

# Willshire lies second in Superkart standings after stunning display

BEN Willshire's fantastic season continued with an impressive showing in the 125cc British Superkart Championship meeting at Oulton Park recently, *writes SAM OAKFORD.*

The Basingstoke man stole the show, claiming pole position on Saturday morning before first and second place finishes saw him move to within a point of the Championship lead.

After a useful pre-race test day on the Friday, he managed to secure pole with a time of 1min 31.4sec, some two seconds ahead of his nearest rival Louise Colin.

Meanwhile, reigning champion Danny Butler suffered mechanical problems after just one lap of qualifying and was forced to start at 18th on the grid.

Race One didn't begin as planned for Willshire, as he was forced slightly wide into Old Hall Bend and was passed by Colin, last year's Grand Prix winner Danny Edwards and Ian Reid.

However, the early mistake did little to put him off and the local man drove an intelligent race to pick off his opposition and fight his way back to the front of the pack.

Edwards remained close to him throughout, but he pushed hard to maintain a three second advantage and take his third win of the season.

During the process, he also broke the lap record for the Oulton Park Island circuit, set by Damien Sleep in 2007, with a time of 1min 30.612 sec - an average speed of 88.43 mph.

Race two saw a similar start from the local driver, however this time he managed to maintain third place on the exit of Old Hall Bend.

The race quickly turned into a four-way battle for the lead between the current top champi-



● **GOOD FORM:**  
Ben Willshire on his way to victory at Oulton Park.  
Pic by Chris@C-Images

onship drivers Willshire, Colin, Edwards and Butler.

Edwards led the pack for the first three laps of the race with his rivals following close behind, before Willshire leapfrogged him to take the lead.

Colin was also making good progress and took the inside line at the Island hairpin to gain first place with four laps remaining.

The front-runners then managed to break a three second gap from the chasing pack to set up a two-way fight for the victory.

Willshire was quicker than Colin in some

areas but the former 210cc British Champion defended very well.

An attempt to take the lead on the final bend wasn't quite enough and the Basingstoke driver had to settle for second place, by the tiny margin of 0.1 seconds.

Afterwards, he described the event as his most enjoyable superkart race yet.

Willshire left Oulton Park second in the British Championship at the half-way point in the season and will need to maintain his pace in the double header at Cadwell Park on July 17 and 18 to keep up his title ambitions.