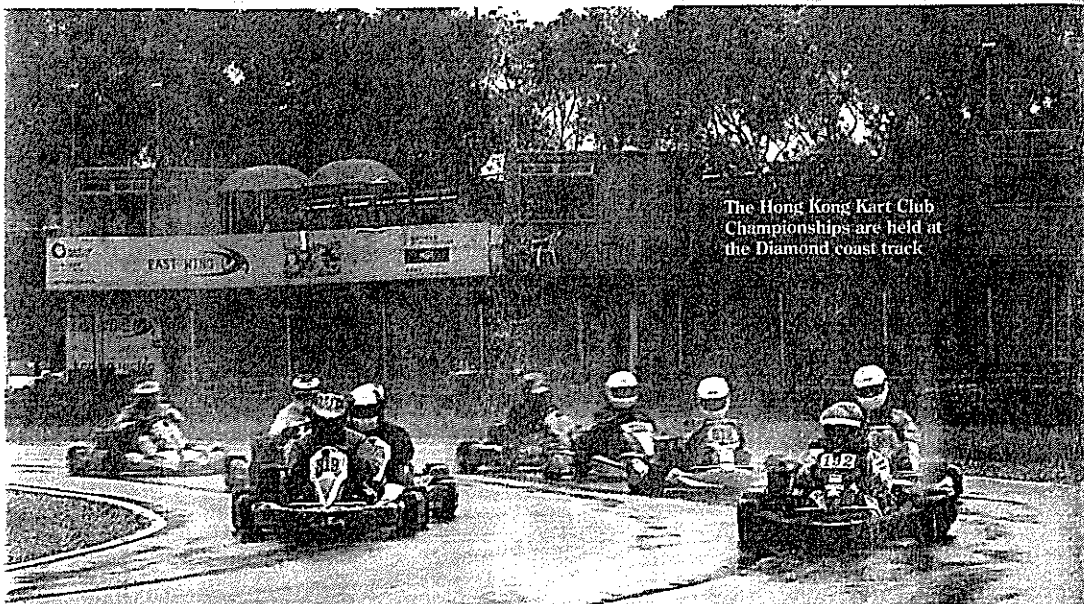


# QUICK GUIDE

# Karting in Hong Kong



The Hong Kong Kart Club Championships are held at the Diamond coast track



Luca Ferigutti is Hong Kong's leading karter

They say that size matters. But that is definitely not the case in motorsport. This month's 'Quick Guide' article will show that even such a small place like Hong Kong can offer a big thrill to all karting-inspired people. First let's take a brief look at Hong Kong itself. Being a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China it occupies an area of about 1100 square kilometres and lies to the south of the Chinese mainland. A trading port (its name literally translates as 'Fragrant Harbour') in the 19th century, Hong Kong has developed into a leading financial centre. Large companies and the banking corporations of many countries throughout the world have located here. Hong Kong is

one of the most densely inhabited areas in the world with a population of 7 million and an overall density of some 6,250 people per square kilometre. It needs to be said that another of China's administrative regions is Macau which traditionally hosts Asian Karting Open Championship (AKOC) events. Macau is famous as an arena of big racing action and in a forthcoming issue we will give you a quick guide to this region and its karting facilities. Karting activities in Hong Kong are officially administered by the National Sporting Authority, Hong Kong Kart Club Ltd, which was established in 1965. Its founder members were a group of motoring enthusiasts from different professions - civil servants, racing drivers, architects and company directors. The first Hong Kong International Kart Prix was held on the 17/18th June 1967 at the Sekkong Airstrip on a temporary circuit of 950 yards. Hong Kong based pilot Steve Holland was the winner of this event. The 2nd Hong Kong International Kart Prix took place at Victoria Park on the 9/10th November



Karting is very popular again now there is somewhere to race

1968. This temporary circuit was laid out on 4 football pitches and 8 basketball courts with a total length of 660 yards, and British driver Mickey Allen (Zip/BM) proved to be too strong for the opposition and won the main event. With the passing of time the Victoria Park International Kart Prix developed into a very prestigious karting event with generous prize money. Because it was always scheduled for the end of the year when the annual karting events all over the world had ended, most foreign champions took the opportunity to compete in Hong Kong in a sort of unofficial world championship. For decades Victoria Park remained the main karting track in Hong Kong, but for a variety of reasons karting in the region came to an abrupt halt in the early 1990s with the last International Kart Prix held in November 1992. Many attempts at establishing a new circuit failed due to lack of available space and strict environmental protection regulations. But finally, in November 2006, a permanent track with a length of 900 metres was opened and this has caused a massive increase in karting's popularity in the region. The new track is called Diamond Coast and it is the only kart circuit in Hong Kong. Currently the most famous and successful driver in Hong Kong is Luca Ferigutti. He started competing in club races in 2006 and took part in the 2007 AKOC, taking 2nd in the Senior Rotax MAX class as well as 3rd in Formula 125 Open. Another leading Hong Kong driver is 41 year-old Barry Tung who started karting as a hobby in 1993. Among his achievements to date was 3rd place in Senior Rotax MAX at the 2007 AKOC. But Tung is

not the only mature Hong Kong driver who does well abroad. His compatriots Ling Chun Pun and Vince Chong took gold and silver respectively in Rotax MAX Veteran at AKOC-2007. As for youngsters, Adrian Lau is said to be a very solid sportsman. Last year his good performances were observed by the Racing Committee and he was selected to represent Hong Kong at the Rotax Grand Finals in UAE. And lastly but not least there is Matthew Solomon. This 11 year-old won the Junior class in the 2007 Hong Kong KC Championship and definitely has what it takes to turn into a big karting star in the future. The Hong Kong championship consists of 8 rounds with classes divided into 6 categories: Senior A, Senior B, Novice C, Heavy Weight, Junior and Mini. All the races take place on the Diamond Coast track which it is anticipated will hold an international event in the near future. The staging of the Asian Karting Open Championship is one of the on-going projects to be discussed by Hong Kong organisers. Amateur karting in Hong Kong does exist but is concentrated at Diamond Coast as well. Apart from their local circuit, Hong Kong drivers also race in mainland China. This year they will concentrate on the Hong Kong Kart Club Championship, the China National Championship and the Asian Karting Open Championship. But there is a good chance that we will see drivers from Hong Kong in



The annual International Kart Prix in Victoria Park was a very prestigious event

Europe very soon. And maybe even, who knows, on the top of European podiums. Julia Petrova

This article was prepared with the help of Hong Kong Kart Club Ltd. The pictures were kindly provided by club members and from <http://karting.shirster.com>.



Matthew Solomon is a future star