



Parkgate House  
Victoria Road  
Castletown  
Isle of Man  
23<sup>rd</sup> March 2014

## Pre-season testing, new bikes, new sponsors, some hiccups and some changes....

Where does the off season go? One minute we are celebrating finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 4hr Endurance race and the next minute I am trying to hammer out our first post-race report of 2014...!  
Well its been a busy off season with some amazing highs offset by some unfortunate lows. Ok bad news first....

One of our principal riders, Chris 'Fozzy' Foster has unfortunately been involved in an RTC, the driver of the other vehicle (a Mitsubishi Warrior) had missed their motorway exit and took the next junction and in a hurry to make up for lost time and proceeded to enter a crossroads without due care and attention. Chris had no chance to make a correction and ended up colliding with the vehicle. This was completely the fault of the other driver, which the Police have now dealt with. Chris was rushed to hospital and spent several days in intensive care.



We are pleased to be able to announce that he is will make a full recovery however his injuries are extensive and included the following (not exhaustive):

- 4 fractures to the pelvis
- Right wrist broken
- Left wrist shattered and extensive surgery has been undertaken to plate, wire and pin all the fragments
- Damaged cruciate ligament in left knee

Short term memory loss (well it was never great so it's hard to tell the difference..... will pay for that comment later I am sure.)





Darvill Kawasaki Z1-R in pre-paint

We can only thank our sponsors for their amazing products without which Chris may not have been here now. In no particular order:

- Held
- Forcefield Armour
- Shark Helmets
- TCX boots

The excellent quality of this kit saved Chris from more significant injuries, for these we are very grateful!

This means that our ThundersportGB activities have been curtailed and puts some of our electric programme at risk, we will keep you updated on his recovery and any amendments to our programme.

**Pre-season testing:**

With our electric bikes still in the USA being built we concentrated on a shake down test of our Darvill Suzuki Minitwin and new Darvill Kawasaki Classic Z1-R. We have a number of 'closed tests' at Jurby Aerodrome this season which affords us the opportunity to continually develop our machines. The first event was held in the middle of March and as luck would have it the weather was perfect.

The Darvill Suzuki performed perfectly with its new fairing and some minor modifications over the winter she should remain the quickest minitwin specification machine out there this season. Look out for her at the S100 and Manx Grand Prix.

Our newest creation is a classic 1978 Kawasaki Z1-R, we have spent a great deal of time over the winter working on this. The engine has been rebuilt by Slick Bass of Slick performance having been re-engineered from the bottom up using internals supplied by APE Raceparts in the USA. We have opted to build this as an endurance engine sacrificing overall HP to give us reliability, that being said the torque being produced at the rear wheel is phenomenal, its not far short from a modern Kawasaki ZX12R, its going to be a missile out of the corners once we get the bike setup correctly. The test allowed us to try a number of suspension settings and to run the engine in, giving us base settings however we did discover a limitation..... the tyres!





We have been using classic Avon's for years on all of our classic machines however we have never had a classic bike with this much torque before and it delaminated a new rear tyre within 10 laps! What to do...?

Well I had a plan... After the test I got in contact with our friends at Infront Motorcycles in Chester whom we knew stocked Continental tyres and we had seen their new classic fitment on a number of endurance bikes in Europe with a number of podiums,

well we had to see what they were like didn't we!

James from Infront got us a set out to us in super quick time arriving here on the Island in 48hrs (which for the Island where post is a privilege not a right is a small miracle).

We journeyed up to Slick Performance and fitted the new rubber (with their 'Black Chili compound'), we were instantly impressed with the design and fitment and couldn't wait until the weekend where we would be able to test these before actually racing them at the 1<sup>st</sup> round of the ARA Championships.



### ARA Round 1:

Rather than reading more of my rambling I thought I would let the rider tell you what he thought of the 1<sup>st</sup> round:

Keith 'Keef' McKay

First meeting of the season under our belt and successfully so!! Running the lovely Darvill Racing Kawasaki Z1-R in the Andreas Racing Classics championship (gridded jointly with the modern Supertwins and 400's); practice was damp and patchy and f-f-f-freezing! Races later in the day were damp but still cold.

The motor built by Tony Bass of Slick Performance Workshop (full of Ape Raceparts yummy stuff!!) was just staggering... a couple of the Supertwins riders spoke to me afterwards and said they couldn't get near it under power!

The Conti RoadAttack CR compound tyres were also amazing, they didn't give me a single "moment" all day in conditions that were challenging to say the least... we had a waved yellow for an incident \*every\* lap of practice and many, many fallers through the day... get well soon to all!!

So that's 2 class wins in the bag... and a very happy team!!

Huge thanks to all the Andreas Racing Association (Jurby Races) officials for running the event and in particular MASSIVE thanks to the marshalls for holding out all day in such bitterly cold conditions.



**Summary:**

Notwithstanding the injuries to Fozzy we have had an amazing start to the season, the Darvill Kawasaki has serious potential and we have a number of new modifications on order in time for round 2 and 3 (a double header weekend in April). We have an accepted entry in the Pre-TT Classic (with the Darvill Kawasaki) here at the S100 course and also an entry into the Post TT races back down in Castletown (on the Darvill Suzuki). We should be receiving our Brammo electric bikes in April giving us time to become acquainted in time for the TT and our special event just prior to this (more about that nearer the time).

We have been so impressed with the performance of the Continental tyres we will be using these throughout the season for the classic bikes and are now keen to try them on the Electric and modern race bikes....!

Thanks again to all our sponsors without whom this wouldn't be possible.

A special thank you to Al at PistonLife Photography for the pictures



--

Best Regards,

Alex Aitchison  
Team Principal  
Darvill Racing  
Phone: +44(0) 7624 433 594  
Email: [alex@darvillracing.co.uk](mailto:alex@darvillracing.co.uk)  
Web: [www.darvillracing.co.uk](http://www.darvillracing.co.uk)

