



MISTI HURST

# LIFE ON THE FAST TRACK

## Stupid Chickens and broken toes

The first thing I saw when I got to Newsome Creek Idaho was a moose, a real live Discovery Channel kind of moose in the wilderness. The next thing I saw was a dozen or so dirtbikes and the bizarre gaggle of individuals who owned them. I was in Idaho for my first ever “Motodude Dirt Bike Week”, an annual event in which members of the said Motodude group get together for one solid week of mayhem in the middle of absolute nowhere. With nicknames such as Stinker, Puker, Jon the Con, Sparky, Bump, Otto and Motobabe, I knew I was in for quite the experience.

The set-up was amazing, a small house, a couple trailers for sleeping, a large meadow to be converted into a motocross track complete with a ramp jump, hills to climb, trails to ride right out the front door and best of all, two large garages filled with TOYS.

After a restful sleep in the quiet solitude of wilderness under a sky full of stars I awoke ready for the first day of dirt biking. A large breakfast of ham, eggs, pancakes and copious amounts of coffee and the group of crazies donned our gear and started out on our daily ride. Did I mention the fact that I was the youngest by about 15 years.

The riding was phenomenal on the various terrain, the scenery was breathtaking and the weather could not have been better. Some of you may be thinking “how could terrain in Idaho be varied? Isn’t Idaho FLAT?” Well that is partially true, most of Idaho is flat but we were nestled right smack in the middle of the Nez Pierce National Forest with trees, mountains, hiking trails, quad and snowmobile trails, dirt fire roads and mountainous single track trails.

The next seven days were filled with momentous moments of dirt biking frenzy and fun with lots of dust and dirt, sliding and crashing, animal viewing, laughing, drinking and exploring. I’m not the most experienced of dirt bikers so the riding was challenging and tiring. I learned a lot about handling and riding and even made it up some impressive hills and terrain.

On the second to last day I managed to break a little toe and kill a grouse, in two separate occasions. The toe breaking incident occurred just a few minutes after my first momentous crash in which I went catapulting over the handlebars after rounding a downhill corner too fast and tucking the front tire. After dusting myself off I gathered up my courage and my pride and started off down the hill again. Suddenly a tree stump jumped out of nowhere and crushed my toes between it and the foot pegs of the bike. Sparky, who was riding behind me, heard an ear piercing and “girlish” scream while simultaneously observing a hunk of the tree stump flying towards him. He then watched in



helpless horror, or amusement, (I'm not sure if he found it funny or not) as I flew shrieking over the handlebars for the second time in only minutes and landed, still screaming, in a ditch which contained a nest of angry bees. I lay in a tangle of tears, dirt and bees, screaming while Sparky (who compassionately tried to help me) ran away yelping and tearing off his clothes after a bee took its revenge out on his tender neck. When the pain subsided a little I attempted to stand up, and that's when Sparky said to me, "could you look at my neck where the bee got me, it hurts," and I nearly broke the toe on my other foot trying to kick him for his inconsiderate comment.

Sissy. I gritted my teeth and jumped back on the bike and in my stubborn "I'll do it myself attitude" started the daunting ride back, blinking to keep the tears out of my eyes so I could keep a careful watch for those sneaky jumping tree stumps.

While heading back, a grouse, or 'stupid chicken' as we called it was unfortunately sleeping precariously in the middle of the dirt road unaware of the 6 dirtbikes wailing along towards it. In a valiant effort to save the poor animal, Bump reached down to grab it and toss it in the air before our murderous machines could come near it. The frightened grouse managed to fly out of Bump's safe grasp and flounder

helplessly for a moment before crashing headfirst into my shoulder. The rest of the motodudes heard a piercing scream, and those behind me saw a sudden burst of feathers.

The grouse may have been ok had his fate simply been to smash into my shoulder, however, upon hitting the ground and rolling around stunned, he proceeded to be crushed by a dirt bike tire belonging to a distracted motodude named Danny. A very unfortunate fate to say the least for any animal. I was mortified and over-come with the hebijebies as I imagined that I must be totally covered in chicken guts. We stopped and I was relieved to find that my body was not in fact covered in chicken guts, only a few random feathers here and there. Bump checked to see if there was anything salvageable on the chicken claiming that he hates waste in any form but upon further inspection, Bump deemed the chicken to be too messy and dirty to take home to the

BBQ. I breathed a sigh of relief, jumped back on the bike and from that moment on was affectionately known as 'Feathers'.

I managed to make it though the entire week with only a few crashes and I made it home in one piece, albeit, I was a little more bruised and broken than normal.

As with most of my 'vacations' I failed to get much rest and relaxation, preferring instead to ride hours per day with maniacs in all sorts of wild terrain, dive off my bike, break bones and tangle with mother nature. I arrived home after a fairly uneventful 10 hour drive exhausted, crawled into my warm cushy bed and muttered, "I need a vacation."

**MMM**

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