

SPORTS

sports

BIKC hosts red hot Rotax battles

● BKIC witnessed host eventful fourth round of national karting sprints

TDT | Manama

The temperatures were cool but the competition was red hot in an eventful fourth round of the 2019/2020 Bahrain Karting Sprint Championship (BKSC), held over the weekend at Bahrain International Karting Circuit (BIKC) in Sakhir.

Five drivers claimed hard-earned victories in the BKSC's Bahrain Rotax Mojo Max Challenge, including Rashed Almuammari, Osama Azzouka, Lewis Smith, Shanthosh Kumar and Rashid Alkhailifa.

Almuammari won the Senior Max class and Azzouka the Max Masters, while Smith triumphed in the Junior Max category, Kumar in the Mini Max and Alkhailifa in the Micro Max class.

All the racing took place along BIKC's 1.414-kilometre Commission Internationale de Karting track.

Almuammari triumphed amongst the Senior Max participants with a time of 14 min-



Winners with their trophies

utes 0.332 seconds over 15 laps. He started the race in second position alongside pole-sitter Fahad Alkhale, but was able to gain the lead on the seventh lap.

Alkhale dropped all the way to third during the sprint but was able to battle back and pass Mohammed Mattar to regain one place. Alkhale eventually finished second 0.144s behind Almuammari, while Mattar was third 3.328s back.

In the Max Masters, Azzouka won despite getting two separate five-second penalties for a

jump start and for causing a collision. He completed his 15-lap sprint in 14:36.180 and enjoyed a 16.753s gap ahead of runner-up Fred Clark.

Smith won the Junior Max class. He was engaged in a tough battle with Fahad Al Muqla through 15 laps, and Al Muqla was originally the first to the finish. But he was given a five-second penalty for his front bumper not being fixed, handing the win to Smith and dropping him all the way to last place.

Smith triumphed with a total

race time of 14:20.159. Abdullah Aldossery was the runner-up 0.729s behind, while Sulaiman Alkandrei came third 1.301s back.

In Mini Max class, Kumar inherited the win from Luca Kane Houghton, who crossed the finish line after eight laps in first from pole but was disqualified after stewards decided that his kart had not conformed to the technical regulations, with his ignition oil not being of legal length. Kumar had a winning race time of 8:14.574. Tye Me-



Cars in action at BIKC

jia was the runner-up a distant 12.040s from first. He had also received a five-second penalty for his front bumper not being fixed. Mohamed Alhassan was third 30.827s back.

In the Micro Max class, Alkhailifa emerged victorious after Gracie Rose Grantham, who had originally finished ahead,

was given a five-second penalty for her front bumper not being fixed. That put Alkhailifa in the winner's position with a time of 8:52.192 over eight laps. Khaled Alnajjar was a narrow second just 0.111s behind, while Louis El Nabulsi finished third 0.354s back. Grantham had to settle for fifth place.

Following the fourth round of action, there were no changes at the top of the championship standings in any of the BRM-

MC's competition categories. Alkhale continued to lead the standings in the Senior Max championship ahead of Mattar, Azzouka remained in front of Clark in the Max Masters, and Smith led Aldossery in the Junior Max category.

Kumar maintained his position ahead of Houghton in the Mini Max, while Grantham was still the leader in the Micro Max championship.

The 2019/2020 BKSC features seven rounds in all. Saturday's fourth round was the first of the new calendar year. Action in the BKSC is scheduled to resume with Round Five on February 8, while the sixth and penultimate meeting of the season will be held on March 7. The championship-finale then takes place on April 4.

India open to day-night Test in Australia, says Kohli

Reuters | Mumbai

India are "absolutely open" to playing a day-night test in Australia this year and the world's top-ranked team have the confidence to take on any side in the world in any condition, captain Virat Kohli said yesterday.

India declined Australia's offer to play a day-night test in Adelaide in 2018-19, citing lack of experience.

Kohli's men, however, took a little over two days to clinch their first pink-ball test, thrashing Bangladesh by an innings and 46 runs in Kolkata in November.

"We played the day-night test here (in India), we are pretty happy with how it went," Kohli told reporters on the eve of the opening one-day international against Australia.

"It's become a very exciting feature of any test series. We are absolutely open to playing a day-night test."

"We are ready enough for the challenge. Whether it's Gabba, it's Perth, doesn't matter to us. We do have the skillsets as a team now to compete against anyone in the world, anywhere, in any format of the game"



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VIRAT KOHLI

on their last visit although the hosts were without Steve Smith and David Warner, who were suspended after the ball-tampering scandal.

Kohli challenged his bowlers to be ready for a full-strength batting lineup of Australia, who made it five comprehensive wins out of five matches for the home summer against Pakistan and New Zealand.

Australia beat India 3-2 in ODIs on their last visit.

In a year when a Twenty20 World Cup is scheduled, Kohli was asked about the relevance of playing bilateral 50-overs matches and the India captain said his team were "excited" and looking forward to the challenge.

With day-night tests seen as a possible solution to test cricket's dwindling attendances, Australia are hopeful that India will agree to play one at the Gabba this year.

India earned their first series triumph on Australian soil



India's Virat Kohli gestures during nets (file photo)

Bahrain claim second friendly win over South Korea



Action from yesterday's friendly

TDT | Manama

Bahrain edged past South Korea 24-23 yesterday in their second international friendly this week held at the Bahrain Handball Association arena in Um Al Hassam.

Both sides are preparing for their campaigns in the upcoming 2020 Asian Men's Handball Championship, which will be held in Kuwait starting Thursday.

The Bahrainis also won their first tune-up game by a single goal. The nationals enjoyed

a 30-29 result in what was a closely contested affair.

Thirteen teams are taking part in the Asian championship in Kuwait City. They have been divided into four groups for the preliminary round. Bahrain have been drawn in Group A along with Iran and New Zealand.

The Bahrainis, who earlier this year made history by qualifying for the Tokyo Olympics, play their first game against the Kiwis on the tournament's first day before playing their Iranian rivals on January 18.

The top two teams from

each group at the end of a single round-robin move on to the next phase.

Group B features Qatar, Japan and China; Group C includes South Korea, Saudi Arabia and Australia; and Group D consists of the UAE, Hong Kong, Iraq and hosts Kuwait.

The Asian championship also acts as the continental qualifying tournament for the 2021 World Men's Handball Championship. Each of the competition's four semi-finalists will book their tickets to the worlds, set to take place in Egypt in January of 2021.