



VOLUME 2, ISSUE 5

Race Update

6/2/08

Sam Licensed and Ready to Race at Summers!

Parker Family Racing would like to apologise for the lack of Race Updates over the last few weeks, the team have been working in overdrive to get Sam's new bike ready to race, and Sam licensed so that he can race it. Plus to make sure Phil can still go quicker than him, the team have also been working hard at fitting a new screw type Supercharger and fuel system to Phil's bike. The following is Sam's run down of the events from last weekend where Sam rode his new bike for the first time in order to upgrade his license for Top Fuel Motorcycle. Enjoy!

I Got to dads to load up the bikes at about 6pm Friday, however we had to do some work on dads bike first so we didn't hit the road till about 8.30pm. Got to the track in Portland at about midnight and had a few quiet drinks with fellow racers Pete and H. Got off to sleep a bit late, but the new trailer has heaps of room, so it was a good sleep at least! In the morning I had to do a blindfold test first, which was easy as I only have one simple fuel shut off switch and then it was time to do my first pass! Just wanting to do a burnout and 60 foot launch first time around, but also wanted to punch top gear at some stage to see if it actually worked.

Started the bike up and rode it forward into the water (was very exciting, as it was the first time I've ever sat on it while it was running! Did a little burnout only as I forgot to go into second gear, and then got ready to launch. Lights came down (well, I couldn't actually see them as a camera man was standing right in front of them....) so I cracked the throttle wide open. The bike made a lot of noise but didn't go anywhere too quickly. I gave it a couple of little hits to see if anything changed, tried second gear and gave it some more hits in case it would go then. Ended up stopping before getting to the finish line and waited for Billy to come get me.

It seemed as if the bike had not enough clutch in it (no where near enough) so we went to town putting a heap more clutch in the bike for the second run. This time, I remembered to select 2nd gear for the burnout and actually held a little bit of front brake on, so the burnout was a nice big smokey one. (Nothing sounds better than a fuel bike doing a burnout!). Just wanting to do a launch again, but possibly go a bit past the 60 foot markers, I cracked the throttle open wide again. This time the bike did come out quick, but about 30 feet into the run, it started to turn the tyre really bad, giving me a massive wiggle that had the crowd gasping as if I was coming off the bike. I rode through the wiggle making sure I got to the 60 foot markers, where I backed it off. Just then I heard something wrong from the motor so I turned it off. I looked down at the motor and

could see that the end of the crank was not spinning with the motor...

We came back and inspected the engine and found the problem, it was a series of bolts missing where the starter drive bolts to the crank, nothing serious! So with that fixed and some clutch taken back out of it we were planning on doing another pass when a spark plug thread stripped in the cylinder head. Not a difficult fix, a helicoil can not be bought at 6pm on a Saturday in Portland. So we decided to pack up, have some food and beer and head for Heathcote the next day - fix the head there and do the rest of the licensing.

We got to Heathcote at about 10am and Dad dropped me and the trailer off at the track and went into Bendigo to find a helicoil to fix the head. Had massive trouble finding one, but eventually got one at mid day and we fixed the bike and took it out on the track. I went into the water, cracked the throttle and nothing happened. The engine would rev, but it wasn't turning the tyre. We took it back to the pits to find some more bolts missing from the drive line.

With that fixed, we headed out for another attempt near the end of the day. The bike still had way too much clutch in it and it gave me a really big wiggle

about 100 foot out from the start line, I rode through a bit of it, but had to back off before it threw me off the bike, I cracked the throttle back open again and at the top end of the track I found the infamous Heathcote bumps that made the bike bounce in the air, I rolled off the throttle a little through the finish line. Knowing that we had to do one more pass for my license, we took it back to the pits took a little more weight off the clutch and prepared to do a pass on the other lane I gave it a big go, the bike came out pretty slow, but then took off. Sounded like it was slipping the clutch a bit and then it started to go right on me, I tried to bring it back, but had to back off the throttle.

A bit disappointed that I didn't hold it open we came back to the pits and the ANDRA official was really happy with the effort. It wasn't actually slipping the clutch, it was smoking the tyre and he thought it was a huge ride to hold it open and try to get it down the track with such little traction available. Saying that if I can do such a good job in low traction conditions that I will find it a breeze on a good track. With that in mind, he was happy to sign off on my license upgrade and we can enter for the Summers in Sydney!

Sam about to stage his new Top Fuel Bike at Southcoast Raceway in Portland.



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Vic T: (03) 9555 5463 New T: (02) 9648 6955 Qld T: (07) 3399 5906