



Perry Cooke, left, on the charge.

Picture: MEL COOKE

# Young Perry keeps up the family tradition after bagging national crown

**Schoolboy racer Perry Cooke is maintaining a fine family tradition.**

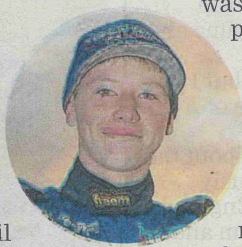
The 15-year-old races a Junior Hot Rod on short oval circuits and has just won the national junior rod championship.

Perry is the third generation of Cookes to showcase their skills around the oval circuits, following in the treadmarks of his grandfather Kenny and his dad Mel, who were well-known local drivers.

“Winning this championship and being awarded the silver roof means a lot to me,” said Perry, a pupil at Norwich School.

“And I’d like to thank the whole race team for all of their help and dedication throughout the year to make this happen.”

The junior rod formula caters for 11-16-year-olds, most of whom drive one-litre Corsa C cars.



**Motorsport**

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But Perry, who lives at Thorpe End in Norwich, didn’t have things all his own way, and it wasn’t until the long awaited points championship final at Aldershot Stadium that glory was secured after a nailbiting day.

Perry was four points behind Sussex-based George Baker going into the final round – where he had three races to overhaul the reigning champion.

There was controversy in race one as Perry led until lap 12 when Baker forced his way through, resulting in a black cross and a two place penalty.

However, the stewards withdrew

the penalty, giving Baker the race victory and Perry second place, which increased the gap to five points.

Race two saw Cooke blast his way through the traffic to get a convincing win from Baker, close behind in second. That meant the gap between the two was reduced to four points with just one race to go – and with the incentive of double points at stake.

And again there was controversy – although Perry steered well clear of any problems as he led from start to finish.

The drama was all behind him as Baker collided with the second-placed driver Zak Yamos.

Yamos was unable to finish the race, putting Baker into second position.

However, the clerk of the course wasn’t happy with Baker’s move and disqualified him, leaving Perry with a 12-point lead overall at the end of an 18-round thriller throughout the season – and the title in his grasp.