

Alex survives bike crash to post good time in British championship test

By Judith Tonner

ALEX Gault kept his head after a dramatic crash landing to post the third-fastest time during last week's British championship test day.

The 14-year-old motorcycle champion from Carluke made an immediate recovery from the incident at Brands Hatch, and will now return to the world-famous circuit this weekend to make his debut in "the most hotly-contested domestic championship in the world".

On his first visit to the circuit, he was riding his new Malaguti bike for only the second time when disaster struck on the ninth lap of his session.

With two minutes of his opening circuit remaining, his rear tyre lost grip, causing the back end of the bike to slide and as it righted itself, both rider and machine were thrown into the air.

His father, Alex senior, watched in horror from his vantage point near the pit lane as the teenager landed head-first.

However, he was fortunately very well protected by his new Vemar crash helmet.

Meanwhile, his new bike only sus-

tained minimal damage after "ghosting" — continuing along the track without a rider and slowing down before coming to a halt in a gravel trap.

Despite his mishap, Alex was third in the standings after the opening 125gp test session behind last year's champion Christian Elkin and title candidate Chris Jones, beating off numerous seasoned British championship campaigners.

He was eighth in an understandably more reserved second round of testing, but finished fifth in the last and set his fastest time of the day by posting a circuit time of 52.148 seconds.

Last weekend saw him take part in a

final test session at Knockhill, which went smoothly.

He and his supporters, under the name Team Barrus Malaguti, are now looking forward to the challenge of taking on another 54 riders in the 125gp championship.

Alex senior said: "This is definitely Alex's biggest challenge to date. It's obvious we still have a lot to do but this was a fantastic result, far superior to what we had expected."

For further information about the youngster's British championship campaign, log on to www.minimotoracer.com.