



Te Puke Enduro X

Hi Everyone! With a stunning weekend just gone, it's no surprise that we managed to have a stunning event too. The Bay always seems to turn on the sunshine for riders so it was off to the Bay we go!

Round 3 of the KTM Extreme Enduro Series was held in Te Puke, amongst the Te Puke AMP show just out of the township. This Enduro X has been going for about 4 years now, but is the first time it has been included as part of the Extreme Enduro Series.

The club always put on a great showing with a different track every year, with each year seemingly getting tougher and tougher. This year was the toughest with the track being very tight and very technical. It probably lent itself towards a trials bike more than an enduro bike, with tight 180 degree turns and little to no gaps in between each obstacle. It wasn't going to be WR territory at all but I was determined to make the final and put on a good showing on the big bike.

I was really happy how the WR tackled the Tokoroa Enduro X, but that was a bit more open and suited the bike more. My first heat went OK. I got a good start and finished second. The next heat again was OK – I think I finished around third or fourth, but in a position to progress to the next rounds. In the semi and quarter finals I decided to take it super-easy and just do enough to qualify for the final and try to save as much energy as possible. The sun was taking its toll on me and the big 450 was a real struggle to get around the course.

I haven't ever not qualified for an Enduro X final, and again I did enough to get in, where I was the only 450cc machine there. The rest were on smaller, lighter, and more agile bikes, like 250 Two and Four strokes, as well as a trials bike. I knew the start was going to be important to getting a good result and I got a good one – crossing the first log in third and slipping into second through the rock garden. The race was double in length, about 14 laps and I was going to push as hard as I could for as long as I could. I started reeling in Warren Laugesen on his trials bike and was feeling really good guiding the WR around the track.

But by about lap 10 I hit a wall. Not a real one though, a fitness one. The big 450 taking its toll on me, and letting two riders squeeze by before crossing the line in fourth. I'm not usually happy with that but considering I wasn't even sure I had the combination to make it to the final, I think the WR and I did well and turned a few heads on the super-tight track.

Just a quick shout out to Roger Boyle from DR Trim Ltd. He has whipped together a tall seat for me with ribs that helps keep me on the seat where I want to be. And it looks pretty awesome too! If you need a tall seat like me, or a seat modification in general he is that man to go to.

The next event will be Round 2 of the Yamaha NZ Enduro Champs in two-weeks time – I'm looking for a little redemption from Round 1 so watch out.

Chris

