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Title: **European Women's Cup - Motorcycle racing**

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2nd RACE - ASSEN, NEDERLANDS 15th July 2007

For the first time, the female european riders have had a confrontation on the prestigious racetrack of Assen in a sunny weekend, ruined just by some rain during the race which was interrupted and restarted as "Wet race".

Many absences due to accidents: The Vallengunga's winner Eliana Pezzilli of the Yamaha Piellemoto Team who suffered an Humerus fracture at the 24 hours endurance in Barcelona the previous weekend; Roberta Dello Siesto, the veteran racer of this European Championship, still in the hospital because of the several injuries consequent to a fall on the Magione circuit; Samuela De Nardi (2005 European Champion for the Aprilia Team) who's having some health problems (we wish a prompt recovery to all of them). The Spaniard Mireia Clavijo and the announced Czech rider Marketa Janakova were absent as well.

In any case, there was no lack of fight or spectacular show. Already on Saturday, the Nina Prinz/Paola Cazzola duel was a "cut and thrust" to improve their best time at every lap. In the end, the German rider of the Ducati Y2K Team had stopped the chrono at the fantastic time of 1.45.8, while Cazzola (Yamaha Piellemoto Team) was just 1.6 seconds away and Alessia Polita (Suzuki Celani Team) at 4 seconds from the pole position.

In the Superstock 600 class, best time for the strong native rider Iris Ten Katen (1.49.8) of the Honda Ten Kate Team, followed by the Italian Romana Fede (Ducati Y2K Team) and by the young Slovenian rider Tina Katrasnik.

The Sunday race starts with some clouds which don't look worrying for the planned 12 laps.

Another great start for Paola Cazzola who's shooting ahead of Nina Prinz, overtook even by Alessia Polita. Just after one lap, the German riding a Ducati 1098 pass both the Italians and put some distance between them keeping an excellent pace. Same situation in the 600 class, where Ten Katen digs a hole with the competitors and goes for a lonely race, while behind Susie Grayson, Tina Katrasnik and Romana Fede are struggling for the second position. It's the eighteen-year-old Slovenian to make it, where the English rider falls during the seventh lap besides Bernice Sangers, Susanne Bolhaar and Nathalia Van der Ark due to the rain that makes dangerous some parts of the track. The race is interrupted after six laps and it will be restarted as "Wet Race" with other five laps to go. In the meantime, the rain decreases and all the teams are facing the difficult choice of the tyres. The Ducati Y2K and Yamaha Piellemoto teams, plus Sharon Mermet, Margreet Zant and Deb Cartwright stay with slick tyres, while Iris Ten Katen, Alessia Polita (just front tyre), Tina Katrasnik, Stine Karlsen, Manuela Fokkema and Karin Ott go for the rain ones.

The rain seems to be shuffling the deck of the first part of the race, passing

the final decision to the tyres choice. The feeling of uncertainty is perceptible on Nina Prinz and Iris Ten Katen who are risking to lose all the advantage set aside in the first part (the final result will be the sum of the two splits). The rain stops completely when the race restarts: Ten Katen (Honda), Katrasnik (Suzuki), Fede (Ducati), Mermet (Honda) set fire to the Superstock 600 class by numerous overtakings; At the end it's the Italian Romana Fede to prevail, followed by Katrasnik, Ten Katen and Mermet, all of them within a minimal difference. The sum of the two splits will award the victory to Iris ten Katen, Katrasnik in second position and Fede in third. Fourth place for the Italian Sharon Mermet, before the Dutch Margreet Zant and Manuela Fokkema, the English Deb Cartwright and the other Dutch Karin Ott of the Edwin Ott Motoren Team (worthy of note is the fact regarding the other components of the team, Karin's husband and the two sons, all of them competing in Assen!)

Undisputed victory for Nina Prinz in the Superstock 1000 class, she keeps a gap of three seconds from the Suzuki Gsxr1000 of Alessia Polita fighting during all the five remaining laps with the Yamaha R1 of Paola Cazzola and giving another enthralling challenge to the race. The Ducati 1098 of Letizia Marchetti, the debutante Paola Arioli on Ducati 999 and the Norwegian Stine Karlsen on Yamaha R1 complete the final placings for this class.

Nina Prinz is now leading the Superstock 1000 class with 50 points, followed by Alessia Polita and Paola Cazzola with 36 points. Iris Ten Katen leads the Superstock 600 class with 45 points, followed by Romana Fede 32, Eliana Pezzilli 25, Tina Katrasnik 20 (the last two only with one race)

The Grand Finale for the first European Women's Championship will be the next 11th of August at Oschersleben, Germany.