

## Another Race Weekend (4/16/12)

So we were out at the track again for another round of CCS racing. We purposely got a late start on Saturday, as we knew we wouldn't be out there for the entire day. By the time we got to the track, there was no parking anywhere, so we couldn't unload the truck. Looks like no practice for Chaz on the race tires today. Guess he will have to be a quick learner in the 30 minutes he gets on Sunday AM. I took the time to pull the wheels and have the Dunlop guy balance the tires, as I mounted them myself. He didn't have time until first thing Sunday AM. Not looking good for practice. Jim Cox (Dunlop guy) came through HUGE and got the tires back to me before 7:30AM, so I had to hustle and get them back on the bike, and safety wire everything again to get it through tech (and on the tire warmers) before 1<sup>st</sup> practice at 8:30AM.

Success.

First practice rolls around, and Chaz will be getting his first taste of race rubber. Spends the first session getting a feel for them, not really pushing too hard. Uneventful. Second practice was much of the same, with a slightly faster pace. He does tell me however, that he has turn 3 (where he crashed last month), and turn 10 (a 90 degree right-hander that it seems like *everybody* hates) figured out. We will see...

His first race is #3 on the schedule: **LW SuperSport**. Only 3 bikes on the grid, but what can you do? Pretty uneventful race for the most part. Andrew walked away while Chaz and Alan battle for 2<sup>nd</sup>. Alan started to run out of fuel on the last lap, so he pulled off early. Chaz finished 2<sup>nd</sup>.

His second race is #5 on the schedule: **Thunderbike**. A few more bikes on this grid, which is good. I screwed up and misjudged the timing of it, so he misses the warm up lap. He has to go straight to the start line. He gets a decent start, and is second or third going into 1. Moves into a good position, and going into 3 he dives under the leader and makes the pass stick. He carries the lead the rest of the lap, as Andrew gets held up a bit. Chaz is looking pretty smooth, and it is clear he likes being out front. He is running a pretty decent pace, but he knows Andrew is coming fast, but doesn't know when or where. Andrew catches him on lap 3 I think, and is just too fast (and consistent) for Chaz to give him any kind of fight for more than a couple of laps at this point. Chaz again finishes 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Lunch break, so we have time to discuss what he feels and I observe. I would agree that he indeed has his two problem corners figured out, but now we need to clean up 1 (his weakest section). It is a fast right/left switchback coming off the front straight, and is the very first place he crashed on the SV. I make a couple of suggestions to him, hoping he has the confidence to try it.

His final race of the day is #10 on the schedule: LW SuperBike. He has had plenty of time to cool off, and think about what he wants to do (it was sunny and warm – low to mid 90's with little cloud cover). I think maybe he had too much time, as he completely craps the bed on the start.

He had the bike in neutral, and he gave the group a 5 second head start before he even left the line. Well that sucks, but we will see how he reacts. Well, let's just say he wasn't happy, and he wasn't finishing last. By the time he gets to 3, he is on the first guy. Laps clicking off and he is working his way forward, at the average of 1 racer per lap. By the time it is all said and done, he again ends up in 2<sup>nd</sup>, with his third podium for the day. It is clear he still has work to do to even battle for the lead, but he is happy with his performance.

He set a new fast lap for himself this weekend, running a 1:06:00. Far and away the fastest, and the consistency is starting to come around, which means the confidence is sure to follow shortly. I will be going through the video over the next week, as we had the cameras front and back of the bike for all the races.

This month (May 21 and 22) is a new track for everybody (INDE), so all bets are off.

-Kelly Abbott