final round to grab the SKUSA #2 plate for 2019. Last year's vice-champion Billy Musgrave began the season with two podium finishes at NOLA and entered the SummerNationals as the point leader. After placing fourth on Saturday, Musgrave was seventh in the final round, dropping him to third in the final standings.

It was a podium-perfect season for Pedro Lopes in the S2 Semi-Pro Stock Honda class. The 15-year-old Brazilian shifterkart rookie opened up the SKUSA Pro Tour with four straight victories, including two perfect scores. Lopes ended the season with two third-place finishes for six-straight podium results to claim his first SKUSA Pro Tour championship. Blair Hosie had six top-five results of his own to claim the vice-champion position. Hosie came on late in the year, standing on the podium in the last three rounds, including his first career victory at the SummerNationals. Fellow Texan Michael Ilavia won the battle for the third-spot on the championship podium. Ilavia had three top-five results, one of which was runner-up to Lopes at the SpringNationals on Saturday.

Brazil claimed two championships on the year, thanks to the performance of Leonardo Nienkotter in X30 Master. The three-time SKUSA SuperNationals winner made his first full campaign of the SKUSA Pro Tour this year. The fight for the title went down to the wire between he and fellow countryman Paulo Lopes. Nienkotter started out the season with a DNF in Round One before bouncing back to win the following day. Lopes stood on the podium both days in NOLA, leaving as the point leader. He continued that streak, winning Round Three in Phoenix and placing runner-up, while Nienkotter was one spot behind him each day. Nienkotter, however, gained more points over the weekend thanks to his fast times in each qualifying session and winning both Prelims. This set up for a fight to the end. Nienkotter stepped up to the challenge, winning both Finals at the SummerNationals to claim his first SKUSA Pro Tour title. Lopes ended up second in the standings, unable to podium at New Castle. Nevada's Jess Peterson completed his first full season on the SKUSA Pro Tour, earning four podium finishes on the year. His best result was winning the opener at the WinterNationals and finishing with two runner-up results at the SummerNationals to claim the SKUSA #3 plate.

History was made in the S4 Master Stock Honda division, with Jordon Musser joining Ryan Norberg as the only two drivers to win three SKUSA Pro Tour championships. Musser defended his title from last year, earning the 2018 crown and adding it to his first championship from 2013. Three victories, including a sweep of the SpringNationals, helped put Musser back on top of the championship podium. 2016 champion Ryan Kinnear kept Musser on his toes all season. Kinnear won at the WinterNationals and the final round at the SummerNationals, placing runner-up in the four other main events on the year to finish and SKUSA #2 plate for a second-straight year. Kiwi native Nathan Stewart grabbed the third spot in the final standings, riding on his five top-five results that included two podiums.

It was a dominating season for veteran racer John Crow, earning his first career SKUSA Pro Tour championship in the S4 Super Master Stock Honda class. Crow won five of the six main events on the season, including four sweeps of the six rounds of competition. Mike Jones was the only driver to beat Crow in a main event, earning the vice-champion position for the second-straight year. Placing third in the standings was Rod Clinard. The fellow Texan finished 2016 and 2017 in the same position, this time thanks to four podium finishes.

Joining the long list of championship drivers in the X30 Junior division is Arias Deukmedjian. The driver from Florida put himself in position to win the 2018 title with a double-win performance at the SpringNationals. Leading the point standings, Deukmedjian placed fourth on Day 1 of the SummerNationals to earn more points than any other title contender, essentially locking up the championship. Arias followed it up with another fourth-place finish to end the season as the ninth different driver to earn the X30 Junior title. WinterNationals winner Matheus Morgatto finished the

year in second, ending the year with his second podium finish of the season at the finale. The Round Six victor was fellow Floridian Jeremy Fairbairn. Recording his first career SKUSA Pro Tour victory, Fairbairn put himself third in the overall standings.

Carson Morgan matched the mark set by inaugural SKUSA Pro Tour champion Colton Herta. Duplicating that of the newest IndyCar Series driver, Morgan earned his second-straight crown in the Mini Swift category. The 2018 season was a battle for Morgan, who started out the year with three podiums, including two victories. A hard flip at the SpringNationals resulted in a concussion and broken nose. He recovered well and came back fighting. With a fifth-place result on Saturday at the SummerNationals, Morgan stamped his name on the championship trophy with a victory on Sunday. Jace Park had a breakthrough weekend at the SummerNationals. His first career victory on Saturday was followed up with a runner-up to Morgan on Sunday, promoting him to the second spot in the championship. Inaugural Micro Swift champion Kai Sorensen recovered from two DNF finishes at the WinterNationals to land on the podium in the last four main events. Producing a second and third at both SpringNationals and SummerNationals put the Californian third in the point standings.

The Micro Swift title chase went down to the wire. Three drivers stood out all season long, with Max Garcia earning his first career victory at the finale to clinch the SKUSA Pro Tour title. Garcia came into the SummerNationals battling Ben Maier and Caleb Gafrarar for the top spot in the standings. Both had two wins, one each at the WinterNationals and SpringNationals. Garcia kept pace with four podium results and gaining the bonus points. Gafrarar struck first, winning Saturday at New Castle while Garcia recorded his first DNF of the season. The title chase came down to the Final on Sunday, where Maier was mathematically out and Garcia needed to win. The trio were among those in the lead group when Gafrarar retired early. Then Garcia emerged with the lead when Maier had trouble of his own. Going on to win, Max scored his first career SKUSA Pro Tour championship, with Gafrarar second and Maier third.

Once again, the SKUSA SuperNationals 22 is returning to the Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino, scheduled for November 14-18 in Las Vegas. The special hotel room block for the SKUSA SuperNats applies to rooms booked between November 5 and November 22. The rate for Sunday through Thursday is \$59, with Friday and Saturday priced at \$109. A resort fee of \$32 includes in-room WiFi for two devices, access to the fitness room, and all local calls. Parking at the Rio is FREE to all guests. Head to the [Rio Reservation Page](#) to secure your rooms for the Superkarts! USA SuperNationals 22. Deadline to reserve to lock in these rates is **October 6**.

Registration to compete at the SKUSA SuperNationals 22 remains open until midnight on Monday, October 29 at the [SKUSA MotorsportReg page](#) – unless your class caps out first!

For more information on anything related to Superkarts! USA, please visit the website – www.superkartsusa.com and be sure to follow the Superkarts! USA [Facebook](#) page, [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts.

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About Superkarts! USA:

Established in 1995, Superkarts! USA is dedicated to shifterkart and TaG racing, and is the leader in the field, promoting four regional racing series. Racing programs are currently running in California, Canada, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Louisiana, Nevada, Oregon, Texas and Washington, in cooperation and support from official tire supplier MG Tires and the Evinco line of race tires. In 2018, the organization will be promoting the ninth edition of the SKUSA Pro Tour, which features the WinterNationals, SpringNationals and SummerNationals. All of it leads up to the 22nd running of the annual SKUSA SuperNationals – the biggest kart race in the world – held every November in Las Vegas, NV. For more information on SKUSA, please visit www.superkartsusa.com.