



Race Report

Stars of Tomorrow

Phillip Island (VIC), 14th - 15th May 2005

At the annual running of Australia's premier C&D-Grade motorcycle race meeting, Dean Bonthorne took his Suzuki GSX-R600 to new levels of speed. Although it's far from the quickest example in a straight line, Dean's outstanding ride over the weekend saw him push harder than ever to shatter his previous personal best time, hitting consistent mid 1:42s. He missed out on victory by only 0.1sec in his class final, but claimed Phillip Island's Superstock lap record in the process, and was the highest-placed Superstock in the main 'Stars of Tomorrow' event. A great honor indeed!

DEANO ON RECORD SPEED AT STARS!



QUALIFYING: 2nd of 28, Best Lap 1:44.10

With a field of almost 30 relatively inexperienced C-grade riders all fighting for position, qualifying was a crowded affair. But over the two sessions Deano managed to reel off a number of 1:44s, the quickest being just 0.1sec off his fastest ever Phillip Island lap, and by far his fastest non-race time. It delivered an excellent 2nd on the grid.

SUPERSTOCK PRELIMINARY RACE: 2nd, Best Lap 1:42.78 (6 of 7)

Dean's traditionally excellent starts were not forthcoming this weekend, with a poor launch bogging the bike down and allowing three riders past. But two of these were quickly disposed of within half a lap, though the leader was already far ahead. However, he gained fast on the lead rider and was on his back tyre within a lap, but passing was another story. The lead Honda rider was much slower in the tighter corners than Deano, but rode very defensively, blocking the track so there was no way past. On the remaining two laps, Dean applied the pressure hard as they pulled a massive 10second gap on third place, but was unable to get through, crossing just 0.5 sec behind for second place. Deano returned to a cheering garage crew who informed him of an astounding 1:42 lap time – The fastest of any 600cc Superstock or Supersport so far that weekend, and 5th of the 128 competitors, with the only faster bikes being four 1000cc Superbikes!! Needless to say, Deano was elated with the result!

SUPERSTOCK FINAL RACE: 2ND, Best Lap 1:42.74 (L4 of 6)

With the fastest lap in the Preliminary race, Deano was handed pole position for the Final. Being front row of the grid looking toward the descending track and distant ocean with no other bike in front was very exciting! But an average start meant that another two riders beat him to Turn 1. Again Dean quickly passed one bike and set out after the same Honda rider in the lead. From there it was a carbon copy of the previous race, with Dean unable to take advantage of his superior braking and corner speed, being blocked by the leader. Several very near collisions took place when Dean would draw alongside the Honda, only to have it tipped on top of him, with emergency evasion manouvers required. Finally, on the second last lap, Dean stuffed his Suzuki up the inside of Turn 2 and hit the lead. But this was short lived as an over-exuberant throttle hand spun the rear tyre sideways and kicked Dean out of the seat, forcing him to shut off to avoid a high-side, and allowing the Honda back past. The lead rider made no further mistakes and Dean was forced to except a still outstanding 2nd by just 0.1 of a second on the line.

STARS OF TOMORROW: 10th Overall / 1st Superstock, Best Lap 1:42.62 (L10 of 10)

In the prestigious 'Stars' race, the 40 fastest riders of any class formed the grid. Dean was a very commendable 10th, surrounded by Superbikes and Supersport machines. A good start and incident at the first turn meant that incredibly, he was up to 5th by mid way in the first lap! But as soon as a straight arrived, the hugely powerful 1000cc machines would blast through like Dean's 600 was in reverse. Still, within 4 laps he was in a solid position and caught an R1 Superbike. A classic battle ensued for the next 5 laps, with Dean gradually gaining and then passing under brakes into MG, only to have the R1 fly passed on the straight. The exact same thing happened every lap until the end, with the Superbike beating him by a bike length. But still the lap times were astonishing.

NEXT MEETING: Australian Superbike Championship, Round 3, Barbagallo Raceway (WA) 4-5 June 2005.



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