

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Malaysia cruises to victory at OCBC Cycle Speedway Southeast Asia Championship 2016



Team Malaysia cyclist Sofian Nabil Omar Bin Mohd Bakri (left) and team mate Muhammad Fauzan Bin Ahmad Lutfi (right) cruising to a comfortable victory against Philippines and Brunei in the finals of the OCBC Cycle Speedway Southeast Asia Championship at Singapore Sports Hub (Photo Credit: OCBC Cycle 2016)

SINGAPORE, 1 October 2016 – REGIONAL cycling powerhouse Malaysia proved its prowess once again at the OCBC Cycle Speedway Southeast Asia Championship held this morning at the Singapore Sports Hub by cruising to a comfortable victory over the Philippines and Brunei in the final. This is the team's second Championship win after its maiden victory in last year's inaugural edition.

Leading from start to finish, the boys in yellow were hardly challenged by their competitors as their lead rider built a sizeable lead straight from the flag off. The lead continued to grow after the switch-over at the halfway mark of the race, with team captain Muhammad Fauzan Bin Ahmad Lutfi and Sofian Nabil Omar Bin Mohd Bakri lapping the chasing pack who had settled into a tactical battle for second place. The Malaysians won with a time of 18:05.283, bettering their winning time from last year by 39 seconds.

“We were confident about being able to defend our champion title this year. We had an advantage this year because some of the strong competitors such as Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand were not present. We were not too worried about the semi-finals results and kept our focus on the finals instead. This was part of our strategy to win this unique race,” said Fauzan.

The battle for second place began at the switch-over, with the Filipinos and Bruneians giving up the challenge for first place and aiming for second place instead. The intense three-man sprint at the end saw the two Bruneians edging the lone Filipino to claim their spot behind the Malaysians. The Bruneians finished with a timing of 20:07.523, while the Filipinos finished with a timing of 20:07.583. However, due to a 10-second penalty at the halfway changeover, Philippines’ final finishing time was 20:17.583. The returning rider from the first five laps of the race did not get off his bike before the dismount line as he passed his wristband to his partner.

Brunei’s team captain, Azmi Bin Abd Hadzid, said: “I knew that the last Filipino rider is a sprinter, so I told my team mates to wait and follow that rider because I knew both my team mates in the second leg would do well sprinting to the finishing line. This is my second time participating in OCBC Cycle Speedway SEA Championship and my three other team mates are new to this format, so I gave them feedback on the race structure and motivated them to just believe in themselves. We supported each other through this race and I think that was important.”

In the morning’s qualifiers, Team Singapore, who placed second in last year’s competition, made a shock exit when they finished last in their heats.

The team, which was grouped together with the Philippines and Brunei, was aiming to better their timing from last year but fell short of their goal. Their opponents set a blistering pace from the start, which proved insurmountable despite a valiant fight from anchor duo Junaidi bin Hashim and Gabriel Tan.

A visibly disappointed Ho Jun Rong, Team Singapore’s captain, said: “The race was a relatively good format. It’s not a format you will see in normal races but it’s good because it emphasises a lot on teamwork and team strategy. However, things never go according to plan. It’s a very dynamic race. Even if you plan it to the best of your abilities, things may go haywire. We are always looking at a long-term plan, which is towards SEA Games 2017. This is one of the races that we’re building the momentum towards. I guess we’ll use this race to identify our weaknesses and focus on the positives.”

Despite the defeat, national coach Adrian Ng agreed that there were positive takeaways for his charges. He said: “What I’m heartened about is, instead of blaming each other, everybody is quite encouraging. Going forward, it will help us to strengthen our bond together and, hopefully in the next race, we’ll be able to deliver the results.”

In the club category, Specialized Mavericks A were too fast for their opponents as they finished first in a time of 18:31.517. Finishing second was Specialized Mavericks C with a time of 19:13.613. Team SwiftCarbon Virgin Active demonstrated a series of tactical moves during the second half of the race, preventing a clean sweep of the podium finishes by the Specialized Mavericks club, when they crossed the line in third place with a time of 20:19.020, nine-tenths of a second ahead of fourth placed Specialized Mavericks 2 who stopped the clock at 20:19.947.

Joseph Cummings from Specialized Mavericks A was happy with the team’s win and the overall experience. “There were definitely improvements from last year’s edition of the OCBC Cycle Club Speedway Championship. It was very positive. We had a lot of fun and we practiced a lot for the last two weeks. It all went exactly to plan. There definitely is a need for more organised cycling in Singapore because the cycling community is growing. The inclusion of competitions like the OCBC Cycle Speedway Club Championship is something that cyclists want to have in Singapore.”

Jeffrey Goh, President of Singapore Cycling Federation (SCF) said: “We have participants coming from Southeast Asia region and our localised clubs here that are racing. I feel that this event can be more wonderful if we have more clubs in Singapore supporting these events. This year we have organised four to five SCF-sanctioned races, but we believe that the cycling community in Singapore has grown tremendously over the last five years. Cycling is the new golf now. I believe that if we continue on this way, the future for cycling in Singapore is great.”

OCBC Cycle 2016 continues tomorrow at the Singapore Sports Hub with the community rides, which will see cyclists participate in The Straits Times Ride (23km) and The Sportive Ride (42km).

More details on OCBC Cycle 2016 can be found on www.ocbccycle.com .

RESULTS
OCBC Cycle Speedway SEA Championship

Position	Team	Name	Time
1	Team Malaysia	Akmal Hakim Bin Zakaria	18:05.283
		Amir Mustafa Bin Rusli	
		Muhammad Fauzan Bin Ahmad Lutfi	
		Nik Mohd Azwan Bin Zulkifle	
		Sofian Nabil Omar Bin Mohd Bakri	
2	Team Brunei	Azmi Bin Abd Hadzid Abdul Hadrie Morsidi	20:07.523
		Abdul Mu'iz Yuzaini	
		Andrew Mikha Bin Sianong	
		Azmi Bin Abd Hadzid	
		Muhammad Rafiuddin Bin Zikaria	
3	Team Philippines	Bon Axel Enorme	20:17.583 (inclusive of 10-second penalty)
		George Luis Oconer	
		Gerardo Amar	
		Jan Paul Montealegre Morales	
		Marko Alab Samwel Guinto Adviento	

OCBC Cycle Speedway Club Championship

Position	Team	Name	Time
1	Specialized Mavericks A	Andreas Ostern	18:31.517
		Bastian Dohling	
		Benjamin Paul Arnott	
		Paul Cummings	
		Tim Clarsen	
2	Specialized Mavericks C	Adriano Niro	19:13.613
		Alan Grant	
		James Guardino	
		Nick Swallow	
		Richard Donaldson	
3	SwiftCarbon Virgin Active	Brian Johnsen	20:19.020
		Kelvin Khoo	
		Michael Koreneff	
		Thorsten Mayr	
		Rick Dumpleton	
4	Specialized Mavericks 2	Craig Cameron	20:19.947
		Elizabeth Hodges	
		Jonathan Hooper	
		Matt Lodge	
		Richard Paine	

OCBC Cycle 2016 Programme Schedule

2 October, Sunday	Location	Time
The Sportive Ride (42km)	Nicoll Highway	5:15am
The Straits Times Ride (23km)	Nicoll Highway	7:00am

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For more information, please visit www.ocbc.com.

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