

2007 Race Journal

The first Hare Scramble of the season was to be at Stoney Lonesome but they had some logging done and were not prepared for the first race and the rain had not helped matters. I was somewhat relieved because I was on travel the week prior and had not ridden since November last year. The weekend of the race that was suppose to be was sunny and 65 degrees and I did not get to ride my race bike but got the DRZ dual sport out for a cruise. The following week I was able to get in a 25 mile ride on my CRF 250X at Scotland In. on some new challenging trail that was a workout for the first ride of the year.

I was planning on doing some Enduros this year so I was set to do the first Enduro in Southern Illinois. After I looked into this more I found it was run on a closed course and they only had so much land to work with plus they had a lot of rain. So I decided I would do the first Hare Scramble at Plymouth Ind. I had ordered new tires and an FMF silencer for the Honda CRF. After a lot of bike prep I was ready for Plymouth no matter how much rain we were getting I was ready to ride with 2 new tires and now a bike that sounded like a dirt bike; and had some more low end with my FMF speed silencer.

So I headed to Plymouth on Sunday morning out of Indy with a light mist and partly cloudy skies. As I drove North on St. Rd. 31 I was noticing the creeks and rivers were really high and some of the fields were flooded. I had ridden this hare Scramble many times and know that most of it is sandy so it might not be too bad. But damn the water was high. A thought of just taking photos was crossing my mind. But then I thought of all the time I spent working on my bike and how it now rips with the FMF silencer. I was racing!!!

Sign up was quick and easy and I talked to one of the club members before the riders meeting. With conditions like this I figured the riders meeting could be important. The club member said he had not ridden the course but helped with one of the bridges over a creek and told me if the bridge backs up to cross the creek to the left because it wasn't that deep. So I kept that in mind and headed to the riders meeting to listen to Clifford Bean give us the details. Pretty much the norm; follows these arrows don't cut the course and if you really want a trophy that bad just let him know he would give you one.

Headed to the starting line and lined up with the old guys in the Senior A and B class on the fourth row with the Super Senior and C class behind us. My start was decent and was passing a few guys thru the first turn and heading for a long straight across a field with the middle being real muddy and I ended up in the muddy part and was getting roasted real bad but kept it hammered then used my Smith goggle Roll-Offs for a clear lens right before we hit the woods. The woods were real muddy and about 6 inches of water with bikes going every which way and I picked a good line and got by a few guys and got to the edge of the muck and found some good traction. This mud section didn't last too long and now we were in the sandy trail that opened up and I was on the move passing a few more riders. Just as I was getting into another tight section; a branch catches my goggles and pulls my rolls-off apart and now I have 3 foot streamer of lens flying around. So I am sure the guys behind me are enjoying that; but this wasn't going to slow me down was just a bit annoying and now knowing if I get roasted again I am in trouble. So I try and tear it off but naturally I can't. Now it is down to about a one foot streamer so not quite as annoying. Some of the mud-holes are now collecting bikes so you really had to watch you lines. I was pretty fortunate and was not getting stuck and kept moving. I finally decided I wanted the goggle deal taken care of so after my third lap I pulled over to a spectator to see if he could get rid of it for me. He tried to rip it but couldn't then he whipped out a knife and had it cut in no time flat but I had killed my bike and it would not re-fire. Finally got it started and noticed 2 guys possibly in my class go by so I was hauling ass to catch them and to look fast for the fans that were close by!!!!

Finally caught them and made a great pass on a switch back. Battled with them back and forth as I fell trying to get around a slower rider which was totally my fault. I had plenty of room to get around him but just broke my concentration and was getting tired after an hour plus of riding. I was able to catch back up to the other rider as he fell over in a sandy turn like I did and now I was on the Yamaha's rear fender. This was to be our final lap but I never did see the white flag so I wasn't sure if I had another lap or not. As we approached the creek with bridge (the club had put together) bikes were waiting because of a few guys being hung up. As I pulled up a spectator told me to cross the creek to the left of the bridge; just as the club member had told me in the morning. So with now two people giving me the same advice I was ready to make the big pass. So I grabbed a hand full and floored it thru the creek. Well it was deeper than they told me and I hit something that turned my front wheel and sent me a bit out of shape but my momentum and

my new Metzler tire got me thru it and back on the trail. I now had only a short distance to the finish line in swampy smelling pants but was feeling pretty cocky now. Rode into the finish line not really knowing where I finished or even if it was the final lap. It was the final lap and I was so glad when the scorers said: that was it; you are done!!!! As I rode up to my truck the Yamaha rider (Donnie Pifer) that I had passed; came up to me and recognized me from a few years ago. We talked about the last lap and my bonzai pass thru the water! He said he had the holeshot at the start and thought we were battling for the lead. He was right; I won!!!! First place out of 17 riders in the Senior B class. I guess my winter workout of Throwing Darts and drinking Light beer really paid off. Was tired and not looking forward to the long drive home but was excited with my finish since I had only ridden once since November and was usually the one getting passed at the end. Maybe the Ice Skating this winter paid off?



April 15th Round 2 is at Stoney Lonesome and it rained Friday night and part of Saturday so conditions will be knarly.

As I headed to Columbus Indiana Sunday morning it was cold and cloudy but the sun was coming out and it was to warm up to 50 degrees. As I rolled in the club grounds I noticed the arrows on the hillside and thought it looked fairly decent. I should be able to go right up that.

The race started on time at Noon. I lined up with 12 other Senior B guys and only three Super Senior riders; so the line wasn't too crowded. I guess

when you turn 50 if the conditions are this bad you are a bit wiser at that age and stay home or just come to spectate at the big hills and offer no assistance!!!! My bike had been starting fine but just before our line was to go I pushed the button and nothing so I am panicking; choking my Honda with no fire and our line is due to go next. Finally it comes to life and I have to kill it and be ready to go within 30 seconds. Well it fired as Roy Garrett dropped the green flag. Had a decent start but as we came around the first turn I followed the arrows like you are suppose to; but if you stayed to the right you had a clear shot to the next turn and I got passed by a bunch of guys. It wasn't much farther we came to the first rocky hill with bikes down and a rutted mess. This way close to the clubhouse and had plenty of spectators watching you make a fool of yourself and to ask for assistance. I made my way around a few riders but did not make the hill that I had looked at in the morning thinking I would go right up. With a little effort and pushing and clutching I was on my way but the leaders that cleared it were gone and I was exhausted already. The trail was slippery as snail snot as I chased on. Fell down many times and got hung up on that same hill again. First 3 laps I was scored in 5th place. The last lap I moved up to 4th place. So I rode 16.4 miles in an hour and half!! I hung around for the final results and found out I finished in 3rd because the guy in front of me missed a check. Was real sore after riding the muddy rutted course and picking my bike up way too many times and probably had an extra 40 lbs of mud on it. So I left and was off to spend about a half hour at the car wash.



Round three was back at Plymouth In. It was going to be 75 degrees and sunny but once again we had a lot of rain prior to race day. The club had laid out a 7 mile course and claimed there was no mud and a bridge over the mud bog area. There were twenty three riders in my class. This time I lined up with Senior B and Super Senior. I had a terrible start and finally came off the line and was passing riders on the left hand sweeper thru the dry grass track. As we got to the woods it was tight and I passed a few more but was way behind probably about mid pack. I was trying to get by the bikes in front of me but had nowhere to pass. Finally the trail opened up and I tried to make a pass and missed the next turn and stalled my bike in the deep sand. Now I not only didn't get by them; I let a few more pass me. I was a bit more patient and played follow the leader for a while or until they got hung up on some logs. I was trying so hard to catch up on the first few laps that I kept stalling my bike and my throttle hand was real sore. On the third lap as the field get spread out I was finally not making so many mistakes and was getting some feeling back in my hand. On my final lap I was catching guys in my class and was riding a lot faster than I had all day knowing I was way behind. The last lap was a blast as I would catch riders and rev my bike to sound like I was fast and most were letting me by! I must of gone from 10th to 5th on the last lap. I finished only 15 seconds out of 4th place. I had been battling with a guy on an old clapped out KDX on the last lap and we passed each other back and forth in the grass sections. He was riding the wheels off that old Kaw! After looking at the results; it was the Kawasaki that finished right ahead of me. Also noticed I had one of the fastest lap times in my class on the last lap! Next race is at Ligioner Indiana the following weekend but I have already committed to Renfro Valley Dual Sport ride in Kentucky.

The first weekend in May was the Hare Scramble in Ligioner with the weather forecast of dry and possibly sunny. I really wanted to do the Dual Sport In Kentucky with some awesome trail and county road cruising on my DRZ 400. The forecast for KY was heavy rain Friday and 50% chance on Saturday so naturally I chose to put some fresh rubber on the DRZ and head south to campout with a lot of old riding buddies.

Hooked up with Dave Crawford out of Columbus and we headed down 65 to Renfro Valley early Friday and it rained lightly on the trip down and hard all night. It rained on and off Saturday and the trail at the start was super muddy but not any huge hills. We had a large group of riders but most were on their race bikes so they left us on the true dual sport bikes behind. We ended up riding 100 miles before we ever found the lunch break at 4:30.

Between having bike problems with Dave's CRF and arrows missing on the road it was along day and decided to take the road back after so called lunch. They assured us to follow the arrows on pie plates and that would take us back to the campground at Renfro Valley. It would be 35 miles back to the start. So I was checking my odo and as we got to about 30 miles we had not seen any pie plates in awhile and now we were running into other riders lost! Seems like every local that we stopped; talked to us like we spoke another language. Finally and old hilljack told us there was a gas station about six miles up the road and now we needed gas and maybe a map! We actually found the gas station and found out we were close to Berea which was 15 miles North of Renfro Valley. By the time we got back to camp dinner was being served and we had rode 160 miles! Sunday was sunny and uneventful except the sprocket was shot on the CRF and Dave didn't get to ride; so we cut short some of the trail and only briefly got lost on the way back to the campground. Sunday had some nice open hills that went forever and the DRZ was right at home on the open hills.

May 20th was Stoneylonesome's second Hare Scramble of the season and it was dry and a little dusty with about a five mile loop. I had been practicing my starts with the kickstart on the CRF and decided I would try that and if it would fire I would get a great start from the inside line as we were heading into the woods on a quick left hander. Well the Honda naturally didn't fire and after the second kick I was off with all kinds of bikes heading to the first turn and I was getting nowhere on the inside so I quickly moved to the outside and took a wide trail on the right and passed a few riders. The first hill was way rocky and I chose the long way up the hill but made it and got by a few riders hung up on the rocks. Came around the first lap in sixth place and was riding decent and had no get offs. Next lap I hade moved up to fifth. I now had caught up to Bart Addis and followed him for a lap and got by him but he would pass me and eventually pull away. I was still maintaining fifth place on the last lap and had actually gotten up to fourth when Andy Koontz caught me right before the finish and blew by me on a small straight away. So I finished fifth out of seventeen in my class and 76th out of 147.

HTR would have their first of three harescrambles at Mitchell Indiana; just a few miles from home. Weather was to be hot with temps near 95 and the trail dusty. The start was real short leading into a narrow opening in the woods. Was not real hip on the start but amazingly the Honda started but way too many bikes trying to fit into the narrow opening so I had my usual mid pack start. But got around a few bikes on the first hillclimb. Was riding conservative on the first lap with no mistakes was passing a few bikes. On

the second lap I noticed a large log that I didn't remember going over. But kept charging and by the third lap was feeling pretty good and on my last lap still had a lot of energy somehow and rode strong to the end. I guess just about everyone in our class missed a turn and we missed some trail. But since we started at the halfway point; it would be hard to determine who all missed trail. So really the one or two in our class that made the turn were that ones that got scored wrong. So I was scored as winning when I probably got second or third. What a great way to win?

The next race was at Stoney the following Sunday. Was to be hot again but near as hot as last race. It had rained a lot prior to the race and the trail was real muddy. They had laid out a really challenging course with a real steep hill that I had never seen in the seven years that I have been racing at Stoney. I had my usual start and actually lost a lot of positions with riders everywhere on the hills as I was patient waiting for a good line.

As I got to the big hill I waited and watched a few riders with unsuccessful attempts to the left. Then I watched as a rider went to the right and made it; hitting a root at the top but clearing the hill. So I made my move and hammered it and flew up off the seat as I hit the root at the top but kept my momentum and made it without falling down. I then continued on the trail and came down a hill where a club member was motioning about ten of us to go back that we had missed some trail. Great now we have to ride some of the trail backwards and figure out where we missed trail. Deja vu from last week except this time we noticed our error. It seemed like we went forever until it looked like we had missed a sharp. Expecting to loop around to where we encountered the club member the trail kept going and going with all of us looking at each other like is the trail or not. I could not believe this had happened. Oh well I guess I would just keep riding and get in as many laps as possible. Came around for the first lap and was scored in 8th. Next lap was in 6th. Moved up to 5th by the end but was sure I missed a check but may have rode extra trail on the first lap?????????

As they posted the results they had me scored as 4th. Then they rescored my class and I moved up to 3rd with one of the riders I was lost with winning!!!!

After this race I was ready to do more Enduro's.

The next race was back at Mitchell. Now the start would be a bit longer heading to the woods but way dusty. Naturally the Honda didn't start but I made it around a few riders before the dust storm hit and it was a snails pace to the woods not seeing much farther than your front fender! Rode hard for three laps catching a few riders in my class. Followed a guy in my class on a Kawasaki for three of the four laps but could not get by him. On the last lap Andy Koontz passed me back then went right by the guy I had been

following all day. As Andy Finished in third and me not far behind in 5th right behind Matt Yeiter on the Kaw.

What a season of racing for 2007. I rode one Dual Sport ride in Kentucky, one four hour Team Harescramble race in Pennsylvania, one 85 mile Enduro in Indiana and 15 out of 18 Harescrambles in District 15. Due to a hand injury and having to travel for work on a Sunday I still made 15 of 18 races. The final Harescramble race was at Plymouth; which is one of my favorite tracks to race at. I was down 21 points so I would have to almost win the race to have a shot at the Senior B championship. The weather was good and I got a great start and went in the woods in 3rd or 4th place but missed a turn in the woods and fell back and got stuck behind a few guys and finished in fourth place with the leader of my Class (Dirt Clodder) Scott Rugenstein getting a flat tire but fixing it to finish the race in 15th place to get five points. So he won the overall by eight points.

Race	Finish	Points	Location
1	1 st	30	Ply
2	3 rd	21	SL
3	5 th	16	Ply
5	5 th	16	SL
6	9 th	12	Upland
7	1 st	30	Mitchl
8	3 rd	21	SL
9	5 th th	16	Mitchl
10	4 th	18	SL
11	3 rd	21	SL
12	5 th	32 State	Mitch
15	3 rd th	21	SL
16	4 th	18	MICH
17	3 rd	21	Ply
18	4 th	18	Ply
Total		311	



Stoney Lonesome 7-29 and 7-30 KTM 4th Saturday and Honda 3rd Sunday