

**2009 AUSTRALIAN SUPERMOTO
CHAMPIONSHIPS
NOVEMBER 27TH-29TH 2009
WANNEROO KART TRACK, WA.**

NSW Supermoto Riders Report.

The Track:



Located next to Barbagallo Raceway, north of Perth, Wanneroo International Kartway serves as a regular venue for the local Supermoto WA riders club.

Track length is approximately 1,000m and features a short, sandy dirt section with 2 tabletops and 2 berms.

The tarmac section is typical Go Kart style with the usual technical variable radius turns, reasonable length straights and even a banked curve at one end.

The Event:

The championship was held over two rounds in a single weekend with practice and qualifying for both rounds on the Friday, followed by Round 1 racing in counter clockwise direction on Saturday and Round 2 in reverse direction on Sunday.

The weather was generally a little too warm, but did fluctuate and we had to contend with regular strong, gusty winds.

The Riders:

For the premier events, the WA club had again secured the attendance of Davide Gozzini, the well credentialed Italian ace, British Supermoto Champion Christian Iddon and British Junior Champ, Lewis Cornish to add an International flavour.

East Coast hotshots were our own Aussie Champ, Angus Reekie and Luke Traill from NSW, the Nicholson brothers from Vic, Lyndon Magee and Beau Laing from Qld and Ross Taylor from FNQ.



NSW Supermoto riders, Darren Webb (Clubman A, S3), Garry Joel (Vets, Clubman A), James Harwood (Clubman A, S2) and myself (Vets) were present and looking for a good showing.

The Local troops from SupermotoWA were waiting for us and ready to show us the way around.

The Racing:

Clubman A&B

A clean sweep by Darren Webb was harder than it looked with local rider, Cameron Stronarch doing his level best to spoil Webby's day. Luckily, Webby had his measure with superior fitness enabling him to last the 10min plus one lap motos and producing some lurid slides for entertainment for the crowd. The other rider to have a shot was our favourite truck driver from Qld, Stephen Relph. Relph qualified well, but had some bad luck and probably was a little less consistent which kept him from bagging a win. That leaves Webby in 1st place for the series ahead of Stronarch. Congratulations Webby.

Our own James Harwood and Garry Joel both started in Clubman A in Round 1 but were bumped to Clubman B for round 2 where they proceeded to harass each other all the way to the end.

James had some cruel luck in blowing the bejesus out of his CRF450 engine early in the piece and had to borrow my KTM 525, so was a little bit like a fish out of water for a while. Garry was having lots of fun on the Husky, commenting that the dirt section was presenting his biggest challenge. Gaz also had a hair raising incident when the front brake pads ejected themselves just before entry into the left hand hairpin, sending him straight on into the weeds. He rejoined proceedings in later races with new pads and fresh undies.

S1

Obviously the top billed category with the famous Gozzini up against our Champ, Reekie. As the results will show, Gozzini was unbeatable on this occasion with a fantastic display of frantic riding and superb bike control. Some of the speedway style power slides were stunning, the guy just doesn't back off for anything. The factory TM is an exotic work of art and ran faultlessly throughout the weekend. We are not used to seeing such fine machinery here in Australia, even for our top riders.

Angus was consistently on the chase, but just couldn't quite match the pace on the day. It looked as though he had the KTM tapped out all weekend and just couldn't close on the 69. In a similar vein, Magee was chasing Reekie the whole time and WA guy, Liam Robertson also in pursuit. If any of the first three had made a slip-up, they were going to lose places, but they all showed us what experts they are at full noise.

Young Lewis Cornish was in the mix early on a borrowed CRF, but threw himself down hard at the end of the straight and was carted off to hospital for checks on his previously injured hip. He was then kept overnight due to a violent reaction to the morphine. We did see him again on Sunday, but he wasn't himself and circulated quietly.



With a clean sweep of 6 from 6, Gozzini took the championship out of Australia, something I'm sure we will want to correct next year with more races on the east coast.

S2

Some of the best racing was in S2. Surprise of the meeting for me was the spectacular riding style of Christian Iddon. On Gordon Milne's borrowed Aprilia 550, Iddon stood out as Mr Smooth with his super long, flat footed backing in at the end of the straights and ridiculous lean angles through the turns, he was unbelievable.

All that said, he didn't have the measure of Reekie, who on his 505, systematically cleaned up the S2 races in clinical style.

Iddon had his share of bad luck and racing incidents, keeping him from the podium, but our consistent Queenslanders, Magee and Ross Taylor clinched hard fought 2nd and 3rd places respectively. Well done boys.

S3

There was a fair bit of anticipation in this class with Luke Traill holding the number 1 plate, of course all hopes are to keep the position, but it wasn't to be this year due to an exceptional effort by Beau Laing, the young gun from Qld.

The 250 boys were so fast, there were only 4 of them, but they were quicker than most of us Vets (on more powerful bikes) who had to ride with them in combined races.

I think Beau's commitment showed through as we all found out, he had worked extremely hard in preparation for this event, his clean sweep was well deserved. Luke had a couple of spills during the weekend and injured his arm, he will be looking to reverse this situation in upcoming events, so those will be well worth watching.

Webby also had a stab at this class on a KTM250 he bought the week before we shipped the bikes. He wasn't far off the pace and might be a factor going forward.

Vets (Old farts, not animal doctors)

This is my class and I arrived having the 2nd place from last year's series behind Pete Cox from Qld. A notable absentee was the super fast Phil Lovett from Cessnock, who had been so busy in the lead up with a ride to 8th in the Six Hour at Oran Park on weekend prior. Phil had run out of time to prepare so wasn't coming with us.

We had a couple of new combatants joining the Vets ranks in a very fit looking Brett Stewart, the local TM pilot and Dean Taylor, who seemed to know every crack and bump in the circuit.

My weekend started not too bad with qualifying 4th in both directions, giving me some hope of putting in a good showing. The 525 was handling track pretty well, and I knew I had better lap times in me for the races ahead.

It took me a while to get ahead and to know the track whilst battling with some local guys on the way. The first corner of the first race resembled a pin ball game and had he quickly slipping back to nearly last (a position I'm familiar with coming from). I spent the 3 races on Saturday working my way forward and ended up in 5th for the day.



After race 1, we had been combined with the S3 guys to speed up the program, so it became a little more difficult to know where you were tracking during the races, although to begin with the S3's were up front anyway.

I started to make some improvements on Sunday and began to make progress through the field. Coxy had been much more consistent than me and was looking good for a 3rd place and although I was in constant dog fights, I was working my way up to him in the later races.

The final race was my best and I managed to clear the guys who had been making me so busy and closed in on Coxy about half distance. As I was trying to distract him the most amazing thing happened. He had been looking over his shoulder to see where I was and he suddenly waved me by. I assumed he was having some bike trouble, but reality is, he thought I was Webby making a comeback in S3! You can imagine his surprise to see old No54 passing him instead - I managed to clear him by 1.5sec by the end of the race for a 3rd. Not very often you get a gift like that and the mistake didn't cost him his 3rd place overall as he had been so consistent.

My overall place was 4th behind Stewart, Taylor and Cox.

All Powers

This event was a non championship event and ended up being an opportunity for the internationals to showcase their racing styles. In a small field on both days, we were treated to a display of the fastest, most aggressive riding by Iddon and Gozzini. They swapped places numerous times in impossible places as they whipped around the track at frantic pace.

A rare mistake by Gozzini in the first encounter gave him something to chase as Iddon slid his way around at blistering pace, using the superior power of the big 550. There was no doubting how hard they were playing as a further mistake had Gozzini losing the front and ending up in the tyre wall.

Race 2 on Sunday was even more spectacular as they swapped places a number of times. Even cornering side by side for half a lap. Gozzini eventually found the front and started to gap Iddon, but watching this display was worth the trip over. The closeness of the racing, combined with the skill not to crash was just so impressive.

After talking to these guys, it is obvious that that is how it's done over there, we are just too conservative with our approach. I would love to see someone get close enough to Angus to have this sort of racing.

Other Stuff

Here are some interesting bits of information that came up during the weekend.

- While the entry list looked decidedly sparse in comparison to recent years, the people who were there all shared the same opinion that with some passion and co-operation between Supermoto clubs and groups, we have a pretty good chance of resurrecting the sport.

- The Motorcycle Sportsmen of Qld have formed a special Supermoto Committee and we have agreed to stay connected between them and Supermoto riders, NSW going forward to assist each other and present a united front when dealing with MA and track issues.
- Guys in Qld are very keen to form an East Coast series for next year.
- We connected with the few Vic guys there and although they don't have a club as such, will be kept in the loop regarding our future activities. They are keen to travel to events in the East.
- I also hooked up with a few of the WA Vets riders and they expressed their keen interest in making the trip over east next year if we can pull something together. Lots of the funds and expenses were provided by local business owners who were club members and they appear to be willing to help get things going in conjunction with us all. A lot of us riders who were there are looking at attending the "King of Cane" Supermoto event which is part of the NQ Motorcycle Expo (www.nqbikeexpo.org.au) in Townsville in July 2-5 2010. We are looking at logistics regarding bike transport, etc. Anyone considering this event, please let me know.
- Things are moving regarding some race meetings already, as Rachael has mentioned. I can recommend the trip to Stanthorpe early in 2010. The track is terrific with 2 dirt sections and a similarity to Marulan.



DISCLAIMER: the info contained in this report is my recollection of events and was not documented during the event. This, combined with my twisted view on things and "Old Timer's Disease" can mean that facts, figures and stories could be totally wrong or misleading. Sorry about that.