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Press Release re

NEWCASTLE SHOWGROUND SPEEDWAY

For immediate Release

Speedway fans in Newcastle are in for some treats this summer with the announcement of several major attractions to be staged at the Newcastle Showground track.

As usual it should be a season of quality on-track action at the iconic venue that inevitably turns on exciting racing in a great atmosphere.

Promoter Graeme Boyd has announced that the first meeting will be on Friday night December 11 and will honour the name of one of the founding fathers of the sport as we know it today – Johnnie Hoskins.

For many years the old Newcastle International Motordrome track hosted a Johnnie Hoskins Trophy meeting for speedway motorcycles and promoter Boyd wants to ensure the event returns to the speedway calendar on an annual basis with both solos and sidecars racing for their own version of the trophy.

Boyd said he wants to acknowledge the significance of Hoskins in staging a meeting at West Maitland on 15 December 1923 before later promoting racing at the Newcastle Speedway, among a string of other venues in Australia and the UK.

“I know much has been written about the origins of dirt track racing prior to 1923, but that date is the significant milestone that the sport in the Hunter region is based on” said Boyd.

“I hope that we can continue to honour Hoskins’ name with an annual meeting, right through to the centenary of that West Maitland meeting in 2023”.

What is certain to boost the significance of that meeting is that it will provide both solo and sidecar riders with a rare opportunity of racing at the venue that will host the Australian Championship for both divisions later in the season.

Riders with aspirations of being competitive in the national title meetings are likely to grab the opportunity of a shakedown run in the Johnnie Hoskins Trophy.

One thing that is certain about the solo line-up is that it will include some of the best crop of teenage riders coming through the ranks in many years. Some are from the Hunter region and while some of this home grown talent has yet to venture overseas they will enjoy the opportunity to race against more experienced riders and so gauge their progress in the sport.

Once again this summer the Newcastle Showground will be one of three tracks to host a round of the Australian Speedway Solo Championship.

After rounds at Gillman in Adelaide on January 2 and at Mildura the following night, Newcastle will host the third and final round of the championship on Saturday night January 9.

For many fans the most exciting prospect for this season is that the Newcastle Showground will host the Australian Sidecar Championship on Easter Saturday night.

The long gone and much lamented Newcastle International Motordrome staged the Australian Sidecar Championship on three occasions but this will be the first time that the city's Showground will be the venue.

Promoter Boyd has been working on bringing this event to Newcastle for several years now and is particularly pleased to have secured it for 2010.

As far as the sidecars are concerned "Anyone who has seen sidecars race on the Showground track knows how breathtaking they can be and with all of the nation's best gathered for the championship it will be a meeting not to be missed" said Boyd.

While there is a particular old world charm about the grandstands at the Showground Boyd is conscious of enhancing spectator facilities. He is working with Showground authorities with a plan to expand spectator capacity by building up an embankment at the Entertainment Centre end of the track.

In addition there is a plan for a VIP Methanol Club to be established for fans for the Australian championship meetings.

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