

## ISDE Poland 2004

### The Six Days Diaries

#### *Report 6 – Day 2 - More of the same!*

Day two's route follows the same course that had been ridden the day before. Riders are complaining of huge holes and bumps at the run in and out of the parc ferme. The bad news is that they have to ride this part of the course right through until Friday evening!

The rest of the course was just about the same – long fast sandy trails, with plenty of bumps that just got bigger and bigger. No real problems to report, other than the short mud holes that the local kids had made. They literally do carry water in buckets and fill in a hole until it will swallow a bike! To make the riders go through it they put logs at angles, which forces them in. bikes have a good thick coat of mud on their lower half when the riders emerge from stamp check 2. The kids are a different story – they are all covered in mud, literally up to their chests! They absolutely love the bikes and cheer each rider really enthusiastically, especially when they pull wheelies!



Dust is again the big problem in the tests. The weather today is even hotter than on Monday, so with the tests even rougher, the whole area looks like it is part of a dust storm. Filters are again taking a hammering with every rider I have seen running with filterskins and changing them every couple of checks.

Chris has really started to pick the pace up today. He was very disappointed with Monday's 44<sup>th</sup> overall E1, so seemed to be on more of a mission today. He rides aggressively but still with some reserve and still doesn't look like he's going quite as fast as he is capable of. He says he still hasn't gelled with the tests and doesn't want to risk a crash and lose even more time

to the leaders. Unfortunately at this level of competition, you have to take some risks. A definite increase in speed sees him start to get some top 30 results, but he is still a good few seconds each test off the top 15 target he had. Strangely though his test times on the first two tests each lap are about 12 places higher than the last test. None of the tests are noticeably different from each other.

As far as the outriding duties go, today was a lot of fun for me, but a complete disaster for others. Justin Wilson who outrides for Wayne Braybrook was one of the victims of an elaborate theft. His padlocked bike was stolen from the special test area on lap1. Although unconfirmed, we reckon it was put in the back of a van and whisked away unseen. Everyone is very worried about their bike security and Euan Syme in particular seems to have sussed who they are and how they work. With Trevor and Elizabeth Hay in tow, he informs the police of their methods. The police are very embarrassed, as in total 4 bikes were stolen from the tests. They are determined that they will catch the thieves, although they are very pessimistic about the chances of recovering the bike.

The weather today is very hot, so the sleeves came off the jacket and I was still quite warm during the ride, even on long road sections. As we'd ridden the route the day before we had a clear idea of where we were going, so had a bit more fun by trying some off-road sections to break up the monotony. Again, dust is a problem for the outriders, as the Polish backroads are just like our forestry roads – in the dry, very dusty. This was very nearly the undoing for Katie Wakely (Simon's sister), who was accompanying Simon Evans on outrider duty. Emerging from a forest and following Simon Evans, she had forgotten that they drive on the right in Poland. I turned a right hander to be greeted with Katie on full chat coming straight at me. Fortunately as she is an experienced rider, she quickly moved back across to the right and disaster was averted.

At the final check, Chris again has 15 mins to work on the bike. Tonight he does a front and rear tyre and fits a new filter, all under the watchful gaze of father Trevor.

So, with no real dramas and Chris's pace quickened, he moves up the leader board to 28<sup>th</sup> overall E1 for the day.



Chris arrives at Stamp Check 1 on Day 2 – The rider behind is some guy called salmon-something – apparantly he's quite a quick rider!