



Race Report

SECOND PLACE SENSATION AT VIC TITLE OPENER!

Victorian Road Racing Championship Rd1
Winton Raceway (VIC)
24-25 April, 2004

Despite coming out of major ankle surgery just three days earlier in which he lost several kilos, Dean Bonthorne took his Superstock GSX-R600 to a stunning second place for the first round of the two-part Victorian Road Racing Championship. Even with a minor crash in the opening race, his new-found pace shattered previous lap times, delivering the silverware in one of his most impressive rides to date.



QUALIFYING : 4th of 15 SStk, Best Lap 1:34.60

With Friday practice cancelled due to torrential rains, Saturday morning was Dean's first time on the Winton long circuit in over 6 months and he recorded a respectable 1:36.45 on the cold track. For the second qualifier, a change in gearing, suspension and mental focus delivered his best-ever time of a mid 1:34 – Enough for a second-row grid position in the combined 600 (Supersport and Superstock) main event.

OVER 500cc C-GRADE RACE : 19th of 28, Best Lap 1:37.54 (L4 of 4)

Saturday afternoon remained clear but cool as Deano took a third-row 9th slot on the Clubman Series grid competing against 600 & 1000cc machines. Taking advantage of his new (mono-free) launch technique, the Suzuki rider was 6th by the first corner and within a lap gained another two places. With fresh Goodridge pads and fluid, he easily passed another under brakes for third position! But braking on a slick patch of tarmac repair at the end of the back straight, the front slid out from under him, Dean and the GSX-R sliding off into the grass. Furious, he ran over, remounted and entered the rear of the field. Despite the dirty tyres and a belly-pan FULL of gravel, he worked his way up to 19th for valuable points, but was red with anger for missing a potential podium finish.

VIC TITLE RACE ONE: 2nd SStk, Best Lap 1:33.05 (L4 of 8)

Sunday brought with it brilliant sunshine for the Victorian Championship race day. After a comfortable morning warm-up to scrub in his sticky new Pirelli Supercorsa tyres, Deano was determined to make up for the previous day's crash. In his best launch to date, he flew from his 7th combined-grid slot and was in 3rd position by the first turn behind a pair of A-Grade Supersport riders! A further two top-level riders soon passed the Suzuki Superstocker and cleared off leaving Deano with a hungry mob at his heels. For three laps he reeled off consistent 1:33 times, holding off another Supersport racer and even once they passed, Dean continued the quick pace. He crossed the line for a sensational 2nd Superstock placing and new fastest lap time. The elated 'air-punching' revealing his delight!

VIC TITLE RACE TWO: 3rd SStk, Best Lap 1:32.20 (L8 of 8)

Still on huge high from race one, Dean entered the afternoon's race determined to finish top-4 for an overall podium. Another fantastic leap from the grid saw him 4th overall and second Superstock by the first turn. A lightning-pace lap battle ensued with a Supersport competitor in consistent 1:32s. Again gaining under brakes, Deano tried to force his way around the outside of the right-hand turn 6, but the other rider ran wide, allowing a Superstocker hot on their heels to jump them both and clear off. Finally passing, Deano used the remaining two laps to fend off his arch rival who had closed in on the two, eventually finishing 3rd in class by just 0.4sec. This delivered enough points for a brilliant second-place Superstock for the day!

NEXT MEETING: Interclub Championship Round 2, Broadford Sports Complex (VIC), 9 May 2004.



PIRELLI - NGK - DAINESE - PTR - WIZ - JAG SIGNS - SPIDI - OGGY KNOBBS