

## Big win for Senthil; Rajiv notches eighth win in a row

**CHENNAI:** Local ace Rajiv Sethu (RACR Castrol Power1 Ultimate) continued his dominant run in the premier Pro-Stock 301-400cc Open category by roaring to his eighth consecutive win while Coimbatore's Senthil Kumar (LGE Racing) notched his first in five years with a surprise victory in a dramatic Pro-Stock 165cc Open class race, to light up the fifth and final round of the MRF MMSC FMSCI Indian National Motorcycle Racing Championship at the Madras International Circuit, here on Saturday.

The other deserving winner of the day was Bengaluru's 17-year-old Savion Sabu (Axor Sparks Racing) who recorded his maiden win of the season in the Novice (Stock 165cc) category.

Sethu effectively sealed the championship in the Pro-Stock 301-400cc Open class with his win spree as he extended his lead to 97 points with one more race to be run on Sunday and 25 points on offer. Hyderabad's Rahil Pillarisetty (KTM Gusto Racing) and TVS Petronas Racing's KY Ahamed finished a



Senthil Kumar

distant second and third, respectively, after being outpaced in the four-lapper, reduced from scheduled six following a red flag stoppage.

Meanwhile, pole-sitter Sarthak Chavan (Petronas TVS Racing) retired due to engine issues on the out lap and did not take the start.

The day's big surprise result

came in the Pro-Stock 165cc Open race that saw 22-year-old Senthil Kumar taking victory despite starting from P8 on the grid. He was running third towards the flag end of the six-lap race after some big names, including two Pacer Yamaha riders Prabhu Arunagiri and Mathana Kumar, besides Petronas TVS Racing's KY Ahamed and Jagan Kumar, had dropped out of contention due to various reasons.

Chasing two teenagers from the Petronas TVS Racing team, Sarthak

and Chiranth Vishwanath, the Coimbatore rider, whose last win in the National championship was in 2018 in the Novice category, suddenly found himself in front as the two youngsters tangled and crashed at the last corner of the last lap. However, both rejoined the race. Chiranth was docked a 10-second penalty for "causing an avoidable collision" and it dropped him to sixth while Sarthak moved up a spot to third behind Senthil Kumar and Bengaluru's Uilas Santrupt Nanda.



Rajiv Sethu