

Sheils Superbike double at Cookstown

Brimming with confidence after a fine win at Tandragee, Derek Sheils and his Cookstown Burrows Engineering Suzuki GSXR 1000 were a sizzling combination that their Superbike rivals found far too hot to handle at the Cookstown 100. In front of a massive crowd, Sheils won both Superbike races and set the fastest lap of the day – he was simply untouchable.

Sheils' first victory came in the Open Superbike race. Derek McGee led briefly but once Sheils got his nose in front he powered away to win by 2.4 seconds. McGee took second ahead of William Dunlop, Michael Sweeney and Guy Martin.

In the feature Cookstown 100 Superbike race, when Irish Championship points were also up for grabs, Sheils scored an emphatic victory that surely left his rivals demoralised. At the end of eight laps of the 2.1 miles Orritor track, Sheils took the chequered flag over eleven seconds clear of McGee with Sweeney taking third ahead of Dunlop. Sheils' fastest lap was 1.23.09, just four tenths of a second away from Michael Dunlop's outright lap record.

Sheils said: "I really enjoyed those two races. Everything went smoothly and according to plan, I can't even remember having one moment to worry about. Winning the second race was very important as championship points were available and it was good to get the Superbike title defence off to a start with a maximum 25 points. It was also important to put on a good show here as it's Cookstown Burrows Engineering Racing's home race. We had a lot of support so thanks to everyone who cheered us on."

Team owner John Burrows was equally delighted: "That was a perfect job by Derek today, he's riding fantastically well. Derek rightly will get the lion's share of the acclaim, but I also want to thank my team who put a superbly prepared machine under their rider. I'd also like to thank all the fans for their support and of course all the team's sponsors especially Cookstown whose famous sausages are made just a few miles from the Orritor track. Everyone will enjoy a good celebration now before focusing on our NW200 and TT preparations."

Sheils was also in action in the Supersport and Supertwins races at Cookstown. In Friday's Supersport race the Dubliner and his Cookstown Burrows Engineering Honda 600 finished fifth while on Saturday, when Sheils had to start in the second wave, another fifth was the result. In the Supertwins race, Sheils was also fifth, riding cautiously in drizzle which made grip levels unpredictable.

Cookstown Burrows Engineering Racing would like offer their condolences to the family and friends of Dario Cecconi who lost his fight for life after a tragic accident at the Tandragee meeting.