SP Electronics Quick-shifter

As bikes and their riders get quicker and quicker there seems to be very few tricks in the bag that can actually reduce lap times and give a measurable boost to performance. This is where electronic quick shifters come into their own as full throttle up-shifts right up through the box are possible using these compact units, which obviously saves fractions of a second per gear change. Add this up over a lap and you can physically measure this advantage with a stop watch. AAA Racing have recently become the UK distributors for the trick looking SP Electronics quick shifters and offered us a system to try out for ourselves. These SP units are used by many of the top world championship runners so they certainly must be durable and reliable to run at this level. Opening up the DHL package containing the magic SP box of tricks revealed a quality looking wiring loom connecting the various electrical components which also included an optional bar mounted on-off switch so it's easier not to leave the unit active and flatten the battery.

The enclosed instructions are clear enough but you do need to have some basic mechanical and electrical knowledge to fit the SP for long and reliable service. First thing is to remove the tip of your gear lever and use the new SP pressure switch shifter tip. This is pretty straight forward enough but the routing of the cable around this pivoting tip is vitally important. Get it wrong and the first time you drop it on this side the wire will be ripped from the resin sealed switch. The machined pivot bolt itself is another quality piece It's worth spending plenty of time correctly routing the cables through the bike to ensure that nothing gets trapped or contacting any hot parts of the engine. The KTM system we fitted does need a degree of common sense to mount correctly and generally speaking the longer you spend getting it right, the better it will function. Needless to say the SP Electronics set up is top notch with marine quality electrical connections and sealed control boxes.

Once in place we were itching to try it out and a quick flick of the bar mounted switch has the SP primed and ready to use.

Like most quick shifters the SP momentarily interrupts the ignition so the rider can shift whilst full on the gas. The spark is actually retarded first rather than cut dead and this allows the up shift to occur as the load is removed from the transmission. The pressure switch sensitivity is just about right and once on the move its clear that this is a quick and almost seamless shift up through the box. The only problem is recalibrating your brain to keep it pinned whist applying slight pressure to the gear lever. The shift is almost instantaneous and you are rewarded by a pop and bang through the booming tail pipe as the ignition retards and cuts the spark. Very S1 cool and a perfect sound track to your progress around the track. Yes, of course it also saves valuable time and reduces your lap times. By how much though really depends on bike, rider and circuit. Some riders power shift their way up through the box by pinging the clutch but this is brutal on the transmission especially on tarmac sections. The SP Electronics quick shifter may not be cheap but it's advantages can't be argued, it does make you quicker but only you can say how much you would pay to gain these vital fractions of a second per shift? Of course racers will benefit from an SP shifter but there's nothing to stop you fitting one to your streetmoto and blitzing your buddies down the back roads. The pops and bangs down the pipe may not go down too well with your neighbours though, but since when have you worried what they think anyway?

Contact AAA Racing www.aaa-racing.co.uk tel: 0844 8260 528 for prices and full details of the SP Electronics quick shifters