



Many positive signs for the 2024 opening of the international reference series

112 drivers in OK-Junior and 81 in OK, making a total of 193, took part in the first of the five events of the Champions of the Future Euro Series 2024 in Valencia. With two weeks to go before the FIA European Karting Championship, which will also be held in Spain on the Lucas Guerrero circuit, the drivers and teams gathered a great deal of information in a variety of weather conditions, as rain followed sunshine on the day of the Finals. The RGMMC group introduced a number of new features that were much appreciated by the competitors. In sporting terms, the show was particularly intense over the three days.

Ireland's Fionn McLaughlin in the OK class and Dutchman Rocco Coronel in the OK-Junior class finally made the difference in this high-level event.

Expert organisation from RGMCC

Drawing on its long experience as a promoter, the RGMCC group has once again introduced innovations to ensure that the Champions of the Future Euro Series continues to be an international event not to be missed. In addition to the new graphic presentation for the live TV coverage, the streaming provides important information for better coverage of the racing, which benefits from numerous replays to immediately review the most significant actions.

Race Control has been equipped with additional cameras, of which there were 40 in Valencia, giving the judges of fact the means to make the racing even fairer. In addition to the series partners already present in 2023, such as Minerva's Virtual Academy, MOM, P1 Fuels, Sports TV, Pixelcom and Unipro, new agreements have been signed with OMP, Bell, ZN, Racing Spirit, B&B and STX Motorhomes.

The drivers were able to learn about the Maxxis tyres in the option and prime versions. The Asian tyre manufacturer had a team on hand to answer questions from drivers and teams. In both dry and wet conditions, the Maxxis tyres proved very popular.

OK: Fionn McLaughlin dominant in the Final

From Qualifying to the podium, a lot happened. A number of youngsters from the OK-Junior class immediately showed that they were capable of fighting for victory, including Britain's Zac Drummond (Parolin Motorsport), who took pole position, Belgium's Thibaut Ramaekers (VDK Racing) and Portugal's Noah Monteiro (KR Motorsport). Drummond won four of the Qualifying Heats, but Brazilian Gabriel Gomez (CRG Racing Team) did even better with five wins out of five! Ramaekers won twice, with the other heats going to Anatoly Khavalkin (Parolin Motorsport), Lewis Wherrell (Forza Racing), Dmitry Matveev (KR Motorsport) and Monteiro.

Using rain tyres on a track that was drying out, Gomez held his own in Super Heat 1, while slicks returned for Super Heat 2, won by Ireland's Fionn McLaughlin. But conditions changed again in the Final, with the return of relatively heavy rain. Drummond got off to the best start from the second row and led the first two laps, before his advantage was overturned by Joe Turney (KR Motorsport), who returned to the front as the competition wore on.

The battle was just beginning, with several other drivers highly competitive in these low grip conditions, including Gomez, McLaughlin, as well as Ukrainian Oleksandr Bondarev (Prema Racing) and Belgian Ean Eyckmans (Birel ART Racing). After a series of passes, McLaughlin made the difference and crossed the finish line victorious. Turney crashed out and retired shortly before the finish. A number of penalties altered the Final classification slightly. Initially in 2nd place, Gomez swapped places with Bondarev, but saved his place on the podium ahead of Khavalkin, Eyckmans and Drummond. Great Britain's Noah Wolfe (VAR by

Birel) made a superb comeback from 21st to 7th. Czech driver Jindrich Pesl (ASD Monster Factory Team) took 8th place ahead of Australian Xavier George Avramides (Tony Kart Racing Team).

OK-Junior: Rocco Coronel dominates in the rain

The 2023 World Champion in the category, Belgian Dries Van Langendonck (Forza Racing) started his meeting from pole position and went on to take six wins in seven heats. No fewer than 10 other drivers managed to win at least once: Austrian Niklas Schaufler (DPK Racing),

Dutchman Rocco Coronel (Victory Lane), Briton Kenzo Craigie (Prema Racing), Spaniard Christian Costoya (Parolin Motorsport), Italian Filippo Sala (RFM), Germany's Arjen Kraeling (KR Motorsport), Nikita Nikishov (VDK Racing), Great Britain's Archie Lovatt (Forza Racing), Finland's Sebastian Lehtimaki (Tony Kart Racing Team) and Great Britain's Henry Domain (Energy Corse). In other words, there were plenty of podium contenders in Valencia!

The victories of Costoya on rain tyres and Schaufler on slicks in the Super Heats did not fundamentally change the starting grid for the Final. It began with an intense duel between Schaufler and Van Langendonck, while Frenchman Thomas Pradier (Victory Lane) had to retire from 6th position. Coronel was soon on the attack and after passing the Belgian for the first time, he got the better of the Austrian and went on to claim a deserved victory in these conditions. By finishing 2nd and 3rd respectively, Schaufler and Van Langendonck put in a good performance in the Championship.

In the chasing pack, positions changed frequently. Only 41st at the end of the Qualifying sessions, Dutchman Dean Hoogendoorn (AKM Motorsport) could be proud of his comeback in 4th position ahead of Craigie, one of the revelations of the event. 82nd on Friday and 31st after the heats, Briton Kit Belofsky (Fusion Motorsport) achieved the feat of moving up to 6th. While some of the favourites dropped out, such as Costoya and Italy's Iacopo Martinese (KR Motorsport), Poland's Borys Lyzen (Sodikart) moved up 28 places to 8th behind Nikishov. Sala and Lehtimaki completed the top 10.



Live Streaming, Highlights, and media galleries

The stream was available not only on our own channels but also on motorsports TV thanks to the deal made in late 2021.

All races, as well as interviews and highlights, are available as always on the RGMMC Productions Youtube channel. More information and complete results can always be found on the Champions of the Future Series official website www.championskarting.com, the RGMMC Group website www.rgmmc.com, and the Champions of the Future Facebook and Instagram pages with the handle @championskarting.

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