

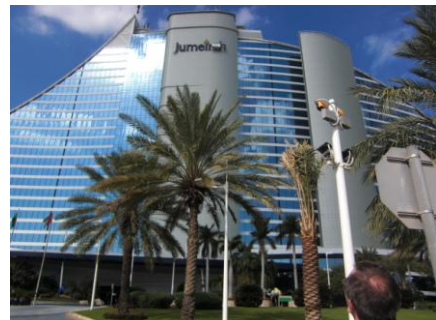


# Superkarts Dubai 2010

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The first running of the World Superkart Challenge took place on January 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> 2010 as part of the 24 hours of Rennes package held in Dubai, giving 2 qualifying sessions and 3 races. The event was coordinated by the organisation that runs the International Superkart Series across Europe. Each team had to load their super-karts, tools and spares into wooden crates to be transported; these were loaded into two containers that were shipped from Antwerp to Dubai. DHL Global Logistics did a great job in getting all of the kit to Dubai intact and on time. There were 15 teams attending the event from the Netherlands, England and Germany.

Most teams traveled on weekend prior to the event even to look at the sights of Dubai. The organisers arranged accommodation at the Holiday Inn Express in the suburb of Knowledge Village for all of the teams. The hotel has a very good restaurant on the 5th floor with a magnificent view over the city and the rooms were very nice and as required had either a huge double or twin beds.



Dubai is truly a land of superlatives. In addition to the world's tallest building (Burj Khalif, 828 meters) there is the only 7 star hotel (Burj Arab 321 meters), the broadest 5 star hotel (Jumeira Beach Hotel) in the world in the shape of a wave that longest unsupported bridge between two buildings, the world's largest penthouse at the Hotel Atlantis on the Palm Jumeirah, the tallest fountains Games (over 600 meters), the largest mall in the world (Dubai Mall) and much more. Many places in Dubai are still being built and we have seen a lot of construction workers, the economic crisis did not really seem to make an impact.





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On Tuesday, John Riley from the Redspeed team was involved in overseeing the unloading of the containers and crates. Each team had plenty of space in the huge Boxing Autodrom of Dubai.



On Wednesday, the superkarts were unloaded and prepared ready to race. Also, the delivery of the Elf Gasoline SK 35 arrived; unfortunately it was expensive because it had to be transported from Europe to the Circuit. Pumped petrol, like almost all foods and Services in Dubai at 6.25 dirhams per Gallon (about 20 cents per liter) is very favourable.

Technical Commissioners Ton Nachtigeler, Deer and Heinz had arrived by then. All

the teams had done a good job and were scrutinised without any complaints by the technical control.

On the evening the 24h organizers Creventic invited the teams to the 24H Welcome Party. In addition to the speeches there was a fantastic demonstration of Belly Dancing, which got the USP team very excited. It was a very nice get together with more than 500 participants in the event room with fantastic views from the balcony, everyone chatted about their goals for the races.



On Thursday morning at 10 o'clock in excellent weather conditions, the free training began. The Dubai Autodrome has a lot of circuit layouts;



the Super Karts used the national circuit 3.541 km in length. The GP course of 5.4 km has only a straight and a right-hander more. The national circuit is very demanding, with various combinations of corners. The best time in free practice went to Marcel Maasmann (NL) with 1:26.105 ahead of Roy Panman (NL) with a time of 1:27.242, third was Kievitsbosch Arjan (NL) with 1:27.607 followed by Priscilla Speelmann (NL), the only woman in the driver's field. The best German was

Jürgen Reinke in 6<sup>th</sup> and the best Englishman was Eddie Kooiker placed 11<sup>th</sup>. Free practice was a great success for John Riley who prepared the Redspeed karts for Marcel Maasmann, Roy Panman and Rob Knook. The track was very sandy in this and all further sessions.

Two hours later the qualifying started, topped again by Marcel Maasmann ahead of Roy Panman and Arjan Kievitsbosch. Everyone had new tyres so lap times were much improved, 1:25,057, 1:25,306 and 1:25,591 for the leading trio. In 4<sup>th</sup> was the European Champion Gavin Bennett (GB) ahead of Jürgen Reinke. In the afternoon was the second qualifying session which saw Gavin Bennett take the pole position in a time of 1:24,611 ahead of Marcel Maasmann and Roy Panman. Kevin Busby (GB) displaced Jürgen Reinke for 6<sup>th</sup>. 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> brought some tension as the times of Priscilla Speelman, Cor Euser, Thomas Bernhard and Jorg Wagner very close together.



At 17:15 the first race started, over 14 laps, but because of the early time of year it quickly became dark and the race finished under floodlights, a new experience for all teams. The race for the lead was very exciting between Gavin Bennett, Marcel Maasmann and Roy Panman, changing frequently. It won by Marcel Maasmann from Roy Panman by only 0.341 seconds followed by Gavin Bennett, who was 0.424 seconds behind Marcel. Jürgen Reinke was in this exciting race finally finishing behind Arjan Kievitsbosch who claimed 5<sup>th</sup>.

Friday morning at 10:00 o'clock the second race began. The drivers had optimal conditions with excellent weather and 25 degrees. Winning the second race of the World Superkart Challenge was Arjan Kievitsbosch ahead of Marcel Maasmann and Kevin Busby. Gavin Bennett, getting the fastest lap of 1:23,004, but failed to finish along with Jürgen Reinke and Roy Panman.

On Sunday afternoon just before the start 24 hours of the race was the third round of the finals and so the World Superkart Challenge. Unlike the previous 2 races, the grid was decided from the finishing positions of those races, not the qualifying sessions. The





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pole position went to Marcel Maasmann folloed by Arjan Kievitsbosch, Kevin Busby and Priscilla Speelman. Gavin Bennett was in 7<sup>th</sup> due to his DNF. Roy Panman had a problem on the formation, but while trying to resolve the issue he drove out of position and he and Kevin Busby came together. Fortunately both could continue, but Kevin lost his good grid position and initially fell far behind. Marcel Maasmann had an unchallenged victory, second was Gavin Bennett ahead of Arjan Kievitsbosch. Best German again was Jürgen Reinke in 5<sup>th</sup> with the only lady in the race Priscilla Speelman finishing seventh.

For all participants it was a beautiful event, even if some participants would have liked a little more success, notably the German drivers Thomas Wagner and Roland Bischoff and Jörg Bernhard, but as they know this is part of motorsport: As there are winners there are also losers.

This has been the first event the European organisation plan to run outside of Europe. The whole sequence was very well arranged and with weather conditions around 25 degrees was all very pleasant. It remains to be seen what interest there will be for next years even, but hopefully even more teams from Europe, USA, Australia and South Africa, giving a chance for you to compete at international level with the best drivers in the world. Dubai definitely worth a trip and the effort for the team is minimal.



**See you again next year in Dubai!**

