



Press Release

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RECORD ENTRIES FOR THE 2006 ROTAX EURO CHALLENGE

148 drivers representing 26 countries will line-up for the first round of the ROTAX MOJO Max Euro Challenge at the Sologne Karting circuit in Salbris, France March 22–26. Now in its third year, the international championship leads the way in bringing together so many competitors from around the World including Australia, Asia, the Middle East, Canada, South Africa, the United Kingdom and Europe.

This year, the series increases to four classes including Rotax Senior Max, Rotax Junior Max, Rotax Max Masters plus the newly launched Rotax DD2, replacing the Rotax RM1 only category. This year, the Rotax DD2 (direct drive 2-speed gearbox engine) category is actually open to all chassis manufacturers producing a Rotax approved kart with the specified safety features. This class is expected to increase as the series progresses due to more of the new karts becoming readily available. 2005 Euro Challenge series winners Cristiano Morgado and Arnold Neveling will race in the category against fellow South African and current Rotax RM1 victor from the recent Rotax Grand Finals Wesleigh Orr. However, each one is driving a different brand chassis which will only add to what should be an excellent competition.

The Senior Max class is almost fully subscribed (maximum 68 entries) for the Salbris event. This will also see some of the junior drivers from the series last year step-up to the class, including World Rotax Junior Max title holder Kenneth Hildebrand of Estonia. If last year is any indication to go by, the Junior Max Class will no doubt provide some very close racing again, with many of the previous competitors re-entered plus some new younger talent coming onboard. For many of these drivers, it's their first taste of this level of competition in 'Max' racing.

Another edition to the Euro Challenge series is the Rotax Max Masters, catering for the more seasoned pilots who are aged 32 years and over. It will give these drivers their own playing field for a shot at a championship title at such an international event. It appears as though the French have thrown out the challenge for round 1, having at least nine drivers in the Masters field for Salbris.

With the introduction of a 'Chassis Make Trophy' up for grabs in each category, points from the pre-final and final in every round will count towards the first ever European ROTAX MOJO Max Champion being awarded to the actual kart manufacturers.

One of the incentives to compete in the Euro Challenge is that 11 drivers will be invited to participate in the 2006 ROTAX Max Grand finals as part of the prizes awarded. As a result of the Grand Finals held last December in Langkawi, Malaysia, all but 2 of the top 4 finishers in each class were competitors in the Euro Challenge during 2005. The standard of this international competition seemed to the series drivers a definite advantage when it came to making the podium at this World event.

RGMMC Establishment are the organisers of the ROTAX MOJO Max Euro Challenge and go out of their way to ensure the competitors have the best opportunity for some great racing. General Manager Roland Geidel insists that they carefully select high profile tracks for the championship, to provide the best facilities. "We are really pleased to be taking the first round back to Salbris, France. Marc Berteaux and his team were a pleasure to work with in 2005 and they made the Euro Challenge staff and Rotax drivers feel extremely welcome." He added that the majority of the competitors last year thought the track was challenging and enjoyed the experience, which makes it a good choice.

Following the initial round in France, the series will head to the famous South Garda Karting circuit in Lonato, Italy on beautiful Lake Garda for the first time in the three year history of the event. This takes the Rotax 125cc championship to the home of 100cc-CIK kart racing for many of the chassis and engine manufacturers in Europe. Round three will see a return in the summer to the A1 Speedworld complex just outside Austria's capital Vienna. This is a fantastic recreational venue, complete with jet ski lakes, swimming pool, ATV and model car tracks. The championship series finale will be run at one of Europe's oldest and most well known kart circuits in Genk, Belgium. Prior to last year's fourth round, the track was totally redesigned and upgraded, including amenities making it one of the most popular locations to date for the Euro Challenge.

Karting fans around Europe will be able to see some of the best racing this year from their lounge chair, as another first for the Euro challenge sees TV coverage by Raceworld in Salbris. RGMMC as the event promoters encourage the drivers to also promote themselves in the international arena of karting. This is just another way they feel they can assist by providing the ideal opportunity, not to mention good exposure for the series and its supporting sponsors. Further publicity for the competitors and their teams will be made possible as personal interviews are conducted live throughout the weekend between races.

So, as the countdown begins to what is sizing-up to be an exciting year's racing, the competition is made even more interesting by a 10-day driving ban at the Sologne Karting Circuit. This applies to all competitors and their karts entered in the first round. Wednesday, March 22nd will see the start of official free practice which continues through to Friday, when qualifying takes place that afternoon. Qualifying heats and finals make up a jam-packed schedule Saturday and Sunday, for the French round champion to be awarded.

To catch all the results as they happen from the ROTAX MOJO Max Euro Challenge in Salbris, check out the Live Timing beginning from Friday's practice at www.rgmmc.com. There's also more information and updates about the following rounds, competitors and Raceworld TV programming as it becomes available.

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