



You may not be able to see Team Fast Bikes from here. We're the ones at the very back of the grid...



RIDERS READY...

Perfect planning prevents piss poor performance. Make what you will then from Team Fast Bikes' 33rd position in the first ever UK round of the No Budget Cup

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Nobody said it was going to be easy. But no one ever said it was going to be this hard. September 12th has been in our diary for months, as the date of the inaugural UK round of the No Budget Cup. This is a new race series over here that has proved to be a massive hit in Belgium. It's real Ronseal stuff, doing what it says on the tin. You pick a cheap bike up that's been made at any point during the nineties, make it race safe by doing all the lockwiring and stuff, and then rope a few mates in to ride and spanner on the day. The point is to make racing cheap, accessible and fun. The grids in Belgium are massive, with over 90 teams often competing, so why miss out on what the crazy Belgiques are going bonkers for? The competition takes the form of a three hour endurance race, so that means refuelling, rider changes and on the hoof bodging. Moby donated one of his own bikes, a 1990

Kawasaki ZXR750, and got three likely lads to ride it (me, Beej and Andy). What could go wrong? Well, where do we begin?

THE BUILD-UP

Having had nearly a year to build our Kawasaki ZXR750 up to be a No Budget Bike was clearly not enough. The last few weeks were a hectic mix of making bits fit, trying to source new parts and scouring manuals and forums trying to come up with answers to our many questions. Moby stepped up to the plate, burning the midday and midnight oil trying to get the bike fit for purpose. After putting it all together, the last job was to turn it over. Click. Click. Click. Bugger. Having had enough by then, Moby then sent it to James at JHS Racing to investigate. It was Saturday now, with the race less than 24 hours away. After a bit of head scratching James got the bike running – hooray! But after sticking it on the dyno, the bike wouldn't select anything higher than third gear – boo! With James wanting a quiet weekend, he offered us an old SV650 that was lying around to make us go away. It just needed a few jobs doing to it first. So the boys packed it into the van and headed to Anglesey 250-miles, and about 15 McDonalds for Al to drool at, away.

► RACE MORNING

After a night spent in one of Holyhead's best hotels (and by default, one of the worst) picking pubs from the sheets and listening to the mating calls of the local wildlife, we rose bright and early and headed to the Ty Croes track. We were greeted by a sunny morning, a busy paddock and the waft of bacon on the breeze. No wonder Al was excited.

After parking up, we disgorged the two vans. Out of one came some longtemers for the trackday, the easy-up awning and a decent array of Moby's tools. Out of the other came 250-miles of food wrappers, the dead ZXR and... the Suzuki SV650 Road Scalpel!

We got James' somewhat untidy SV650 out of the van as quickly as possible and hid it beneath the awning, contemplating the task ahead of us. A quick scan around the paddock saw some trick Ducatis (two 748s, a 996 and an ace looking 888), Suzuki GSX-R750s and 600s, FireBlades, R1s and a stack of other serious-looking kit already going through scrutineering. Hmm.

The Scalpel wasn't a pretty sight. To get the bike through scrutineering we'd have to fit a

bellypan, lockwire the front and rear brake calipers, remove the sidestand, fit a shark fin, change the tyres, fit a battery, find a petrol leak, replace the coolant with water, stick the race numbers on and away we'd go to race glory. Scrutineering closed at 8.30. It was just gone 8. Easy...

Well, it would be easy if we'd done it in a workshop with all the right tools to hand. If the paddock thought that as a magazine we'd rock up with a fancy bike, birds and all the gear they were about to be bitterly disappointed, finding us trying to blag bits for a beaten up old SV. Begging bowl in hand, we managed to find some rudimentary tools and Moby got himself uncomfortable underneath the Road Scalpel in an effort to put a race face on it.

The trackday kicked off, a chance to put each race bike through its paces and to sort gearing and suspension settings out, but our first job was to cut and fashion some metal

AL PUT DOWN HIS SAUSAGE MCMUFFIN AND TOOK TO THE POWER TOOLS

Alastair always makes a mess during lunch - wherever he has it



Things were going so well in the morning that Moby decided to sit down on the job



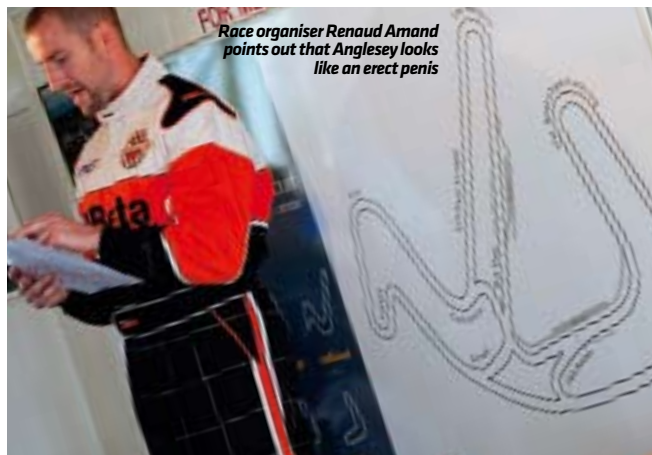
salesman charmed one from another team. We were saved, until I promptly snapped it seconds into the job. Arse.

Finally Alastair had a legitimate use for his new iPhone 4, other than scouring the net for porn, trying to find a DIY store open on Anglesey. With a Homebase found in Holyhead, I jumped in the snapper's car and fled the chaos. So I apologise to anyone on Anglesey who wanted a 1.5mm drill bit on that September Sunday, because I'd bought all eight up, and as Tesco's was next door, I stocked up on sarnies and snacks for the troops. Every little helps.

The scene I returned to was disappointingly almost exactly as I'd left, an hour before. With qualifying now under way our first race was to try and get a few laps in before the hour was out. Moby got through another four drill bits doing the rest of the drilling, before impressing the whole team with some rather immaculate

brackets to hold the bellypan in place. Using a hacksaw so blunt it would struggle to slice cheese, we managed to eventually cut four brackets to cajole into shape using two sets of molegrips and a bit of Moby muscle. While the boss was on this, Alastair put down his sausage McMuffin and had taken to the power tools, sparking up the genny and getting to work on drilling the caliper bolts in situ.

Drilling bolts is best done using a pillar drill with the bolt held firmly in place. A 12v Bosch, a blunt drill bit and a hungry Al is a recipe for disaster, and so it proved. To his credit, A-Force got one side of the fronts sorted, but the other side was like drilling for oil through granite. Charlie scoured the paddock for another drill bit, and our smooth snake oil



Race organiser Renaud Amand points out that Anglesey looks like an erect penis



Amazingly, Moby only managed to put three holes in his finger

lockwiring. With the big jobs done, the smaller ones got ticked off one by one. We replaced the battery with the one out of Andy's ZX-10R, the coolant was replaced with water, the new Dunlop D211GP rubber went on and the chain guard got fitted. After a final race briefing from race organiser and fellow racer Renaud Amand reiterated the aim of the day ("stay safe and have fun"), we then found a snoozing scrutineer who'd last looked at a bike five hours ago. He proclaimed it safe for racing - we could now go out and qualify. Except qualifying had finished half an hour ago with most teams getting 30-odd laps under their belts. Ah...

We'd be starting from the back of the grid, in 48th place. But with two sessions of the trackday still to run it was chance to have a quick shakedown to see if the Road Scalpel was the tool its tank decal proclaimed it to be. It came off its paddock stands for the first time in nearly six hours, it started and was warmed up while I got ready. I jumped on the bike, clunked it into first, and the Scalpel promptly died. I tried again, with the same results. It turns out that where we'd disconnected the sidestand cut-out switch the bike defaults to thinking that the stand's down. For fuck's sake... Messing about with the switch took up

the whole session.

So it was down to the final trackday session of the day to give the bike its shakedown. Would it be the gem James promised, with classic SV650 nimbleness allied to one of his special motors? Two corners was enough to answer that with a categorical 'no'.

There was nothing wrong with the motor at all. With a set of Keihin FCR 39 flatside carbs,

IT SHUFFLED ACROSS THE TRACK LIKE A DOG WITH AN ITCHY ANAL GLAND

jettied to perfection, there was grunt galore, although there would be only around 85bhp of power to play with, well down on most of our rivals. No, the problems lay elsewhere - mainly with the shock.

It had had a tough life and the rebound stroke was geriatric in its response so the front end shuffled across the track like a dog with an itchy anal gland out of every turn. I thought that either the headbearings were fucked or the front wheel had not been put in right.

There was no way we could race at anything like a decent pace in this guise.

But we'd have to, because as soon as the session finished, we lined up in pitlane ready for the race. With no rebound adjustment we'd have to put up with its wobbles and ride accordingly. Thankfully, Dunlop's marketing man had pitched up just at the right time to advise we ditch over 10psi from the rear tyre as it was well over 40psi warm. And with that, we were, er, ready to race.

THE NO BUDGET CUP BIKES

With very few rules, the choice of machinery competing in the No Budget Cup was interesting and diverse. Of course, most bikes were the usual suspects, with Japanese 600s littering the grid along with bigger bikes from the Big Four. But alongside the mainstream were some bikes that fitted snugly with the No Budget ethos (a few Suzuki SV650s, an old Honda VFR750, a Yamaha YZF750, and a pair of Yamaha TRX850s) with those whose budgets may be a bit deeper (the Ducati 748s, 996 and 888 being the best of this bunch). But it seemed that no matter the make or money, anyone was in with a shout of the win, so long as the riders were keen, the pit changes efficient and the fuelling quick (Fast Bikes fell down on all three counts).



Behind the glasses is a look of fear - and lots of it

► THE RACE

But we'd made it to the start, an achievement in itself. Because I was the last one to touch it, Beej and Beaks reckoned I had to ride it first, so I sat in pitlane, behind 47 nervous souls waiting for the race to start. Because grid starts are inherently dangerous, the No Budget Cup runs a very sensible rolling start, so we spent two laps behind the pace bike before the green flag announced we were now competing.

Given the pandemonium of our preparation, I hadn't really thought about the race itself, and with only five laps of practice I was still trying to get readjusted to Anglesey's excellent curves. So it was a slow and steady start; given the Road Scalpel's failings it couldn't be anything but. However, I plugged away, ignoring the petrol leaking from somewhere, and soon the pitboard proclaimed I was heading in the right direction. Being at the back of a rolling start meant the leaders had about half a lap on me and after 10 laps or so an R1 blasted past down the back straight, putting into context the pace required to win this thing.

Just as my wrist started to pump after half an hour, I got the pitboard to come in and I was pleased to see that we'd gone from dead last to 17th in a session. Beej is great a riding crap bikes, so it looked as if things were going from strength to strength. But a red flag soon brought the bikes in and it was clear that BJ wasn't happy with the bike, asking, "How the fuck did he ride it like this?" But Beej was putting in similar laps and progressing us further up the leaderboard. Running top ten times there was a chance that we could come out of this with our honour intact, but a few laps later Beej gesticulated something going



“A BREATHER PIPE CAUSED BEEJ TO RUN OVER HIS OWN FOOT AT ONE POINT”

past the pit wall in a way that could never mean good news.

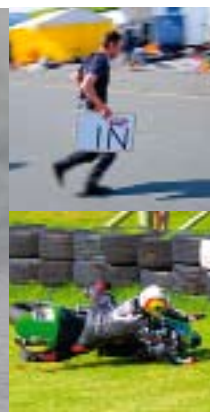
A boot glistening with oil was the problem, with a loose breather pipe being responsible. Apparently BJ had a few botchy clenching moments with his boot slipping off, causing him to run over his own foot at one point. But it wasn't clear where the pipe should fit, even after pulling the tank up. So Moby did his scrapheap challenge thing and fashioned a catch-tank from a Powerade bottle and a zip tie and sent Andy out with over 16 minutes lost, propping up the leaderboard once more.

Andy, in his first ever race, was on a mission, carving the Road Scalpel round Anglesey like a man possessed. Ever since a nasty smash in November, Beaks has been down on confidence, but now was the time to man up and put in some times, and that's exactly what he delivered, rocketing the team up into the, er, mid thirties on the board.

With glory gone, what with being 10 laps behind the leader, it was a case of getting to the finish, but things are never that easy in



The day was hot, the action was hot and the women were, well, at home it seemed! But never has Anglesey been so much fun



Have you ever seen a more immaculate race machine? What do you mean 'yes'?

endurance racing. Getting into the groove for my last session, I felt like the left footpeg was bending under my weight. It wasn't bending, it was falling off, so it was back in for another six minute stop to sort that out, before sending Beej out on a kamikaze mission to get into the top thirty, that netted him our fastest laps of the day, to then let Andy consolidate our position to the finish.

But 33rd (of 37 finishers) was as far as we could climb, 17 laps behind the eventual winners, SP Racing on a FireBlade, with Team Fossil (GSX-R750) and a Mad SP Racing (GSX-R600) all completing 94 laps. The top ten were within four laps, and lap times were close and competitive. But for Team Fast Bikes it was a miserable placing, deserving of the rubbish Burger King on the way back home. Fourth spot went to organisers Motorrijder on their SV650, proving what the an SV is capable of, with Team Fast Bikes returning south proving what we're incapable of doing. And all this after Renaud 'stay safe and have fun' Amand crashed their SV650 after the flag, injuring himself in the process – thankfully the

only 'serious' injury of the day of half a dozen or so offs.

But thanks to a massive team effort, we got out there, raced and brought the bike home – much to the relief of James at JHS. It really was a fantastic event, run smoothly, at an awesome venue with a crowd of people involved that couldn't have been any more enthusiastic. Some doubted whether the success of Belgium's No Budget Cup could be replicated in the UK, but this event in 2010 proves that 2011 will only be bigger and better – and we'll be part of it. After all, someone's got to prop up the leaderboard... ►



Thanks to the rear shock, this was as close as we got to an apex all day



THE NO BUDGET RESULTS BOARD

POS	TEAM	LAPS
1	SP Racing	94
2	Team Fossil	94
3	MAD Sp-Racing	94
4	Motorrijder	93
5	The Muppets	93
6	Brand Brothers Racing	92
7	Team Phoenix	91
8	Track Projects	91
9	SP-Racemanjes	90
10	Mudshack Racing	90
11	Inferno	89
12	Goodwin Racing	89
13	Timbrell Bikes	89
14	Norfolk En Chance	89
15	OMCC Racing Team	88
16	BEFIX	88
17	What's Your Name?	87
18	Tante RoXse & Co.	87
19	Team Wrist Action	85
20	JTM Racing	84
21	Wye 4 Teen	84
22	ASP	84
23	South East Biker	84
24	No Hope	84
25	Roundel Racing	84
26	Three Wide Men	83
27	Cheese Racing	82
28	Titanic Racing	82
29	Tretartarughe	81
30	Simmi Performance	80
31	CFC Racing	79
32	One Fat Antelope	79
33	Fast Bikes	77
34	Coolcomforts	77
35	Kernow Cowboys	77
36	Piston Broke	60
37	2WheelSkool	55
38	Team Wobbler	DNF
39	RAF Benson Burners	DNF
40	349 Racing	DNF
41	Mojo Racing	DNF
42	Motocorse	DNF
43	Ruby Racing	DNF
44	Dales/William Sawyer	DNF
45	MSM Racing	DNF
46	69	DNS
47	H4H Racing	DNS
48	Exhaust-ed	DNS

BJ'S RACE

The first few hours of my NBC experience was spent mostly legging it about the paddock begging for this or that. Never mind the fact we'd had no sleep or that we were missing all the track-time, the Road Scalpel needed a few things doing and we were rather short on, er, everything really.

When things started going a bit smoother I was able to sneak out on Simon's 848 for some laps, where I discovered that overnight I'd completely forgotten how to ride a motorcycle. Not good. Before long, the race had started and it was my turn. Exiting on to the track, the lack of shock damping was immediately obvious, like a loose wheel, but ignoring the fact you felt like you were crashing at every turn you could actually rape the wee beastie. Two red-flags came out in my first session, then a loose breather covered my leg in oil and I ran my own foot over after it slipped off the peg. The boys got it sorted and before long it was my turn again, so threw caution to the wind and went Banzai! The result was the most fun twenty minutes of riding I've had all year long. The NBC rocks!

ANDY'S BAPTISM

My first stint was right after BJ's oil breather problem had been fixed. With time lost I was eager to get out. I knew I would have to run hot into turns if I stood any chance of keeping pace with bigger bikes. Alastair had given me a pep talk and I was keen to regain the rest of my lost confidence. After a few laps I was feeling good, I actually thought to myself, 'I can do this!'

The front end (from a 916) was amazing. Buried into turns, I could hold a mega tight line and get out quicker than a lot of people out there. I was in my element and having a ball, mixing it and trying to find ways past, whether it was on the brakes up the inside or round the outside on slower turns.

What's one man's headache is another's joy and I actually revelled in the SV's stability issues. Through the fast right and up Anglesey's hill the Scalpel would get well out of shape, I'd aim to clip the curb and loosen the bars to just ride it out before breaking hard for the tight left, it must have been a right sight. My Mum always said to never wish your life away - but roll on next year.

NO BUDGET CUP 2011 - FULL SEASON

The plans for 2011 are yet to be finalised, but after the massive response to this single 2010 event, it would bonkers not to ride the wave of success and enthusiasm and compete again in 2011. Dates and venues are yet to be agreed, so head to nobudgetcup.co.uk or check out fastbikesmag.com for information on next year's events.



► THE BIKE: 1990 KAWASAKI ZXR750

Avid readers of our project bike column will know the history of the Kwaker, with Moby rescuing it from a garage in return for freeing up the space. The plans were grand, we all had a Scott Russell WSB replica in our minds but what the ZXR turned out to be was more of a Scott Russell wreckkica. Getting bits to fit the bike was the challenge. HPS/Nitron was fantastic and stumped up a shock for the job, Skidmarx came up with a set of road fairings, and eBay proved to be rather useful. Scorpion pulled a blinder and made us an end can to suit the headers we had, and HPS and Bike Torque Racing came through with a raft of consumables. Parts people supreme Wemoto plugged all the last holes with a raft of pattern parts that meant Moby could rebuild the calipers, and Maxton could build us a fork that actually had straight stanchions. After a lot of internet searching, some of it for what we actually needed, we found a tail unit at ARD Racing, and with just hours to go we finally had a complete bike.

But the knackered gearbox, that we're hoping is just a bent selector fork, and a bugged sprag clutch, proved to be our undoing. We're not giving up though, and this bike will be on the grid for 2011. Moby has already put his hand in his own pocket and bought another ZXR750 to use as a donor bike, and the preparation is already underway, with lessons learnt about last minute bike building.

The beauty is that we really did - with everyone's help - nearly make it onto the grid. To be ready for April should be entirely doable.

The pit board says it all. A bunch of knobs making a cock of it



THE (OTHER) BIKE: 1999 SUZUKI SV650 'ROAD SCALPEL'

SV650s is what James has built his reputation on. What he doesn't know about them isn't worth knowing, and this one was a gem. Well, engine-wise it was. The problem was with the rear shock, as tired and saggy as Thora Hird. So exiting turns was a wild experience, riding this bucking bronco all the way to the rumble strip before being able to fully tap the gasser.

The motor was enthusiastic, able to keep up with most machines on the initial drive out of a corner, but the speed differential on the straights was huge, not helped by the flat bars that left us high and dry in the wind. Time could be made up on the brakes, which were alright, and the old girl could turn in tightly with lots of weight pitched on the front end.

There's a lot of potential here, and another SV ended up fourth overall, proving that with a little of those precious commodities, time and money, even a humble SV can be turned into a whole heap of fun that can get you to the right end of the leaderboard.

Massive thanks to James at JHS Racing 0117 9868844 jhsracing.co.uk for the loan. ☐

Just imagine what we'd have done with this weapon. We might even have cracked the top 30...

