



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Date:** 3 January 2017

**Press Officer:** Dave Cornish - 07815 685524

### **LEWIS' ASIA END OF SEASON FINALE**

Norfolk supermoto racer Lewis Cornish finished his 2016 season by packing race tyres and leathers into his hold baggage and heading off on a long-haul race trip to Malaysia for the final round of the FIM Asia Supermoto Championships. Lewis was met by his Kenny Motorworks team and reunited with his elderly KTM450-SXF at a nearby track where he was holding a supermoto training school for some local riders. This didn't go to plan as a nasty accident on the sun baked MX track had Lewis making a trip to A&E to have his badly cut and grazed arm and shoulder treated.

However jet lag and the oppressive heat didn't faze Lewis as the team arrived at the Shah Alam circuit but it was decided that Lewis would sit out Friday's free practice sessions to allow his injured arm time to recover. The fast and technical makeshift, stadium circuit would prove to be a physically demanding track but during qualifying in a field of national champions from Europe, Australia, NZ as well as Asia and the USA, Lewis was ahead of his rivals and finished the qualifying session in pole position. However during the following SuperChrono timed session he had to give best to multi-British champion, fellow countryman Chris Hodgson but Lewis was still comfortably second on the grid ahead of NZ champion Richard Dibben. The lack of Friday practice proved to be a disadvantage for Cornish because his standard KTM front brake was suffering from fade and lack of feel in the heat of qualifying. Burning the midnight oil the team changed out the master cylinder, pads, brake fluid and also fitted a TekMo carbon air-cooling scoop in an effort to prevent problems during Sunday's two 25 minute races.

Under the gaze of 20,000+ spectators the grid assembled for race one. The lights went out and Lewis got the perfect start to take the hole-shot into turn one and he headed the pack onto the dirt section. With Kiwi rider Dibben close by the duo began to gap the field as behind Hodgson crashed out of contention. Within a few laps Lewis had pulled a comfortable lead on his pursuers and it seemed as though victory was within his grasp, sadly the brakes couldn't cope with the pace he was setting and they faded at the fastest part of the track which saw Lewis hit the ground hard. By the time he had straightened out the bars and re-joined the race it was just a damage limitation exercise as he battled his way up through the field to take a disappointing seventh at the flag.



**Lewis keeping his cool on the grid**

Whilst Lewis sat in the medical centre having the dressing to his arm replaced once more the team set about repairing the bike for race two. Taking up his place on the grid (now in seventh) the team had done their best with the little resources at their disposal and as the lights went out and the pack thundered into turn one, Lewis emerged in third place over the first jump. Quickly he moved up into second place behind Malaysian champion Gabit and once more the two front runners pulled a gap on the chasing pack. Lewis looked comfortable following in the wheel tracks of the Husqvarna rider and several times the crowd gasped as Lewis swept past his rival to take the lead before Gabit nipped ahead once more. Then once again 'Lady Luck' deserted Lewis as inexplicably he began to drop off the leading pace. The chasing pack started to catch and then pass the luckless Cornish and it appeared that his injuries had begun to take their toll. Then from nowhere Lewis picked up the pace and began a move back up towards the leaders.

As the laps wound down he was re-passing several riders per lap including Aussie champion McLeish who he passed up the inside at the end of the start straight. Cornish's KTM engine was hitting the rev limiter and it seemed as though it might not take the punishing pace. Thankfully the bike held together long enough for Lewis to cross the line in fourth place. It then became clear as to why his pace had dropped off and the bike was sounding rough. For almost half race distance the KTM was stuck in third gear which meant it was a miracle he'd finished the race at all. A seventh and a fourth place was enough to put Lewis fifth overall on the podium which was a disappointing result by his standards but never the less it was an inspired ride against all the odds.





**A fantastic start in race one saw Lewis lead the pack and pull away at the front**

*In the medical centre after the race he said "I'm really disappointed with my final results here, it certainly didn't reflect my true pace. I honestly know that I had both of these races in the bag and despite my arm stinging I was comfortable at the front. The team did their best with the old standard bike that we had and I'd like to thank them for their efforts. It's hard enough to race in this climate with my injured arm but with all of my close rivals on top spec 2017 race bikes with new tyres it was always going to be tough using old rubber on a stock SXF to compete. However it was simple bad luck that let me down in both races, the boiling front brake and the snapped gear shifter cost me the wins here and I'm very disappointed. But thanks to Kenny Motorworks for all of their support and for getting me over here for the season finale. The pace in Asia has really improved since my first trip here and I'd also like to congratulate the organisers for putting on such a good series but mainly congratulations to Gabit for lifting the FIM Asia title, he's a great guy and a worthy champion."*



Lewis sliding his Kenny Motorworks KTM into turn one at Shah Alam

Finally Lewis and his small team would like to thank all the sponsors who have supported him through another year of top level competition around the world, without them it would be impossible.

Keep up to date with Lewis and CRT Supermoto by clicking onto [www.lewiscornish.co.uk](http://www.lewiscornish.co.uk) and the CRT Supermoto page on Facebook.

