

USGPRU

United States Grand Prix Racers Union

Ryan looked perplexed. "My bike has a real bad vibration. . . I don't feel safe riding it anymore. Can you guys take a look and see if you can find anything wrong with it? My mechanic says it's fine and I should just ride it." Having tuned and raced these bikes for many years, I wondered how bad it could be given the fact that Ryan had been flying around Oak Hill all day. Maybe it was just the track surface that was messing with his RS125 at speed. But one blip of the throttle and even from 5 feet away you could see the motor rocking in the frame. Upon closer inspection we found that someone had installed the motor very poorly and 'finger tight' would have been a generous assessment of the engine mount bolt's torque setting. It was amazing that this kid could even ride the bucking beast much less turn the blistering laps he was running. I knew from that point, that this kid had some serious riding skills, and more importantly he had the judgment to know when to stop when something wasn't right.

In 2007, the 18-year-old, Ryan Ferris stepped up to the 250GP class and proceeded to demonstrate some of that racing skill we glimpsed at Oak Hill as he led the class for most of the season. Canadian, Eddy Brunet gave him a solid run for the championship, but in the end the kid from southern California came out as the 2007 USGPRU 250GP National Champion.

Ever since he was three years old, Ryan Ferris has been riding motorcycles and he's been racing road bikes for the last 5 years. His father, Trent, used to race years ago and started his two boys dirt riding when they turned 3-years-old. The entire family is involved in the sport now as Ryan's mom, dad, and brother all participate in one way or another. When asked how he felt about all of the family involvement, Ryan answered, "It matters a lot to me. It's one less thing to worry about when they are there to help. It's often the little things like making sure tire warmers are plugged in and I've eaten lunch. I really know it when they're not there. Last year my dad couldn't make a few rounds, and it just didn't feel right."

Ryan's parents, Trent and Michelle, don't just take care of him they also have his younger brother, Kyle, to watch. Even though Kyle is 2 years his junior, Ryan is quick to point out that they both started roadracing 50s, 60s, and 80s with the CMRRA at the same time. When asked if they work as a team or as competitors Ryan answered, "The first thing I do after the practice is done, is go check to see what his times where. I can't let my 16-year-old bro beat me!" We'll just call that a healthy brotherly rivalry. It worked for the Bostrom brothers, so why not for the Ferris boys?

Every rider has a bit of room for improvement. Ryan admitted that after a recent weekend with the California Superbike School, he started wondering if

*Ryan Ferris
250GP National Champ!*

he was as consistent as he should be.

On the track, Ryan plans to focus on consistency. Off the track he is looking to build his name recognition from a marketing standpoint. Winning the championship will certainly help on that front.

The championship wasn't served to Ryan on a silver platter. He did seem to have the season in the bag when he went to the Barber Motorsports round. He crashed on the first lap, and sat on the guardrail watching his championship contender, Eddy Brunet. Luckily for Ryan, Eddy also crashed, but that really opened up Ryan's eyes as to how fast fortunes can change. From that moment on, every scenario was analyzed and every point counted. Electrical problems at the final round cast a final shadow of doubt on the lead, but good fortune and great riding kept him in the fight and allowed him to win by a mere 18 points. And his favorite part of the season was seeing his father, his team owner, and his mechanic jumping



up and down holding his pit board with a big #1 on it as he crossed the finish line.

So where is this champion going from here? When not studying Aerospace Engineering at Cal-Poly, he's working towards his ultimate goal of landing himself a ride in MotoGP and becoming the next world champion. Next year his primary racing will be on a 600 in WERA and AFM with an occasional cameo appearance in the USGPRU to help coax a little more speed out of his younger brother.

by Stewart Aitken-Cade
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2008 Schedule

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