

10 Years of Racing

May 2001 10 years of age

Grant convinces Bethwyn to Join Coastal Motorcycle Club and get a race license so Luke can race his 2000 Honda TRX 90cc. Well that was pretty much the first hurdle of many in the next 10 years.

The club took our membership, when there was no other quads to race, and MWA took money for licence that couldn't be used, as there was no racing for Junior quads. Being issued with the #4 number plate, I guess hindsight now shows he was the first junior quad rider in WA to get a licence to race. After a huge battle with the woman who ran MWA trying to get a refund on an un-useable licence, it was back to the ATV Club for 2002 and 2003.

Luke went to Coastal as a junior on his 90cc the day after the senior state round to ride the extremely rough track. In 2003 The junior Quads had good numbers in the ATV Club and raced down at Harvey at the Western Desert Racers facility, and also the new Woodridge ATV Park was being constructed.

At the Wagin Pony Express events, the juniors had a separate track to ride on until they were old enough to get out on the course and race the 2 wheelers.

This group of kids included Luke, Simone, Adam & Melissa Davies, The Normans, The Bushby's, Plummers, McKays, Rossams and many others.

Towards the end of 2003, Luke joined the Trail and Enduro Club to allow him to get his race licence, to go over to Melbourne for 1 weekend to race in the Quad Nationals which were run by Mark Beechey. Mark had written all the Quad rules in the MA Rule book. At the Nationals there were 2 classes. The first one was Senior Quads, it included USA rider Tim Farr who took the title, the other class was Junior 80cc 2 stroke- 90cc 4 stroke. This grid included the Wades, VanVliets, Larsons and one only interstate rider Luke Gaisford, now sporting the #14 allocated by MWA. The nationals were part of the thumper nats and the juniors raced only 3 times on Saturday. Race 1 Luke won, second in the second race, and won the third race and therefore the first Junior 90cc National title. 2nd was Cameron Wade and 3rd Adam Larson



2004 saw Simone Gaisford with her new '03 Honda and the Coastal Motorcycle Club allowed just the two riders to compete on club days, along came David Norman, Joel Mortimer, Jay Callo, Jamie Lee Brenton, finally we had a small grid to race, mean while things were happening at the ATV club, 2004 saw many events at Woodridge and Harvey, even a full on race series with over 100 quads competing.

2005 Luke had turned 13 and this again put him in no mans land, he couldn't race in the 90cc division and was the only rider on a blaster, lots of the other 90cc riders were like Luke, very tall and had outgrown their 80/90cc machines, they were all now riding Blasters at non MWA tracks, we requested a rule change for 2006 that all kids could ride 200cc/300cc class once they turned 12, effectively this meant that all our juniors went up to the 200/300cc at once, Luke again travelled to Melbourne for the Quad Nationals, sister Simone although having ridden a Blaster all year, had to compete in the 90cc class, the only girl and the fastest 4 stroke in the country, not a bad finish for her! Luke on the other hand had the flue before we left, and still really wanted to go, going by plane, we arrived with Luke in excruciating pain, 2 blown ear drums and a chronic chest infection. He raced as hard as he could and settled for 4th place. 2005 saw WA's Josh Higson take 1st Carlie Emanuelli 2nd Mitch Van Vliet 3rd

2005/2006 Summer, we decided to go looking for new kids to recruit into racing and new places to race at, first stop was Northam Speedway, we couldn't believe it, a new crop of kids and some we had seen at Harvey, others renewed friendships from the past in the ATV Club. After racing their series and telling them all about Coastal, saying things escalated would be an understatement !

Between Coastal and Northam the group of kids grew to a FULL grid, meanwhile our family along with Leanne Brenton and Darren Williams applied for the 2006 Australian Quad MX Championships. Kevin Williams came to WA for the MX nationals at AJS, we spoke to him and he said he would make it happen for WA, throughout the year, the Junior 200cc started to get invited to all the events that once they couldn't get into, ie Civil War, Coastal Kid, Chad Peters Memorial, and eventually they would be part of Wanneroo Junior Open, Southern Cross, Manjimup, Tumbulgum etc

2006 became a huge year, Northam ran a state title for Juniors over a full weekend for 200/350cc and 90/110cc, WAQuadMX.com was started in January and the kids were all racing and having a heap of fun.

The Nationals were held in Perth and 200cc class saw Luke Gaisford win the National title, with 22 kids entered, we were all really proud. Mitch VanVliet was second and Jake Emanuelli 3rd. For WA Luke also won while Simone took out 3rd in the state as a MWA sanctioned state title was also run alongside the Nationals points, for WA juniors. Simone had broken her collar bone just 7 weeks earlier and she did really well to put in 5 good races.



2007

After a hard 2006 which saw much travel, expense and pressure, we had decided early in the year that this year would be quieter, the kids entered and raced every Club Run and Open they could, just like all the Juniors, everyone had to keep their ears open to not miss a spot on the grid at the races.

Luke also decided to start an Apprenticeship and got special permission to leave school at 15.

2007 saw a Quad only State Championship event run at Coastal Park, the kids raced for a state title that day of which Luke won and Simone came 5th outright.

Luke turned 16 and immediately said goodbye to the Blaster ,long negotiations had gone on with Rockingham Powersports re what ride Luke would be on when he turned senior. The new CanAm was about to be released by Lukes 16th birthday, and RPS wanted Luke to race it for them. August came and went and with no sign of the CanAm , Luke grabbed the Honda TRX 450ER 2007 model.

Brand new out of the box, we took Luke to Hyden, we thought 300kms on this will get him used to a 450 ! No aftermarket shocks, nothing... Luke entered the 400cc+ class unmodified and although finding the 300kms really hard took the class win.

The following weekend Luke entered Senior State Round 5 at BSA, the usual "have Fun" from Mum and Dad, while both walked away from the grid almost sick with nerves. Luke was in Clubmans and took all 3 wins that day. Luke also entered State Round 6 at Coastal Park in Clubmans and also won all 3 races. He entered Southern Capes Open, his first race alongside Chris Brenton and Colin Jefferies etc, Luke took second overall for the day, but also the bragging rights to a holeshot.

Luke finished off the club series in seniors, but not everything was to go to plan. Luke had a pretty major crash, seeing him knocked out, broken nose, and an eye injury that he will have to deal with the rest of his life. I think this was a bit of a wake up call for him, as he settled down a bit after this, as he knew he just lost concentration for 1 second, not something you can do on a 450cc Machine



Southern Capes Open 2007



2008 would see Luke upgraded to Intermediates and on the grid with the Pro's. The CanAm had come in, and being a brand new model, Luke had to ride it in stock form for most of the series

In his class he picked up a perfect year of 17 wins from 17 starts, if he been scored with the Pro's he would have finished 5th outright for the state. He still had a long way to go, but decided to go to Tasmania to compete in the Pro Class. He placed 6th 12th 12th 8th and 4th suffering quite a few crash's along the way.

Luke also competed at Hyden and although putting in the fastest lap times, suffered an electrical problem which put him a lap down.

2009 Luke stayed on the CanAm against adversity. Strange things happen when your told something so blunt, you train and ride harder to prove people wrong. Luke was upgraded to the Pro Class, his first race for the season he won, his first ever Pro class win, alas this was the only pro race win all year, Luke though did finish 2nd overall for the year to Ant Yewers. Following up the season with Southern Capes Open, where he again finished second.

Luke went to Murray Bridge SA to compete in the nationals, he was pretty happy with his form and took 5th 4th 8th 15th 5th , the 15th coming from a dislodged chain. Overall 7th place, this he wasn't

happy with. Simone travelled to Murray Bridge and although having ridden a 2 wheeler for the season, hopped back on the Quad to secure 4th in a massive field of 20 women.

2010 after running half the 2009 season on the Honda, Luke decided it was time to go back to what he and the shop knew best and that is Honda's. Luke ran his seeded plate #2 for the series, he won 4 Pro Races, came 1st in two rounds, 2nd in 2 rounds and 3rd in two rounds.

Luke took the WA State Title and the #1 plate

Luke won the BSA Cup, and the Quad of the Cross and with the series over, he got ready for the Nationals at Southern Capes.

Luke had run one bike all year, trained and raced on the same bike, and just 2 weeks out from the nationals a major mechanical needed all hands on deck to get ready in time for racing. Luke was pretty devastated, in fact he almost pulled out as time wasn't on his side to have the bike ready. He knew in the trim it was, he would be at huge disadvantage running a 38hp Honda against Australia's best, 2 massive names from England and New Zealand's National Champ along with current and ex Australian champions. Luke was the second youngest rider on the grid and put in place a plan to get on the podium, and with a bit of luck on his side, he would just do the best he could. His first race he was very lucky to avoid a huge crash, and took off to eventually win the race, he took 4th 5th with a flat tyre and 3rd 3rd to come an outright 2nd overall by just one point to Ryan Lancaster.

2011 it was time to start afresh, old injuries were rested and stretched and it was time to start training for the 2011 season. Plenty of time was spent training through summer, and the long off season had everyone ready for the first event of the year Summercross. Luke won this event along with the Civil War races and focused on the first state round. Plenty of training put Luke in good form for round 1 where he won all 3 races. Round 2 he won the first race, and 2nd in the other 2.

Round 3 at AJS Motorcycle Club, Luke achieved 2nd in the 1st race, then won race 2 & 3

Round 4 at Bunbury won the first race, and then 2nd in race 2 and 3 by mere seconds

Round 5 was Noble Falls, he had expressed that it was time to step it up and take it to the next level, this is always a worry as increasing lap speed sometimes comes with an accident or two. Well Luke started well in race 1, got through the crowd up into second and was putting in good laps to take second. Race 2 well he finally holeshotted and got out in front and held off a charging Ryan Lancaster and clinched the win. Race 3 again got a good start was out in front and then disaster, he clipped a ledge in a corner and was high sided slamming him into the track injuring his shoulder and hitting his head hard. His never dnf attituded saw him back onboard the bike to finish the race all even with a flat front tyre.

Round 6 saw Luke with a 48 point lead for the WA state title and also leading the overall points for the year in Senior MX, weather was to cause a cancellation of the quad racing and Luke took the back to back title. WA State Quad MX Champion

Southern Cross Quad of the Cross saw Lukes name engraved on the shield for the second time, and then it was off to the inaugural ATV Cup in Coolum Queensland. Luke clinched 2nd place out of a field of 17 riders.

The Australian Quad Motocross Championships was at Coolumb Queensland . After the container was unpacked and practice was completed. Luke felt out of sorts. He hadn't ridden since his accident at Noble Falls, although the shoulder was reasonably healed, other more major problems were making Luke very uncomfortable riding at all. He started the first race and straight away was landed on over a single and tangled with a pile of bikes, he got apart and took off for the 15 minute journey amazingly getting up into second place. Race two although ridden with some precaution saw Luke riding under par but taking the win, when his nemesis Ryan Lancaster didn't make it off the start with a mechanical. Who would've thought, leading the event after round 2 it was a tired boy who fell into bed Saturday night. Sunday morning saw a wet track and Luke rode 2 good races to go into the last race of the meet only needing 8th or better to win the title. Sounds easy but motorsport isn't secured until you cross the chequers, Luke made his way up into 3rd place and was attacking for second when his bike started playing up making noises, Case saver broke off and covered him with oil, to say all his supporters were panicking was an understatement, he nursed the Honda for the last 4 laps not dropping any positions, and skidded to a stop over the chequers to the applause of everyone, what most don't know, is how lucky he was to finish, the motor was a mess and never to start again.

Luke celebrated the win with family and friends and supporters and long time competitors. Simone secured 2nd place for the Womens Class and capped off a great campaign to her Quad racing.

Luke Gaisford Australian Pro Quad motocross Champion, a long journey finally complete.

