



Piers Prior wins the fifth annual Henry Surtees Challenge 2015



The best of British young motorsport talent came together at Buckmore Park circuit, on Wednesday 7 October to battle it out in the fifth annual Henry Surtees Challenge.

The event organised by former F1 World Champion, John Surtees OBE, and the Henry Surtees Foundation, provides both kart and car racers that are currently progressing up the motorsport ladder the unique opportunity to win a spectacular range of career enhancing prizes to help aid their race programme preparation for 2016.

The hotly contested race saw 26 of the UK's most talented young drivers battling it out in challenging weather conditions, using superb Club 100 Birel Karts.

After setting a strong pace during qualifying, former McLaren Autosport BRDC winner and 2011 Formula Ford Champion Scott Malvern and Formula Renault ALPS and Eurocup driver Jack Aitkin led the race, but a dramatic early spin off by Malvern and a tussle with Aitkin put the duo at the back of the grid, both fought throughout the race to work their way up the grid, but the final 6 minutes was dominated by Racing Steps Foundation backed FIA Formula 3 Racing Driver Jake Dennis.

After qualifying 3rd in group, Piers Prior started the race in 6th place and battled tirelessly up the order into second position. A thrilling race ensued between him and Jake Dennis with neither giving any quarter, and Piers taking advantage of the passing of a back marker then slipped through into the lead and won by a slim margin. In third position with another impressive race finish was Ed White.

Event winner Piers Prior said "The event was awesome, so much fun. Its not often you get to race against genuine and highly skilled racers. Last year I came in 6th position, and I was keen to return and better myself. It was a tough battle with Jake; I am staggered to have won. I know that being awarded the Formula Renault test with Manor Motorsport

will be an incredible experience that will help enhance my racing career. I am really grateful to the foundation for the opportunity”.

Runner up Jake Dennis said “I raced as hard as I could, as much as I did in the World Championship! I really had Piers working hard for that pole position. It was a great battle, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I am really happy for Piers to have won”.

In third position Ed White said “Buckmore Park is the most physically demanding track in the UK, it was a very intense race, more physical than an F3 test!”.

Several of the race participants had never competed at Buckmore Park before, including Junior Max kart racer Jack Gordon from Aberdeen who set some impressive lap times. Jack said “whilst I had a frustrating race, it was a great experience to compete against such talented car drivers; I am keen to return in 2016 and hopefully secure one of the amazing prizes”.

John Surtees said “the first Henry Surtees Challenge took place in 2010, and Buckmore Park seemed the natural venue to host it; it’s the circuit where Henry first sat in a kart, at the age of 8, but also where he had gained success. Buckmore is renowned for being a challenging circuit and a superb training ground for future British World Champions. During its 52 years; the track has seen the likes of World Champions Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button hone their racing skills amongst many others”.

He continued “I understand the difficulty youngsters are faced with in motor sport; the event provides a helping hand with their careers and some of the prizes available will assist them greatly in their preparation for the 2016 season. Surprisingly the number of entries did not reach expectations considering the fantastic prizes available. But some really quality performances were seen on track in both the wet conditions of practice and the dry ones of the final. . All were competing on a level playing field, on normal slick tyres.. It was a thrilling day of extremely competitive racing, and really showcases the up and coming talent we have in the UK. We are grateful to the sponsors for offering the exceptional prizes and to Club 100 for providing the karts and back-up.”.

The top three drivers were awarded with the prestigious Henry Surtees ‘H’ trophy title and given a choice of an incredible selection of career enhancing prizes – considered to be the best prizes ever offered at a kart meeting.

Piers Prior, Winner 2015 Henry Surtees Challenge 2015 received the top Henry Surtees ‘H’ trophy, a Formula Renault 2.0 test on the continent donated by Manor Competition (including travel courtesy of Travel Places), plus a full kit of Puma race clothing – race suit, three pairs of gloves, two pairs of racing boots, one pair of running shoes and one pair of lifestyle shoes, donated by Puma SE.

Jake Dennis, Runner up, received a Henry Surtees ‘H’ trophy, a supply of tools to the value of £1,000, donated by Teng Tools, plus Puma race clothing - two sets of gloves and underwear, one pair of racing shoes, one pair of running shoes and one pair lifestyle shoes, donated by Puma SE.

Ed White, third place, received a Henry Surtees 'H' trophy, a simulator session at the Ferrari Driver Academy and a Ferrari Racing Department factory tour for two people, donated by Ferrari. Air travel donated by Travel Places, and one set of gloves and underwear, one pair of racing shoes, one pair of running shoes and one pair of lifestyle shoes donated by Puma SE.

Other Awards:

Fastest Lap: Andy O'Neill

Over 80kg: Ed White

Unluckiest Driver: Jack O'Neill

Prizes were awarded as follows:

Formula Renault 2.0 test on the continent donated by **Manor Competition** (including travel courtesy of **Travel Places**) – Awarded to **Piers Prior**

MSA Formula test (official UK FIA F4 Championship) donated by **Falcon Motorsport** (Including travel courtesy of **Travel Places**) - Awarded to **William Van Es**

Clio Cup test for one driver aged 16 or over donated by **Renault** – Awarded to **Shaun Hollingsworth**

A simulator session at the Ferrari Driver Academy, plus a Ferrari Racing Department factory tour for two people, donated by **Ferrari**. Air travel donated by **Travel Places** – Awarded to **Ed White**

Tour for two people of the Red Bull Racing facility, with simulator session and evaluation by a racing engineer, donated by **Christian Horner** – Awarded to **Andy O'Neill**

An Arai GP-6S helmet in white finish, donated by **Arai** – Awarded to **Owen Jenman**

A complete hearing health check and pair of custom-fit driver communication earpieces donated by **Hearing Electronics Ltd** – Awarded to **Scott Malvern**

A supply of tools to the value of £1,000, donated by **Teng Tools** – Awarded to **Jake Dennis**

Puma race wear– **Piers Prior, Jake Dennis, Ed White**

Prizes were awarded down to 8th place taking into account the drivers' performances, placings and ambitions.

Available for interview:

John Surtees OBE, Founder of the Henry Surtees Foundation

Pier Prior, winner of the 2015 Henry Surtees Challenge

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