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YOUNG GUNS SHOOT HARD

The SportZprint 2010 Australian Under 21 Speedway Championship will see the cream of Australia's young speedway talent on display at Mildura's Olympic Park track this Saturday night.

Amongst the rider's list will be the current World Under 21 Champion, Darcy Ward, from Queensland, who took the World crown against massive odds back in the European summer of 2009. Ward was able to blast both the top two fancied riders away, so look out at Olympic Park, as Ward should start as hot meeting favourite.

The real challenge should come from the Victorians in the field, particularly Justin Sedgmen, who has had a great first outing in an Australian series, along with brother Ryan, who is now riding back into form. The other Victorians are the pair of boys from the Goulburn Valley, in Jake Anderson and Dakota North, who is a former Australian Under 16 Title winner. Anderson has ridden well at Mildura in the past and the track holds no fears for him, but North struggled to come to terms with the tight turns, crashing out of what could have been a qualifying place in the senior Title just two weeks ago.

Justin Sedgmen has just finished eighth in his first senior Championship, taking some major scalps along the way, including giving series leader, Troy Batchelor a solid beating in heat four of the final round at Newcastle. This was the turning point for Batchelor, as he never recovered from that poor score line and subsequently did not make the "A" final, losing the Title to Chris Holder.

The younger Sedgmen scored mid pack in each of the three rounds, so was well rewarded for his consistency. He was able to keep away from trouble, although he did look as though he had hurt himself at Mildura, when he instantly laid his machine down to avoid a falling Mark Lemon, when Lemon picked up in turn one of the heat where the two Merbein riders met. The knowledgeable Mildura crowd was warm in their applause of Sedgmen's instant response to the incident and feared the worst when Sedgmen got up cradling his arm. Sedgmen should rightfully start the Title as second favourite.

A large group of NSW riders includes Sam Masters, who has done so well in the 2010 senior Australian Title series for his first try in the big league, the experienced, Richard Sweetman and Taylor Poole, who has good speedway breeding. Also from NSW are Hugh Skidmore, Michael Penfold and Todd Kurtz, who was last at Mildura riding a 350cc machine very nicely. They are all good racers, with young Mason Campton having his first go at the Under 21 Title.

The other Queenslanders in the field are Josh Grajczonek and Tyson Nelson, who will both be looking to ride well, especially Grajczonek, who had a wretched senior series, scoring poorly at all three venues. Grajczonek should use his previous experience at Mildura in a positive way and ride himself out of a form slump, even if just to go back to England in the right frame of mind. Nelson has not ridden Mildura before, so like all first timers, will take some time to come to grips with the tight turns of Olympic Park.

The other rider to be included in the field is visiting English rider, Josh Auty, who will be back in Mildura for the fourth time for this season. Auty is a good and seasoned rider, with enormous skills and quickly came to terms with the tight confines of Mildura.

He will be right at home again at Olympic Park, which is so much like the English tracks which he has grown up on. Auty was great value in Mildura's opening meeting for the season and rode well enough to qualify into the senior Title rounds.

Similar to the senior SoloTitle, there will be a top selection of Sidecar support events, with the added bonus of some 350cc machines racing as well, which will round off a wonderful program.

Gates will open at 4:00pm, with senior riders practicing from 5:00pm. A Junior support program will open the evening, with the rider presentation set to begin at 7:15pm. The SportZprint Australian Under 21 Title will get underway at 7:30pm.

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