

Valerie Thompson Racing Update AHDRA Rockingham, NC Nationals & Testing with Matt Smith



The Hacienda Harley-Davidson and Monster Energy Drink Destroyer had a great test session in Rockingham, NC Friday night with a career best ET 9.30 @ 145.44 mph. The cool weather set in at the Rock and the 9.3's looked promising going into qualifying on Saturday. Qualifying sessions went well. There were over 40 bikes trying get into the 16-bike field. I qualified eleventh with a 9.32-second @ 142.58 mph and twelfth in the Super Gas class with a 9.73.(Index 9.70) Later that night Jim Fagan introduced me to Matt Smith-NHRA Pro Stock Motorcycle Drag Racer. He was there with his team (George Bryce-G2 Motorsports) making some spectator runs. Matt Smith ended up helping us thought the rest of the weekend.

Sunday, my first competitor was Julie Holiday. I had a great light and 60ft time to start with. We were neck & neck down the track but I took the win light with a 9.45ET to her 9.47. My next competitor was Brian Fox. Again, I cut a great light with a 1.34 60' ft but he took the win light. I was very happy with the run. I think the nervousness and the anticipation of hitting my shift points on time took over and I ended up short shifting into second and third to quick. His time was 9.22 to my 9.40.

Overall, we had a great weekend! The Hacienda-Monster Energy Drink bike ran consistent with great weather. The

Rockingham fans were wonderful and I had a blast! Special thanks to Mickey Eddinger (DME Racing), Steve Ray, Matt Smith and Metzler tires for changing last minute tires, Brett DeGood for cutting my chain guard. Brian Batzel from Florida also came up to help. Thank you so much! I also want to thank again Eagle Harley-Davidson of Layette, IN (Larry Edmonson) for getting my new motor back together in time for this race. The new improved Vanson and Hines transmission is working GREAT! IN ADDITION, a big thanks to Rick Hatch (Hacienda H-D Scottsdale, AZ) for getting me back to the track!

During the weekend I signed a lot of posters, took many pictures, sold VT Race Girl T-shirts and gave out a lot of Monster Energy Drinks, hat's, T-shirt's, Monster wristbands, and Hacienda give-a-way's. It was great to see the return fans from last year and I cannot wait to go back next year. I even got to see my biggest fan Breanne who is 6 year old. I met her in Bristol, TN this year. She made me home made brownies, a bag of candy, and colored another picture for me. In Bristol Breanne cried when she found out that I lost the race...She has been my #1 fan since.

After the Rockingham AHDRA race, I was scheduled to be back in Arizona the following weekend for the annual Air Show representing Hacienda HD but I had a deli mina. There was a great opportunity to test-n-tune with NHRA Pro Stock Motorcycle Drag Racer, Matt Smith. I called Rick Hatch (Owner of Hacienda HD) and explained to him of the circumstances. He was very understanding and told me to take this time and learn from the best! (Thank you Rick!) I did just that...The next day we headed to Valdosta, GA. Matt Smith and Mike Lozano worked out the map issues I had in Rockingham. Lozano did a wonderful job! They got the map perfect on the third try. My Verizon internet wireless connection sure works great at the track! Nine passes later and the bike was consistent 9.36-seconds with great 60 ft times. It was very hot and humid...but had a great time. Matt is great help, he taught me how to read the information from each run on the computer and gave me a great clutch set up. The V-Rod Destroyer class is the most highly competitive classes in the AHDRA. The map, clutch set up and rider are the key to winning rounds. Native Films (Bailey Whitaker & Mike) was there filming our runs. Coming soon...New videos, YEAH!

The next week, I tested again with Matt Smith, Branon White, and Bailey Whitaker (Executive of Native Films) at the Farmington 1/8 mile track. I made two great passes and Matt said, "Put your bike on the trailer, you done well, and don't run it till the next AHDRA race". Matt Smith did what he said he was going to do...Make VT go fast! I was very pleased with 1.29 and 1.30 60-ft time, which is my personal best. Thanks Matt!

The next day I headed west bound Hwy 40. I was sad to leave my second home...North Carolina and new roommate Mickey Eddinger. I had a long journey ahead of me but I wanted to back in time to Las Vegas for the NHRA Nationals to watch Matt Smith. I have to tell you it is very weird going to the racetrack as a spectator but it was nice to relax a little bit.

After the NHRA race was over, I got a chance to spend time with my friend Mondo at Denvers Choppers, Henderson, NV. He gave me my own work space-lift to work on my bike. My bike was a few pounds over weight and Steve and Mondo helped remove a few pounds off. While I was there, I got to sign the famous wall right by Ray Price! In that same week, we went to the White Cap Supply Hot Rod Truck unveiling. Boyd Coddington presented a beautiful red White Cap truck. As I, entered the White Cap Supply store my eyes lit up like a Christmas tree. Everything a woman needs...My favorite...TOOLS! It was nice to see my two friends Bernt Karlson and Duane from the American Hot Rod – Boyd Coddington.

The SEMA show was next. SEMA is the largest aftermarket products on the market. I have never seen 34-inch wheels! The coolest thing I saw was the Montréal...Monster Energy Drink was completely wrapped from head to toe. I stood there for a long time just trying to get one picture! I also had a chance to go to some great restaurants...my two favorite places...I love sushi and Fellin's Restaurant in the Sam's Town Hotel. Later that week I met up with Billy Lane at a dinner party. What a great person. He gave me great advice for my career and I wish him the best of luck!

The next and final race of the season is at The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, November 10- 12th. I am looking forward to end the season on a winning note!

Thank you Neale Bayly and his son Patrick for coming out and taking some great action photos.

By the way, check out my new website VTRaceGirl.com. John Biehl (Media Specialist) from Arizona International Pictures FX did a great job on my home page. AZ International FX office is located 2nd floor at Hacienda Harley-Davidson North, 15750 N. Northsight Blvd, Scottsdale, AZ. They do a great job in Promotions, Photography, and TV-Video Production. www.internationalpicturesfx.com. While your there check out the Hacienda Custom Choppers, see Larry Hickman for a new bike. Hacienda HD North also has a great rental program at the Top Spoke Rentals. Make sure you mention VTRaceGirl to get your discount.

To wrap up this month's article, I want to thank my great sponsors: Monster Energy Drink, Hacienda Harley-Davidson-Rick Hatch, Legend Air-Ride Suspension-Jesse Jurens, Bikernet.com-Keith Ball, PhoenixBikes.com-Kirk Johnson, Dirty Dogg Saloon-Jack, Neato Manufacturing-Mark O'Ravitz, MTC Engineering-Eric Hochstetler, Lucas Oil-Don Corsette, and Rance Trailers-Jim Shaffer.

Thank you Dennis Martin at Thunder Roads Magazine!

Till next month, race smart and Make it a great day!

Valerie Thompson #20

