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WARD WINS SECOND TITLE

World Under 21 Champion, Darcy Ward, from Queensland, won the SportZprint 2010 Australian Under 21 Speedway Championship at Olympic Park last Saturday night, his second consecutive Title. Finishing second was Justin Sedgmen, who has capped off a wonderful first twelve months as a senior rider.

Ward did not win the Championship easily and was only the third qualifier to the event final.

Leading the points score after the twenty heats of the event was young NSW rider, Sam Masters, who scored fourteen points for the night, only dropping one point to eventual third place man, Josh Auty from England. Masters worked the track well, using his good starting and good corner speed to advantage.

Second place for both the Title and after the heats, where he gathered a solid twelve points, was local star, Justin Sedgmen, who has had a brilliant three weeks of consistent racing. He was always putting himself in key positions and doing exactly what was required to finish meetings off as well as he had started them. Like Masters, Sedgmen kept his focus on the meeting all night and showed maturity beyond his years, seeming not get involved in the "who har" which occupied the minds of some of the other riders early in the meeting.

Ward lairized in one heat, when against weaker opposition and fell when going into turn three after a mono wheel down the back straight. Zero points for that exclusion saw the young man pay the remainder of the competitors a little more respect for the rest of the meeting and he worked to gather enough points to make it into the main final.

A solid mixture of ego, gamesmanship and nerves had many of the riders in the wrong frame of mind at the start of the Championship, but after the second round of heats, all riders knuckled down and the meeting became one of high quality with some excellent racing being witnessed.

The riders in the "B" final, which were for places four through to seven had the major prize as a last selection into the main event. This event turned out to be a cracker, as the rider who had impressed most spectators, a very young Queensland, with a Dirt Track background, Tyson Nelson has been like lightning from the gate and had used his good starts to accumulate some good points for the night.

Nelson contested the "B" final against the NSW pair, Richard Sweetman and Hugh Skidmore, but it was the Elite League skills and experience of Josh Auty, who worked his way underneath Nelson and eventually won the secondary final, giving him a place in the main event, from which he took third place overall.

The top four placed riders now have the opportunity to continue on in the World Under 21 Qualifying rounds during this coming European summer. These will include Ward, Sedgmen and Masters for their first, second and fourth placings, but they will be joined by Tyson Nelson, who scored fifth overall in the meeting and will be included as the fourth Australian home in the event, the other rider being Englishman, Josh Auty, who will have to qualify through his home rounds in Britain this coming summer.

Next Saturday night, Olympic Park will play host to the Mildura Solo and Sidecar Masters event, which will see a massive field of Sidecars, for the first time this season as well as a strong field of solo machines, which will give Sunraysia fans a well rounded program for their interest.

It is expected that there will be a full championship field of Sidecars so regular three wheel fans will be back in full enjoyment.

Gates will open at 4:30, with a junior program to start the evening, with the Masters event set to commence at 7:30pm.

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