

Thursday, 2nd September 2010



Aussie Titles 2010

Wow, what a week, full of ups and downs, but unfortunately only finding some form far too late to achieve the result I was hoping for.

The week began at Garan & Zac Hale's farm near Kyogle, where they generously offered for me to stay with them leading up to the event and prepare for the weekend. Their property was abundant in the type of extreme slippery terrain that is common in parts of Europe, but rarely seen in Australia, and it was going to be a very tough week of training. Dad and I decided we needed to learn from Zac and Garan, who were more adapted to the terrain than myself.

Friday before the event consisted of perusing the trial site where it was raining all day, and a quick ride in the afternoon to adjust myself to the venue. I left feeling relieved I had spent the week with the Hale's and adequately prepared for the event.

Thunderbird Park was an ideal venue for this event with camping, parking, trade stands, score tent, etc. all within a small radius. Spectators didn't have far to walk to access visible sections with plenty of excitement, although those further up the creek were only accessible by the extreme trials addicts!

Saturday the rain clouds had cleared to a bright, but cold, sunny day. I started very nervously, taking big points in the first few sections. I had set my goal at the top for this event and the poor start was affecting my confidence very quickly and disappointingly reflected in my riding. I began to get frustrated half way through the first lap when I just could not get a break in the slippery creek that the trial was based in. I showed myself signs of the riding that I normally produce at events but was never able to capitalise on it.

I finished the day a disappointing equal sixth with Kevin Zarczynski (NSW).

Sunday I knew I needed to put in the biggest effort of my life to rescue myself from day one and took off very focused and determined. I took a slack three on section 1 but tried not to let this faze me. Section 2 was the big break I needed! I rode aggressively and managed my first clean in the creek for the weekend. From here my riding improved greatly and I pulled the second best first lap for Sunday behind the formidable Jake Whitaker (NZ). The second lap was better again but unfortunately I made a mistake in section 3, taking a 5, and in one of the later creek sections a large apexed 250kg rock came out from underneath, forcing me to take a 3, thus pushing up my lap score massively!

I finished in 4th place, or 3rd placed Australian, thanks to my 'best Australian' performance on Sunday, definitely helping me climb up the ranks as much as possible.

One point ahead was the previous Australian Champion, Col Zar (NSW), himself being only 6 points behind Neil Price (WA) in 2nd. Jake (NZ) finished up a whopping 22 points ahead of his nearest rival. Boyd Willcocks (QLD) finished 4 points behind my score after an awesome first lap of 17 on Saturday.

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Thunderbird Park provided the event with a multitude of slippery rocks with most of the sections held on a continuous run along a creek bed. Fortunately for the winner, Jake Whitaker of New Zealand, it was like being at home and he produced a brilliant performance for the two days of competition. A big congrats to Jake!

My Gas Gas TXT Raga 300 performed faultlessly throughout the event, being the bikes second Australian Titles. I must credit this to Paul Arnott for his ease of dealing with and putting himself out to help me, and as always the GRO products are above standard allowing the motor to run perfect. Thanks Dunlop for the great tyres and The Howell Family for their generosity. A big thanks to all the people who supported me over the weekend and of course gave supportive words to me, especially Dave Marchant from Pacific Park and Trevor Bennett. Thanks Garan and Zac Hale for your great training area, Simon Grist for lending me his wheels, and of course all of my family who are always behind me wherever I need support. Thanks to Greg Nordsvan for putting a lot of time and effort into me this year with everything from rebuilding bikes to helping me with nutrition, you've played a big part in my riding this year!

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