

## The Short Version

As some of you know, I, BUSAPWR, am a husband, father, and then motorcyclist. Well, this weekend I was a MOTORCYCLE RACER, for the very first time on a street bike. 🏍️ In anticipation of the upcoming race weekend, I prepared by spending many dollars and lots of time on race prepping my '01 GSXR-1000. I had to show up like a rock star at the track, since my wife gave me an ultimatum. Either we had an RV for the family, or the family wouldn't go. 34' of pure recreational vehicle is what we showed up in. My 16' fully enclosed trailer made for a 50' land train rolling down the highway on Friday night. 🏍️

Saturday was new racer's school and time to prove that we as individual motorcyclists could reach a lap time of under 2:00 minutes on Big Willow. Some crashed, which led to my first learning experience. What it looks like to see someone had a bike right in front of me!!! 😬 It also taught me what it is like to go off track at about 110 m.p.h. 8) I unfortunately did not go down but instead held the bike up and made it safely back around to the grid for another practice start. Puckering is good, but puckering and saving it is better. 🤔 The last lesson I learned on Saturday was my race strategy for Sunday's race. I sucked at starting so I had to take two of the six laps to catch back up. Then the next two laps to make my way to the front. And the final two laps would be necessary to pass the guys in front and be the **ONE** to pass for the win.

As all good plans go, mine was changed on Sunday at about 3:30 p.m. We had our first start, yes I said first, as in there would be another. We had our first start and at about the middle of turn 6, someone decided to take an afternoon nap in the dirt at about 100 m.p.h. 🤪 We got the checkered white and orange flag, go back to the pits, kind of like an on course red with riders moving off the track instead of stopping in their tracks on track.

Chaos then ensued. No one knew what to do, where to go, or how to handle the immediate situation. We got instructions to re-grid after the bike and rider was attended to. Most of us just hung out in the hot pits to take out second warm up lap. Some just made the mistake of totally losing touch with all reason and went back to their respective pits. Too bad for them.

We go to re-grid and now find out our 6 lap race has been changed to a 4 lapper. My strategy wouldn't work out perfectly, so I tried to make a better start. In my attempt, as my wife called it, I ended up about second from the back of 32 after gridding 20th, after turn 1. I knew time was not on my side so I wasted no time in dispensing with a few of my fellow riders in the first of my 2 favorite turns, turn 2. 🤔 Turn 2 is a beautifully flowing 220° constant radius slightly banked right-hander. The **REALLY** fast guys drop a knee on the white line on the inside of the corner and ride it until the corner spits them off on the exit of turn 2. I try to be like the really fast guys and that is the line I take. Immediately after exiting turn 2, I had made up about 6 or 7 spots. Now it was time to set the rest of the field up for my other favorite turn, turn 8. Turn 8 is extremely fast, during practice I was entering it at about 151 M.P.H. but during the race I know I was going faster. During practice I never touched a knee down, but for some odd reason during the race I was dragging my knee and toe slider. 😬 Turn 8 is a right-hander that takes patience exiting, as you need to wait, then wait some more, and finally wait a fraction of second more before diving into turn 9, which throws you on the front straight. Hauling ass through

8 can get you the much needed places and a great drive to shoot past people on the start/finish line.

My second lap just introduced my GSXR-1000 to more people to be passed. 😏 I tried to show off, or should I say needed to pass more people, and it just so happened to take place in turn 4. Luckily, the entire LABUSAS cheering section was there to make the passing look even better than it was. My second lap produced another 8-9 places up in the standings. Now came the final and most difficult challenge of the day. Catching the 4 guys that had produced a large gap in front of me.

As the LABUSAS group will attest, I was up for the challenge. I just kept thinking about needing two more laps. But to my dismay, I only had 4 total to do the deed. "If" is a word I try to stay away from, but in this instance, **IF** I only had two more laps.

Oh yeah, lap three. Well, on lap three I could see my four worthy competitors ahead and I put my thinking cap on and thought of all the ways to catch and pass them. 1 minute and 30 seconds passed and I only had one lap to do anything about it.

THE FINAL LAP!!! I knew someone would be crashing this lap and prepared to pass their fallen ass if the opportunity arose. Luckily for me, it wasn't me, but the guy in front of me. I now was about to finish my very first amateur road race climbing from a 20th grid position 16 places all the way to **FOURTH PLACE** in only 4 laps. The grin on my mug going through turn 8 was beyond ear to ear, it stretched all the way around my head. 😁 Then I remembered a lesson learned from my collegiate bicycle racing career. Race to 10' past the finish line!!! Everyone always gives up right at the line, and if you want to win, race just past it. I did, and no one made a move around me, I had securely remained in 4th place, one place shy of making money on my first race. Needless to say, I was completely and utterly full of joy and pride to not only finish the first of many sweet rides on the track, but to kick all but 3 other rider's butts!!! 🍑

I would like to first thank my wife and kids for the support they showed all weekend. Next I want to thank all the people who came out to cheer on all the racers, not only me, we truly appreciate the support. And finally, I just want to thank Go.....You didn't really think I was that kind of guy did you??? 😏

It was an awesome weekend that I will never forget and I look forwards to many more race reports, hopefully with a number 1 in them somewhere. I don't have any pictures since my wife, Jodie, was busy taking care of our 2-1/2 year old, Sebastian, and our 4-1/2 year old Josephine, but if anyone wants to post what they got please do. Here is my best recollection of who I can personally thank for showing up, even if they didn't come just to cheer for me; Pranav, Phyllis, Gregg, Kim, Lucy, Dennis, Mitch, Jennifer, Eric, Dan, Stuart, Vik, Alan, Gregg's friend Rex?, Pranav's other girl friend?, and last but not least, the Graeber's newest baby sitter, Jeff. I hope everyone had as good a time as I did. See you all next month.

Marcel