

Bike racer Gault is back on form

By Judith Tonner

ALEX Gault is back in top gear after claiming a new lap record and two race wins in the second round of the club championship at Aintree last weekend.

The 15-year-old motorcyclist from Carluke fitted the trip to the Liverpool circuit into a busy schedule, including important school exams, as he sought to recover from the engine failure on his RVF400 bike which had forced him out of the previous round of the Scottish championship.

It proved a worthwhile venture as he set a blistering lap record of 91 miles per

hour in that category and came close to a famous comeback victory in the open up-to-500cc class.

Alex's first scheduled race was in the Superbike 400 class on his rebuilt YPE Honda.

The bike performed well in the seven practice laps, with the team making suitable adjustments to control the engine temperature and noting the condition of the newly-installed petrol tank.

He drew fifth place on the 36-strong grid for the opening five-lap race and immediately stormed up the field, passing Aintree experts and local heroes Alan Oversby and Tim Kermode to win and claim pole for the event final.

Competing in blazing sunshine and temperatures of 28 degrees, the youngster was in control throughout, leading

the race from start to finish and coming home in front of the two Aintree experts and Aprilia rider Colin Skillicorn.

The random allocation of grid positions meant that Alex was 27th on the grid for the open race.

He made an impressive start on his four-stroke machine, entering the first corner in fourth place and taking the lead by the second lap.

A restart was subsequently required after a crash, though, and the local rider was forced to pull out after one further lap when his engine cut out after almost overheating.

It meant that he was on the back row for the final, but he again launched himself through the pack as soon as the lights went out, reaching the middle of the field by the first corner.

His ascent continued as he caught the leading pack of three and he made his way into second spot ahead of the final lap.

But as he seemed set to clinch an amazing victory, having started at the back, his engine again overheated and stopped just 40 seconds from the line.

Dad Alex senior was delighted with the youngster's performance, saying: "We did everything we set out to do. Faults are being ironed out, the bike is getting faster and we know how to fix the problem with the cooling system.

"As always at Aintree, it was a really good meeting."

Alex will be back in action this weekend when he and his team travel to Pembrey in Wales for the fourth and fifth rounds of the CB500 Cup.