



VALERIE THOMPSON

Racing

By Chad Gammage

Hold on to your handlebars everyone because this update is loaded with exciting news. First, you should know this was my first drag racing event as team manager and I could not have been more excited. I realize I have a lot to learn in my new position and will rely on my experiences from other industries and help from experts around me to line this team up for its first championship season. This update starts with Valerie's return trip from Gainesville to her hometown for Arizona Bike Week and finally the AHDRA Screamin' Eagle Performance Parts Arizona Bike Week Nationals. I will also share with you a wonderful new sponsor and introduce a few special fans.



As you may recall Gainesville was good for qualifying but left the team with a broken motor before Sunday's eliminations. After which, Valerie was left waiting in Winston-Salem, NC while her new motor was being installed at Eagle Harley-Davidson of Lafayette, IN. She drove almost 200 miles through snow and ice to get her bike back and then turned for home. Special thanks go out to Dan Bell owner of Eagle Harley-Davidson and his team and Bike-Sponsor Rick Hatch owner of Hacienda Harley-Davidson of Scottsdale for expediting the repairs with urgency.

Upon returning home it was back to work for what would become 10 busy days for Valerie. She was in meeting after meeting with sponsors and event planners for her many appearances scheduled throughout Arizona Bike Week.

If you have never been to Arizona Bike Week, you are missing a huge 10-day event. Every year it attracts bikers from all over the world and every year the place to go for Arizona Bike Week is the Hacienda Harley-Davidson Kick Off Party on Friday night. Familiar to everyone as the party that only Rick could throw. Its where to go for the best party in town including live bands, vendors, bikers galore and the search for GoDaddy.com's next GoDaddy Girl.

Saturday began with the Coulter Foundation Biker Rally named after the son of Rick Hatch who was tragically killed in a motorcycle accident. The proceeds raised through the generosity of hundreds of riders will be put to good use at the new Coulter Foundation Youth Center. The rally ended at Speed World for head-to-head run what you bring racing for all who came and were willing to back up their street talk. Some awesome racing went on there, all had fun, and most importantly, it was for a noble cause and salute to a fallen rider.

Later that night Valerie and her crew were at the Dirty Dogg Saloon for its "Big Bike Week Party". There she signed autographs, saw some familiar faces and meet many new fans. The highlight of the night was when Valerie, with help from Rick Greene of the AHDRA who was there promoting the upcoming Arizona Nationals, did an awesome smokey-burnout in front of everyone on the Dirty Dogg's front porch.

The following day was Sunday and was not a day of rest. Much shopping for our girl and catching up on home stuff before the day ended and only after completely unloading the trailer. This, the crew was promised to be a simple task but cleaning every nook and cranny took Valerie's crew into the wee hours of the morning to finish. A well-rested Valerie said to her crew "looking good helps me go faster". I cannot see an increase in horsepower in her theory but if felling pretty helps her reaction time and hitting her shift points, I will not argue.

Wednesday, we were off to West World for more autographs, photos and a great outdoor party and concert that featured headliner and legendary rock band 38 Special.

The next day was Thursday and all about racing and would stay that way until the last race at Arizona Nationals on Sunday. It began at Speed World in Surprise, AZ for some much-needed test and tune of the new engine. With help from Larry Edmondson and Elvis from Eagle Harley-Davidson, VTR crew chief Mickey Eddinger was able to make significant progress dialing in the bike in preparation for the weekend's big event. As always, Valerie was excited and decided to go straight to Firebird Raceway a day early. There she and her crew stayed the night to get an early start on another days test and tune. Remind you this is her hometown and she could have stayed in her own bed but the racer inside her sleeps better at the track.

Valerie Thompson Racing had a great set up in vendor's row and was the pit where everyone was seen hanging out. Next to us was team Product-Sponsor MAC Tools and Independent Distributors, Greg Burcar and John Ozenich who were on hand and brought Valerie the elusive "John Force Screwdriver Set" she had been longing for. The generator provided by Alfred Franklin, Account Manager of "Cummins Rocky Mountain LLC" kept things quite and full of electricity all weekend.

Saturday was a long day of qualifying. After several competitors served hot-oil-alamode to the track, the days racing ended about 9:30pm where VTR finished in the sixth qualifying position in an extremely tight group of 24 racers.

Sunday was another great day for racing and the weather had everyone feeling good. Valerie's competition was fast and so was her GoDaddy.com/ Hacienda Harley-Davidson V-Rod Destroyer going into the day's semi-finals. The pit was full of fans like Travis Scott who came from Colorado, Marcus and Tracy Pierre from Las Vegas, the crew from Washington, Dave from MTC Engineering, and new Associate Sponsor Mr. Eldon Heppner President and CEO of The Real Security Company all the way from Canada. The fans and Eldon all pitched in and were rewarded through out the weekend with Team shirts, a Catered dinner and breakfast prepared by Brandon Borbeck of the Scottsdale Culinary School who decided to stay around and help Associate-Sponsor Norm Gilbert President of Screamin' Eagle Designs, grill a fabulous steak barbeque for 20 people. The team was a strong contender but having just finished a run in the Super-Glass class, the warm motor was to much for VT who did all she could to get a win light from the rested number one qualifier and eventual overall winner L.E. Tonglet.

The past 2 weeks were incredible and I thank everyone for their help during all the events. Thanks to all the parents who brought their kids to see Valerie, it means so much to her. To all our sponsors and Valerie's fans, were off to St. Louis. Valerie is already packed and looking forward to seeing everyone there.

Always remember, racing is for the track.

Valerie Thompson Racing

VTR Team 2007 Sponsors:

GoDaddy.com
Hacienda Harley-Davidson
Independent Cycle
MAC Tools
Screamin' Eagle Designs
D.M.E. Racing
The Real Security Company

Dirty Dogg Saloon
MTC Engineering
Red Line Oil
Monster Energy Drink
Phoenix Bikers.com
5-Ball Racing/Bikernet.com
AHDRA

