

NG Road Racing Race Report.....

Castle Combe – 8th June

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“Arise, King James of The Combe.....”



**James Cox, winner of the Simply Saab King of Combe..... followed by Phil Bevan and Tom Garness
.....and new outright NG Road Racing lap record holder at 91.45mph**

Local 28 year-old Wiltshire man James Cox who started his two wheeled racing exploits on Mini Moto's over 15 years ago was crowned the new Simply Saab King of Combe with a stunning record breaking ride on his Michelin/Highbridge Caravans backed ZX10 Kawasaki. After setting pole some 1.2 seconds quicker than Tom Garness on his Team Retard S1000R BMW, Simon Knowlson and Scott Pitchers he lined up as red hot favourite.....but the rest made him fight for it and the huge sun-baked Wiltshire crowd were treated to 10 laps of the type of racing that only the “old school tracks” like the high speed Combe can.....fast and furious.

Come the final and it was a blistering start for Knowlson and Roo Cotton from row 3. Knowlson on his CBR lead for the first two laps , but Cotton squandered his good start after he had to take the slip road through the Bybrook Chicaine, which is due to still suffering wrist problems after a Brands Hatch crash last year. Garness did not make the best of the early race and was down in 10th but revelling in the conditions and a BMW that was obviously working well for him as he picked his way back into contention. On lap 3 Phil Bevan took up the running, with Cox ominously still sitting....watching....and waiting. As well as Bevan, Cox, Garness, Pitchers and Knowlson there was Dale Thomas on the back of the leading train. On lap 6 of 10 Cox hit the front and took Pitchers on the amazing Team SP 675 with him. Bevan by now was suffering after a crash in morning warm up and had been passed by the flying Garness.

Over the last 3 laps James Cox wound up the ZX10 and took a full second per lap out of the rest to stamp his mark on the race. Garness meanwhile was almost matching Cox's pace but was some 5 seconds adrift and surely ruing the poor start some 10 laps earlier. Tom muscled the big BM passed Pitchers 675 in the last few corners to grab second but by then James Cox had already taken the flag and the King of Combe crown.

As the top brass from the Simply Saab dealership were handing out the trophies to the top 3 it was obvious that not all racers are Marc Marquez....Dani Pedrosa or Marco Melandri sized 5 foot nothings as Cox, Garness and 19 year old hot shot Pitchers are all well and truly 6 footers.

www.Simon Consulting.info Powerbikes in association with Motorcycle Direct

Local star James Cox continued his winning ways at Castle Combe by taking the Powerbike win. Simon Knowlson got the drop at the lights to take the lead with a great start...but meanwhile fellow front row qualifier Tom Garness who was having a great meeting blotted his copybook with a jump-start. These three along with current champ Phil Bevan dragged away from the rest. Cox though reeled off lap after lap under the old lap record held by Daniel Cooper to streak away on the Michelin/Highbridge Caravans backed ZX10, he eventually took it by over 12 seconds from Knowlson and Phil Bevan. Garness despite the 10 second penalty got fourth just ahead of Ben Marsden having his best ride yet on the NP Motorcycle ZX10.

Wayside Garages 600cc

A first lap crash at Quarry by Dale Thomas split the leading group asunder. Daniel Fuller came through unscathed and had what looked like a very healthy lead, but Fast Bike Magazine tester got his head Down and set a series of new lap records to hunt down then pass Fuller in the latter stages for his first race win since 2008. Two regular front runners who suffered most in the Dale Thomas melee were Scott Pitchers and Chris Hakes. Pitchers joined in 13th and forced through to take a stunning podium third place, but Hawkes suffered worst of all on his Station road Garages GSXR, he came round at the end of lap one in 28th. Hawkes really worked up a sweat as he picked off one rider after another to cross the line in 13th and salvage 3 valuable championship points.... and they may prove vital at the end of the year.

MPH Bikes Mini Twins

Justin Garrett has really stepped up his game this year on the Nigel and John Reed backed SV650. He has always had a reputation as a fast starter, but would then fade slightly as the race went on..... This year though there in no sight of the fade.....and the starts are still good. Garrett, Nigel Reed, Paul Wardell and Jordan Rushby along with Sean Montgomery broke clear at the front. Meanwhile series leader Kevin Davies was charging through from a back row start after being removed from the grind in the qualifier with a suspected oil leak in the qualifier. The frustrated Davies was on a mission. Up front early on Garrett set the pace, with Reed in second, but Reed's SV started to cough and splutter. By the time Rushby and Wardell had got through Garret was well out front. As all this was going on Kevin Davies was reeling them in and in the last couple of laps got passes the struggling Reed, and then mugged the squabbling Rushby and Wardell as they came through the back-markers to take a hard earned runner up spot

125GP / Moto 3

After setting pole position in the qualifier Adrian Bowman on the BART Racing RS125 must have thought he would have an easier time of it in the final, but 2010 class champion Jamie Ashby had other plans. Ashby was starting from the back of the grid due to problems in the qualifier and set about his job immediately with a good start. By half way he was past current series leader Mark Strudwick and had Bowman in his sights. As the laps counted down so did the gap but Bowman held on to take the win by just 0.1 of a second at the line.

Steve Lynham Formula 125

Charlie Nesbitt the Swindon schoolboy who cut his racing teeth on Mini Motos at the age of 6 has made the transition to the bigger bikes this year. He now has a Aprilia RS in the Formula 125 and after not the best of starts to forced his way to the front eventually leading home the rest, headed by Kurtis Drew by over 10 seconds. Nesbitt also set new class lap record figures on his way to the win. Current series leader Jake Archer failed to finish but his healthy points lead still sees him top the table.

Fraser's of Gloucester 500cc Open

It was two stroke 250's vs four stroke 450's on the 500 open class, and after qualifying Adam Hoare with the RS250 Honda looked to have the upper hand. Come the final the RS just would not pull off the line cleanly and was 4 seconds adrift of early leader Dave Hampton on the TZ and Harry Coomber and Bradley Jones, both on RRV 450's. Hoare set about his task, and with two laps to go it was a 4-way fight for the lead...but after doing all the hard work Hoare got tangled with a back marker and his challenge was over. Hampton who had led for most of the race then got the shock of his life as the two fearless 15 yea-olds of Coomber and Jones rattled through to finish 1-2. Adam Hoares only consolation as he finished just 1 second adrift despite all his issues is that he now holds the class lap record.

GP45

Harry Coomber and Bradley Jones, both just 15 years-old !!! scrapped (...there is no other word for it) it out for top honours in the GP45's. Both were riding the RRV450 Aprilias. There was nothing to choose between them with passes being made two...three ...and four times each lap. The pair even showed us that overtake's were possible where we never thought they were. It took a new class lap record from Coomber on his Bardahl-Aztec GB RRV to eventually take the win. Current series leader mark Carkeek, despite being a distant third still retains his series lead.

A and R Racing Formula 400

If there is anything that Simon Gates loves it is fast and demanding circuits. His super smooth riding style seems to really suit tracks like Combe and Thruxton. Here at Combe he reeled off lap after lap just a couple of tenths off of his own lap record to take a 20 second win on the GNG Racing and RB Engineering ZXR Kawasaki. The win was even more pleasing considering he crashed out of the lead at the last round at Donington. Gates and ZXR engine guru Rich Bearcroft repaired and rebuilt the little Kawasaki and the results speak for themselves. Alan Russell on his recently rebuilt VFR Honda came though in second just ahead of young hard charger Luke Collins.

Peter Hammond Motorcycles Sound of Thunder

Alistair Fagan (675), Daniel Fuller (675), Chris Richardson (1098) and Darren Rumley (RC8) squabbled over the lead in the Sound of Thunder before the two 675 riders eventually hit the front using the superior handling of the little triple through Combe chicanes. Fagan also slashed over three-quarters of a second off the class lap record in the process of taking the win. Current series leader and past Thunder champ Paul Willis said ".....it was just one of those days !!!!" as he struggled to match the pace up front finishing down in fifth.

Metzeler and DTR Streetstock including the BLD Motorcycle Specialists Trophy Race

Luke Collins on his aptly named Collins Family Racing ZXR400 fought long and hard with Chris Bavel for top honours in the 400cc Streetstocks. Both riders racing under the old lap record. Collins though with his wild and very animated riding style took the win ...his fifth of the year, to take some valuable points out of current series leader Corey Lewis who rode the wheels off his elderly KR1S Kawasaki for third. In the 700cc Streetstocks Danny Frankham looked like he had done enough on his CBR600, but he had not reckoned with Murray McConnachie. McConnachie on his Cabot Tyres/Bob Harvey 675 set a new class lap record on the last lap to sweep through and nick the win by just a bike length at the line. The 1300's saw Novice rider Andrew Gooding on his Mirage R1 get the better of the fast starting Richard Hughes, Paul Dawson and Tom Cook. Gooding also set a new lap record on his way to picking up the spoils in the BLD Motorcycle Specialists Trophy race.

TPC Construction Pre Injection

After writing off both of his bikes at Brands Hatch round one the former two time Pre Injection champ Adam Jeffery has managed with the help of Andy from AFB Motorcycles put together one R1 from all the bits. Adam proved he is still a force to be reckoned with as he headed home current champ Tom Palmer who with second place takes himself back to the top of this years rankings ahead of Paul Harlington for finished fourth. The 700cc class had former 250 rider out on his old R6 and took a fine win ahead of Simon Gates with his ZXR400 who despite finishing second set a new 700cc class lap record.....on a Rich Bearcroft tuned 400 !!!!!

CSC Racing Sidecars

Ben Holland and Lee Watson used Combe as some valuable testing for the upcoming National championship rounds on the Finning Cat LCR Suzuki. The top UK crew voluntarily started from the back of the grid in the qualifier and soon swept through to take a convincing win over Simon Gilbert and Nathan Robinson. They looked to do the same in the final, but the LCR Suzuki had other ideas and went sick during the race with the pairing pulling at two-thirds distance leaving the way for current series leaders Gilbert/Robinson to take the 25 points. Dean Nicholls and Ashley Moore lapped the whole field in the F2 class on the Certain Exhibitions 600cc Lumley ZX6 and set new class lap record figures.

April UK Newcomers

There were no newcomer's races at Combe but it's worth mentioning that the orange jacket-wearing novices still made their mark as Andrew Gooding.... Charlie Nesbitt.... Mark Strudwick... Chris Baker and Sean Montgomery were featuring strongly in open competition.

Wayside Garages Performance of the Meeting

Justin Garrett – No 77 – John and Nigel Reed backed SV650 – Mini Twins

Bardahl Top-Oils Newcomer of the Meeting

Andrew Gooding – No 66 – Mirage Ltd R1 Yamaha - Streetstocks

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Images for all NG Road Racing events are available from the official photographer.....

EDP Photo News - Nigel and Julie Eddleston-Dike

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