

**6 February 2022**

***Press Release re***

## **JUNIOR SPEEDWAY STARS TURN ON EXCITEMENT, DRAMA, and CONTROVERSY**

***For immediate Release***

A new champion in Noah Grabham was crowned and others left disappointed after the running of the M & K Eklund Transport New South Wales Under 16 Speedway Championship at the Central Coast Junior Motor Cycle Club track at North Somersby last Saturday.

The weather held off and the track staff worked wonders to allow some of the country's best junior speedway riders to turn on an enthralling programme of races.

At the end of a meeting that produced plenty of close and exciting racing there was a dramatic championship decider, and an outcome that in the eyes of some observers was controversial.

The 20 heat races decided the top three riders who progressed direct to the A Final – and there were no surprises who that top trio was.

Bathurst rider Noah Grabham finished top on countback with 14 points, after being beaten only in his final heat by Beau Bailey, ahead of Queensland champion Jordy Loftus who lost only to Grabham.

Bailey was next on 13 with a third place behind Loftus and Cooper Antone in his first heat and then four wins.

The next four riders on the scorechart had to contest the cut-throat B Final from which only the winner went in to the decider.

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That turned out to be Albury Wodonga rider Cooper Antone who gated brilliantly and host club rider Lachlan Russell could not overhaul him, after both had scored 11 points in their heats.

The other B Finalists were Queenslanders Anika Loftus and Jai Bainbridge who finished in that order.

With the top four riders lined up for the final there was sure to be drama – Grabham led but as Loftus tried an outside pass he actually lost second place as Bailey came through on the inside. As Bailey continued his inside charge there appeared to be some contact with Grabham who ran off the track.

Such happenings always place officials in an awkward position, but they have to make a decision that invariably never pleases everyone.

The decision was that Bailey was excluded with the win awarded to Grabham ahead of Loftus and Antone.

Fans were left rewarded for their patience as track staff turned a saturated surface in to an extremely raceable track that allowed the youngsters to show off their talents, albeit two hours later than the planned start time.

Even among the riders who did not make the finals there is plenty to enthuse about as even the least experienced riders showed enough to suggest that all will progress with coaching as part of the Speedway Experience Coaching programme led by former world No. 3 Craig Boyce.

One of the bottom half of the field was the only girl from New South Wales in the line-up, Ruby James from the Kurri Kurri Junior club who received the Encouragement Award at the meeting.

Final result

Noah Grabham 1<sup>st</sup>, Jordy Loftus 2<sup>nd</sup>, Cooper Antone 3<sup>rd</sup>, Beau Bailey EXC

B Final          Cooper Antone, Lachlan Russell, Anika Loftus, Jai Bainbridge

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Other Scores        Lachlan Hawgood 7, Sonny Spurgin 7, Cooper Freebairn 6, Riley  
Conner 6, Billy Brown 5, Jacob Adamson 3, Bailey Carpenter 2, Ruby James 2,  
Dustin Constable 1, Preston Craft (Res.0) 0.

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***On behalf of Central Coast Junior Motor Cycle Club***