

Trials Tales



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My big day out

The sun was shining, cheering in the dawn to a cloudless azure blue sky. My new bike, resting now in the shed was clean, freshly oiled, fuelled and with tyres set to optimum pressure. All that was needed was a quick hefty right kick to bring a perfect day's trialling to a commencement.

Taking my warm-up seriously, I did slow circles around the shed to ensure my vestibular (*balance*) system was centred. I did some small bunny hops to make sure my old legs were there to play the game. Then I did some slow inclines to enable throttle control to be honed razor sharp.

My first destination was a sun dappled log section where a tumble of felled trunks of varying sizes up to enormous, waited. Here I set to attacking timber one by one, starting at the smallest, just a mere blip and hop, till eventually arriving at the largest. A perfect rollup, punch and I was on top, resting the sump plate on the rough bark of the hardwood hulk and then easing it off the other side. In this time I had completed all of my obstacles without once footing.

Some rocks in the middle of the paddock beckoned as I passed my six contented cows grazing in the balmy sunshine. These rocks are grippy, sure enough, but always tricky with their jagged edges forever ready to catch an errant footpeg or misguided boot. My first pass through a knarly tumble of moderate sized stones had me teetering as I sought to complete a sharp right-hander to exit. A well-executed front hop had the bike pointed in the correct manner and a gently slipping clutch ensured a clean exit. A large unforgiving boulder which had always alluded me was next to feel the wrath of my Michelin as my splat hammered into it's face. Over the top and into the creek bed; this served as my next ambition.

The creek bed with it's super slippery and water-worn rocks has been a baptism for many a trials bike, wetting their heads in it's flow. On this day however, me and my bike, working in perfect unison, were not to be denied. With hardly a decent splash we negotiated the slick cobbles effortlessly, the bike moving lithely between my limber legs upstream and out over a expansive willow stump, to face a grassy hill climb, again without footing.

The hill climb loomed before me, a leviathan of loam, near vertical and enough to make most quake at the very thought of attempting a run. With a mere miniscule of a run up, and not before letting the bike clear it's lungs for the ascent, I raced forthwith in fourth gear. The slope sharply inclined as the bike bit and tore at the yielding ground before me. My front wheel skimmed the surface all the while threatening to launch skyward. My legs were bent nearly double, my backside lightly resting on the rear fender as my throttle hand did not waver. Like a dancing veil, a mix of clipped grass and topsoil sprayed out in a long, swaying rooster tail behind me. In one final lunge we made it to the top, my bike had not missed a beat, had found traction where no bike had gone before and I, yes I, had not put a foot down all day.

In the rarefied air at the top of the mountain I took pause to reflect. This had been undoubtedly my best day of trials riding ever...and undoubtedly my best dream ever!

