

THE VIC MINERELLI MEMORIAL CUP

By Geoff Salmon

Twelve months ago, a meeting was held at Lismore between a number of interested parties concerning Super 200. The overall decision was that the Club should hold an event similar to the Jim Riley Memorial that used to be held at the Gold Coast.

Thus was born the Vic Minerelli Memorial Cup.

Vic Minerelli was a life member of the Lismore Kart Club, who had a liking for twin 200cc Open class karts.

Reed or Rotary valve air cooled engines revving to 20,000 revs and running on sticky tyres was the format and Vic Minerelli in his Number 27 kart was a starter at all the events that counted up and down the East Coast of Australia.

Vic Minerelli had a passion for this class and karting in general.

On Sunday the 6th August 2009 a small but dedicated field of Supers arrived on the Saturday to "DIAL IN" in anticipation of the days racing on the Sunday.

The drivers came from all over, John Rollins from Victoria, a man I had not seen since the early 90's, had an engine failure on the Saturday, rebuilt the engine Saturday Night and ran it in Sunday Morning, unfortunately to no avail, and was a non starter for the first heat.

Steve Pittman was there, the man that designed and built the "VENOM" Chassis for the twin 200 class and is a devoted driver and promoter of this class of racing.



Greg McGuinness was there as well, for the week-end driving the original Vic Minerelli chassis and running Vic's old number 27, Greg known as the Lismore Jet after many years of top level racing at Lismore and again up and down the East Coast of Australia.

The man who helped put this meeting together Reg Underhill was there and was very determined to do well.

Bruce Hine was there with his entry driven by the unchallenged Australian Champion Rotax Over 35 driver, Jerry Brookes. I was of the opinion that Gerry had sat in and driven a Super 200 on a previous occasion, BUT in an interview during the day and at the presentation Gerry categorically stated that he had been waiting 20 years to drive one of these "ROCKETS" and further commented that

“YOU CAN’T DESCRIBE THE ACCELERATION AND THE NECK JARRING IMPACT WITHOUT FIRST DRIVING ONE” So Gerry was impressed.

Unfortunately Barry Fisher was going to drive his twin on the day but due to lack of time and suitable engines was relegated to the sidelines to watch.

During the first heat of racing Barry came up to the Commentary position and made some great remarks about Vic Minerelli and his association with the Lismore Kart Club, which was well received.

His daughter Jodie Nommenson (Fisher) was nominated in a 135cc engined chassis unfortunately blew the engine in carburetion and was again a non starter.

Heat One:

Saw some great action, unfortunately Reg Underhill went into the first corner with a little bit too much power on and finished in the wood chips to be a DNF in the heat, Gerry Brookes took advantage early and was able to storm away to take the victory from Steve Pittman and Greg McGuinness running third.

Heat two:

Gerry Brookes looked like making it two from two until late in the heat he slowed significantly and finished with a DNF. A great battle between Greg McGuinness and Reg Underhill saw the final placing as follows Steve Pittman first, second Greg McGuinness and third Reg Underhill.

Pre-Final:

After an engine change for Gerry Brookes (we found out that a kinked fuel line was the cause of the engine failing in the second heat) unfortunately a failure again in the pre-final resulted in a second DNF.

Also after the days racing had finished we found out that Greg McGuinness was racing without brakes ALL DAY – brave man Greg. The 27 kart in the Pre-Final ran third with Reg Underhill finishing in second position. A great display of reliability and understanding of the driving conditions by Steve Pittman enabled him to win the pre-final.

15 laps of racing faced these drivers for the final of the inaugural Vic Minerelli Memorial Cup and the pit lane hummed with anticipation as a team of pushers assisted the drivers on their way.

Gerry Brookes after some excellent pit work from both Brian Hine and crew was determined to take a win in the final and drove very sensibly to achieve just that, Steve Pittman drove through to second and Reg Underhill third with Greg McGuinness (remember no brakes ALL DAY) ran fourth.

Overall on the day finished with Steve Pittman’s name to go onto the Cup for the first year, with Gerry Brookes swearing to be back for next year running second and Reg Underhill third and Greg McGuinness running fourth. All in all a great days racing and we all look forward to the Second Vic Minerelli Memorial Cup in 2010.

To all the sponsors a hardy thank you and we look forward to having your support again in 2010.