

Extreme



Bike Makeover

Zero to Hero in 14 days

By Donna vd Merwe

Everyone loves a good make-over and the world of all things 'moto' is certainly no exception. A challenge was put forth to K&R Corporation – Xtreme Rentals and T4-S Creative Engineering to transform a proverbial 'ugly duckling' into a beast of a machine that any seasoned track day rider would be proud to ride ... within 14 days and a tight budget, of course.

A sad and neglected second-hand 2004 Suzuki GSXR-750 was purchased for R20 000. Hard to believe? Not when you consider all that was wrong

with it. Although not too much is known about the bike's history, what we did know was that it was an ex-track bike, with its glory days a distant memory, that had been left out in the elements to weather and perish for approximately a year. As a result, all the bolts were rusted and the engine casings were stained from dirt, oil and rain. The dirt build-up had actually been absorbed into the aluminium parts of the engine casings. The rubbers were so dry that they were cracked, crumbling and even disintegrating. The paint was cracked and peeling. The

belly pan was filled with leaves, cobwebs and a rather large spider that had long since died.

As if that wasn't enough, as the make-over team started to disassemble the bike, the bigger problems began to reveal themselves. It was obvious that this bike's previous owner had run out of talent on numerous occasions: Crash damage had left the frame and engine covers badly scratched. Poor attempts were made to cover these scratches with a make-shift spray job, using D.I.Y. spray paint from a can. The brackets to support the fairings and clocks were home-made from steel – not the ideal material for the

purpose of a track bike.

The radiator was beyond repair. The cores were too mangled for effective cooling. The exhaust, which started out as a performance pipe, was now dented, scraped, squashed and grated and had been butchered in an attempt to get more performance out of it.

The handle-bar end weights were useless. The clocks were cracked. The fairings were in an atrocious state. They too, had received a hardware store paint D.I.Y. spray job to cover up the previous paint job, which was chipped and flaking. The bike had no ram air ducts. The steering damper was poorly mounted and a danger to the rider. The chain was completely rusted and links were stiff and seized. The tyres were so old and perished. Part of the clutch lever was snapped off, the seat was melting, the tank was dented and rusted, the list was endless. The only thing right was that it had potential.

Understandably, all of this would overwhelm most people. Fortunately the make-over team consisted of people who don't back away from a challenge. Over the next 14 days, the bike was stripped, evaluated and reconstructed by Jason Wessels of K&R Corporation – Xtreme Rentals and Kiril Kostov and his crew from T4-S Creative Engineering.

The goal was to transform the bike to look and run exactly like a proper track bike.

So it was stripped right down to the frame and engine. The frame, sub-frame and swing arm were repaired and re-sprayed back to their original colour - satin black. The shoddy welding job on the grazes of the engine covers

were completely revamped. The radiator, fan and all the nuts and bolts were replaced. It was decided that the newly-fitted OEM top fairing bracket would be modified to accommodate the newly-mended clocks. Add to that, brand new ram air ducts and a thoroughly repaired and refurbished body kit sprayed in the striking Xtreme Rentals colours. The project was starting to come together quite nicely.

The screen was replaced, as well as the sprockets and chain. The old standard and perished hoses were tossed aside in favour of braided hoses, which enhance the bike's braking abilities. Upon closer inspection, the original front forks were still functional and in good condition, so they were merely fine-tuned for track use. T4-S manufactured the eliminator, as well as a bracket to hold the exhaust.

Dunlop N-Tec tyres were fitted to rims that had thoroughly-polished edges. This prevents paint chipping, which often occurs during tyre-changes. The steering damper was repaired and mounted correctly. Other new additions include the brake lever, grips, handle-bar end weights and a sleek new, locally-manufactured Stealth performance pipe, as used by top SA Superbike riders.

What started as a demanding and challenging project, was now a success story that exceeded even our expectations, given the time limit. The result: a mean looking specimen of a track bike that was sure to turn heads. Not only did it look stunning, but it had the engineering to back it up. Most of all, the client was ecstatic on the handover day!

This was definitely a team

Before



The tank was badly scratched - no doubt from the zip of a Jacket



This bike had bitten the dust a few times



Weathered engine casings



This bike was in serious need of attention...

effort and would not have been possible, if it wasn't for the dedicated and hardworking T4-S crew, the valuable industry expertise gained from many years of experience in professional racing by Jason Wessels and the various other contributors who helped to keep the make-over within budget by sponsoring parts.

The makeover team:

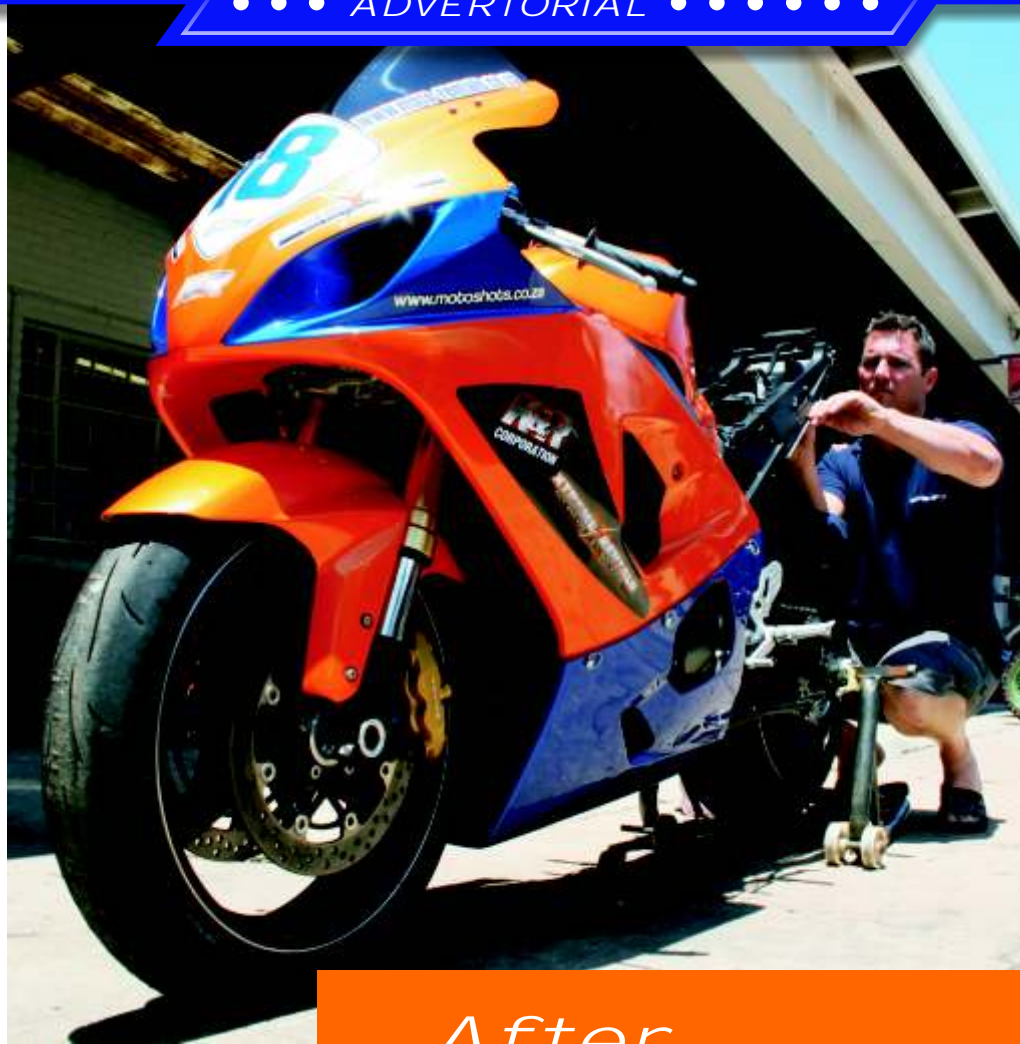
T4S Creative Engineering
Kiril or Bev (011 394 5043)
Chassis straightening / cleaning;
Workshop facilities; Welding;
Engineering.

Stealth Exhaust Systems
Piet (083 723 2866)
Exhaust Pipe

Omega Fibre Glass
Contact Thomas (082 970 2184)
Ram Air Ducts

K&R Corporation – Xtreme Rentals
Donna (082-480-9486)
jason@moto-rentals.co.za /
donna@moto-rentals.co.za
Spray job; Tyres; Chain; Sprockets;
Grips; Seat; Stickers

Photos by Motoshots



After

