

# The Second Classic Scooter Race Nürburgring, Germany

In 2004 Stefan Menke from Köln in Germany organised a classic scooter race as part of a huge classic bike meeting at the Nürburgring Grand Prix circuit. The five-kilometre track, not the old circuit that is open to the public.

It had been a huge success attracting over 50 scooter entries and as such the 2005 event promised to be even bigger! It was, with nearly 90 entries and only 75 of those lucky enough to be allowed to compete. The race is open to all pre-1978 scooters, with scooter engines only, unlimited engine tuning and disc brakes allowed. The emphasis being on 'classic looking' not cut-downs.

Any real race enthusiast could not miss the chance to race on a proper Grand Prix circuit, especially with a minimal 70 Euro entry fee. So the event could take place, it was 'officially' deemed a 'time trial', the rider with the most consistent lap times being the winner. So much for that then once the flag dropped!

Our crew consisted of Mark Hanson, #67, on a 1972 135 Malossi Vespa 90 Racer (his current BSSO racer), Andy Beadnell, #72, (an ex-pat that flew in from Canada especially for the event) on a

1959 Vespa VBA with a 210 Malossi kit and 25mm Vortex carb, and Harry Barlow (Pro Porting) on a 1972 Primavera fitted with his old T5 170 Polini motor. Reliability? Let's just say that by the time we left on Friday morning Mark's racer was the only one running!

We arrived at the Köln Scooter Center later that evening, where Stefan met us and we retired to his very nice flat in Köln city centre for the night. Here we had chance to wind down with a few beers, the ideal preparation for a scooter race – sorry, time trial!

Saturday morning saw us all back at the Scooter Center, thrashing to get the scooters prepared in time, thanks to the hospitality of Ulf and Oliver who own the place. The shop closed at 2pm and we had to be at the track, just over an hour away for scrutineering between 4 and 5pm. Well at least the VBA was now up and running, very well in fact having jetted it along the roads near the shop, unlike the T5 170 Primmy that was

being put together by Jon Weston our resident crew chief and super-mechanic.

After a drive through the picture-postcard scenes of the Eifel Mountains we arrived at the huge complex inside the Nürburgring circuit. We found the pit that Stefan had arranged and unloaded the scooters. Scrutineering was a formality, if not just a check that you actually had brought your own scooter to race! By 7.30pm we finally got the T5170 Primmy up and running, celebrating this momentous occasion with sausage, beer and soul music until the small hours, again courtesy of those nice people from the Scooter Center. Mark went walkies around the circuit and slept well in the pit after that, while the other three settled down to a night of comfort and cuddles in the team van.

Sunday morning saw us consuming large amounts of coffee before prepping the scoots for practice at 10.50am. Qualifying time was by transponder (an electronic device that records your time when you cross the start/finish line), your second lap being the one that counted for your grid position for the race. So, no pressure



there then! Especially when none of our team had raced at the circuit before.

Qualifying was good for Team Pro Porting, the jetting having to be adjusted. The scooters performed better than expected, enough that Harry and Andy qualified on Row 2 and Mark on Row 7. Stefan split Harry and Andy, while four extremely fast guys made up the front row. Thomas Pabst was on pole with his very fast Vespa Super (210cc), yes a SUPER! Due to the fact there were 71 starters the grid was split into a two-wave start. Quickest of the five Frauleins competing was Stefan's wife Katharina on her Lambretta starting on the row 10.

Other Brits taking part were Darren Creek on a Series 2 Lambretta and Andy Holburn (LCGB) on a LI190, both of who work in Germany. Andrew Reid from Detroit was a lone American rider on a Vespa small-frame.

On the start line it was simply awesome to look back at all the riders lined up on the various different machinery, all raring to go. The flag dropped and the four guys on the first row made blinding starts, especially Thomas! Of Team Pro Porting Andy made the best start, Harry being a little slow off the line, and Mark getting a flyer thus getting the jump on some of those in front of him. By the first corner (a tight right-hand hairpin) Harry had carved his way back up to Andy and

they were lying seventh and eighth. Mark in the mean time had got caught up with some Kamikaze scooterists at the hairpin but was still running in the top 25. As the race progressed Andy fell back slightly as Harry was now racing 'Enzo', #57, on a similar small-frame fitted with a 220 motor, blasting past Harry on the straights but losing out to him in the corners. Mark had a couple of disastrous laps, due to his motor dying on the fastest stretch of the circuit. The problem finally cleared and he set about recapturing the places he'd lost, culminating with a three-lap dual with Matthias Henze on his Zündapp Bella. Harry eventually gained the upper hand with his battle with Enzo, coming fifth, with Enzo sixth and Andy a comfortable seventh. Mark and Matthias's battle for supremacy was a mirror of that of Harry's and Enzo's, only this went to the wire with Matthias taking the chequered flag by less than a few hundredths of a second. Both finishing inside the top 20 with Mark making the fastest smallframe-engined lap time of 3:45.61. Thomas, #33, took the victory with a best and fastest lap of 3:09.15, second was Falco Engelfried, #7, and third was Günter Kobler, #74. Of the girls racing, Katharina maintained her dominance as the fastest 'Fraulein' finishing with an excellent 35th place approximately, and in the process showing some gentleman riders a thing or two about racing.

Everyone we spoke to thoroughly enjoyed the race, whether it be the riders, the numerous spectators or motorbike enthusiasts. The race

exceeded all our teams' expectations, it was that good! Discussions for the following year were made once Stefan confirmed that the event was all go for 2006, after consulting MSC Porz, the club organising the meeting. Our scooters need to be better prepared and have a lot more power. After watching some of the prize giving we headed back to Köln for the night courtesy of the Menke's again. The following morning we said our goodbyes and then had a three-hour non-stop mad motorway dash to catch our ferry.

Our thanks must go to Stefan for his time and effort putting these races together. For more information about Nürburg and other races in Germany please go to [www.classic-scooter-racing.com](http://www.classic-scooter-racing.com). The Scooter Center ([www.scooter-center.com](http://www.scooter-center.com)) at Köln without whose help would have probably resulted in only two of our team racing, their hospitality trackside and their photo album webpage. Stefan and Team Pro Porting would like to say a big thank you to all who took part in the race, making it so memorable. Finally the spectators who took hundreds of photos, not least Frank Küppers ([www.franks-photo-service.de](http://www.franks-photo-service.de)) for the photos his firm took at the circuit. It's a real shame there's nothing like this in the UK really. ■

#### Team Pro Porting

