

Winner's Diary 06/15/03 Father's Day 2003

Today is the day after Father's Day and I have now had time for the weekend's events to play themselves out in my mind many times. Please follow my written account of the race weekend as they unfolded.

Saturday was a fresh beginning to the race weekend as I awoke at 5:45 a.m. to get my morning refueling. By 7 I had my bike technically inspected for the day's practice. As I made my first practice session, I said "HI" to a couple of buddies I had met the past couple of months racing. All was well until about 9:30 a.m. I saw a puke green bike in the back of the crash truck and it was making its approach way too close to Stuart's pit. Just to let you know, there are only 2 bikes at the track have even remotely the same puke green color, one is Stuart's and the other is a twin of some make, I'm guessing a Kawi. I had a weird feeling this wasn't the twin, and my gut reaction was to approach the carnage and figure out if in fact it was our beloved track dominator, STUMAN. "Ouch", I said as the bike was dumped from the back of the crash truck. Luckily, Stuart had only bruised his foot on a very quick, possibly 120 M.P.H., turn 6 get off. Unfortunately, Stuart's bike faired much worse in the accident, as it had a very badly dented frame. I assume the "new" 636 has seen its last day at the track. Stuart may work it out, but it is definitely his call and not mine. Good Luck.

I continued the day with great success of my own to completely destroy a fairly new set of Dunlop 208 GPA's. The 100°+ temperatures obviously didn't help the tire's longevity, but I just tried to be even smoother with the greasy, slippery, almost icy feeling tires, by day's end. I knew what sliding felt like now and was very comfortable testing the limits of near high-sidedness sideways sliding of the rear tire. Fun ended one 8-minute practice early on Saturday, as I truly had no rubber left to sacrifice to the track we call, "The Fastest Road in the West". I was confident that I had made the most of my practice by not only making a few new and improved passing opportunities, but also following some much faster riders and not dumping my bike while riding very near the elusive 100% of my capabilities. My tires told the true story of my accomplishments of Saturday with almost a complete slick look to them almost from right edge to left edge.

Sunday introduced my 1000 to a new set of 208's on a new set of wheels. The great thing about these new tires and wheels were the almost pristine rotors that were attached to the new wheels. A set I had picked up for \$490 with only 1900 miles on both the front rotors, probably ridden at sub-speed limit speeds. I now could put my newly practiced late braking into turns 1 and 3 skill set to even better use with almost perfect front rotors. The two practice sessions in the early morning of Sunday proved my thoughts about my newly acquired late braking application technique to hold 100% correct. I had too much confidence, if that is possible. 🚫

By the beginning of our rider's meeting that morning, about 9:30 a.m., the outside temperature was climbing quickly to the 100° mark again. 🤦‍♂️ Sunscreen worked very well. Directly after the meeting I headed over to get my grid position. Only adding to my already over filled confident backed ego, was the fact that I was placed in the perfect spot to do the most damage to the field on the start, POLE POSITION!!! 🍊 🍊 🍊

I had a plan all worked out for the race once I saw my grid position, start 1st finish 1st. Now came the realization that I needed the ingredients to make the win a

reality. No sooner did I think about the race beginning, did I hear the announcer call out, "First call for Heavyweight Novice". Not taking offense to the comment, I suited up and headed out to pre-grid. 🤔

As I entered the pre-grid area, nothing gave me more pleasure at the racetrack so far as to raise my right hand index finger to the scorekeeper, indicating my grid position. NUMBER 1!!! No, I didn't give him the LABUSAS salute. The warm-up lap was just a precursor of the eventual outcome soon to be realized by #767 on his Amazing Ricardo Racing Sponsored GSX-R 1000.

I took my place in the number 1 grid position and tried with all my might to contain my over abundant flow of testosterone and adrenaline. It was nearly impossible to do but since I knew the start was crucial, I put all the juices in a small spot in my heart to be unfurled later after 6 laps of pure ecstasy we call motorcycle racing.

The first start was pretty good; I didn't sink like a rock and took a nice comfortable position in 4th. I exited turn 1 and made my way around the racetrack to a now famous turn 5. The guy just in front of me on a yellow bike made a small error on the entrance to that turn and I took the opportunity to pass him on the inside. The next thing I knew, I heard a small screech, which was his back tire letting go. Then I heard another louder screech, and that was both of his tires hooking up again. 🚫 I was instantly reminded that racing is full of excitement at every moment; this was one of these moments. Using my peripheral vision only, I was intent on catching and passing the two others in front of me, I saw a couple of tires rotating towards the sky on my right in a clockwise direction. His bike had begun the spiral of a major high side only a mere inch from my right bar end. I gassed it to make up time with only a small hint of concern for his well-being, but this is racing and the medics are there to take care of us. I relied on this fact to make the race continue without much other thought in my mind as to how he was. There would be plenty of time to find out how he was later.

As I raced over the turn that took Stu's 636 for a slightly less than fantastic ride, I made my way past the two in front of me. Turn 8 is fast and I made the most of it to pass the two guys in front of me. As I went on to start the second lap a gleaming RED flag reared its ugly head. Apparently, a couple of others had had the same notion of crashing in turn 5 and left some debris on the track.

While waiting for the red flag to clear I got to talk to Mark, one of the guys I had passed in turn 8. He mentioned something about me winning two other races, but I told him I had placed 4th and 3rd in my last two outings. I also sealed my fate when I told him I was to win this race. My own personal Father's Day present. 🤔

The re-start had a less than perfect beginning for me, but I already knew of the few riders I had to challenge for the lead. I headed into turn 1 with only 4 laps to perform my best and produce a winning performance. I came out of turn 1 in 6th or

7th. By turn 3 going into 4, here I am 4th.

I then made up two more places by the second lap. Passing Mark again on the outside of turn 8 at about 150 M.P.H.

By the way, thanks for the great shots, Jeff. You can take my camera every time to get some good action shots.

The third lap proved to be fatal for the guy in front of me just before entering turn 3. A standing yellow flag was displayed and he slowed ever so slightly. I didn't, since that flag only means to be aware of impending crashed riders. I made the pass and didn't look back. Turn 4 had a waving yellow, which means NO PASSING, so I knew I had the 1st spot all locked up.

Now was the time to GO, GO, And GO!!! I had empty track and a will to only finish in one position, FIRST!!!

By the end of the race, one and a half laps later, CZ Eddie crudely measured the gap I had over second place at about 6 SECONDS!!! I never looked back and finished the race with my throttle stuck a ¼ of a turn beyond wide open. A few tears entered my eyes, as I knew I had accomplished the main goal of my budding-racing career, WINNING A RACE!!! 😁👍

To describe the felling would be pointless, but I'll try just the same. Remember back when you were a young person and you finally did something better than your older sibling or Mom or Dad. That is the feeling that I had the moment I crossed the Finish line. I now know what it is like to win and I will strive to do it at all possible occasions when on the track. Knowing what it feels like to win is one part of racing, and doing it is the other. I have both under my belt now and will continue to feel and do. 🍅😬

I must now say an extremely large "THANK YOU" to my family, Jodie, Josephine, and Sebastian for coming out with Daddy to the racetrack and supporting me as they did. I also, want to thank Jeff, Lori, and Eddie for being there and cheering me on. Lastly, for anyone who has met me, I would like to thank you for any warm, uplifting, or praising comment you made to me, as well as any constructive criticism, I greatly appreciate your support.

I hope to see more of you out racing and cheering, just wait for the summer months to pass, as it was HOT as SHIT all weekend. Thanks for reading.

Marcel