



Winners of the JK Tyre National Racing Championship 2018.

Speedy extravaganza for serious racing enthusiasts

SHAMS NAQVI

Think of circuit racing in India and there's one name that towers above the rest. Almost three decades back JK Tyre laid down a long term and sustained approach to promote Motorsport in the country. For the last 21 seasons the company has been successfully organising the FIMSCI National Racing Championship and this year was no different. All roads for racing aficionados led to the Buddh International Circuit over the last weekend as the grand finale of the season took place amid much fanfare. Of course there were the regular categories like Euro JK and the LGB Formula 4 but the Buddh Circuit promised to provide a fitting finale to the 21st edition of the JK Tyre National Racing Championship with the return of the high-profile FIM Asia Cup of Road Racing (ACRR), an FIM sanctioned event that features top riders from various Asian countries. Two-wheeler fanatics in the Capital were in for a grand treat as the Championship would see two super bike races (JK SBK 1000cc and JK SBK 600cc), giving them a taste of really powerful bikes.

"We have had an exciting season and it has been really wonderful to watch all the racers competing so aggressively. I am sure we are going to see a number of surprises over the weekend," Sanjay Sharma, the head of JK Motorsports, said.

Euro JK 18
Chennai's Karthik Tharani and Mumbai's Nayan Chat-



At the Buddh International Circuit in Greater Noida.

terjee won a race apiece on Day 1 of the Grand Finale throwing open the Euro JK 2000 at the BIC. Karthik began the weekend on a positive note, grabbing the pole position on Friday evening. He made the most of his early advantage to win Race 1 in 20:56.000 grueling minutes. Nayan, who started from P3, put up an aggressive run, even recording the fastest lap time of 2:02.671 in the ninth. He attacked Karthik but just couldn't find a way past him.

In the second race of the day both the drivers made their moves right away, surging past the field to take the first two places. It helped Karthik sneak ahead of Ashwin by three points, giving him a total of 82 points. A fitting finale was on the cards, with the reverse grid too coming into

Apart from working for promoting the girl child education the Indian motorcycle riders group would experience different road conditions, changing landscapes, varying temperatures and diverse cultures. The 19-day ride would see them ride through some of country's most popular cities...

play and adding to the drama on the final day Nayan and Karthik commenced from behind, from sixth and fifth position, making their task that much tougher. Nayan, however, suffered a massive blow at the start of the second lap itself, colliding with Manav Sharma and pulling out of the race. It left the field wide open for Karthik, allowing him to steadily get past the field

to win the race as well as the championship. Nayan had to be content with the second place while Ashwin Datta, who had been leading after each of the earlier rounds, finished a disappointing third.

LGB Formula 4
Vishnu Prasad from Chennai won race one and finished fourth in the second to amass 75 points, to be six

points clear of the field. He streaked past pole leader Dark Don't Rohit Khanna and Sandeep Kumar. Prasad then took the fourth place in Race 2 to bring a good position to take home the title. Rohit finished second in Race 23, behind Diljith TS, but that was not good enough to bring him back into contention.

But on a dramatic last day in front of 35,000 fans defending champion Prasad was upstaged in the last race. With a clear 6-point lead, the MSport veteran simply needed to drive smart but he lost the plot and fell behind midway through the race. This opened a window of opportunity for his teammate Baghel Bangarum to make a successful charge and finish second, which handed the championship in his lap.

Vishnu picked up just one point, forcing him to yield the title to his teammate. Delhi's Rohit Khanna took the race but it was good enough to give him only the third place.

Suzuki Gixxer Cup

Chennai's Joseph Mathew was virtually assured of the title in the Suzuki Gixxer Cup as he had won all the previous rounds this year. On the opening day he finally lost the first race of his season, but was still comfortably placed on 60 points. Aiswath Maheswrdhwani won the last race on Sunday, claiming the second place in the overall run. Mathew hung on to his lead and the Cup, despite having his worst round.

Maheswrdhwani also turned out victorious in the prestigious Asia Cup of Road Race, ahead of top Asian bikers, Australia's Max Stauffer and Sri Lanka's Hansika Abeyasinghe took the second and third positions. New Delhi's Gurvinder Singh and Jaipur's Vijay Singh pocketed the JK Superbike Cup 1000cc and the 600cc categories respectively.

Over 35,000 delighted fans roared as they witnessed a mind-boggling stunt show led by UK's Terry Grant and Lithuania's Aras Gibeiza. This in addition to spectacular stunt shows performed by JK Tyre motorsport team. Just as always the company had provided the much needed boost to motorsport in the country.

Shams Naqvi is an anchor/producer for the News X motor show, Living Cars