

Contact: Los Angeles Karting Championship
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2018 UNDERWAY FOR LOS ANGELES KARTING CHAMPIONSHIP

New championship chases begin season at CalSpeed Karting Center

FONTANA, CA (February 23, 2018) – For over three decades, the Los Angeles Karting Championship has provided the platform for racers to enjoy, develop, and compete year after year in the southern California area. The 2018 season is no different with nine events scheduled on the year with a diverse collection of karting classes racing for year-end championships. Those title chases got underway with Round One of 2018 on February 18 at the CalSpeed Karting Center in Fontana, California. The 'Tecnico' layout in the clockwise direction was the circuit for the first round, which welcomed a number of first time winners.

The Los Angeles Karting Championship has been the home for many of the young talent climbing the karting ladder. The 2018 season is no different with a number of young stars developing in the *P1 Engines* Mini Swift class. Jesus Vasquez Jr. started the year out with the pole position in the category, as the top four were separated by just 27 thousandths of a second. Among them was 2017 Micro Swift champion Logan Toke, 2017 race winner Kasey Gillis and Cooper Hicks. In the Prefinal, Gillis worked his way into the top spot, dropping Vasquez to second. Toke finished in the fifth spot, but would not be denied in the Final. Toke jumped up to second early and ran behind Gillis for much of the race until they fought for the lead in the closing laps. Toke assumed the top spot with the white flag waving, holding on to the checkered flag for victory in his Mini Swift debut at LAKC. Vasquez came 65 thousandths short at the line, with Gillis completing the podium. Hicks and AJ Matheson rounded out the top-five.

Surpassing the highest entry totals throughout 2017 already with the opening event was the *Empire Karts* Micro Swift division. A total of 19 drivers took part in the opening event, led throughout the day by John Antonino. The 2017 Honda Kid Kart Expert champion swept the day. Antonino edged out Logan Ainsworth by six hundredths of a second in qualifying for fast time. He led 10 of the 11 laps in the Prefinal, including fast lap of the race, before going wire-to-wire in the main event. Recording fast laps of the race, Antonino stretched out to a 3.3-second advantage at the checkered flag. Logan Chambers ran second with Gavin Decuir rounding out the podium. Kane Martin won the fight for fourth over Max Repolust with Ainsworth down in sixth.

The *Ryan Perry Motorsport* X30 Junior Expert class saw a number of drivers graduate to the Senior ranks over the winter break, with this season to showcase new talent at the front of the field. Alan Tang was among the top contenders last year, returning to steal the first top qualifier award of 2018, edging out Jacob Yesnick by nine thousandths of a second. Colin Queen and

Bryce Stevens were both within one tenth of Tang on the stopwatch. It was Tang and Queen fighting for the lead in the Prefinal, with Tang holding the advantage after 11 laps. The lead group grew in the Final, as did the intensity. Tang found himself out of the race early on, and Kameron Perry knifed his way to the front. Fighting a number of laps for the lead with Queen, Perry secured the lead on the white flag lap, holding to the checkered flag for his first LAKC victory. Stevens and Jonathon Portz slipped past Queen for second and third with Cole Cotham placing fifth.

Among the many graduating to the *Nash Motorsportz* X30 Senior Pro division is Alex Siragusa. The Senior rookie was the only driver to break the 42-second mark (41.959) in qualifying. It was still tight with the top-three - Justice Lepe and last year's champion Colby DuBato - within five hundredths of Siragusa. In the Prefinal, Siragusa had an issue after six laps, and retired, thus allowing Lepe to score the race win. Siragusa started the 18-lap from 16th in the combined race group. The top qualifier was the quickest kart on the track, and worked his way toward the point. Aidan Yoder put himself in the lead for much of the main event, and led with the white flag flying with Siragusa behind. Siragusa was able to complete the hard charge from the tail, taking the lead and scoring victory in his Senior debut. Yoder fell down to fourth in the action, with Lepe into second and Cody Kelleher in third. DuBato completed the top-five. Yuki Tanaka won the 2 *Wild Karting* X30 Senior Intermediate class, joined on the podium by Cody Diggs and Gregory DiMaggio.

Branden Bell was able to secure a sweep on the day in the *Mike Manning Karting* X30 Master division. Bell was able to squeak out the fast time in qualifying, with only nine thousandths separating he, Tony Rossetti and Chris Kneevers. Bell made sure to step up the pace in the Prefinal, leading all 11 laps with fast lap of the race. Kneevers was able to pressure Bell early, however, began falling down the order in the second half of the race. This allowed Bell to cruise to a 2.1-second advantage for the victory over Steve Martin and Robert Drenk. Kneevers dropped down to fifth behind David Roberts.

The largest shifterkart class of the LAKC opener was the *MRC S3 Novice Stock Honda* division, welcoming 11 drivers. Leading throughout the day was Eddie Tafoya, earning his first class victory. Tafoya bested the field in qualifying, clearing the field by over three tenths of a second. He won the Prefinal by five seconds, and nearly doubled it in the Final to secure the victory. Jacob Pope and Emon Fazlollahi joined him on the podium. Sumner Trevor and Quintin Bineau completed the top-five.

Matt O'Donnell won in his *Kimball Williams Racing* S4 Master Stock Honda debut. Javier Colombo set the pace early on, posting fast lap in qualifying and winning the Prefinal. O'Donnell started the main event in fourth, and was able to stalk Colombo in the second half of the Final. Matt was able to take the lead on the white flag lap, holding on to reach the checkered flag first for the victory. Adrian Yong followed him through to take second from Colombo. Last year's S4 champ John Crow moved to the *PKS S4 Super Master Stock Honda* division for 2018, sweeping the opening round. Crow went untouched, earning the Final victory by nearly 10 seconds. Myan Spaccarelli worked up to second with Sean Bond in third.

Crow was able to double up on the day, sweeping the *iKart West Briggs 206 Master* class. Winning twice last year, Crow has already reached half that total with the opening round victory. David Roberts was second with 2017 champion Steven Campbell in third. Jetson Lieser swept the *Mack Motorsports Briggs 206 Senior* division in his LAKC debut. Lieser battled with Crow for the overall victory in the race group, scoring the checkered flag. Daniel Eaton and Ryan Carey completed the top-three.

The IAME KA100 made its LAKC debut this weekend with nine drivers total in the combined race group. The Senior class, presented by *IAME USA West*, was dominated by last year's Briggs champion Henry Morse. While not the quickest driver in the Final, Morse went wire-to-wire for the victory. Luis Persz took home fast lap honors, placing second with Jared Caylor in third. Robert

Perez swept the Master class, presented by *Superkarts! USA*, with Jeff Thralls and Arman Cornell on the podium.

Other winners on the day include:

Phil Giebler Racing Open Shifter Pro: Tyler Coffman
Phil Giebler Racing Open Shifter Novice: Rogelio Aguiluz
Baldozier Racing S1 Pro Stock Honda: Billy Musgrave
Mad Old Nut S2 Semi-Pro Stock Honda: Kian
TruTech X30 Senior Novice: Sicheng Li
Mike Manning Karting X30 Super Master: John Nielsen
Italcorse S5 Junior Stock Honda: Cash Baxley
MDG X30 Junior Novice: Steven Grafton
Formula Works Honda Kid Kart Expert: Zate Legend
Formula Works Honda Kid Kart Novice: Nixon Ellsworth

The 2018 Los Angeles Karting Championship season continues with Round Two, scheduled for March 25 at the CalSpeed Karting Center facility. For more about the Los Angeles Karting Championship program, please visit LAKC.org and 'Like' them on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/LAKC.org) and follow on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/LAKC.org).

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About the Los Angeles Karting Championship (LAKC):

Since 1985, the Los Angeles Karting Championship series, a true 501(c) (7) non-profit organization, has provided a family-friendly, sprint kart racing environment for all ages in the Southern California region. Our mission is to provide the most competitive, largest sprint kart classes in the region at the lowest prices in the industry. We are extremely proud of averaging of 2,400 competitive entries per year. Our series operates from the CalSpeed Karting facility located in Fontana, CA. For more information about the Los Angeles Karting Championship please visit www.lakc.org.