

## CUDLIN BROTHERS 4TH AT 6 HOUR

Seasoned international endurance motorcycle racers, Alex and Damian Cudlin have battled against the heat and a problem with their fuel cap to finish fourth in yesterday's Belray six hour race at Oran Park.

Supported by OzQuest Home Loans, the two brothers returned from international duty to compete in their first Australian race in five years and took to the track on their Dean Evans Revolution Accessories Yamaha R1 for practice on Friday with track temperatures soaring to a massive 68 degrees.

Despite the heat playing havoc with the team's Pirelli tyres, the Cudlin brothers recorded a number of encouraging times before experiencing an engine problem which cut their track time and placed a serious doubt as to if the pair would be able to take to the grid for Sunday's grueling race.

A mammoth overnight effort by the team saw Damian Cudlin return to the track on Saturday where he completed the fastest time for the team and represented the pairing at the Superpole session where he punched out his best time for the weekend, a 1.10.8 and secured a start from the third position of the grid. Damian Cudlin then started the race and after getting a good start led the opening lap of the race before noticing fuel was spraying from the fuel tank. The problem persisted throughout his opening stint of the race before he handed over to Alex Cudlin who had to bring the bike back in to the pits to be looked at, losing crucial laps while the team investigated the problem.

After examining the bike the team decided to replace the fuel cap at the four hour mark of the race. The Cudlin brothers then returned to the track and started clawing their way back through the field to finish in fourth position.

Despite the problems experienced during the race the team turned heads across pit lane, with their rear tyre changes taking just 21.78 seconds and 18 litres of fuel placed into the bike in 16.8 seconds. The team also had a specially designed cooling technique for the event, which saw cool air and water sprayed on the radiator to reduce the heat generated by the bike. Alex Cudlin said he enjoyed the event and despite being one of the only teams in the race with two riders, felt that the fuel cap cost the team a potential podium finish.

"After we had the fuel cap fixed up it was then just trying to claw our way back up on the leaders and see where we ended up. I did two more stints on the day and the heat made it pretty hard as it was around 40 degrees, however Damian and I have raced in similar conditions before and are used to it and we just kept pushing hard," Alex Cudlin said.

"I guess that's part of endurance racing, some times things fall in your favour and but yesterday we were just unlucky and everything seemed to work against us," Damian Cudlin said he too enjoyed the event and thought the team performed well given the problems that they had experienced. "At the end of the day, our entry into the event was something which was put together at the last minute when Dean Evans gave us a call up. I thought it was going to be a fun race and wanted to be part of history with the event the last motorbike race at Oran Park," Damian Cudlin said. "We assembled the best crew we could and everybody put in a good effort and things just didn't go our way but that is endurance racing sometimes you need lady luck on your side." Dave Caprice of OzQuest Home Loans said the brothers put on a strong performance despite the tough circumstances.

"Damian [Cudlin] and Alex [Cudlin] did a great job to finish in fourth position given the circumstances. They were also one of the few teams in the event to have just two riders competing in the race and given the heat wave experienced on the weekend they both did extremely well on track," Dave Caprice said. "On behalf of the team I would like to say a special thank you to John Redding from the Yamaha Racing Team, Ian Irving the engine builder and Frank Pons from Biketek. It was because of John's effort late on Friday night that we were able to get the genuine Yamaha parts required so that the problems with the bike could be fixed that night in order for Damian and Alex to take to the grid for the race."

Damian and Alex Cudlin race for Yamaha Racing in Europe and take part in the World Endurance Championship.