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PODBOJ AND YU SCORE FIRST HEADLINE VICTORIES AT CALIFORNIA PROKART CHALLENGE

Successful weekend at Santa Maria Karting Association facility for Superkarts! USA flagship regional program

TEMECULA, CA (July 12, 2017) – The California ProKart Challenge is now into the second half of the season after hosting Round Four of the 2017 championship chase at the Santa Maria Karting Association circuit. West of the Alamo wildfires, the flagship Superkarts! USA regional program contested two days of racing on July 7-8 around the 7/10-mile course, helping to shape the title chases even further as the program looks toward the final two rounds in September. The weekend in Santa Maria also marked the debut of the pushback bumper in the X30 Senior and X30 Junior categories. SKUSA officials are optimistic with the addition of the pushback bumper, while understanding it is a learning curve for both the officials and the competitors. On track, however, the competitors are putting in 100% effort toward victories, and those still in the chase are keeping their eye on the year-end prize of a championship.

The **Formula Works/CompKart X30 Senior** field was strong, with 23 drivers battling for victory. Coming off his victory at CalSpeed, Michael Avansino was the top driver in qualifying with a 48-second flat lap, edging out S1 champion Billy Musgrave and S1 Pro Tour winner Nic Le Duc. Avansino led wire-to-wire in the opening heat, with Le Duc moving up to second over Musgrave. The order shuffled up in the second heat with Avansino demoted from the lead by a charging Chance Skaufel. On lap seven Skaufel was shuffled outside the top-five, allowing championship leader Nicky Hays to assume the lead, going on to win the race over Le Duc and Senior rookie Dante Yu. Hays and Le Duc went back and forth early until Hays came away with the lead and Yu slotted himself into the challenger role. Yu remained on the bumper of Hays until the final lap, working past for the lead and reaching the checkered flag for his first series X30 Senior victory. Hays settled for second, helping his championship chase, with Andrick Zeen slipping up to third for a second straight podium result. Le Duc and Skaufel rounded out the top-five.

The Santa Maria weekend will be one to remember for Mathias Podboj in the **Vemme Kart S1 Pro Stock Honda**. The longtime California PKC racer came away with his first career feature victory in a hard fought battle. Podboj found himself behind the eight-ball in qualifying, sitting fifth

in class and well off the pace of top qualifier Hunter Pickett. Championship leader Billy Musgrave went on to win both heat races, with Matias working up to fourth in class, and past most of the S2 drivers in the combined race group. Musgrave led the first 12 laps with Podboj showing fast laps of the race, charging through the rest of the S1 field. In lap 13, Podboj took over the lead and from there pulled out to a 1.1-second advantage for the victory. Musgrave settled for second, with S1 rookie Hunter Kelly earning his first podium of 2017.

Momentum is the key in motorsports. For Aaron Aguirre, it has propelled him into the championship chase for the **Mad Old Nut/Mad Croc USA S2 Semi-Pro Stock Honda** division. Aguirre came away with victory at CalSpeed, and began the round in Santa Maria third in the S2 order in qualifying behind Josh Early and Royal McKee. For Early, it was his first ever top qualifier award, using that to drive to his first heat race win. In the second heat race, Round One winner Kyle Wick picked up the pace, driving up to the lead and the win by over three seconds. Aguirre found himself out of the race after lap one, forced to start from 15th overall in the combined S1/S2 race group. Wick, who had never been to Santa Maria before, became the overall leader after the halfway point in the main event. That was until his airbox came off on lap 13, forcing him to pull off. That handed the S2 lead over to Aguirre, who steadily worked through the field to end up in the lead after Wick's misfortune. Aguirre went on to score the class win, his second straight on the year. Point leader Jason Pettit finished second, with Kol Bailey completing the podium. Garrett McKelvie was fourth with Robert Heck Jr. in fifth.

The **Mike Manning Karting S4 Master Stock Honda** class looked to belong to SKUSA Pro Tour champion Robert Marks. The defending Super Master champ set fast time in qualifying before going on to win both heat races. Marks led the main event with Nick George in tow until trouble on lap three. It dropped both down the order, handing the lead over to championship leader Rob Logan. He led for four laps before Kevin Woods took over the position. From there, Woods led the remainder of the race to secure his first series victory and the fourth different winner on the year. Round Three winner Gianfranco Casadei slipped past Logan for the runner-up position, with Vivek Tandon finishing fourth. Robert Marks was classified fifth with George scored behind Marks for contact.

Trey Brown added to his win total in 2017 with his third triumph in four races in the **Ryan Perry Motorsport X30 Junior** category. Brown started the day third in qualifying behind Oliver Reed and CalSpeed winner Joseph Daniele. The heat races went to Daniele, with Brown placing second in Heat #1 but slipping back to fourth in Heat #2. Daniele and Oliver Calvo fought early in the main event for the lead until contact on Lap 11 dropped both out of the hunt, handing the lead over to Brown. From there, Brown led the remainder of the race for the victory. Alex Siragusa won the battle for second over Jace Denmark-Gessel. Edward Portz was fourth with Calvo fighting back to finish fifth.

Zach Pettinicchi became the first double winner in the **Nash Motorsportz S3 Novice Stock Honda** class. He fought with Keawn Tandon all day. Tandon held the advantage in qualifying and in Heat #1. In Heat #2, Pettinicchi led all 10 laps for the race win. Pettinicchi grabbed the holeshot in the main event, never looking back to secure the victory. Tandon slipped back to fifth on the opening lap, but worked his way forward to second-place late in the race. Evan Jonker completed the podium.

The **Phil Giebler Racing X30 Master** category also welcomed a double winner with Jess Peterson coming away with the victory in Santa Maria. Class newcomer Lloyd Mack stole the fast lap in qualifying over championship contenders Travis Irving and Peterson. In the opening heat, Peterson leaped over both to score the win and repeated in Heat #2. The main event was a wire-to-wire triumph for Peterson, scoring his second of the season to extend the championship lead. Irving drove to second with Luke Vasquez completing the podium. Tim Meyer finished fourth with Mack slipping back to fifth.

It was a second straight victory in the **Outsource Utility Contractor Corporation Mini Swift**

class for Carson Morgan. Missing out on the opening round, victories are the best remedy to put himself into the championship chase by the end of September, with Morgan adding a second in Santa Maria. National #2 SKUSA plate holder Diego LaRoque set the pace early on in the event, posting fast time in qualifying and winning the opening heat race. Daniel Inzunza put himself at the front of the field by the end of Heat #2 for the win with Morgan following him through. Morgan got the jump as the main event began, and never looked back. Morgan led all 14 laps for the victory, finishing with fast lap of the race. LaRoque closed up to within one tenth at the checkered flag for the runner-up spot. Inzunza completed the podium with championship leader Jonathan Portz placing fourth and Cole Morgan in fifth.

John Crow is now four-for-four in the **Musgrave Racing Company S4 Super Master Stock Honda** features, earning his second straight event sweep. After leading the class throughout the round at CalSpeed, Crow duplicated the feat to earn maximum points on the day – with a six-second margin of victory in the main event. Darrell Tunnell won the battle for second with Jonathan Allen completing the podium. Warren Kindberg and Ken Schilling made up the top-five.

Logan Toke completed a sweep for his first victory in the **PKS Kart Supplies Micro Swift** division. Toke entered the weekend leading in the championship standings not having won in the previous three rounds. He took care of that, leading all the sessions from qualifying through both heat races and the main event. Toke won the Final with a wire-to-wire performance, leading by over three seconds at the checkered flag. Parker DeLong and Enzo Deligny joined him on the podium with Ethan Nascimento and Ian Aguilera completing the top-five. Jacopo Pizzinato was the lone driver in the **Rolison Performance Group S5 Junior Stock Honda** category, winning unchallenged.

The month of August is off for the California ProKart Challenge as Superkarts! USA hosts the SKUSA Pro Tour SummerNationals at the New Castle Motorsports Park in New Castle, Indiana on August 11-13. The PKC championship chase resumes on Labor Day weekend with the Monterey Bay Karters hosting the series on September 1-2. For more information on anything related to SKUSA, please visit the website – www.superkartsusa.com and be sure to follow the Superkarts! USA [Facebook](#) page, [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts – or call the SKUSA head office at 951-491-0808.

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About Superkarts! USA:

Established in 1995, Superkarts! USA is dedicated to shifterkart and TaG racing, and is the leader in the field, promoting four regional racing series. Racing programs are currently running in California, Canada, Hawaii, Indiana, Louisiana, Nevada, Oregon, Texas and Washington, in cooperation and support from official tire supplier MG Tires and the Evinco line of race tires. In 2017, the organization will be promoting the eighth edition of the SKUSA Pro Tour, which features the new WinterNationals, paired with the familiar SpringNationals and SummerNationals. All of it leads up to the 21st running of the annual SKUSA SuperNationals – the biggest kart race in the world – held every November in Las Vegas, NV. For more information on SKUSA, please visit www.superkartsusa.com.