



Race Report

BEST EVER ISLAND TIMES AT HARTWELL FINAL

**Hartwell Club Championship – Round Four
Phillip Island Circuit (VIC), 29th August 2004**

Delighted to be back at 'The Island' for the first time in five months, Dean Bonthorne pushed his GSX-R600 Superstock machine to the limit deliver his best ever lap times and entertain onlookers as he carved through the huge field of entrants. Although the nature of the club championship gradings did not allow him to take home any silverware, results were predominantly highest placing in his Superstock class for an awesome weekend.

Race1: Non Expert Over 500cc: 5th of 36, Best Lap 1:44.03 (L3 of 4)

With no qualifying Deano's grid place was based on his very limited time in the Hartwell club events, oddly relegating him to 29th. But despite the 9th row slot and number of larger-capacity machines ahead, Dean carved through the field to be 12th within half a lap and catch the leading five within 2laps, recording his best-ever lap time in the process! Gaining fast, he had third place all lined up in his favourite overtaking place, but a yellow flag banned him from passing, with only two turns left to the chequered flag. But he was ecstatic with passing 24 people within 4 laps to be the first Superstock and recording a blistering 1:44.0 time!



Image: Stephen Piper

Race2: Expert & Non-Expert 600cc: 5th of 40, Best Lap 1:44.43 (L4 of 4)

After his amazing climb through the field in Race 1, organisers promoted him from his 37th grid place to 10th, surrounded by all 'Expert'-level riders. A great start launched him into 4th until an A-grade Supersport competitor came flying past on the straight. But encouraged to try and keep touch with the leading four experts, Deano peeled of consistent 1:44's for the first time in his racing career, gapping those behind by some seven seconds for an awesome top five overall and highest-placed Superstock!

Race3: Expert & Non-Expert Over 500cc: 7th of 40, Best Lap 1:44.87 (L3 of 5)

Unfortunately Deano greeted Sunday morning with extremely poor health and a resulting lack of sleep which was strongly effecting his judgement ability, delivering just 1:52s in morning practice. But spurred on by a front row 4th grid slot he held 3rd during the opening lap and then 5th as two more Supersport 600s out-powered him. Deano's lap board incorrectly showed a 6 second gap, so he took a sweeping wide line into turn four, leaving the gate open for two more riders to slip through under brakes. Without 100% metal or body ability he wisely did not chance any risky passing maneuvers in the closing laps and crossed the line close together for 7th overall and 2nd Superstock.

Race4: Non-Expert Over 500cc: 5th of 36, Best Lap 1:45.81 (L2 of 5)

From 6th on the grid Bonthorne maintained 5th place into the first corner and opening lap, but in gusty conditions and still feeling poorly, a hesitation in the ultra-fast Turn 1 to assess the effect of the wind allowed a competitor to come through underneath him. The two slower riders ahead of Deano then engaged in a spectacularly aggressive and unpredictable battle, bumping shoulders and swerving all over the entire track width. This simply did not allow any space for Deano to make a clean pass and he was forced to circulate at 1:47s despite his higher corner speed. A mistake by one rider in the final corner allowed at least one place to made up for a very acceptable 5th.

NEXT MEETING: Australian Superbike Championship, Round 7, Phillip Is. (VIC) 10-12th September 2004.



PIRELLI - NGK - DAINESE - PTR - YOSHIMURA - OHLINS - JAG SIGNS - SPIDI