

# NATIONAL KART RACING ASSOCIATION

## GRANDE FINALS 2019

RACE REPORT - FOREST EDGE - AUGUST 4<sup>th</sup>



### FORMULA BLUE

Many of the drivers had attended the Two Counties Club round the month previous in order to gain as much track information as possible. The top three on that day were Michael Bell, Russell O'Neill and David Waldron. They went into the Finals weekend with high hopes, as did the winner of the last regional round David Watts and reigning NKRA Champion Anthony Cleal. Four heats would be needed to give the racers enough chance to ensure their best possible start grid for the Final. The day dawned sunny and



dry and would start so for all of the races, eliminating any need for wet set up requirements.

**Heat 1** had David Goode on pole position with Russell O'Neill opposite. Behind them sat 'hot shot' from Scotland



Stuart Gray and Robin Stoddart-stones. From the lights O'Neill and Gray forged past Goode and started their race long duel which culminated with Gray taking the lead on lap 5. He would hold the lead to the flag with Russell O'Neill 0.2 secs. Behind . Toby Cook finished 3<sup>rd</sup> followed by Watts and Stoddart-Stones. Further back Mitch McLeod and Cleal had stirring drives both making up many places. **Heat 2** with opening nerves now settled, heat two rolled on the track with Serita Shone on pole,

Kevin O'Neill on 2, David Watts on 4 and Toby Cook on 4. Serita took the lead which she held for 4 laps until succumbing to pressure from Watts. Gray also managed to scrape by on the last lap to claim 2nd place, which was then removed at scrutineering after he was found to be very marginally underweight. This promoted Cook into 3<sup>rd</sup> spot. As in heat 1, Mitch McLeod put in a strong drive through the grid as did Mike Bell, having sorted his electrical problems.

**Heat 3** turned out to be a 'humdinger' with Taylor Waldron on pole and Bell alongside, Mitch McLeod and David Waldron occupied the 2<sup>nd</sup> row. By the end of lap 1 Mitch was in the lead, one which he would not lose up to the flag. Taylor Waldron came home 2<sup>nd</sup> with Cleal taking 3<sup>rd</sup> place just ahead of Bell, who was to suffer the same fate as Gray. He was disqualified for being marginally underweight! This promoted Dave Waldron up to 4<sup>th</sup> place. The drivers, further back, who put in the strongest performances, were Watts in 6<sup>th</sup> and Serita Shone in 10<sup>th</sup>.



**Heat 4** with Mortimore and Paul Alexander on the front row with Ron Shone and Cleal on row 2. A motivated Cleal stormed into the lead during the opening lap. Mortimore held 2<sup>nd</sup> place until lap 4 when, following an incident with Taylor Waldron he left the track. Cleal took the flag followed by Taylor Waldron and Mitch McLeod. Racers who drew attention during this race were Stuart Gray and Russell O'Neill, both making up many positions from a lowly start place. Once the dust had settled

from the Heats, the grid for the Final was posted. Mitch McLeod had claimed pole position from David Watts. The 2<sup>nd</sup> row was occupied by Cleal and Cook. On row 3 were Taylor Waldron and Gray, with Serita Shone and David Waldron taking up row 4. Following a tentative rolling lap, it was Mitch McLeod who emerged in the lead after lap 1. Gray made the most of his start by passing Taylor Waldron for 5<sup>th</sup> spot. David Waldron in the opening play forced past Serita Shone. Russell O'Neill had a poor start and slid back to 12<sup>th</sup> place. Paul Alexander gained from contact with Alex Fortune and also passed Nigel Vickery at the same time. Fortune as a consequence left the circuit and had to work hard for the rest of the race to catch up. Into lap 2 and Watts was into the lead. Further back Vickery re-passed Alexander.

Lap 3 and Cleal passed Mitch McLeod who would lose several more places before race end. Serita Shone, in trying all ways to get past Dave Waldron, left the 'door' open and was herself passed. Vickery and Alexander were 'tied' together and both forced past David Goode. Rob Mortimore, having started from a lowly grid position was also moving forwards passing Ron Shone for 16<sup>th</sup> spot.

By lap 4, the scene at the front was set with Watts racing without error ahead of Cleal. These two front runners were well clear of the rest of the pack. Russell O'Neill and Mike Bell were racing it out for 11<sup>th</sup> place with Russell eventually taking the spot. Mortimore continued with his own charge, passing Goode for 15<sup>th</sup>. On Lap 5 Taylor Waldron forced past Stuart Gray. A move which he continued on lap 6, this time on Cook. At the back Alex Fortune had caught up the tail enders and claimed 18<sup>th</sup> place off Kevin O'Neill. On lap 7 Nigel Vickery outbraked himself allowing Paul Alexander and Rob Mortimore past. With 4 laps to go, David Watts and Anthony Cleal were established and untroubled at the front. Third place, however, changed hands as Taylor Waldron overtook Mitch McLeod and Stuart Gray passed Toby Cook. Behind, Mike Bell repassed Russell O'Neil. Lap 9 and Mike Bell was now up to 10<sup>th</sup> having accounted for Stoddart-Stones. Kevin O'Neill retook Alex Fortune. Into the penultimate laps and pressure told on Alexander who, still in his first racing season, made an error and lost 13<sup>th</sup> place to Mortimore, Vickery and Goode. At the back Fortune, now in contact with the rear pack forged past Ron shone and Kevin O'Neill. So to the flag, with David Watts, Anthony Cleal and Taylor Waldron all safe at the front. Not so behind, Mitch had been caught and passed by Gray and Toby Cook. The rest of the grid was unable to make any more progress and finished in the order of the previous laps.

With the points and positions all counted the results were as follows

- 1<sup>st</sup> David Watts 3 points
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Anthony Cleal 5 points
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Taylor Waldron 8 points
- 4<sup>th</sup> Toby Cook 9 points
- 5<sup>th</sup> Mitch McLeod 10 points.

For the NKRA prestigious number awards, the final outcome saw Anthony Cleal retain his No.1 with Taylor Waldron the new No.2, David Watts No.3, Serita Shone No.4 and Michael Bell No.5

For more results and details of the NKRA and numbers please view the website.

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