



# ***THE REECE BANCELL SCHOLARSHIP 2012 Season***

## ***- MICHAEL LOCKART***

AFXC Nationals & Superbikes Round 1 – Eastern Creek (17-18 March, 2012).



**David Bancell** - As we all know Michael had a very difficult start to the season and we applaud him and very proud of him for his courage and determination to get back on the bike and contest the AFX round at Eastern Creek last weekend.

Below is Michael's "take" on the weekend at the AFX round and again he has proved he has a lot of talent and showed great maturity!! Well done Mikey!

**Michael Lockart –**

“Hello all,

Sorry for not sending a race report after the ASBK Round 1 at Phillip Island in February but with the tragedy of the weekend and my own issues to deal with, I didn't feel it was appropriate.

Hopefully you enjoy my account of last weekend at the AFXC Nationals & Superbikes Round 1 – Eastern Creek (17-18 March, 2012).

I was very nervous and cautious about the weekend ahead as it was a real rush to get ready. We only just picked up the bike on Wednesday from being straightened and measured, with losing my spare bike in the accident at Phillip Island, the weekend was all about getting comfortable again and used to the different style Dunlop control tyre in this series compared to the ASBK series.

I spent Friday focusing on the set up of the bike and learning the limits of the Dunlop slicks and brake markers. The day was hot and very productive and couldn't have been achieved without Nigel from Pitstop Motorcycles' help. Unfortunately, my new IXON leather suit didn't make it in time but my new IXON gloves and AXO boots were just amazing, combined with a new SHARK helmet I was prepared for a good weekend of racing under number 10 due to finishing 10th last year in the AFX series.

However, the rain came down all during Friday night and didn't let up for Saturday morning. With track work at Eastern Creek not being completed, there were rivers and mud flowing onto the circuit so Saturday's racing was delayed until this could be cleaned up. When we finally got to go out for qualifying, the track was still quite wet but drying up quickly, we chose wet tyres and ended up 10<sup>th</sup> on the grid. With the delay, the day was cut short from 3 races to 2 and I was prepared for the work ahead to improve my place. The day was a total mish mash with rain coming and going.

**Saturday Race 1** - I went out on slicks, after 1 lap decided to withdraw as it was a bit slippery and the last thing I wanted was a crash to ruin the whole weekend. Fortunately for me, the race was red flagged and a restart declared. This gave us time to change to wet tyres and go out again, however things dried up and the wet tyres were getting destroyed quickly. I once again chose to retire to preserve tyres. Unfortunately this meant that my grid position moved to last for Race 2 but with consistent lap times in the low 1.37's I managed to work my way to 5<sup>th</sup> place and finished Saturday's racing in 2<sup>nd</sup> place for C grade FX600.

**Sunday** racing is where I hoped to make a real impact, as the AFXC Superbike series is televised on Speedweek and there is the chance to win a Yamaha YZ450 for the winner of C&D grade. The rain stayed away and we woke up to a great morning, I was pumped for racing.

Qualifying didn't go as planned after losing my knee slider in turn 1, I had to cruise back and quickly get another. I then went out and did a couple of flying laps and in order to save tyre wear I waited in the pits sitting in 7<sup>th</sup> position. On the last lap a few other riders were a bit quicker so I moved down to 9<sup>th</sup>. Not what I hoped for but confident I could improve on this.

**Sunday Race 1** – I got a great start and was sitting in 4<sup>th</sup> for a few laps, however the Yamaha's were just a bit too quick for my stock Kawasaki ZX6R and Adrian Di Giandomenico (5) passed me on the straight. With a 3 second gap ahead of 6<sup>th</sup> rider I rode the race with my head, avoiding any close calls and finished in 5<sup>th</sup> place achieving a personal best lap time of 1.35.4. Race 2 was a similar race, once again riding in the 1.35 and 1.36's to cruise home in 5<sup>th</sup> place without any dramas. With 2 C grade race wins, I was now sitting pretty for Race 3 if I rode the same way. Unfortunately, my start wasn't the best in Race 3 moving down to 10<sup>th</sup> in the field, I managed to move up to 7<sup>th</sup> by turn 2 but had my work cut out for me trying to pass Sudarmono from Indonesia and Liam Wilkinson (9). After needing to study Sudarmono's style very quickly, I found a passing spot in turn 9 on lap 3. It was now time to chase down Liam. Sitting right behind him and tapping into his slip stream from turn 12, I managed to make my pass down the straight and once again finished the race in 5<sup>th</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> for C graders.

I couldn't have been happier, it was a great outcome. This race win gave me the confidence with possible new outcomes for the 2012 year after a horrendous start.

I will update my website [www.michaellockartracing.com](http://www.michaellockartracing.com) with details of when the race will be televised and would like to thank all of the following sponsors for enabling my racing.

**Personal sponsors** - EPL International, Armstrong Consultancy Service, Amorini, Bendix Brakes, California Superbike School, IXON Leathers, SHARK Helmets, AXO boots, Frank and Anne Stephens, my parents, Kawasaki Australia, Evans Panel Works, Airspeed Kustom Art and P.C.

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