

Fast on four wheels or two

BMW Motorrad Motorsport star Troy Corser caused a stir recently, swapping two wheels for four and piloting the BMW Sauber F1 car around the legendary Nürburgring circuit in Germany.



Corser took control of the 700 hp monster – usually driven by F1 ace Nick Heidfeld – at a recent event for fans and partners of BMW Sauber's Formula One outfit. As part of the vehicle swap spectacle, bike fan Heidfeld then got to grips with Corser's works BMW S 1000 RR motorcycle.

Corser is no stranger to driving exotic cars (he owns a Lamborghini Diablo) but this was the first time that the double World Superbike Champion had sampled the awesome power of a Formula One racing car. Despite having competed in the World Superbikes for over 15 years – regularly reaching speeds in excess of 320 km/h in the process – Corser was amazed by the BMW Sauber F1 car's performance.

"It was just awesome!" he said. "The car feels so balanced and the brakes are fantastic. The tyres have unbelievable grip and the steering is very direct but still has a lot of feeling. I can't believe how hard and late you can brake either – I know I was braking too early and I would love to have a day or two with the car to really see what I can do with it."



While Troy was revelling in the F1 car, Heidfeld – who is an avid motorcyclist – was getting his teeth into Corser's works superbike racer and was not disappointed. "It was a sensational experience," said the BMW Sauber F1 driver. "I already had lots of fun practicing on the street bike in the morning and managed to scrape my knee sliders! I had expected the factory Superbike to be a huge leap over the production version when I got on track, but I was pleasantly surprised in the end. Obviously I'm still miles from the limit with the superbike and I would love to have done more laps on it."



Corser's BMW Motorrad Motorsport team-mate Ruben Xaus was also in attendance at the event designed to celebrate the German manufacturer's racing activities, and he was soon in the thick of the action, climbing into the BMW 320si WTCC car used in the World Touring Car Championship. Although the Spaniard enjoyed his experience, he admits that he prefers his high-speed fix to be on two wheels rather than four.

"It was a lot of fun," he said. "The big difference between four wheels and two is the braking, because you can brake so much later on four wheels. I enjoyed my brief experience, but I prefer to be on my bike because on the bike I feel free."

In addition to the activities on the racetrack, guests at the event – consisting of members of the BMW Sauber F1 team fan club and team sponsors – were invited to autograph sessions and took part in raffles to win exclusive prizes, including signed racing gear and the chance to ride around the Nürburgring.

The BMW event served as the perfect respite for Corser and Xaus who are entering the final five rounds of their debut World Superbike Championship season with the team. Both riders were selected by BMW Motorrad Motorsport to spearhead its first season in the highly competitive series and with nine rounds of the season already completed, the team has been a welcome addition to this year's series. Both Corser and Xaus have been regular features in the top ten which, in BMW Motorrad's inaugural World Superbike campaign, is a considerable achievement.

Although the BMW customer event might have shown that the duo aren't ready to take on the world on four wheels, throughout the 2009 World Superbike Championship season, they have proved that on two wheels, they are more than a match for anybody.

