

Donington best for Carluke racer

MOTORCYCLIST Alex Gault overcame high winds and a starting position of 28th on the grid to finish 10th in the latest round of The National Super Stock 600 Championship.

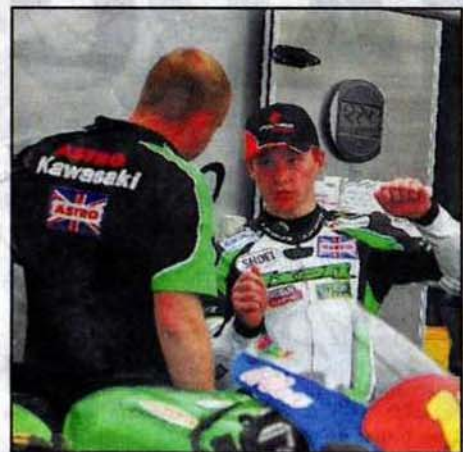
The fourth round of the British Super Bike Championships took part at Donington Park and saw the Carluke racer knock three seconds off his previous best time round the track.

Gault, who is riding with the ASTRO Kawasaki team this year, posted a time in free practice of 1.41.60, then in qualifying set a time of 1.41.00 seconds.

South African Allan Jon Venter who raced to pole position on the factory backed Triumph 675 set a time of 1.38.97.

That two second deficit meant Gault lined up at the starting line in 28th place.

Only three seconds separated the top 40 places



TALKING TACTICS...Alex Gault in discussion with technician Lee Machin during round four at Donington Park.
Photo Ref: ZZWSHGALTDONTON040608-03

available for Monday's bank holiday race from the 52 riders vying for starting places.

A rain soaked track for Sunday's second qualifying session did scupper any chance of improving on Saturday's times but it did give Gault the chance to familiarise himself with the conditions and make adjustments to the settings of his bike as the forecast for race day was set to be the same.

As it happened, it stayed dry for the National 600 race although high winds caused some races to be cancelled.

And the 17-year-old Gault began exceptionally well.

From his start position, he had passed 12 riders by the third lap just before the red flags came out due to an accident.

The restart of the race - now shortened to 11 laps - took place some 15 minutes later but Gault did not make such a good start with 40 riders involved in the melee for the first corners.

However he did make speedy progress throughout and an exciting session saw Gault cut through the riders in front of him (on average one a lap) eventually finishing in a terrific 10th place with a fastest lap of 1.40.00.

The result moves Gault into eighth place in the championship overall and second place in The David Jeffries Award Scheme which runs inside the main championship for riders 18 years of age and under.

Meanwhile it is believed a lack of track knowledge and testing time on the bike is proving to be a big disadvantage for the younger members of the ASTRO Kawasaki team this season.

Instead of visiting the tracks before hand, the first sessions are being used for set-up and gearing selection, which could all be done before arriving to qualify for a race.

For Carluke racer Gault in particular this has been frustrating given the fact he goes quicker every session he is out on track.

Of even greater disappointment to Gault is the news that he has had to withdraw from the KTM Super Duke Battle due to a lack of funding.

All focus will now be on his sound start to the 600 Championship with money saved from racing the KTM going straight into the 600 races.

The fifth round is set for the weekend starting June 13th at Snetterton in Norfolk.

For more information on Alex Gault go to his dedicated web site at www.minimotoracer.com



OVERCROWDED... 40 bikes fought for position at the first corner after the National 600 race had to be re-started at Donington Park.

Photo Ref: ZZWSHGALTDONTON040608-01