



## Nate Kern Clinches Thunderbike Crown

By Stephen Anderson #39428

On Sunday, September 7, the world of motorcycle racing crowned a new champion. Nate Kern, riding his BMW R1200S, captured the ASRA National Pro Thunderbike Championship at Summit Point (West Virginia) Motorsports Park, wresting the title away from Dave Estok and the factory Buell effort.

Kern, immensely popular with BMW riders, had so dominated the 2008 Thunderbike season that he had only to start the race to win the #1 plate. Competitor that he is, he nonetheless rode aggressively, leading the first several laps before settling into a comfortable and safe pace. He finished the race in third place, behind a pair of Buells, content in his championship.

By the time you read this, the final race of the Thunderbike season, at Daytona in October, will be in the history books. Nate Kern credits his fellow BMW riders with much of his success. "This #1 plate belongs to the BMW rider community," Kern said. "I had the easy job, just cruising around and getting up front."

His modesty notwithstanding, Kern's championship represents the first non-Buell ever to hold the Thunderbike crown. His mostly stock R1200S was sponsored by BMW XPLOR, BMW Motorcycles of Atlanta, Morton's BMW Motorcycles, and Engle Motors. At the tracks, he was also supported by fellow BMW riders who came out in droves to cheer him on and work in his pit. Few other racers have that kind of support from fans, a testament to Nate's skill, drive, and openness with his fan base.

So, the next time somebody tells you BMWs aren't competitive, despite their many years of racing success in the past, point to Nate Kern and his #1 plate and try not to laugh.

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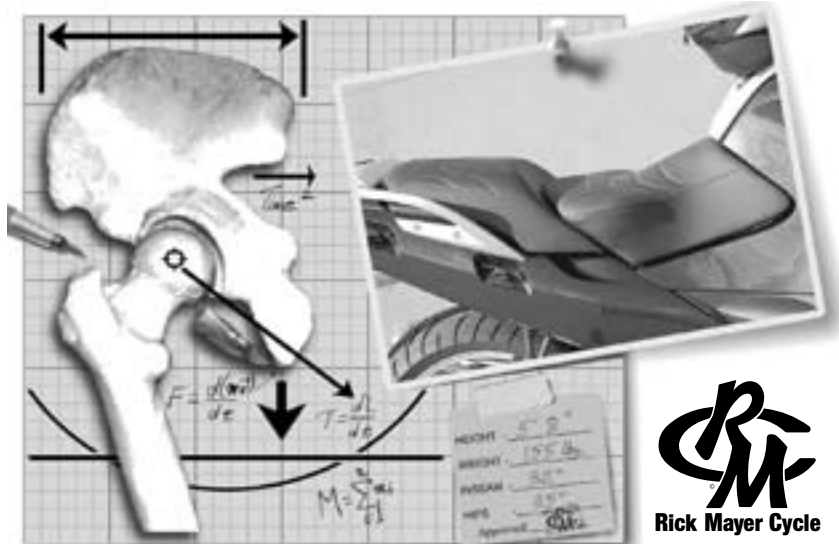
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