

Race Meeting Report

NG Road Racing – Thruxton – 6th October

NG final championship round
and

Phoenix Yamaha (Trowbridge) Trophy Day

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“Local Boys come good.....”

Despite the fact that Motorcycle races at Thruxton in Hampshire are to say the least few and far between with just BSB and NG Road Racing taking two wheels to the super fast circuit there is something in the air that always lifts the locals.

This weekend for the final NG Road Racing championship round was no different. Simon Gates who lives less than 15 mins drive from the circuit took a dominating win in the F400 class on his ZXR 400 Marlborough sidecar crew of Roger Lovelock and Rick Lawrence, despite going for their second Eastern Airways British title next weekend he could not resist the call of Thruxton. They won the CSC Sidecar race, and set new lap record figures. James Hillier too who hails from Ringwood, wheeled out his Bournemouth Kawasaki Pr1mo ZX10. Hillier had a great time at the TT this year grabbing podiums, and has really stepped up to the mark on the BSB scene with Pr1mo, but after a mid-season injury he has recently had a frustrating time. He put his reputation on the line and despite maybe still not being 100% fit stormed to the Powerbike win. Adding more local interest was Leon Morris who is less than 10mins from the Thruxton circuit gates. Leon who is still just 24 cut his racing teeth in the NG paddock some 10 years ago, and still loves to make an outing at Thruxton if BSB Superstock commitments allow. So it was good news then that Morris on the Ducati Coventry – Hire Base 1199 Panigale was free for this one. Morris took a fine Phoenix Open win after a race long battle with Hillier as their battle for Hampshire honours drew them 12 seconds clear of their rivals at the end of the main race of the club day.



Leon Morris – Ducati Coventry – Hire Base 1199 Panigale

Winner of Phoenix Motorcycles (Trowbridge) Open

Photo – EDP Photo News

The Phoenix Motorcycles Open

After making the short 10 minute drive from his home to the circuit Leon Morris the 24 year-old BSB Superstock rider and 2011 British 848 Ducati champion was in relaxed mood. But he knew that Thruxton is not a circuit that suits his 1199 Ducati Panigale. The big new flagship bike for Ducati's future assault on the superbike scene has not really made the immediate impact that the Italian manufacture expected. Morris's Ducati Coventry – Hire Base Team have worked hard throughout 2012 and the bike has come on as the season has progressed, but there is still a rear grip issue on long cranked over corners when the rider gets on the throttle. That's just about every Thruxton corner !! The 2012 crown has already gone to Phil Bevan and he celebrated by taking pole in qualifying

When the lights went out for the final though it was Morris along with another fast Hampshire resident James Hillier on the Pr1mo KX10 that set the pace and despite Hillier setting the fastest lap Morris held on to the lead, and the bucking and weaving Panigale. At the line just 5 thousandths of a second separated the young Hampshire men. Bevan ended the year with a fine podium and the Open class title but Mark Compton put in a fine late race charge to come through to 4th. James Hurrell and Paul Shook took their fight to the line for 5th whilst AFB Motorcycles team mates of Chris Pope and Michael Blank took each other straight on through the chicane on the laps lap as neither wanted to give second best. That allowed Kevin Davies to come through on his new GSXR 1000 Suzuki. Such was the race pace that all of the top 15 put in 100mph plus lap times in ideal racing conditions.

Pro-Bolt 600cc

Luke Jones, the store man and mechanic at a breakers yard took apart the opposition in the Pro Bolt 600cc final. Just one week after turning 24 he showed exactly why the Triumph factory put their faith in him for 2012 after he won the Triumph Triple series in 2011. With a T3 supported ride for this season he has built on his 600cc performances. Jones who made his name on 125's, taking the British 125GP title has made the step up in capacity very well and proved that here this weekend with an astonishing 16 second win over Scott Pitchers in the fastest race of the weekend.

As Jones reeled on the laps and his lead extended, he also got quicker and quicker and by half race distance he was knocking in outright NG lap record figures. Alex Lowes set a 1:19.08 back in 2010 with NG, but Herford's Jones had his eye on that time.... Lap 5 and the timing screens changed colour... fastest lap.... new lap record.... 1 minute 18.77....107.85mph. He was lapping over 4 second per lap quicker than anyone else... I guess we now know what champions are made of.

125GP

After ending the year with three wins on the bounce 17 year-old Andrew Fisher was visibly relieved as he crossed the line at the head of the 125GP field to add the NG Road racing title to add to his previous New Era 125 crowns. Outgoing champ Jamie Ashby was still in with a chance of retaining his 2011 title. But after slipping back behind Adrian Bowman he saw his title hopes fade away.

Steve Lynham Formula 125

Joseph Thomas continued his season long domination of the Formula 125 class with yet another win on his RS125 Aprilia (.....still remarkably devoid of any sponsors logos) . His ninth win of the year saw him finish ahead of Mark Clayton on his refined recruitment GP80 which suffered a bit for top speed on the high speed 2.3mile Thruxton circuit.

450cc Open

John Lewis reeled in early race leaders Chris Beverley, Dave Hampton and Tom Snow to put him in prime position for a last lap challenge for the lead. Hampton on his TZ had just over a one-second advantage as they went into the last lap but Lewis on his TZ timed his charge up Woodham Hill perfectly. He left his braking a split second later than Hampton as he took the line up the inside for the chicane. Lewis set the fastest lap of the race on that last lap to take his first ever NG Road Racing 450cc win.

Pirelli UK GP45

Peter Carr made it 10 wins from 13 starts in the GP45 class on his Pistol Pete Racing KX Kawasaki. It was a win made even sweeter because he had a whole mini bus full of supporters and sponsors who had made the trip over from the Isle of White where Carr is based. He obviously took the class championship, which he adds to the Streetstock title he won in 2010. Outgoing champ Matthew Andrew finished second on the day but had no answer for Carr's pace at Thruxton.

A and R Racing Formula 400

Local man Simon Gates wheeled out his GNG Racing ZXR at what is his acknowledged favourite circuit and promptly took the win over Lee Tyack. Tyack though was overjoyed with his podium after returning to the grids after a 5-year lay off. Ben Palmer looked to have the pace of the top two in qualifying but problem in the opening laps put him on the back foot.....recovering as the race went on to get up to fifth. 2012 champion Shannon Hale was safe in the knowledge that the title was already hers for the second year in a row and had a relaxing ride out taking 6th at this final outing of 2012.

Simon Consulting Powerbikes

James Hillier, the Ringwood rider on the Pr1mo ZX10 may still be recovering from injury but showed all present that he will once more be a force in the BSB paddock in 2013. He took an emphatic win in the Simon Consulting Powerbikes, and set a new class lap record on his way to the win. Phil Bevan took second place and the season long title after a tentative ride in the early stages as he is still riding with broken bones in his hand after a crash at Castle Combe. It was no easy run to second though as Paul Shook, Mark Compton, Chris Pope and Greg Allsop along with Phil squabbled over the podium spots. Shook it was that stole third on the final lap, and the Welshman showed what it meant to him as he crossed the line on his 2005 spec, virtually standard www.britishhedgehogs.org ZX10.... on tyres that most people would have binned races ago.

MPH Bikes Mini Twins

Ben Marsden, the 2011 Mini Twins champion knew that if he was to have any hope on retaining his title he had to win the race... nothing else would do.... But he also had to rely on current series leader Dale Thomas making a mistake. Ben duly won on his NP Motorcycles SV... But Dale the 18 year old Welshman rode with a mature head staying out of harms way in the early laps, but bursting through the 5 man fight for second to grab the runner up spot, and the Mini Twins title at the flag.

Performance Red Sound of Thunder

The in-form Luke Jones won the Performance Red sound of Thunder on his T3 675 as he had a race long battle with Leon Morris and his Ducati Coventry Hire Base 1199 Panigale. Morris may have had more power under his right wrist compared to Jones's 675 but struggled to get that power to the ground as the rear end of the big Ducati made all sorts of shapes as it scrambled for grip. Jones Triumph meanwhile did everything he asked of it and the former 125 British champ took the race win and a new class lap record as he headed Morris over the line. The pair dragged over 20 seconds clear of Daniel Fowler (848) and Dan Fuller (675) who fought race long for third.... Fowler got the nod, but only the transponder timing could split them... the gap 0.01 of a second !!.

Metzeler and DTR Streetstock

Ben Palmer and Ben Ireland were neck and neck for the whole 400 streetstock race with the nod eventually going the way for Palmer on his Raven Performance ZXR after setting the fastest lap at the end of the race. 700cc honours went the way of WC Racings Lee Dawes on his R6, he took his maiden win in the class over Chris Whitehouse and Rob Starkey. Series leader David Mitchell was forced to sit out the final after a crash earlier on in the day but was safe in the knowledge that his points gap was enough for the crown.

Simon O'Donnell did all he could in his bid for 1300 Streetstock glory by winning the race lapping at over 100mph on his road legal Simon Consulting ZX10. Mark Skinner knew though, he just had to keep O'Donnell in view and although Dan Millard stole second off him in the latter stages Skinner who switched from Suzuki to Kawasaki for 2012 under Cardiff M/C Centre colours was happy in his change of mechanical allegiance.

TPC Construction Pre Injection

Two time Pre Injection class champ Adam Jeffery knew that a win was essential if he was to make in three crown in three years, but also had to rely on series leader Tom Palmer making a mess of on his R1. Jeffery set his stall out early taking for front sport on track as early as he could on his AFB R1. Palmer say in second... but was then passed by Steve Palmer on his GSXR 750 then Michael Hobbs. Palmer on his BS Racing R1 regrouped in the latter stages and when he saw the chequered flag the emotion and relief came pouring out the championship was his. Jeffery took the win but was 5 points short of the title this year, and was left ruing what could have been, after he had been absent for a couple of rounds mid season..... It's all about the if's and but's. Palmer though has only been off the podium once this year and has five wins under the belt..... a championship winning year.

The smaller 700cc pre-injection class was another nervous affair. Alexander Jones has hit a great run of end of year form on the Black Fox 600 Kawasaki and has been reeling in series leader Mark Pask. This time out Tom Vear took the race win on his SV with Jones second and took 20 points.... the mathematicians were all fingers and thumbs though as they waited for Pask... 8th place and 8 points.... Was it enough ?. The answer was yes, by just three points. Pask and his R6 could relax.

The CSC Sidecars

Leader of the 2012 Eastern Airways British Sidecar championship took a weekend out of his National schedule to take a run out at his local circuit. Roger Lovelock started his sidecar-racing career with NG Road Racing back in the latter end of the 1980's. Through the 1990's he alog with his passenger back then Frazer Sutcliffe picked up new fewer that eight sidecar titles. Lovelock from Marlborough now has Rick Lawrence in the chair and they have continued to collect championship on a larger scale including the 2006 Euro Cup and the 2009 British title. As I said they are in line for the 2012 win with one round to go. Lovelock and Lawrence were the form book favourites, and they didn't disappoint taking the win by over 22 seconds on the Driver Wolf LCR 1000 Suzuki, over fellow British championship runners (.... And 6 time NG sidecar title winners) Ian Drowne with Ken Edwards in the chair.

The F2 class win went the way of Miles Bennett and Shelly Smithies on their Shellbourne 600 Mad Cow outfit. Meanwhile the battle was on between two other pairings and despite Tom and Thomas Quaye (Father and Son) getting one over on their season long rivals it was the championship that went to Rob Handcock and Basil Bevan on the super fast starting Maddock Hire 600 Shellbourne Honda.

Triumph Young Guns

In the series run by the Triumph factory where hand picked riders compete for a backed ride in the 2013 Triumph Triple British series the candidates had been whittled down to three for the shootout at Thruxton. The riders are not only taught race craft over the competition but also media training and machine preparation. Russell Brown, Charlie King, and Tom Oliver were the short-listed riders. On the race-track the nod went the way of 16 year old Charlie King. King splits his time between an SV650 and the Triumph... who ever gets the nod for 2013 will have the opportunity of a lifetime, and all credit must go to Triumph.

Inter Services Jamie Adam Memorial Race

Jamie Adam the Royal Navy racer unfortunately lost his life in the Manx GP a couple of year ago and now an inter armed services award has been instigated. For this first year four riders were in with a shout of lifting the new impressive trophy. After 6 frantic laps of Thruxton Bill Callister of 42 Commando (Plymouth) on his CBR600RR took and emotional win over Colin Wilson (RNAS Yeovil) on a GSXR600, Stevie Elliot (30 Commando Plymouth) and Graham Humm (Chicksands Naval base). So first honours to the Royal Marines and Bill Callister. The Navy need to review their battle plan for 2013 !.

Wayside Garages Performance of the Meeting

John Lewis was a worthy winner of the Wayside Garages performance of the meeting award with maiden race win on his TZ250 Yamaha in the 450cc open, with a magnificent last corner victory.

Russ Gardner

Images for NG Road Racing Meetings are available from NG official supplier :

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