



Acerbis 4 Hour Taupo

Over the weekend Peter Broxholme and I teamed up for the Epic Events, Acerbis 4 Hour held just out of Taupo on the Saturday. This is an event that I have twice finished runner up in and would love to add it to my long list of endurance races that I have won. I think it's the only one that still eludes me. So the pairing with Peter was very exciting for me and with both of us riding Honda CRF's we were in a good position to fight for the win.

A team talk resulted in Peter taking the starting honours and making sure we had a fighting chance from the outset. The gun went off and Peter got a top 30 start heading into the trees, staying clear of the first corner pile up and ahead of over 100 other riders behind him. But what was even more impressive is that come the end of Lap 1, Peter had clawed us into 3rd place, only a minute or so off the leading riders. This was just the start we needed.

I headed out for my first lap and was quickly presented with Brad Groombridge on my tail from out of nowhere. We battled for the whole lap, and I handed the reins back to Peter and he headed out for his second lap. The solo riders had the advantage of taking the race line instead of the pit lane, which saved them 30-40 seconds.

Peter returned again after putting down a heater and with Groombridge now out front, Hadleigh Knight was within eyes view on parts of the course as I started to navigate my second lap. A mistake from Knight allowed me to make the pass and we were into a solid second place and well within the hunt for this win. I figured I had nothing to lose and with Brad doing it solo it was likely he would burn out before me. So I started to really push my 2009 CRF450R to its and my own limit to close the gap. On a section of track that allowed me to see forward a few hundred metres I caught a glimpse of the flying yellow blur. But before I had a chance to capitalise, it was all over.

On a fast downhill section, I hit a water run-off mound with too much speed and got kicked from the braking bumps in the G-out. I had used up all my travel and then some, sending my Honda into a rear end spasm and nose dive, tossing me over the bars and down the track with an almighty thud! It took me a long while to get up from this one. The biggest crash I've had in a long, long time I think. Our race was over.

I'm very thankful that as of today, nothing is broken and that I came off very lightly, considering the speed and air time I achieved. A rider stopped and gave up his race to stay with me and help me get back to the pits. I don't know his name but if you are reading this, mate, please get in touch. I'd like to show my appreciation. It's riders like you that help make our sport as safe as it can be while we are out there riding way too fast.

Thanks must go out to the Fox V4 helmet for allowing me to stay conscious during this yard sale. I'm going to retire this one. And my Sidi Boots for keeping me walking too. Both quality safety products that will, sadly get me back to work sooner rather than later. Thanks to everyone else for your support. I'll be back on a few weeks...hopefully.
Chris

