

PIRELLI MASTERS 2011

Last weekends Pirelli Masters of Morgan Park which incorporated the 2011 Queensland Historic titles attracted a record field of 128 entries after the inaugural event in 2010 drew a field of 119.

While most historic field sizes increased some modern categories reduced significantly resulting in only a slight overall increase in field size. Period 3 & 4 dominated with a major increase from just 17 in 2010 to 32 this year while sidecar entries also went from just 5 last year to 17 at this years event. Bears category entries were fairly stable with only a slight reduction of 4 overall. The significant advertising program by QEMSC & the promotion of the Interstate Sidecar Challenge certainly paid dividends with increased numbers across all historic & sidecar categories. The pre modern categories were inexplicably down from 30 in 2010 to just 11 this year.

While Saturdays weather was very cold it was still a good day of racing with a short break in proceedings after a sidecar dumped some oil late in the day.

From a Goondiwindi competitors perspective Saturday was a great day with period 4 competitor Tony Eelkema finally getting his 250 Ducati to run properly after several years of frustration. As the day progressed the smile on Tony's face just got wider & wider as his beloved Ducati finally delivered him some excellent lap times. Tony's weekend however did end with a slight hiccup on Sunday morning after he ditched his machine at the end of the main straight during the run down lap after finishing the first race in very wet conditions. Luckily he was uninjured & the damage to his machine was only minor.

Second of the three Goondiwindi competitors Allan Barter competed well on his Honda CB125 which lapped consistently in the P5 up to 350c event all day without any major problems.

The only downer to the weekend from a Goondiwindi competitors perspective was my own Honda 350 running like a dog. I made a slight change to the cam timing recently after a rebuild but instead of the hoped increase in performance it ended up exactly the opposite.

A small highlight for me personally was the parade lap by all the sidecar teams at lunchtime on Saturday in honour of our good mate Ted Hayes who sadly passed away last week. I swung for Ted for several years & he absolutely loved his sidecars & I'm sure would have been thrilled with this small gesture. Thanks to Damien Deane for allowing me to participate.

Another QEMSC member to strike some trouble was Damien Kavney when he suffered a minor low speed crash on Saturday morning with no resulting injury or major damage while another QEMSC member Gerard Purcell was not so lucky with a crash late on Saturday afternoon while competing in the New Era up to 500cc class. His VFR 400 suffered major cosmetic damage while Gerard himself ended with multiple fractures to his left arm. Gerard is in good spirits however & is already talking about a possible comeback with his beloved Norton at our own Stanthorpe Big Chill event in July.

Racing was eventually cancelled before lunch on Sunday due to continued rain after several spills in the first round of the Greg Hansford feature race event.

It is certainly my hope that this event continues to grow in popularity each year to give all our QEMSC Historic competitors another local option other than our very popular annual Stanthorpe event. If there is any consistent complaint about this event it is the condition of the surface of the first half of the new section of track. In particular interstate competitors may not continue to make the long trek to Warwick on a regular basis if this is not improved.

QEMSC webmaster, David Vincent.