

# AUSTRALIAN SUPERBIKE SERIES 2011



**SAM LAMBERT #17**

**600cc Super Stock**



## **Round 8 (Nov 2011) Phillip Island**

## **RACE REPORT**

There was a lot of excitement leading up to this final round in the ASBK series. Sam's last time on this track was his first time on the 600 at the start of the year. We were looking forward to see how much he had improved in both speed and technique. Sam really loves this track and was looking forward to Friday practice. To give him some extra time on the track we also cross entered him into the super sport category.

### **Friday practice**

Practice was excellent. Being able to get out on the track in the super sport class as well as super stock, gave Sam more time to blow out the cobwebs of 2 months with no riding. Overall practice saw him get into the 1.41's - an excellent lap time and a 5 second improvement on his last visit to the track. The weather held out and apart from a clutch issue - all in all it was a good day. He was given the nick name "Chopper" by the crew and this was stuck onto his race suit with race tape. Everyone was extremely happy with his efforts.



### **Qualifying**

The first qualifier was in generally good weather conditions except for strong winds and Sam finished the session in 8<sup>th</sup> position in the super stock grid. The second qualifier was in wet conditions so we didn't bother sending him out as every one's times would be slower. In the super sport he qualified in 12<sup>th</sup> position. The second super sport qualifier was dry but unfortunately we had no time to change the tyres to get him out there so he tumbled to the back of the grid in second last place. The weather doesn't give you much choice, those who know Phillip island – one second dry, the next the sky just falls on you in an Antarctic gale. ☺

### **Race 1**

'Those with spare wet set up bikes win the day' - first major lesson if you want to challenge for a championship - make sure you have 2 bikes!!! The superbikes were just out qualifying on a dry track but there was spitting rain around for the last few minutes but the wind was helping keeping the track dry. The control dry tyres or wets??? The call was made to go on dry tyres and what do you know, when the 30 second board goes up, down comes the rain. Some were able to grab their wet bikes at the end of the

sighting lap and started the warm up from pit lane able to take their grid position for the start of the race. Unfortunately 6 bikes had to leave the race on the first lap due to the treacherous conditions, and tyre choice. Sam was one of them. Ces La vie.

### **Sunday racing**

Sunday weather was great. It was dry conditions all day so way less stressful. Sam had an absolute ripper of a race. He managed to hold onto 5<sup>th</sup> position most of the race and was literally pipped at the chequered flag to finish in 6<sup>th</sup> position.

During the second super sport race his clutch gave out so it was DIY dad to the rescue to see if it could be fixed in time for his final race which was 40 minutes later. With the help of Ben Henry (superbike team owner and racer), and a clutch kit - thanks Phil ☺ the bike was sorted in time for race 3.

The final race of the round was just superb viewing. Sam got a good start up to 5<sup>th</sup> coming into turn one for the first time, and then a fellow Suzuki rider block passed and ran him wide and Sam dropped back to 12<sup>th</sup> position but no way was he staying there. The following 6 laps saw very tight racing and passing manoeuvres putting Sam back up in 6<sup>th</sup> position. He was amongst 5 riders changing position several times a lap. On lap 6 he was very close in 7<sup>th</sup> position but as he was going up into Lukey Heights at 160kph + the Yamaha just in front slowed unexpectedly taking a strange line and Sam had to brake extremely hard and suddenly to avoid T-boning it. The front tyre locked and Sam slid off into the gravel trap. He was OK and the bike not badly damaged. He got up wanting to get back into the race, but just couldn't start the bike. So a second DNF for the weekend in super stock!



### **2011 in review**

Sam would like to say a special thanks to Ben Henry for the opportunity of joining 'Cube Racing' and for his mentoring and support throughout the year. Sam has improved in his riding techniques and other skills on and off the track. He has enjoyed being part of a team and all that goes with it. He loves being at the track and socialising with the pit crew and other riders but equally when the helmet goes on... it's all about the racing. He has outgrown suits and boots throughout the year, taken a couple of tumbles but all in all this year has seen him far exceed his goals and the team's expectations. Thanks also to Troy Herfoss and Brodie Waters for all their advice and encouragement throughout the year.....and boots ("ta Herfey!")

Sam has been in the top ten in the series all this year. A fantastic effort for his first year on the 600! Unfortunately his 2 DNF's this round slipped him back into 11<sup>th</sup> position. This was still a great effort and with his personal best times for Phillip Island, everyone is looking forward to next year with the promise of greater things to come. For now it's back to reality with a grade 11 Math Exam.

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Cheers 😊

Sammy "chopper" #17