

Hartwell Series Round 4: Broadford

By Glenn Kettle



It's been a long stint since the last round and many were itching to get to the track, especially Rollie, who had been working frantically on modifying and rebuilding his bucket and managed to squeeze 20 hp out of it. Considering they only put out about 8 hp from the factory, it is quite an impressive gain—and what's more, it lasted the whole weekend!

To add a double Yee-haw, Jack Cousins had a guest ride on it and rode the pants off it in every race to finish 3rd for the weekend. He even got called up to race control a few times to be reminded that this is not the World Championship! The only concern was when he asked how to get more grip out of the tyres; having a look at the treaded tyres that had zero tread left, it was suggested he simply get new ones!

There were some amazing bikes on display over the weekend, ranging from Rollie's hot-rod bucket to Brendan Wilson's R1 and a couple of homemade Supermonos'. But the oldest bike over the weekend was Guy Hildreth's immaculately presented P4 1972 CB350. Apparently, it was out there cutting some very decent laps, too!

The race program was choc-a-block with 7 races per class and 2x main events, which left no one with time to complain—especially if you were riding in two classes. But to everyone's credit and surprise, we managed to get through the whole program! Top job to the officials, and to the riders for not flopping off so much.

Some Tasmanians, Kristian Riley and Martin Pedersen, made the trek over the ditch and brought some exotic machinery: a trusty Yamaha FZR 400 and a homemade, hand-fabricated Supermono with a lot of history and a very trick engine. Apparently, the engine is a 650 and then some, but no one is quite sure exactly how much more! They joined some of the club's riff-raff at the top pub for dinner and a full dose of banter on Friday night. There was a huge crowd at the table as other members strolled in, and even some of the locals joined in so they wouldn't miss out on the laughter. While some had mixed feelings over the food, one thing's for sure—you can't go wrong ordering the lamb shanks at the top pub!

The next night was karaoke, so everyone headed back for a singalong session on the rumour that Simon Cowell was out scouting local talent. For some reason, those sneaky Tassies didn't show up. Maybe they got lost somewhere between the track and Broadford? Either way, top blokes and always great to catch up with them.

Sunday morning got off to a hiss and a roar as someone brought their boombox into the pits and cranked the Carlton Blues theme song. The Blues have been on quite a roll lately and had just defeated Melbourne the night before, so all was quiet until... ♪ Up there with the navy blues, we are the old dark navy blues! ♪ ...out of the entire pit in B Shed, only one person cheered while everyone else looked like stunned mullets. C'mon Blue Baggers!

There was a bit of payback over the P.A. system on Sunday. For those who have raced with the club in the past, we used to hear this regular announcement: "Roland skate to pit office please, I repeat Roland skate to the pit office, your assistance is required immediately!" This was heard multiple times a day over many race weekends, mainly because Rollie used to go walkabout. Well, on Sunday, the tables turned. Karen's services were required in the office, and she was nowhere to be found, so with a flick of the mic switch and a clear of the throat, the announcement went trackside: "Karen skate, Karen skate, your services are required immediately in the pit office! I repeat: Karen skate. NOT Roland—Karen skate!" She was caught watching the racing by pit turn and looked around in total confusion. Rollie was seen laughing his head off.

Off track, a whole gaggle of BMW adventure riders showed up after hearing the Hartwell round was on. They were spotted at various points around the venue scoping out the lads on track to get ideas on how to improve their riding. Oddly, they were more interested in watching us than the motocross riders cutting laps right next door. When asked, none of them were too keen on touching the asphalt and stuck firmly to the dirt.

Many people camped as usual, and the weather was perfect during the night. The 400 crew were a man short when they got back to the campsite from the pub and realized they had left Nick behind. Intentional? Maybe. But he managed to wrangle a lift from a local, albeit at the cost of a glass of lemonade.

Overall, the weekend was absolutely fantastic. Well done to everyone involved: the club committee for organizing the event, the marshals for waving at us on cool-down laps and making us feel like superstars, and all the competitors of all ages who put on some great racing.

Well done!

