



Media Release

17 December 2008

The NSW SRA inc presents the **Australian Championship Qualifier to be held at the Transcrete Central Coast Speedway on the Jan 2nd 2009.**

The top 6 qualifiers from the 16 selected riders will earn a spot in the 3 round Australian championships starting at the Newcastle showgrounds the next night the 3rd Jan.

the 16 riders will contest a 20 heat programme with the top 6 progressing.

As well as the qualifier there will be 500cc solo support ,350cc juniors and the short track mx for 250 and open classes.

Racing will commence at 4pm with a pre meeting racing featuring the 350 juniors, mx boys and solo support with the top qualifiers moving into the evening programme to support the Australian qualifier.

practice for the top 16 riders will also take place from 4.30pm,with the main event starting at 7pm.

Gates open 3pm,

Admission; adults \$15,

12-16 years \$10

U/12(accompanied by adult)free

(riders in riding order)

1/Tom Hedley– MILDURA (VIC)

Mildura's Tom Hedley was the 'next big thing' according to some judges a few years back, but hasn't quite found his rhythm since suffering a serious head injury just over a year ago. He is ready to re-launch his career and tonight would be a great place to start.

2/HUGH SKIDMORE – COFFS HARBOUR (NSW)

The current NSW Under 21 Champion, Hugh is a top kid and a real racer in every sense of the word. Has really come on since teaming with renowned engine tuner Steve Langdon last year and tonight will be his biggest test to date.

3/LEE HERNE – Lumeah(NSW)

Lee is entitled to win this meeting, but nothing is ever straight forward in speedway and there are a dozen young kids trying to stop him. He is a multiple Australian finalist and former international. Hard to stop tonight.

4/KOZZA SMITH – NEWCASTLE (NSW)

A Gifted motorcyclist who has channelled his skills into speedway and is starting to get the rewards for his efforts. Outstanding second place in the recent NSW Championship and one of the favourites tonight on his local track. Mr Excitement!

5/KURT SHIELDS – MULBRING (NSW)

This bloke has a great riding style and wants an international career so bad it hurts! He knows tonight is a very important meeting in terms of his future and recent form suggests he could get through. Part of a family that knows nothing except speedway! Solid chance.

6/RYAN SEDGMEN – MILDURA (VIC)

Ryan is a top kid and has an enormous amount of skill. A crash last summer at Gillman seems to have taken the edge off him a little and some recent health issues aren't helping him at all. Has the skill, but he'll need to bounce back to his best tonight if he's to progress.

7/DARCY WARD – BRISBANE (QLD)

Strap yourself in! This kid is as fast as any 16 year old in the recent history of the sport. Eats, sleeps and breathes speedway and this will be his toughest test on home soil yet. Could win it, or may be found out as being a little inexperienced at this level. Great talent and a huge future, regardless!

8/JUSTIN SEDGMEN – MILDURA (VIC)

Like his older brother Ryan, Justin has bags of skill and so far has not put a foot wrong in the senior ranks. Top young bloke with a big future in the sport and could prove a dark horse tonight. Great text book riding style too.

9/SAM MASTERS – NEWCASTLE (NSW)

This bloke can ride anything fast! He's just a kid at heart but if it's got a throttle he'll make it work. Has a burning ambition to ignite his international career and knows that tonight is a great place to start. Not too far behind Darcy Ward in terms of potential.

10/MICHAEL PENFOLD – NEWCASTLE (NSW)

This kid is a real surprise package. Looked handy as a junior, but not overly special, however his efforts on the 500 have been enormous. Starting to gain a reputation as someone to be reckoned with and fears nobody. One to watch.

11/RICHARD SWEETMAN – NEWCASTLE (NSW)

Supremely talented youngster who would probably be the bookie's favourite tonight, but still has to get the job done. Top young bloke with a promising international career ahead of him and really loves this Central Coast layout. Hard to stop.

12/MITCHELL DAVEY – TOWNSVILLE (QLD)

Mitch has a really nice style and loads of potential. Will need a good first ride tonight to get a roll on. Just returned from debut UK season and could qualify tonight but will need to ride out of his skin. Top young fella too.

13/AARON SUMMERS – ADELAIDE (SA)

Very neat rider with a solid UK season under his belt, Aaron will be looking for a podium finish tonight and hopefully won't get swamped by riders who know the track better than he does. Deserves to get through but there are no guarantees.

14/ARLO BUGEJA – ADELAIDE (SA)

Nice young bloke with a massive heart. Gives every race everything, but might find this hurdle a little hard to overcome. Would be a threat on his home track, but might come up a little short tonight. That said, he wouldn't be here if he wasn't good enough – has a puncher's chance!

15/JAMES HOLDER – APPIN (NSW)

This bloke is a solid competitor. Doesn't win too many meetings, but rarely finishes outside the top four. He's desperate to get through after riding a couple of races in the Australian Title last year. He's not a certainty to make it, but he'll be very close that's for sure. Good chance.

16/JAY HERNE – IUMEAH (NSW)

Jay is very good around here and has just done a full year in the UK. Has been threatening to do something amazing for a couple of years and tonight would be the best time to do it. Should qualify.