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CALIFORNIA PROKART CHALLENGE OPENS 2023 SEASON AT BUTTONWILLOW

First regional victories on the season for nine drivers following two days of action

TEMECULA, CA (March 17, 2023) – The opening weekend for the 2023 California ProKart Challenge took place over March 11-12 at the Buttonwillow Raceway Park. Nearly 100 competitors participated on the weekend at the California facility with two full days of action for the first event of the six-round championship program. The 7/10-mile circuit in the counter-clockwise direction welcomed nine drivers earning their first victories on the season at the Superkarts! USA regional program.

The largest category of the weekend was the HRT Driver Development KA100 Senior class at 26 drivers. Chase Hand, making his first start in the category, set the quick time in qualifying to clear the field by over two tenths of a second. Hand led the field to the green flag for the Prefinal, but then spun around during the opening circuit and fell back to the tail of the field. That allowed Ethan Lampe to lead all 12 laps of the Prefinal, edging out Texan John Burke for the win. Burke, Lampe and Senior rookie Stephen Eisert all took a turn at the lead in the first four laps of the Final. By lap 5, Burke secured the top spot and led the remainder of the 22-lap race to secure his first series victory. Hand, who drove up to 10th in the Prefinal with the fast laps of the race, did a similar feat in the Final. With the quickest laps of the Final, Hand improved up to second to land on the podium ahead of Lampe. Ayden Aquino improved four spots to fourth, with Eisert slipping back to fifth at the checkered flag.

Defending champion Keagan Kaminski in the Speedsense Motorsports KA100 Junior class won the series finale in 2022, his only win on the season. Kaminski extended the win streak to two, opening the year with a victory in Buttonwillow. Shea Aldrich earned fast time in qualifying with a 52.308-lap, while Kaminski was eighth on the board. Aldrich led the opening seven laps of the Prefinal until challenged by Payton Westcott. That fighting allowed Kaminski, who was up to fourth, to move up further, and two laps later into the lead. Kaminski went on to win the Prefinal ahead of Westcott. During the first half of the Final, Westcott led the way before Kaminski took back the top spot. From there, Kaminski stretched out to a near three second advantage for the victory. Westcott fell to third behind Ryan Giannetta. However, Giannetta was penalized three seconds for contact, which moved Westcott to second and Nico Sarphati to the podium in third. Giannetta was

classified fourth, with Aldrich completing the top-five.

The Factory Karts Pro Shifter division welcomed 10 drivers for the opening round. Multi-time series champion and defending title winner Billy Musgrave led the way for much of the day. Musgrave set fast time in qualifying and drove away to the win in the Prefinal. The main event came down to the final circuit, with Musgrave leading the first 21 laps until a mechanical issue hampered his pace coming to the checkered flag. That allowed Keawn Tandon to slip past and secure the victory. Musgrave's gap allowed him to literally push his kart across the line to finish second. TJ Madonna finished on the podium in third, with Luis Quinones and Brian Keck completing the top-five. Cody Hodgson ran uncontested in the Open Shifter category, while David de la Torre was solo in the Master Shifter division.

Ronnie Swaim was the only driver on the weekend to sweep the event, finishing first in every session for the Empire Karts X30 Master class. Swaim cleared the six-driver field by over two tenths in qualifying, then leading all 12 laps of the Prefinal. He completed the perfect score by showing the way for all 22 circuits in the Final while recording the fast lap bonus. Terry Giffen drove to the second spot, with Scott Nealon beating out defending class champion Robert Switzler for the final step on the podium. Arman Cornell completed the top-five.

The Nash Motorsportz KA100 Master class welcomed a first time winner on the season. Ronnie Swaim, running double duty, set the quick time in qualifying, faster by over a half second than the other drivers in the field. Swaim led only the opening circuit of the Prefinal, as Matthew Ostiguy took control for the win. Ostiguy would go on to lead all 22 laps of the Final to record his first series victory. Swaim settled for second, with defending champion Brian Phillipson in the third position. Ron Schoonover and Craig Vasquez finished fourth and fifth.

A total of 18 drivers took part in the opening round for the Superspeed Bearings Mini Swift class. Last year's Micro Swift champion Troy Ferguson began his Mini campaign with fast lap in qualifying to lead the field to the green flag for the Prefinal. Ferguson fell back to third in the Prefinal as McLaren Carroll took the top spot for the race win. Carroll then went unchallenged to lead all 20 laps for his first series victory, crossing the line two-seconds ahead of Ferguson. Matthew Cagle started second and slipped to third, with Tyren Scott in fourth and Braydon Wagner up to fifth from the eighth starting position.

The P1 Racing Engines Micro Swift category featured new names at the top of the time sheets. Byron Borneman earned his first top qualifier honors as his fast time edged out Drew Jensen by 59 thousandths. It was Jensen that took the checkered flag first in the Prefinal, leading most of the 10-lap race. In the Final, Jensen showed the way during first 16 laps before Aidan Go came up from starting third to take over. It was Aidan that led the rest of the way, securing his first series victory. Jensen was a close second, with Borneman finishing on the podium in third. Jett Destito and Nathan Ramirez rounded out the top-five.

The California ProKart Challenge returns to the Buttonwillow Raceway Park on May 6-7, running in the opposite direction for the second event of the 2023 season. 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 single-speed racing, and is the leader in the field, promoting three regional racing series and two national racing series. Racing programs taking place in 2023 include California, Florida, Indiana, Texas, Utah and Mexico, in cooperation and support from official tire supplier MG Tires and the Evinco line of race tires. The organization is hosting the 14th edition of the SKUSA Pro Tour with six rounds over three events racing coast-to-coast. SKUSA is set for the return of the SuperNationals, the largest kart race in the

world, with the 26th edition to be held in Las Vegas, NV. For more information on SKUSA, please visit www.superkartsusa.com.
