



Race Report #2

On the 25th May I headed to Pinnaroo's Scorpion Park for Round 2 of the SA off Road Championship. This was a 3hr cross country held on a sandy mallee terrain style track. I claimed the outright and pro class win with a 15minute lead ahead of 2nd place getter Todd Barry who got the lead on me at the start of the race and put up a good race in the early stages of the cross country. This was great preparation for leading into the Finke Desert Race the following weekend. It was great to have my KTM SA Plasterboard race team members and crew there to support as well, we had a very professional set up with very productive pit crew.

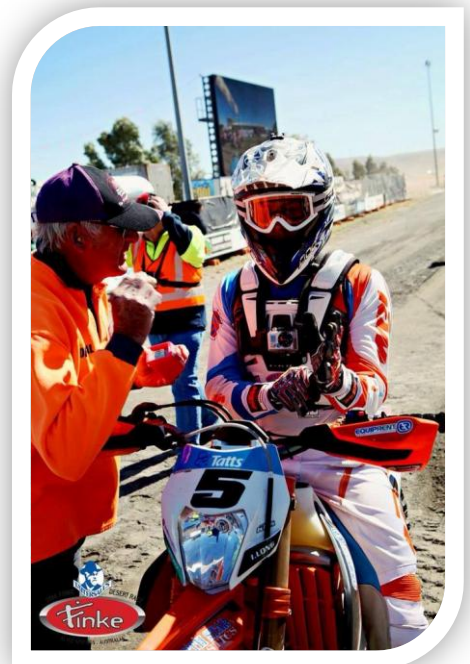
The June Long weekend once again seen myself heading to Alice Springs for my 4th Finke Desert Race with my new Factory ride with the KTM Australia Desert Team. Most of you would have already heard the good news but I finished 3rd outright and 2nd in the 451+ class aboard my KTM 500exc. This was a result that the KTM Australia Desert Team and I had been working hard for and I couldn't be more stoked about it.

On race day 1 we had to prologue on an 8.8km track, I gained the fastest prologue time for the morning with a time of 4:16, but it wasn't until late in the afternoon that my fellow team mate Toby Price blitzed my time with a 4:14. This resulted in Toby and myself starting on the grid side by side on the first line ahead of 442 other competitors for the first leg of the race down to Finke.

On the big race day down to Finke Toby and I had a competitive start banging bars into the first few corners, it was Toby's undeniable corner speed that got him the quick lead as we headed towards our first checkpoint, Deep Well. I had a slightly unsettled ride to Finke as I wasn't quite comfortable with my set up on the bike to which bucked me around in the whoops a few times. I lost a bit of time with this and 3rd position rider David Walsh quickly caught some time off me. I finished down in Finke in 2nd position 2 minutes behind Toby Price, but on corrected starting times David Walsh was to start 50seconds ahead of me on the return leg back to Alice Springs the next day.

On the return journey and last leg of the race, I got off to a blazing start; I knew I had to make up 50seconds to catch Walsh to get back 2nd position. I presented the fastest times through the checkpoints and with my highly professional team and their quick fuel stops they had me back out on that track in firing fashion. The last 60km I was within 20 seconds of David Walsh and I was chasing his dust. We could see the finish line in sight and I just ran out of ground, and came in to the checkered flag 11 seconds behind Walsh to earn 3rd outright. Both Toby Price and David Walsh put on a great battle and earned their positions well fought for.

Shortly after the race I learnt that I posted the fastest time home with a time of 1:56:46, exactly 1 minute faster than 1st outright winner Toby Price. We are still waiting to hear if that is the quickest time a bike has returned from Finke to Alice in the history books.



I would like to say a huge thanks to the KTM Desert Team, this was my first race with the factory team and I couldn't be happier with my results and how well the team did. Ben Grabham my manager provided me with great guidance over the week prior to the race when we were testing and the race weekend. The mechanics, GDR suspension and the support crew also did a great job on my bike set up and fuel stops. The sponsors who also invested in our team with our transport and hands on crew also played a vital role in our team success. My next outing with the race team will be round 1 of the WA Tri Series Kumarina 500 to be held at the Newman Enduro Club from the 27th to 29th June , then the Hattah Desert Race on the first weekend of July. I look forward to these races and keeping my sponsors and supports updated along the way.

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