



Castrol Honda 6 Hour

Six months on from my first race on the very under-rated Yamaha WR450F, saw the other big 6 Hour teams event of the year – the Castrol Honda 6 Hour at Burts farm in Matata.

Finishing up second at the Suzuki Six Hour back in October on my first outing was a pretty good result, but as a racer you're never really happy with runner up. Blowing the start of that race and putting the team nearly five minutes behind after the first lap didn't help matters either. We should have won that race, but the fastest team doesn't always win – I have learnt this many times over the years. So six months on, I really wanted to make sure that in this 6 Hour, we put the WR where it belongs.

I have been teaming up with Adam Reeves for team events recently, but unfortunately he was unable to attend this race, so a ring-in was required. I have known Callan May for a while and seen him advance through the off-road ranks to become a very accomplished rider. 2013 see's Callan join the Yamaha Off-Road team, so he was the perfect choice to help race the 6 Hour.

With memories of a last place start, I made sure this time I started the race at the other end of the field. The WR got off the line very quickly and rocketed to the front through the short grass section and into the bush. The first job was done and we just needed to keep up front.

The next six hours of the race was very tight at the front with the Husqvarna team of Sam Greenslade and Cam Negus putting the heat on the whole time. They were never more than one minute behind us, keeping us on our toes. At about the two-hour mark we needed to stop and change our air filter, as the dust was a factor when following or lapping riders. The Husky team passed us in the pits and lead the race for a while. The race was not only about speed but keeping the bike going too and both teams were changing filters all day. We re-passed them as they were changing an air filter and got the lead back. From there it was a dash to the finish with the Husky team hot on our heels.

My job was the last lap and with a small lead of about 20 seconds there was no way we were going to be the runners up again. Callan and I brought the WR450F home for the win, only 41 seconds ahead of second place.

It was a great feeling to win the Castrol Honda 6 Hour for the fifth time – but even nicer to win it on the WR450F. Like I said at the start, this bike is very under-rated and it's good to show just what it can do in the right hands. We couldn't have done it without Callan's consistent riding. Seems like we make a good team.

Till next time,
Chris

