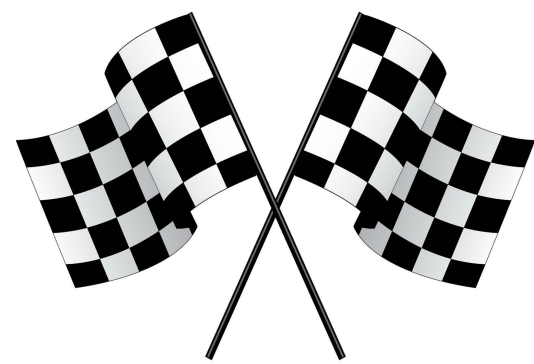


Lobith - Dutch Open 2023



The 2023 championship season kicked off on Sunday the 5th of February in the Dutch village of Lobith for the annual Dutch Open event.

This year, only a small number of drivers were in attendance with 18 drivers racing; 3 of which included British trio and former full size F1 stockcar driver Sam Jacklin along with Graeme Beckett and Chloe Mitchell who made the trip across the border after racing at Rugby Stockcar Club on the Friday night before heading across for practice on the Saturday.

Dutch super star Maikel Rutten was very much red hot favourite going into this event. A driver who very much has the capability to compete at the top of this sport in both Holland and in the UK. Could anyone stop the flying Dutchman and cause an upset for the title?

Saturday was an open practice day for the drivers to come along and get some well needed laps dialled in ahead of the main event on the Sunday. Maikel Rutten, Teun Jansen, Tjidsger Postma and Sven Versteegen were some of the names spotted track side eager to get some set ups sorted for the following day.

The Sunday morning began with a quick drivers briefing before 4 qualifying heats to decide the top 12 drivers for the semi final grids. It was all smiles before the racing got underway, who would be smiling the most come the end of the meeting?



Round 1

The opening round of heats began with a close fought win for Sven Versteegan on 94 laps along with Sam Jacklin just losing out on split. 3rd place went to Daan Faber on 90. Livvy Steegs and Jan Stark had a terrible start to their Dutch Open event with early DNF's after a couple of issues.

Heat 2 was another close battle between Dutch driver Tjidsger Postma and UK driver Graeme Beckett. It was Tjidsger who won the heat with 89 laps, with Graeme a lap behind on 88. UK girl racer Chloe Mitchell earned a top 3 result with 81 laps.

Heat 3 was dominated by post meeting favourite Maikel Rutten who showed his talent with a fast paced opening heat on 98 laps. Stijn Faber may have been struggling to keep pace with the eventual winner, but he still managed a promising 93 laps to open his scoring. Dennis van Asten was 3rd with 89 laps.

Round 2

Heat 1 of the 2nd round of heats was another fast flying start for Sven Versteegan as he stormed to victory with 93 laps ahead of UK driver Sam Jacklin on 89. 3rd place went to Daan Faber on 86.

Heat 2 was a 3 way battle for the lead the majority of the race, with UK driver Graeme Beckett coming out top trumps with 91 laps. 2nd place was closely followed by Davy Steegs with 89 and UK driver Chloe Mitchell on 88.

Heat 3 was another superb drive by Maikel Rutten who managed to pull a few laps clear to clinch his 2nd win of the day with 96 laps. Stijn Faber was 3 laps adrift on 93 laps ahead of Dennis van Asten on 87.

It was Maikel who lead the way after the opening rounds on 194, Sven was in 2nd with 187, Stijn in 3rd on 186. The top 5 was rounded up by Brits Sam and Graeme on 183 and 179 respectively.



Maikel Rutten 144

Round 3

Sven's fine run of form continues with another dominant display in heat 1. He won the opening heat of round 3 with 94 laps .. 12 laps clear of 2nd placed Daan Faber on 82. Sam Jacklin rounded up the top 3 with 79 laps.

Heat 2 was a 4 way battle for the lead the majority of the race, with places changing every couple of laps between Davy, Chloe, Graeme and Tjidsger. It was eventually Davy Steegs who pulled clear to win the race with 91 laps, Chloe and Graeme tied on 90 with Tjidsger trailing on 87.

Heat 3 was once again a dominating performance for Maikel Rutten who managed 102 laps in his 3rd outing of the day. Stijn Faber and Dennis van Asten rounded off the top 3 with what I believe was 95 laps each (but I can't quite tell due to a blurry photo).

Round 4

The final round of heats was very much a familiar scenario with Dutch super star Maikel Rutten running away with a 100 lap heat to seal his pole spot for the semi final event. Stijn Faber was a further 8 laps behind on 92, with Dennis van Asten in 3rd on 82.

Heat 2 was one of the closest races of the day with youngster Chloe Mitchell managing to beat Davy Steegs on split for the race win on 91 laps. Correct me if I am wrong, but I believe this was her first ever win on Dutch soil. Tjidsger Postma had a good scoring final round with 89 to hold on to 3rd place ahead of Graeme Beckett on 88.

The final heat of the day belonged to Sven Versteegen ahead of Sam Jacklin and Peter Van Asten. I can't quite tell what the lap scores were in that race due to a blurry photo.

So that's the heats done and dusted!! Semi finals up next ... Could anyone stop Maikel Rutten in his tracks?



Sven Versteegen 390

Qualifying positions after round 4 of 4

The top 12 go into the semi finals.

The top 3 in each semi final qualify for the Dutch Open 2023.

Kwalificatie ranglijst - Serie: 1,2,3,4,5 - NK [NK]

Rang	Rijder	Nat	Club	Rnd	Run 1.	Run 2.	Run 3.	Run 4.
1	144 #Maikel Rutten	NL	Lobith	401	98 5:00.607	96 5:02.839	102 5:02.406	100 5:02.333
2	390 #Sven Versteegen	NL	Peeldrivers	378	94 5:01.054	93 5:02.480	94 5:02.665	92 5:02.447
3	444 #Slijn Faber	NL	Friesland	374	93 5:00.680	93 5:02.510	95 5:00.559	92 5:01.379
4	737 #Sam Jacklin	GB		366	94 5:04.647	89 5:01.517	79 5:03.658	88 5:00.125
5	16 #Dennis van Asten	NL	Peeldrivers	362	89 5:01.587	87 5:01.261	95 5:01.047	82 5:04.870
6	137 #*Chloe Mitchell	GB		360	81 5:01.293	88 5:02.094	90 5:02.777	91 5:01.847
7	202 #Greame Beckett	GB		359	88 5:01.236	91 5:01.000	90 5:04.913	88 5:01.893
8	156 #Davy Steegs	NL	Peeldrivers	358	81 5:02.331	89 5:01.686	91 5:01.407	91 5:02.431
9	693 #Tjidsger Postma	NL	Friesland	356	89 5:02.829	84 5:01.324	87 5:02.985	89 5:00.074
10	57 #Daan Faber	NL	Friesland	335	90 5:01.836	86 5:00.967	82 5:02.789	77 5:00.084
11	217 #Roland Versteegen	NL	Peeldrivers	329	79 5:02.011	71 4:43.007	81 5:01.740	86 5:02.591
12	3 #Chris Wammes	NL	Peeldrivers	324	79 5:02.529	65 4:15.515	83 5:04.794	80 5:02.281
13	33 #Peter Van Asten	NL	Peeldrivers	319	84 5:03.972	75 5:03.251	79 5:04.211	80 5:02.430
14	230 #Jan Stark	NL	Lobith	305	5 4:19.112	82 5:00.800	67 5:01.900	72 5:02.948
15	66 #Jan Steegs	NL	Peeldrivers	300	74 5:02.503	78 5:02.817	73 5:04.293	75 5:01.343
16	17 #Melwin Van Dijk	NL	Friesland	298	70 5:04.237	68 5:01.614	60 5:03.459	73 5:03.736
17	43 #*Teun Jansen	NL	Peeldrivers	277	82 5:00.085	78 5:03.131	50 3:44.386	45 5:01.901
18	11 #*Livvy Steegs		Peeldrivers	275	25 5:02.190	65 5:00.951	70 5:01.532	69 5:01.685

Semi finalists 1

Maikel Rutten goes into semi final 1 as the favourite, however Sam Jacklin has certainly been showcasing his talent during the qualifying heats. Can Sam take a surprising victory against Dutch dominater Maikel?

Semi finalists 2

Sven Versteegen has only really been one of a few that have really given Maikel a run for his money during the heats. He's expected to win this race and secure a pole row start for the main event. Can youngster Chloe Mitchell make her first major final as a true underdog?

Sam keeping an eye on his battery charger while Chloe keeps herself busy checking up on her social media accounts. Both in the mix for a final spot alongside the 3rd and final UK entry Graeme Beckett. Could all 3 UK drivers give the Dutch a run for their money?



Semi final 1

Maikel Rutten starts on pole, ahead of UK driver Sam Jacklin.



To no surprise, Maikel Rutten successfully managed to sneak his way around the oval raceway to take his spot in the Dutch Open final. The only real shock was Sam Jacklin managed to stick with him for the majority of the race and only just lose out by 3 laps to the Dutch favourite.

Sam is still very much a fresh face to the section and he is certainly improving every time I see him when track side. He knows how to get involved and use that front bumper, so Maikel needs to keep his eye out for the fast moving yellow grader.

It was Tjidsger Postma who managed to grab the final spot in the final with a comfortable 3rd place ahead of Davy Steegs in 4th. Unfortunately for Dennis and Chris, this was the end of the road for their hopes of a Dutch Open championship.

Full results of semi final 1

#	Nr	Car	Driver	i	T	Laps	Laptime
1	1		#Maikel Rutten		→	101	00:03.529
2	2		#Sam jacklin		→	98	00:02.820
3	5		#Tjidsger Postma		→	94	00:02.936
4	4		#Davy Steegs		→	90	00:07.732
5	3		#Dennis van Asten		→	84	00:03.182
6	6		#Chris Wammes		→	78	00:05.988

Semi final 2

Sven Versteegen lines up on pole ahead of Stijn Faber.



Semi final 2 was definitely the more tighter scoring semi final with only 9 laps separating the 6 drivers. Sven Versteegen made a bright start as he remains calm and collected to maintain the race lead throughout the race. His closest rival Stijn Faber kept Sven very much on his toes with some constant lap scoring as he tried to pile some pressure on the front runner.

After the 5 minutes of racing, it was Sven who eventually took the chequered flag with a brilliant drive on 101 laps. Stijn was a close fought 2nd just the 3 laps adrift from Sven however the shock of the day has to be young British driver Chloe Mitchell who managed to pick up the final qualifying spot in the semi final to earn herself her first ever major final spot. She managed to beat fellow Brit Graeme Beckett by a solitary lap ahead of Daan Faber and Roland Versteegen who sadly miss out on the main event.

Social media very much went into uproar when the news broke out that she had made the grid for the Dutch Open. An achievement that anyone should be proud of, even more so for Chloe who surely even herself would have never expected this!! Well done Chloe. Up next is the junior Dutch Open race.. With this brilliant result, could Chloe add to this and take home the first bit of silverware for our UK travellers?

Full results of semi final 2

Event:	NK electro 2023						
Date:	05.02.2023						
Section:	NK [NK]						
Racetime	Current Racetime	Remaining Racetime					
00:05:00	00:05:00	00:00:00					
Finales [NK / 1/2 Finale B - Finale serie 1]							
# Nr	Car	Driver	i	T	Laps	Laptime	Absolut
1	1	#Sven Versteegen		→	101	00:02.965	00:05:0
2	2	#Stijn Faber		→	98	00:02.889	00:05:0
3	3	#*Chloe Mitchell		→	98	00:03.041	00:05:0
4	4	#Greame Beckett		→	97	00:02.916	00:05:0
5	5	#Daan Faber		→	95	00:03.034	00:05:0
6	6	#Roland Versteegen		→	92	00:03.077	00:05:0

Junior Dutch Open Championship

From left to right – Teun Jansen, Chloe Mitchell and Livvy Steegs.

Drivers of the future! Only 1 of the 3 could take home the Junior Dutch Open title for 2023. But who would it be?

With their only being 3 juniors, as you can imagine it was more of a test of maintaining their concentration for the full 5 minutes rather than trying to dodge any carnage in front of them.



It was British driver Chloe Mitchell who took the honours after a close battle between herself and Teun Jansen for the win. Only 4 laps separated them after the 5 minutes of racing with Chloe coming home 1st with 97. Teun finished on 93 laps and young Livvy finished on 80. A shame that there wasn't too many competitors for this title, however at the end of the day you've got to be in it to win it!

It's always nice to see the kids of our sport with smiles on their faces and I am sure the win will make the long journey back home for Chloe a lot less boring! A star in the making? A big year ahead on the national series, could we see Chloe at the very top once again?

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Full results of the Junior Dutch Open Championship

Date:	26.01.2023					
Section:	NSO + Finale [NSO + Finale]					
Racetime	Current Racetime					
00:05:00	00:05:00					
Series [NSO + Finale / Heat 1 - Serie 1]						
#	Nr	Car	Driver	I	T	Laps
1	2		#*Chloe Mitchell		→	97
2	3		#*Teun Jansen		→	93
3	1		#*Livvy Steegs		→	80



Dutch Open Championship 2023

So time for the main event of the day, the 2023 Dutch Open Championship.

It was a Dutch front row lockout with Maikel Rutten and Sven Versteegen lining up on row 1 ahead of UK Sam Jacklin right behind in bumper territory.



The rest of the field consisted of Stijn Faber starting P4, UK girl racer Chloe Mitchell P5 and Tjidsger Postma in P6 on the grid.

It was all to play for .. Hold on tight folks, here comes the main event. Gentleman (and ladies!) start your engines!!

The lights go green and straight away UK Sam Jacklin goes on the attack for the home town favourite Maikel Rutten. Hits were going in left, right and centre as Sam got himself stuck in with the front bumper and gave Maikel a cheeky reminder what the British drivers get up to week in week out!! Maikel managed to dodge a few of the hits but a lot of them were paying off for Sam.

Unfortunately, I think Sam became a little too focused on aiming for his front bumper he ended up losing a couple of laps himself due to facing the wall. He did manage to keep going and challenge the front runners for the title.

While all this was going on, Sven Versteegen was very much trying to keep his nose clean and keep on scoring consistently in pursuit of Maikel. Stijn, Tjidsger and Chloe were very much in a race of their own as they all tried to get the laps added together to challenge the top 3.

As the race continued, it was clear to see we had 2 races in 1 with Maikel and Sven starting to clear into the distance. Sam was holding on to the best of his abilities however as the buzzer went off to signify the end of the race, it was Maikel who managed to dodge the hits just about enough to come out as the Dutch Open champion for 2023.

He won the race with 106 laps, followed home by his Dutch opponent Sven on 101. Sam managed to finish on 99 laps and make up the final spot on the rostrum with an impressive 3rd place, followed closely behind by Stijn on 96. Girl racer Chloe Mitchell finished 5th with 95, a result that anyone should be proud of in a major title even more so that she's still a junior and improving every meeting. The 6th and final spot in the final went to Tjidsger on 90 laps who just ran out of steam eventually. Nonetheless, still an impressive performance to make the main event.

Full results of the Dutch Open Championship

Finiales [NK / Finale A - Finale serie 1]				Remaining Racetime			
# Nr	Car	Driver	I	T	Laps	Laptime	A
1	1	#Maikel Rutten		→	106	00:03.012	0
2	2	#Sven Versteegen		→	101	00:02.893	0
3	3	#Sam Jacklin		→	99	00:03.959	0
4	4	#Stijn Faber		→	96	00:04.262	0
5	5	#*Chloe Mitchell		→	95	00:03.008	0
6	6	#Tjidsger Postma		→	90	00:05.536	0

Dutch Open Champion 2023 – Maikel Rutten

After the meeting, I caught up with the Dutch Open champion for 2023 Maikel Rutten.

Stuart – Maikel, congratulations! Dutch Open champion for 2023. How do you feel?

Maikel – Happy as winning is always good.

Stuart – Tell us a little about the race itself?

Maikel – From what I can remember, it was a bit messy at times but a good race with Sam Jacklin rubbin' a bit and newly crowned Dutch Junior Champion Chloe Mitchell not making it easy to pass .. But that's stockcar racing and worth watching I'm sure of it.

Stuart – Was there any driver that stood out to you who surprised you during the event? It certainly looked like the Brits were giving you a good run for your money.

Maikel – Without a shadow of a doubt Chloe Mitchell. All sweet and quiet in the pits but a hard stockcar racer on track. Yes, of course as England is the home of stockcar racing.

Stuart – Awesome, thanks Maikel and well done again on your win.

Maikel – Stay safe.

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A big shoutout to British duo Sam Jacklin and Chloe Mitchell. Fantastic results!

Sam managed a 3rd place overall just missing out to Sven Versteegen and overall winner Maikel Rutten. And an even bigger shoutout to youngster Chloe who not only won the Junior Dutch Open, she also managed to qualify for the main event and came home with a fantastic 5th place

We can't forget Graeme Beckett either can we!! Suppose better luck next time! He sadly just missed out on a spot in the final thanks to .. Guess who? ... Chloe!!

A great effort by all 3 of them to travel all the way to Holland this weekend. Not forgetting they also make an appearance at Rugby on Friday night on route for the border



So that's it for this years Dutch Open.

A fantastic event to kick start this year's racing calender. A shame that the numbers were low, but nevertheless it appears as though everyone's gone home smiling and at the end of the day that's what matters. A credit to everyone involved in organising the event .. Whether big or small. Every little helps. A reminder that the next event is at Hathern Raceway for the English Open on Sunday the 12th of February. It's sure to be another great event and it's already shaping up to be a special one judging by the booking list already.

Some more photo's from the Dutch Open are available below.

Report by Stuart Clarke (Nobby #150).







