



A beautiful late summers afternoon greeted drivers, teams and a huge number of fans as they gathered at HRP Lochgelly Raceway this past weekend for one of the biggest stock car events to be held in Scotland this year.

Day one of Hardie Race Promotions' August Speed Weekend saw no less than three international titles on the line as the ProStocks British Championship, UK Oval Track Legends European Championship and Superstox Championship of the World headlined the event sponsored by Dechmont Forklift Trucks.

However, it was the youngsters in the Ninja Karts who got the racing underway with the first of three heats and Declan Honeyman took the win, having returned home from Northern Ireland last weekend as the newly-crowned National Champion, ahead of Robbie Armit and Ethan Doull. Honeyman, who is also the current European Champion, took a second victory as he romped home to the win in heat two ahead of 2016 rookie Logan Tweedie who is showing some great speed and also a resurgent Scott Allardyce. Unusually, with a different format being adopted, the Ninja Karts actually contested a feature final and this went the way of British Champion Charlie Hardie. Hardie had been caught in an incident in heat one and had his chain fall off in heat two so taking the feature final would have went some way to make up for these incidents while Doull claimed second place ahead of the returning Josh Bruce who had sat out a few meetings.

The ProStocks have provided some great entertainment this year despite being low on numbers but, with the British title on the line and several visiting Northern Irish drivers, a healthy entry of over twenty cars arrived to do battle. Several new cars made their debut including pre-race favourites Tam Melrose

(Astra) and Ricky White (Corsa) plus Dougie Kidd also arrived with what looked like a new Corsa. However, it was Thornton's Ricky White who claimed victory in the first heat in his new car ahead of Northern Irish trio Leonard Dunn, Stephen Boyd and defending British Champion Stephen Haugh. The Northern Irish have dominated the major titles in the formula recently and Dan Shannon claimed victory in the second heat ahead of White and Melrose. White's heat victory and runners-up spot in the second race gave him pole position but many of the top drivers were well within striking distance. The race was frenetic as many in the large crowd had expected and the Northern Irish drivers showed their great speed as they battled with the Scots for position. At the end of the 16-lap race, it was defending champion Stephen Haugh who had managed to get ahead of White to successfully defend his British Championship with White coming home in second and Tam Melrose in third.



The ultra-smart and ultra-fast UK Oval Track Legends made their annual trip north to HRP Lochgelly Raceway for what has become one of the mainstays of the August Speed Weekend as they would compete for their European Championship. With 20165 champion Sean Smith not in attendance a new champion would be crowned from the sixteen entrants who had all went to great efforts to attend the event. The first heat of the weekend went the way of the driver currently at the top of his game and the national points as Miles Rudman romped home to victory. David Evans brought his stunning black and white machine home first in heat two with Rudman claiming second and therefore pole position for the European Championship under the HRP Lochgelly Raceway floodlights. With Rudman on pole, it was going to be difficult for any drivers to catch and then overtake him. The Legends made for a spectacular sight under the lights as the "pocket-rockets" flew around the tarmac but it was Rudman who took full

advantage of his pole start to secure the 2016 European Championship ahead of Daniel Holden and James Hyett.



With so many big races on one evening, the main event was still undoubtedly the Dechmont Forklift Trucks Superstox Championship of the World. A stellar entry of drivers from all corners of the Superstox world had descended on HRP Lochgelly Raceway with defending champion Chris Bradbury enjoying one final lap as the current World Champion as his car and a replica of the 1976 World Championship winning car of Gordon McDougall in the hands of owner Alan Harwood led out the contenders for the 2016 title. The grid draw saw Northern Ireland top points scorer Denver Grattan on pole with English National points Champion Jason Cooper on his outside and many people's pre-race favourite Scotland's Stuart Gilchrist on row two alongside Scottish Champion Bryan Forrest with Jack Gilpin of Northern Ireland and defending champion Bradbury on row three. The 1976 McDougall replica led the cars around on a slow rolling lap as a salute to the fans before the HRP Mercedes Pace Cars picked up the grid as the drivers settled in for the 35 laps ahead. As the green flag dropped the expected chaos ensued as bumpers flew in everywhere fans looked and, after the initial sort-out, it looked like a two-way battle between England's Cooper and the chasing Gilchrist of Scotland. Gilchrist managed to overhaul Cooper in the early stages of the race but Cooper knew he had to get back ahead of the 2012 World Champion quickly and dispatched him with a big hit in turns three and four which results in Gilchrist being almost a full lap down on Cooper. When a stoppage brought the cars to a halt Gilchrist pulled off with what turned out to be a badly injured wrist and we wish him well in his recovery. Cooper surged away once again on the green flag with the likes of Forrest, Bradbury and Grattan in tow and this was how they remained until the chequered flag fell and the fireworks heralded the crowning of Jason Cooper as the 2016 Superstox World Champion – 8 years after he last claimed the title. The subsequent races for Superstox saw a race winning double for Peterborough's Jordan Aylward who enjoyed a great evening having managed to finish a world final for the first time in a very respectable seventh.

Sunday saw the sun shining once again and another cracking meeting was in prospect with the Superstox, UK Oval Track Legends and ProStocks all in Open Scottish Championship action while the

1300 Stock Cars were also in action for the Bill Auld Fabrications Trophy and the extra prize money that the feature final carried. An improving number of cars was great to see and we were also joined by young English star Tommy Aylward who raced the Callum Barclay Corsa to good effect all day. The heats were won by a fast-moving Zak Gilmour and Boab Low. The feature final was a traditionally frenetic affair with the extra £100 on offer to the winner but it was Low who came through once again to head the field at the chequered flag to claim a heat and final double, the extra prize money from Bill Auld Fabrications and an upgrading to blue grade.



Sunday's ProStocks action kicked off with their Scottish Open Championship. With the grid decided by a random draw; the action came thick and fast and it was former multi-champion Ryan Abernethy from Northern Ireland who survived the chaos to claim the title of ProStocks Open Scottish Champion for 2016. The subsequent heats saw wins for Jason McAlpine and Halbeath's Jazz Moore who returned to the formula for a one-off meeting in the borrowed car of Leonard Dunn. The UK Oval Track Legends held two qualifying heats for their Open Scottish Championship and they were won by Alistair Murray and former Superstox World Champion Sean Brooker. Brooker's son Jayden led the Open Scottish title race for a number of laps before Sean took the lead from him and reeled off the remaining laps to claim the title of Legends Open Scottish Champion to add to his incredible racing CV. Jayden Brooker held on for second while Daniel Holden managed to win a fantastic battle with the likes of David Evans and Miles Rudman as he claimed the final podium spot. The UK Oval Track Legends then said goodbye to the Scottish fans in their own unique style with many of the drivers performing donuts at various points on the circuit.

The Superstox Open Scottish Championship took centre stage on the Sunday and most of the drivers were back in action from the previous evening. A random draw saw the 34 car grid formed for the Open Scottish Championship and it was the top two in the previous evening's World Championship Jason Cooper and Bryan Forrest who motored their way to the front. Forrest landed a decisive hit on Cooper which relegated the Norfolk driver down the order and saw Forrest secure his second title in two weeks while Surrey's Nick Roots claimed a fine second place ahead of a resurgent Cooper who had performed well in a car that was clearly struggling in terms of handling. Former World Champion Ben Marjoram had been working all weekend on getting his car to handle around the tricky HRP Lochgelly circuit and that hard work paid off with victory in heat one on the Sunday ahead of Lee Davison of Northern Ireland. The final heat of the weekend saw Chris Roots claim a hard-earned win ahead of Davison once again in a race that was as fast and furious as the first race of a fantastic weekend of action.

The next slice of stock car action at HRP Lochgelly Raceway comes this Saturday September 3rd and features Banger Ramp Racing plus the Ninja Karts Scottish Championship. The 1300 Stock Cars, CC Rods and Ministox will also be in action from 5:30pm in a busy fifteen race programme.