

Trials Tales

Ouch!

By Greg Cramond

Did you ever have one of those days where you should've stayed in bed?

For me yesterday was one of those. You desperately want to ride, but something just ain't right. Something about your balance or how you seem to crash and bounce off obstacles rather than ride over them.

When you're in the backyard you can let your better sense tell you to give it up and go inside and watch footy or one of those fishing shows where the fish are always cooperative. When you've paid full entry fees for a proper trial however, you will ride and ride even though it's obvious to yourself or to any amused bystanders, that you're not on your best game.

If you're bloody minded like me, that is.

So here I am persisting at riding; careering through sections with absolutely no modicum of control and not enough sense to give it up.

One five, well maybe that's just bad luck? It happens to the best of us, eh? Two fives, I'm getting some rebellious thoughts but still too blinded to give it up yet. And so the trend continues..... Every section takes on a life of it's own and as a new life form obviously has a personal vendetta against me.



Stupid under-powered bike!

My careering is regularly interrupted by square-edged rocks strategically placed by the vindictive section setters to bring me to sudden and ignominious stops. My clutch hand is the first to turn mutinous and I frequently stall out as my tally of fives continues to climb. The next mutineer is my foot, which as I gracefully hop from rock to rock suddenly jams down bringing me to another violent halt whereby I get up close and personal with the front mudguard (and stall). Another five. Even with body parts rebelling against me, my force of will brings them in line. But then it's the bike that's causing this I just know it, it's always been recalcitrant. Five. Then I'm just doing stupid things like missing markers and taking hands off the bars as I get more flustered.

You're probably wondering why for Heaven's sake I haven't cut and run at this stage? It would be also painfully obvious to anyone watching that this would be a prudent course of action, but you see I am oblivious because I am labouring under a false beliefs. Those beliefs are, I am sorry to report, the ones that goes through my mind as frequently as my foot touches the ground: "If I keep trying I will get better" and "practice what you don't like rather than what you do like".

These two thoughts are all well and good, but it takes experience and dare I say it, enough intelligence to recognise when you just suck on that particular day and you should just give it up. Give it up until another day when life just goes easier. And that day will come.

So it's been a most harrowing trial and if you got through without too much damage, you can count your lucky stars, but you will leave early even if you do finish. There will be no point staying for the trophy presentation and most likely you're not wanting to be seen by any of the observers (as that lunatic with the blue helmet who kept breaking the tape every lap). Quietly you load your bike and skulk home.

Arriving home, you leave the bike on the trailer for later until you've stitched together the last scraps of your self-respect into something like a healthy psyche.

Your significant other seeing you stumble through the door with dirty face, torn and bloody jersey, gibbering something about needing a copper, panadol and a good lie down, sympathetically says, "so you do this for fun do you?"

Yes, my dear I do.



Who set these infernal sections?!



It had to come to this!