

T E A M

RIDEFAST
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2 4 H O U R R A C E
P R E S S R E L E A S E



The 24 hour Endurance Race held at Red Star this year is the culmination of a difficult period in Superbike Racing due to various circumstances. The 2014 event was cancelled at the last moment due to lack of entries as the event was going to be held at the Phakisa Grand Prix circuit. So with the 2015 event confirmed it was up to the Ride Fast team to ensemble a good rider line up, a good pit crew line and most importantly some all important sponsorships. Pride Bulk Logistics along with Honda Kyalami, Michelin and Evolve were the primary sponsors of the Ride Fast effort for the 2015 event. So this was going to be a baptism of fire for all riders – and some riders have competed in an Endurance event and others not. The race event itself is divided into various classes and categories with each member of the team expected to maintain a certain level of consistent times around the 4,010km circuit.

The categories were as follows:

- A Group – allowed for unlimited lap times and the faster the better
- B Group – allowed for a maximum lap time of 2:05s and going under this lap time incurred a penalty
- C Group – allowed for a maximum lap time of 2:10s and going under this time also incurred a penalty
- D Group – allowed for a maximum lap time of 2:20s and this group incurred double penalties if a rider went quicker than this

Unfortunately the D Group would be one of the most difficult groups to ride as it is usually the more inexperienced rider having to compete as well as having to maintain and “reduce” his speed to maintain his consistent lap times. Hence the double penalties.

Qualifying

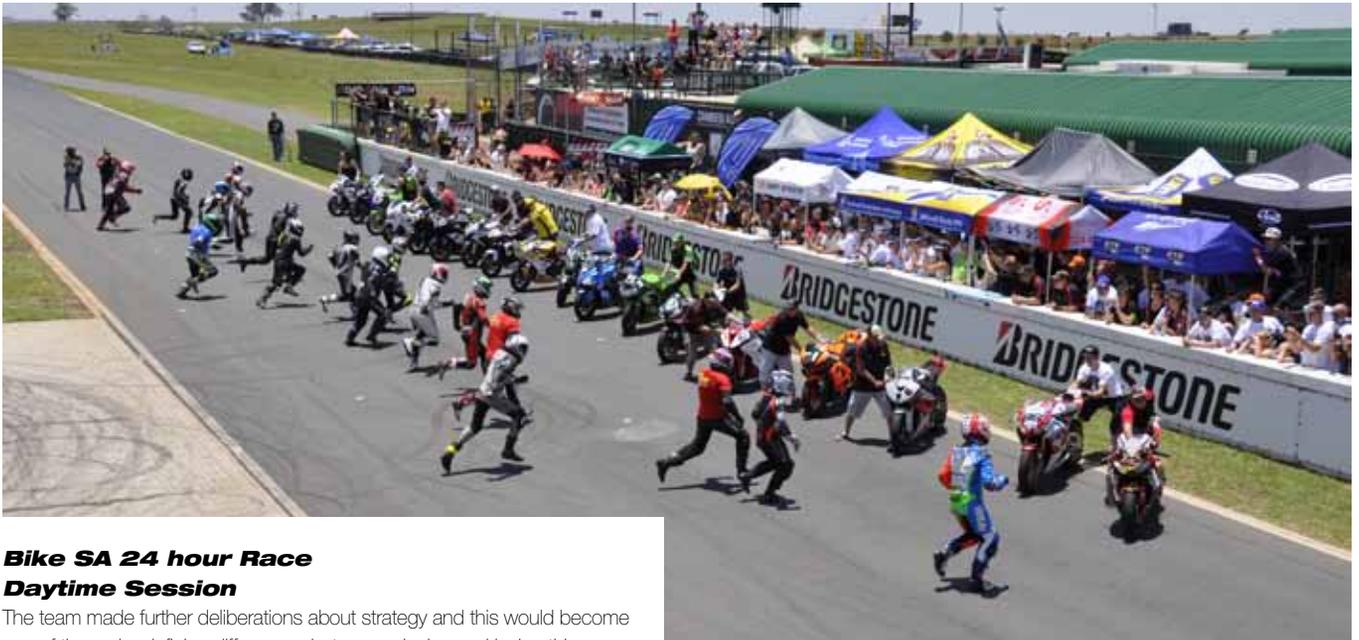
The team decided that in order to preserve its precious commodity, tyres, Shez was nominated to do only 4-5 hot laps and ensure a good qualifying position. Bearing in mind that the 24hr race had a Le Mas style start it was extremely important to secure a good grid position. Shez achieved this by securing 2nd on the grid. With qualifying behind us and the tyres now left to do a new heat cycle – it was now time to mentally prepare for the race.



Sheridan Morais sideways into turn one during qualifying



Professional pit setup - Honda CBR1000RR SP ready for action



LeMans styled running start for all riders

**Bike SA 24 hour Race
Daytime Session**

The team made further deliberations about strategy and this would become one of the major defining differences between winning and losing this race. Our strategy was to try and bank as many fast laps as possible in the first two Groups – ie A & B group as their margins for error was minimal. Shez got off to a flying start and even though he was 2nd going into turn 1 he was leading by turn 6. So our teams race was underway and Shez led the way for A Group.

When it was B Group headed up by veteran rider Rob Portman some blistering laps were put in but all within the limit of 2:05 and consistency was the absolute key. Which rob achieved with aplomb.

Then it was the turn of C Group rider headed by Jason Crookes who also managed to keep the times consistent and within the 2:10's lap after lap. Jason was hamstrung in the that he had to ensure that his throttle hand was held back at each turn in order to maintain his times – and not to breakout of the zone.

Then it was the turn of D Group rider Martinus – who is not as experienced as the other riders in Endurance racing and as such was unable to manage a penalty free session. So in the first race cycle which was 2 hours long Team RideFast incurred 4 penalty laps which dropped us down to 2nd. So for the next 2 hour cycle the A Group duties were handed over to another racing veteran Ricky Morais (Shez's Dad). Ricky is usually found on the other side of the bike and working his magic on making them turn and go faster but not usually in race mode. So the old rust and cobwebs were blown out by a previous test session and it was, to our huge surprise, found that Ricky was still very competitive on the bike. So Ricky's managed to haul the team back into contention by being a few seconds a lap quicker than our main rivals which was Team IUM, headed by Jason Wessels. Team RSR headed by AJ Venter were the major favourites to lead and win this race unfortunately had a mechanical issue which was quickly rectified but that dropped them down to 3rd very early on.

Group C rider Jason also managed to incur a 2 lap penalty against the team which dropped us down to 2nd again as Team RSR was consistent.

Group D rider Martinus managed to ensure a penalty free cycle for the daytime but this was not to last.

And so the cycles went for the day time.

During the day time session the lead chopped and changed between IUM, RSR and RF and Team RF went into the dusk session leading.

Unfortunately at around 5pm one of the competitor teams had a major crash on the main straight which resulted in the safety car being deployed for almost an hour whilst the medical teams stabilized and evacuated the rider to be airlifted to hospital. This caused Team RideFast to review its fuel and tyre strategy as now the bike had cooled down, the brakes had cooled and the tyres took a breather. Our strategy changed to run our second batch of tyres for 8 hours instead of the allocated 6 hours.



Elbow down - Sheridan Morais leads the pack in first session



Group B rider Shaun Portman in action

Pit Stops

The team did all their maths and calculations extremely precisely and managed to maintain flawless pit stops for fuel. A 15 litre fuel stop was done after every second rider change.

However it was the tyre changes that posed the greatest challenge. The team pit crew had been practising all through the previous days and had managed to get a full tyre change of front and rear tyres completed in a matter of 1:26s, having started off initially with a 3min change time. So as you can see the guys really rose to the occasion. A rider change only was completed within 20-30 seconds and a fuel/rider change was about 1:30s.

However there was one minor point that the Team did overlook and that was the difficulty of changing the brake pads during a pit stop – and one the major issues was coping with the intense heat generated by the braking system at RSR. This small point would be a major problem for the evening cycles.

Evening Race

The evening saw the team eventually have to change the brake pads as they had worn out to the point of metal on metal. At the start of the evening cycles, Team RideFast were 3rd and behind the leaders by 4 laps and it was very close with Team RSR and Team IUM. The evening as was predicted would take its toll on both riders and pit crew. Group C & D riders Jason and Martinus both fed up with getting penalties and decided to take time out.

As Group D rider Martinus came in to hand over to Shez a brake pad change became necessary. Unfortunately the brake pad change did not go according to plan and more than 13mins was lost in the pits due to this event. Apparently the backing plates of the pads were really difficult to reinsert whilst under extreme temperature and this lost the team a lot of time.

The teams pit crew devised a new method of installing the brake pads and this would prove to be crucial for the event.

Once Shez was handed Group A duties again he managed to use all his experience gained in International Endurance racing and put in lap times that were only 100th of a second off his daytime lap times – and this would also be crucial to the outcome of the race.

All the Group riders went into the evening session fully versed and prepared for maintaining consistency and by the break of dawn Team RideFast came out 12 laps into the lead.

Dawn to End of Race

Once the riders had settled into their roles of maintaining our lead the early morning session did however take a bit of its toll on the riders as both Group C rider Jason and Group D rider Martinus incurred further penalty laps and this brought our tally to 10 laps overall for the 24 hour period.

Finally from about 8am the riders got into their groove and as the race drew to a close the Team managed to extend its lead to a massive 13 laps.

And that is how the race ended – Team RideFast managed to secure the victory by a margin of 13 laps.

Frantic Brake Pad change which proved to be an Achilles Heel initially.



Left: Team members work hard and fast to change front and rear tyres as well as brake pads. Right: Sheldon in charge of re-fueling



Group C rider Jason Crookes



Second Group B rider Rob Portman in the first night session

Some Interesting Statistics

ETR Performance and iAdapt both teamed up to manage some of the background work and data and thought we would share with you our readers some interesting statistics about the consumables used for the 24 hour Endurance race.

Detail	Qty
Fuel	299.23
Laps	555.00
Km/Lap	4.010
Total Km	2,225.55
FUEL	
Detail	Qty
Litres/100 Kilometres	13.45
Kilometres/Litre	7.44
TYRES	
Detail	Qty
Sets Used	4.00
Kilometres/Set of tyres	556.39
Laps/Set of tyres	138.75
BRAKE PADS	
Detail	Qty
Sets Used	3
Kilometres/Set of pads	741.85
Laps/Set of pads	185.00

The Michelin Tyres was for the team one of the biggest surprises in that they were able to withstand varying heat cycles and laptimes (ie differences between A Group and D Group was 20sec a lap) and still maintain acceptable grip levels after a 140 laps. In fact the one set went on to do an 8 hour stint and 180 laps during the evening cycles which is most impressive.



Ricky Morais - Faster than ever!



Group D rider Martinus Lowings



We are the Champions! - Team RideFast wins 24 Hour race. Not possible without support of sponsors below:

