



MISTI HURST

LIFE ON THE FAST TRACK

Live, Breathe and Think Motorcycle Racing

March 12th 2005, and I'm on my way to the Shark Club in Vancouver, B.C where hundreds of motorcycle race fans are gathered to celebrate the kick-off of the road racing season. It's Bike Week in Daytona and although I long to be in Florida checking out the first AMA race of the season up-close and personal, I take the next best option and meet up with friends and fellow racers to grab a beer (who cares if it's only 10am) and watch the racing action on the big screen TV's.

It happens every year, this ritualistic act of gathering with friends to kick-off the motorcycle race season with a bang. To watch the big guys sweat and push, race and crash or triumph over all odds. Throughout North America, and maybe even the rest of the world there are thousands of little gatherings like this taking place simultaneously in bars, pubs, shops, living rooms, all of us held together by the common thread of motorcycles and the thrill of racing.

Mostly we talk bikes and race strategies, what our plans are for the upcoming season, what mods we've done, what new gadgets we've purchased and what our bikes put out on the Dyno last week. We hoot and holler when a rider goes down, when there is a close pass or when the checkered flag is waved.

There is excitement in the air, an anticipation of the season to come. We look at the big rigs in the pits at Daytona Speedway, the big names, the factory teams and reminisce about the time last year we drove 18 hours to Calgary in the pouring rain in our mini vans and camped out at the track in the freezing cold just to race during the National Championship Weekend perhaps in hopes of getting noticed by someone important. We joke about the time we raced on tires that had seen 4 race weekends already because we couldn't afford another set, or the time we patched up our broken bodywork with a Canadian Tire fiberglass kit and duct-taped our leathers back together after a big crash so we could race the next morning. It reminded me of all the times I'd heard dads talking about the old days, "when I was a young boy, I used to walk five miles uphill to school everyday."

Of course, we all stopped talking when the announcer got up to call out the winners of the door prizes. Cool stuff like custom rear sets and levers, sweatshirts, jackets, decal kits and gift certificates. I didn't win anything, I rarely do but it was still exciting nonetheless.

Then the organizer of the event, Bernie Ryan took the microphone to talk about the importance this event had not only for us, the racers, the members of the Westwood Motorcycle Road Racing Club, the volunteers, the



spectators, but to the kids. You see, Bernie has such a big heart and he organized the event to help raise funds for kids with cancer. Called Balding for Dollars, Bernie had previously collected pledges from acquaintances as well as from all of us in attendance, then proudly had his head shaved to the great excitement of everyone. The person who pledged the highest amount got to take the first buzz with the shaver, leaving the crowd shouting “hey look, it’s

Crusty!” What a cool way to end a great day.

Ahhhh, motorcycle racing, there is nothing like it in the world. You don’t just race motorcycles, you live, breathe and think motorcycle racing. The 2005 season is approaching. Are you ready?

MMM

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2005 Parts Canada Superbike Championship

Schedule:

May 20-22	Round #1 Shannonville Motorsport Park, Pro Track Shannonville, ON
July 1-3	Round #2 Race City Motorsport Park, Calgary, AB
July 15-17	Rounds #3 & 4 Mosport International Raceway, Bowmanville, ON
August 5-7	Round #5 Atlantic Motorsport Park, Shubenacadie, NS
August 26-28	Round #6 Molson Indy Montreal (Superbike Only) Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, Montreal, QC
September 2-4	Round #7 Shannonville Motorsport Park - Long Track Shannonville, ON
September 9-11	Round #8 Le Circuit Mont-Tremblant Mont-Tremblant, QC