

National 250GP Rounds 8 & 9 – Anglesey Race report

The 250 National Championship headed for the stunning Anglesey circuit for rounds 8 & 9 of the ACU, Dunlop and Willis Developments backed series with Championship leader Ant Hodson keen to retain his series lead over Dan Jackson and the reigning champion — Andrew Sawford. It was Anglesey last year where the title battle took a turn in favour of the St Neots Motorcycles backed Sawford, when Hodson crashed out at high speed allowing Sawford to place at least 1 hand on the inaugural 250 National title—which he went on to do in fine style.

Round 8 - filled with drama and crashes.

Qualifying saw Hodson place his DJG Construction / TSM Yamaha on pole but it was Sawford who lead for the first part of the race with Hodson and Rich Grinling, back on his RS Honda for this round having competed at Oulton on his reverse cylinder TZ, keeping Sawf honest in very close formation.

But on the 6th lap, the race was brought to an abrupt stop as Grinling's RG Carpentry backed Honda threw him over the high side exiting the banking section of the track, leaving the luckless Newark ace breathless in the middle of the circuit.

For the restart, Sawford got the drop and never looked back but it was drama all the way behind him . As the pack headed into the tight Rocket 2 section of the track Melksham's Darrell Higgins made a hash of things crashing out , almost taking quick starting Lee Goddard and Sian Brooks' Spyre Ltd Honda with him, unfortunately for Brooks, having survived that scare, she arrived at the tight Peel right hander next carrying too much speed and also crashed out of a very strong position.

At the flag it was Sawford by a comfortable 5 seconds from Ant Hodson with Dan Jackson on the Team Sigie TZ in 3rd position. Derek Clark had a fine ride to 4th on board the Spares Unlimited of Hull backed RS Honda and the consistent John Lewis collected 5th on his Hicks Heating and Plumbing TZ. First of the Irish contenders John Ella came home in a very strong 6th position on his Peretech RS Honda. Royston Keen continued his NG Cup winning ways in a fine 7th on the road only a second ahead of Guernsey's Phil Guillou. 2nd place in the NG Cup went to Paul McCullagh on his Chippenham Motorcycles TZ, and 9th on the road while completing the top 10 saw Lee Goddard recover from his dead last position on lap 1 following his excursion off track to avoid the crashing Higgins.

With Keen and McCullagh 1st and 2nd in the Cup and really holding their own within the top 10 on the road Paul Metcalfe completed the Cup podium , and also collected points in the overall championship in 12th.

Round 9—Sunday, Cup battle boils over

As the 20 lapper got under way in the sunshine of Sunday, attention was divided between the battle to catch Sawford at the front and also on the NG Cup battle developing between Royston Keen and Paul McCullagh who were locked together on the road.



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With Sawford once again getting the drop, and the overall pace considerably quicker than the previous days encounter, it was not long before the drama kicked in. As the pack rounded the Cork Screw exit onto the start straight, Cup leader Royston Keen was thrown from his TZ and cruelly took his main Cup Championship rival McCullagh with him. Both riders took a real beating in the awkward crash but both walked away in the end. Re-built and keen as always, it was veteran Darrell Higgins who took chase after Sawford for a couple of laps but by the time the Higgins, Hodson, Jackson and Clark argument settled down, Sawford was gone!

In the end, Sawford completed a calculated and very cool double victory to close the gap even further at the top of the title chase, with Hodson in second and once again in a repeat of Saturdays top 3, Dan Jackson completed the podium party. Higgins' Dennis Trollope TZ Yamaha was next in a fine result considering he added to the Anglesey scenery the previous day! In another great ride, Lee Goddard brought his LLG Racing RS Honda home in 5th setting some very fast lap times en route. John Lewis 6th, Derek Clark 7th reigning Cup Champion Adrian Martin was next in 8th, who was also recovering from a fall the previous day, John Ella was 9th and a delighted Paul Metcalfe was 10th on the road handing him his maiden NG Cup win and just 0.01 of a second behind him was Gary Vines collecting 2nd in the NG Cup, enough to move him into 2nd in the NG Cup Championship chase. Adrian Morris joined the Cup podium for the second time this year with 3rd position. With Chris Harrison retired his Snagglepuss Racing TZ out of the race on lap 4, none of the top 3 in the series scored.

Dunlop Performance of the Day Awards

The Dunlop Performance of the Day Awards went the way of Royston Keen in Saturdays round 8 encounter. Royston collected 7th overall and the Cup win with some incredible lap times on his 1996 TZ. Sundays rear tyre, compliments of Dunlop Motor Sport went to Lee Goddard who had a tricky weekend but again set some very fast lap times in his efforts to make up for being taken off track in Saturdays race, to a poor start on Sunday but a strong recovery to 5th position.

Just look at the points below and how this is shaping up. Sawford does not like Pembrey which is next up, Hodson and Jackson do, All the top NG Cup riders go well there, so life is pretty exciting in the 250GP arena at the moment!

Championship: Hodson 158, Jackson 147, Sawford 141, Grinling 83, Higgins 80, Goddard 68, Lewis 58, Hudson 56, GUILLOU 55, Snow 41

Cup: McCullagh 140, Vines 113, Keen 105, Harrison 96, Barrett 87, Hunt 67, Cox 64, Metcalfe 61, D Hudson 57, Morris 43.

Next Round—Pembrey 17th 18th September



Paul Metcalfe Round 9 Cup winner



Guess where ? Series leader Hodson at the seaside

Official Championship photographer and media coverage: EDPphoto.co.uk | press@edpphoto.com

For up-to-date NGRRC results, lap times and race dates please visit www.ngroadracing.org

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