



# RACE REPORT

## ZX10 CUP

[For immediate release 30/01/2008](#)

### Race Report ZX 10 Masters Cup - Kyalami

EmTek Racing has agreed to assist two riders in this "gentlemen's class" being Gavin Lightfoot and Gilbert Parsons.

**Gavin** is a previous Regional Superbike Champion and **Gilbert** is a BOTT's refugee looking for a more reliable bike than he has had with the Ducati.

The team set up the pits on the Friday which was also official practice day for the riders.

Gavin arrived late due to traffic and family commitments and Gilbert left early due to Business commitments - so it was not an ideal start to the race weekend. Practicing is all important when contending in a national championship series.

Gavin had put in consistent times at the top of the timing sheet with the main contenders right on his back. The top riders were posting times in the 1:52's consistently. Gilbert was having a little bit more of a torrid time going through the transition phase of 6 years on a twin to 3 weeks on a Japanese 4 cylinder which has a whole 30+ more horsepower. Gilbert was also finding it difficult to come to terms with the Bridgestone rubber having spent (scratch that -spoilt) 6 years with Ohlins front and back and Pirelli SC2 (remember that all the World Superbike technology for tyres is going into Pirelli due to the one make tyre rule). However the Bridgestones is for all riders in the ZX10 Cup and still levels the playing field at a lower cost.

### SATURDAY QUALIFYING

Saturday 26th January 2008, Saturday morning at around 06:30am members of the **EmTek Racing Kawasaki** team rambled in to the pits for the start of this auspicious occasion. The race day however did not get off to a very good start. There was some confusion regarding the riders' briefing which was to have been held on the Friday afternoon (which is impractical for business people that is riding for fun and not as a profession like the proper Nationals). So Saturday morning it was announced through "word of mouth" that riders briefing would be at 08:45 **prior** to qualifying which was all fine. Then it was announced on the PA system (twice nogo!) that riders briefing would be held at 09:45 **after** qualifying.

So Gavin and myself get to the riders briefing at the earlier time but I had to jump into the gents (usual butterflies in the tummy syndrome) and missed role call by 3 minutes. Gavin was also in the vicinity but was not sure of the exact location (Kyalami has many offices, conference rooms etc) and also missed role call by 3 minutes. After there were much heated exchanges between the Clerk of the Course and certain competitors it was



decided to penalize those that missed the role call (and not the offenders that tackled the CoC)).

Bikes were double checked, tyre warmers engaged and then it was ..... the wait. Qualifying went fairly well with Gavin qualifying on Pole only to be relegated to third place after having been docked a full second off his time and Gilbert qualified 14th (not too bad) only to be relegated to 17th. This action was not in the spirit of the event and kind of left a bitter taste in the mouths of the competitors. At Regionals this has never happened and the day always seems to go through with no mishaps or problems - and yet at every National event attended there is always politics and problems.

## RACE 1

The race started off just as the country had been plodding along for the previous week - in the dark. No electricity for the start lights to work. So out came the trusty old MSA flag to do the business with Hennie De Beer at the helm.

Gavin got a good start and the front runners managed to break away quite early in the race and by the second lap were some distance ahead of the second tier riders. Unfortunately (and quite predictably) Dewald Winterbach had a major crash in turn 2 which resulted in the Safety Car being deployed - and being a bunch of non-professional riders what happened next was also predictable.

Riders were overtaking under full double yellow flags and SC conditions (#99) and others decided to overtake whilst on the straight also under yellow flags. Unfortunately the front runners were caught with their proverbial pants around their ankles.

Gavin tapped off after seeing the double yellow waved flags as well as SC board when invitee Danie Maritz overtook him (we are not sure if this was intentional or pure speed at work) and so all three front runners accidentally passed the safety car just as it was coming onto the main straight. Safety concerns in terms of not being able to brake safely enough may have been the reason but in any case ALL 3 front riders (Danie, Gavin and Greg) passed the SC and were subsequently disqualified from Heat 1. Unfortunately the rest of the race up to the last lap ended under SC conditions. For Gilbert this was not the start he was looking for either, as at least 4 riders had overtaken him under the yellow flag/SC conditions. This relegated him to 11th (which was not too bad having started 17th). All in all 3 laps of racing were completed. However Gilbert still finished 4th in the Veterans class.

Newcomer (and ex National Champion) Gavin Ramsey easily won the first heat.

## RACE 2

Gavin had to start at the back of the grid (along with Danie and Greg) and Gilbert had to start in 10th on the grid for Heat 2. Gilbert had a slightly better start this time and managed to get up into 8th position when the bike decided to start "moving" its rear end like a New York prostitute looking for a John. Gilbert lost a number of positions and was down in 10th place when again there was a major crash exiting the Esses. This time **Stew Christie** decided that parts of his bike would look really good on the underbelly of the TV helicopter that was following us around (maybe he thought it was the Communist gevaar coming back to spy on us and needed to "take them out"). Well all I saw was a bike sliding into the abyss and many Kawasaki parts (I lost count after the clocks went passed my visor) flew into the air.

Again the SC came out and again there were a number of transgressions that were not picked up by the marshalls - these riders are going to have to go for training lessons about the meaning and colour of flags and SC conditions.

The rear gunners had by now made their way into the top 10 but the riders spent another 5 laps traipsing around on a breakfast run. With 2 laps to go the SC lights went out but

some of the riders were not aware of what to do and held back quite far from the front bunch. This left both Gavin and Gilbert struggling to get past and into higher positions. Again Gavin Ramsey won the race and he took overall honors for the day. Unfortunately Gavin only managed to finish 3rd in the race and 6th overall for the day. The biggest surprise though was Gilbert's terrible finish in the second heat - 6th and an overall finish in the Vets class of 5th. So we banked the 23 points and look forward to the next meeting in March.

We were very surprised and happy to hear that Stew had no bones broken and was just very stiff and sore.....HE WILL BE BACK.

**PS:** We hear that Stew's missus (Colleen) won her first trophy on Sunday (Motard) by coming in 4<sup>th</sup> overall.....**VERY VERY WELL DONE!!!!**

### HUGE THANKS

Both the riders being Gavin and Gilbert would like to say a huge thanks to the following for their unwavering help and support:

- Ricky "*the rocket*" Morais - for dialing out the patter and assisting with setup - you made us feel like WSBK stars
- Armondo "*the panelbeater*" Oliveira - for being Gavin's crew chief and chief bike "detailer"
- Andy "*smokin*" Parsons - for being Gilbert's crew chief
- Ryan "*the handyman*" August - for being the all over crew chief and making the bikes happen (and kept spotless for each event)
- Ryan "*the pit boss*" Parsons - for his support of the whole team and any car that managed to take his fancy (which is Subaru for now)
- Yolanda and Vanessa - for being there
- Kyalami Marshalls - for taking the time to make a persons day special!!

Gilbert and Yolanda would like to sincerely thank the **Kyalami marshall** (pit entrance marshall) and **chief Medical officer** - Shaun Groome - for making the day special for their son Ryan. Ryan suffers with a mental condition known as Cerebral Atrophy (shrinking of the brain) as a result of a serious car crash when he was only 18 months old. However he truly enjoys cars (and sometimes bikes) and his parents cannot praise everyone enough for the help, support and care given to their son no matter where they go in the motor racing fraternity. Whether it is Regionals, Nationals or even track days he is watched like a hawk by all the pit crew and even people that have never met him before.

The marshalls and safety officials arranged for him to do a couple of laps in the safety car (a Subaru with the lights blinging). He even got to wear his own Arai helmet and was the most chuffed boy at the track. There was not enough space in the car to contain his pillar to pillar grin. One hell of a happy boy (and now an ardent Subaru fan).



As for the next race, we do hope that we will not have the same serious crashes as before.

EmTek Racing now heads off to Cape Town to do some more testing and the ZX10 Cup team will be with the big daddy team including Shez and Cazz.

See you there or wait for our next report.

***Adeline Kritzinger***

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