

Rob Storey crowned 2007 Champion

Contributed by NSWFF Media
Saturday, 03 November 2007

It came down to the last race of the final round, but Firepower Racing's Rob Storey has claimed the NSW State Formula Ford 1600 Championship for 2007, after claiming the third and final race of the weekend at Oran Park Raceway to dethrone arch rival and defending champion, Icon Motorsport driver Ben Morley.

(c) Pic by John Morris - MPix

In what was one of the entertaining races of the year, Storey and Morley fought it out tooth and nail along with Team Sydney driver Glenn Welch, the third and final race saw Welch right in the mix of the championship outcome as he battled with both Storey and Morley throughout the 12-lap journey. At the completion of the third and final race it was Storey that came out the winner, and most importantly sealed the NSW State Championship in the process, when he downed Morley and Welch in second and third respectively.

Up until the third and final race it looked as if defending champion Morley was set to continue his Oran Park Raceway domination when he ran away with victory in both race one and two, and also topped the time sheets in qualifying. Back in round four at Oran Park Raceway it was Morley had clean swept the round by taking qualifying and all three race wins.

(c) Pic by John Morris - MPix

With the championship win as his main motivator Storey was focused on claiming both the battle and the war, but he definitely had to fight for it. For the majority of the final race it was Storey, Morley and Welch that kept everyone on their toes, as they swapped positions at some of the fastest and most daring sections of the 2.62km Oran Park Raceway circuit.

The final race was marred by a safety car period when it was deployed to retrieve the stranded car of Ryan Campbell, who had made heavy contact with the wall at the final turn on the sixth lap, but that didn't hamper the battle for the lead one iota; in fact it actually added some spice.

Anglo Australian Motorsport driver Tom Tweedie had one of his strongest drives to date when he finished the final race just outside the podium finishers in fourth place followed by a struggling CAMS Rising Star Daniel Erickson, Tom Ballard, Ken Birt, Bruce McCabe, Derryn Harrison, and the tenth place finisher was David Holland. Chris Goodman was on track for a top five finish up until a spin in the closes stages saw him drop back down the field to finish in 13th.

Earlier in the weekend it was Morley that claimed the winning honours in the second race on Sunday morning after he held out a determined Storey for the entire 10-lap distance. The battle for third place was also an interesting affair with Erickson and Welch, and it resulted in Erickson falling back to finish in sixth due to a plug lead coming astray, and this allowed Welch to get by and finish on the podium in third place, although he was minus a front nose cone due to earlier heavy contact with the back of Erickson.

On the final lap of the second race it saw Welch and Goodman come in contact with one another and saw the latter spin off the circuit and into the outer wall. In what was a fine drive, Tom Ballard finished in fourth, followed by Tweedie, Erickson, McCabe, Harrison, Campbell and Birt in tenth place. Morley and Storey set the tone for the weekend when they battled it out in the opening race, and it resulted in Morley gaining the upper over Storey, and Erickson made a strong start to end up with a third place finish, ahead of Welch, McCabe, Ballard, Harrison, Birt, Campbell and Holland in tenth.

The opening race saw Tweedie trigger the safety car when he beached himself in the sand trap exiting the dog leg, but was able to rejoin the race. Goodman was in the wars in the opening race too, when he had a nudge from coming together with Welch causing him to spin to the infield. He regained composure and returned to the track and as a consequence dropped dropping from fifth place down to 11th place, which was where he finished.

Matt McGill and Jason Liddell failed to get past the opening race due to mechanical issues and took no further part in the remainder of the weekend.

Qualifying saw Morley too quick for his rivals when he outpaced Welch, Storey, Erickson and Tweedie in fifth with a best lap time of 1:13. 3797.

Final NSW State Formula Ford 1600 Championship point standings (after six completed rounds):

- 1 Rob Storey - 492
- 2 Ben Morley - 473
- 3 Daniel Erickson - 374
- 4 Tom Tweedie - 326
- 5 Glenn Welch - 309

The Rookie of the Year was won by CAMS Rising Star driver Daniel Erickson.

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