Kelly wins first race

Waren Thomson

BAVIN Once Kelly has continued his great year in BMX, taking out two events at the Red Centre BMX Club's first trophy meet for the year.

Kelly, who came third in the men's Championship Cruiser class at the 2012 Australian BMX Titles earlier this year, took out the Open men and the 11- to 13-year-olds Cruisers at the Dinga's Dazzler event.

More than 50 riders took part in the Dinga's Dazzler, with young and old riders flying along the track.

Nicholas Cohen was the overall junior, winning two of the junior events.

Cohen won the 11-year-old boys 20-inch and eight-to-13-year-old junior Cruisers event.

Cohen's older brother Marcus also had a good day out, finishing second in the Cruisers event and winning the 12-and 13-year-olds' 28-inch event.

Antonio Bellotti took out the eight-and-nine-year-old boys 28-inch, Liam Fry took the 10- to 11-year-olds' 30-inch and Jack Stagg took the 11-to-13-year-old girls' 28-inch event.

Jeremy Clifton took out the 14-year-old and older Cruisers event.

All the young Sprocket riders also put in great performances, with each rider receiving a trophy.

New black belt trio

Alice Springs Martial Arts Centre's new three black belts Steven Purdie, Joe Demarco and Kym Purdie.

Picture: MELANIE PURDIE

Gardiner returns with silver lining

Steve Menzies

CENTRALIAN martial arts legend Martin Gardiner has shown he still has the skills and spirit at 85 years old and after two knee reconstructions.

He has recently returned from the 2012 Cacoy Doce Pares World Eskrima/Arnis Championships held in Cebu City, Philippines, with the silver medal in the 50 category.

His only loss was to a fighter 12 years his junior who was the world champion for 15 consecutive years while in the open age category.

For Gardiner, who was largely responsible for bringing supreme grand master Cacoy Canete to Australia in the mid 1980s and introducing the sport to the region, it was chance to return to his fighting roots and meet former students, such as Anthony Kleind, who is now in Los Angeles, who are taking Eskrima to the world.

He started judo, trained in the Bosnian war and organised the first kickboxing tournament in Australia in Alice Springs and a full-contact event before turning to the Filipino martial art of Eskrima.

Gardiner, who was inducted into the Australian Martial Arts Hall of Fame in 2010, said: "I dedicated this tournament to my partner who is recovering after suffering a life-threatening health condition."

"I could not have done it without John Tarce pushing me to do all the training."

"For the training, the way the guys came through was a credit to themselves and their families."

The three new black belts take the overall number to 13 in the club, and Oaklands said it was an ongoing challenge for members to progress.

"The day was very long but very rewarding and now there are new goals for a lot of people." Oaklands gave special mention to the centre's instructors Rick Chambers and Bill Blain, who work tirelessly at the centre.

He said: "Rick and Bill did a fantastic job." A number of other ASMAC members were graded and progressed.

"The three new black belts had to go through an arduous sparring session against five different opponents for five minutes each with no break in between." Oaklands also pointed out the professionalism of Kevin Hill, who came in to be part of the grading day as a guest sparring partner.

He said: "The way Kevin handled himself was first class." Instructor Rick Chambers said the trio had to work for at least five years to get to this point.

"It was awesome to see and you get emotional when this type of thing happens." Chambers said around 80-100 of the juniors were graded on the day and it was a true testament to ASMAC being a family club.

"The majority of our seniors have got their families involved, which is great." Chambers applauded the new black belt trio and said the future is bright for them.

He said: "Steven will now start at the bottom of the senior ranks and make his way up to senior black belt, while Kym and Joe will go away and bring back some new ideas to the club." "Kym is the best grappler and Joe is a great boxer. So we want to constantly learn new moves and ideas."

Chambers said the ASMAC expects another black belt around December.

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Martin Gardiner (right) in a bout during the Cacoy Doce Pares World Eskrima/Arnis championships.

Picture: SUPPLIED