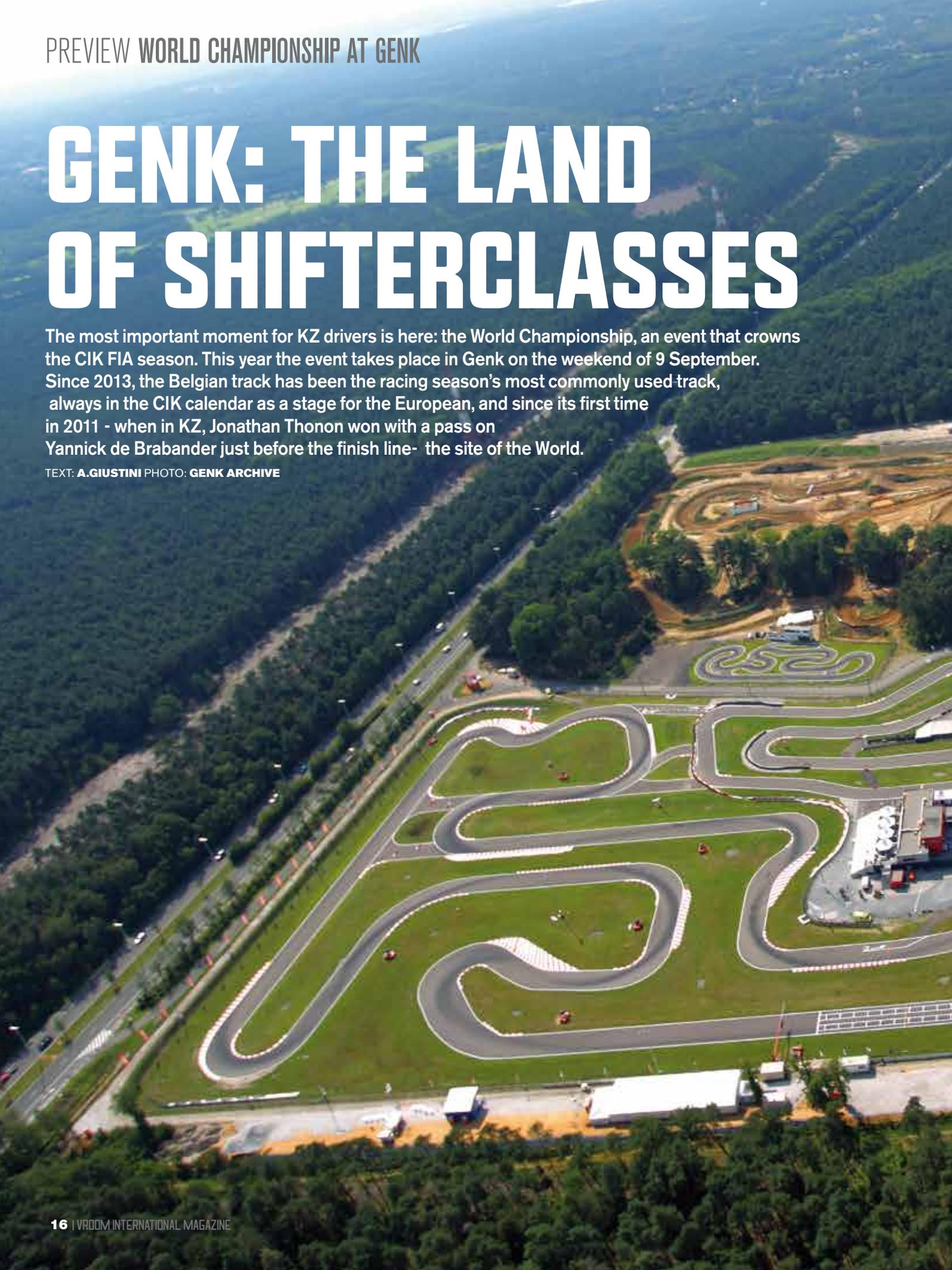


PREVIEW WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP AT GENK

GENK: THE LAND OF SHIFTERCLASSES

The most important moment for KZ drivers is here: the World Championship, an event that crowns the CIK FIA season. This year the event takes place in Genk on the weekend of 9 September. Since 2013, the Belgian track has been the racing season's most commonly used track, always in the CIK calendar as a stage for the European, and since its first time in 2011 - when in KZ, Jonathan Thonon won with a pass on Yannick de Brabander just before the finish line- the site of the World.

TEXT: A.GIUSTINI PHOTO: GENK ARCHIVE





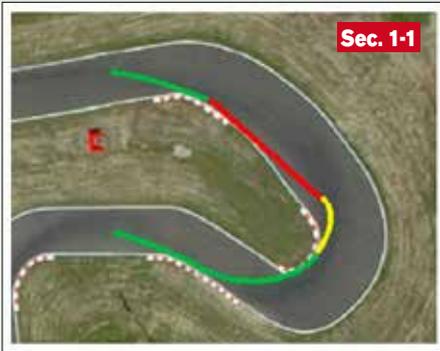
Background

The track was built in 1983 and obtained CIK homologation in 1987. In the early years, the circuit, now called Karting Genk, was called Horensbergdam. Measuring 1360 meters, the circuit is the second longest of the KZ season after Salbris, 1477 meters, but compared to the French track, it presents a more technical driven section concentrated in the first two sections, followed by a faster intermediate that leads to the finish line. On the Belgian kart track, more than anywhere else, it is necessary to find the right compromise between maximum speed and driveability.

There are not a few points for overtaking; the first braking point requires just the right speed to flank the driver in front and dive on the inside. A very precise front end is essential to avoid going wide on the exit of the curve where one risks being attacked by drivers close behind.

Another opportunity is offered by the third corner, a hairpin to the right that leads to the track's second longest stretch. The same can be said for the sixth curve, a hairpin to the left that leads to the track's third section, the fast one.

Circuit analysis



Sector 1-1: It is one of the circuit's most complex braking points and, as we have seen, an important overtaking opportunity. After approaching to the right, it is essential to brake at the center of the curve, aiming outwards and then converging to the second point of the racing line to take advantage of both the inner and outer curbs at the exit.



Sector 1-2: To best cope with the long left-hand bend, an optimal exit from the previous braking point is essential. The curve must be faced in full, remaining as close as possible to the internal curb on entry.



Sector 2-1: Here, too, the bend to the left demands maximum speed and a trajectory as close as possible to the inner curb.

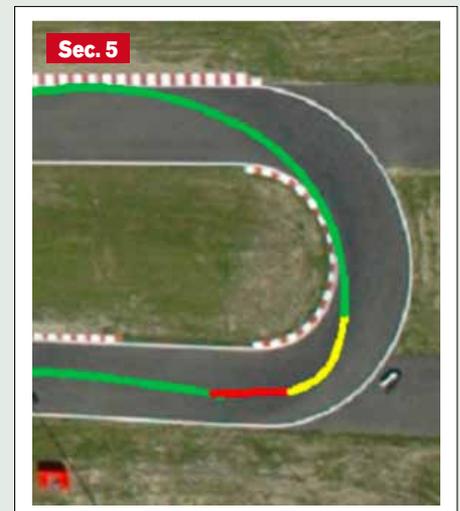


Sector 2-2: This is the first important braking point. It is a hairpin to the right which is reached after two curves traveled at high speed. To best cope with this section it is necessary to keep as much as possible on the outside on entry and braking before setting up the next braking point. Sacrificing the entry, avoiding meanwhile to turn in too soon, avoids

understeer that would prevent the driver from remaining stuck close to the internal curb, forcing him to return to the gas late. An optimal exit also foresees exploiting the external curb.



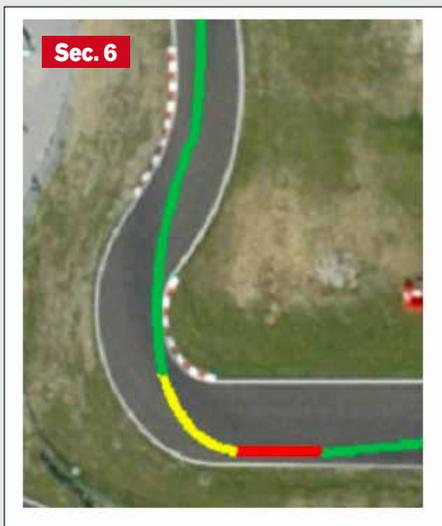
Sector 4: The drivers find themselves facing a chicane after a long straight; this is one of the points where "the lap time is made". It is advisable to keep to the outside at the entrance, braking with wheels straight and letting the kart slide before converging on the inner curb and then re-accelerating to make the most of the other curves of the chicane.



Sector 5: This too is a section that exalts the driver's talent, since he or she has to cover the first right at full speed, staying in the middle of the track and then braking while moving towards the outside and then turning left, taking the line. At this point, it is essential to climb on the curb at the center of the curve, which allow the driver to take advantage of a very fast exit on the outer curb.



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Sector 6: The straight leads to a right where the driver will have to brake slightly to put himself in a position to cut the inner curb later.



Sector 7: A good exit on the previous turn allows the driver to tackle the left corner in full, taking care to touch the inner curb.



Sector 8: Brakes on for the last time before returning to the finish line. In this case, it is advisable to brake as much as possible and then cut on the curb inside and speed up again all the way to the finish line.



LEGEND, WORLD CUP 2011

Thonon's masterpiece two corners from the finish line!

The 2011 World Cup is a valid example of how in karting the result is never to be taken for granted until the finish line and how the driver's mental condition is an essential ingredient for success. The protagonists of the episode are Jonathan Thonon and Yannick de Brabander. The latter was at the head of the race when there were only a few dozen meters left. De Brabander is younger and less experienced than Thonon, who has more miles on him and more clear-minded at a moment, the last curves, where time seems to pass with inexorable slowness.

De Brabander, at the time in Formula K, comes out slowly from the third last corner and Thonon, taking advantage of a better acceleration, slips inside in the approach of the next left with a move that won't allow for counterattacks. CRG # 60 looks like a bullet and with an anthology move wins the event at home. A note also regarding Davide Foré who, in the crucial moment of the race, lap 13, lost his chance to take the lead when he gave the impression of having more speed. Thonon also takes heed, and his move on Foré was equally decisive to aspire to the conquest of the World Cup.

De Conto aims for triple header?

The Number One favorite for the Belgian event is Paolo De Conto, the current World Champion and, above all, the last winner in Genk. Will the controversial epilogue of the European make De Conto even hungrier for victory? It won't be easy for De Conto, however, having to deal

with a group of drivers among the most competitive in recent years. To make life difficult for him, in fact, there will be a fresh European champion Jorrit Pex, Marco Ardigo, Anthony Abbasse and Bas Lammers, plus the return of Jonathan Thonon. Eyes on outsiders Alex Irlando and Marijn Kremers, who on several occasions have shown they have the stuff to make the podium.

KZ Genk 2013/2018 Winners

2013 Max Verstappen
(CRG / TM / Bridgestone)

2014 Marco Ardigo
(Tony Kart / Vortex / Bridgestone)

2015 Jeremy Iglesias
(Sodi / TM / Bridgestone)

2016 Marco Ardigo
(Tony Kart / Vortex / Vega)

2017 Paolo De Conto
(CRG / TM / Bridgestone)

In the **KZ2 Super Cup**, instead, Giacomo Pollini will have the chance to respond to the continental success of Adrien Renaudin, with probable contenders being Emilien Denner and compatriots Alessio Piccini and Riccardo Longhi, 3rd last year in the Super Cup of Wackersdorf.