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Aussie rules

Fresh blood dominates old event



Australian import and honorary Canadian Jake Stapleton coming out of the "Tunnel of Love" on his way to victory. Rome Haloftis (below) gets pointed in the right direction after being steamed out.

Story and photos by Jeff Morgan

GOODERHAM, ON - For the 54th time the Corduroy Enduro hit the forests of the Haliburton area on Sept. 15-16. On this occasion the paddock was located at the Gooderham Community Centre before embarking on the well laid trails for the two-day event.

Blair Sharpless worked tirelessly this year to ensure that the "Cord" would run through as much trail as possible, making it possible for anyone who cared to enter to do so with just an off road licence plate. Sharpless, a multiple winner of the Cord himself obviously knows the area well and helped select a marvellous route through the countryside.

Newcomer Jake Stapleton of Australia came in to take the overall victory with two solid performances on his Yamaha, winning both days. Watch for his name in the future. This is the same rider who won the Spanish round of the WEC in 2006 and took two first places in Greece in 2005, both in the EJ class. Now he can add to the list of trophies the coveted Corduroy Enduro overall and the Can-Am Award that he won along with runner-up Pat Beaulé and third place finisher Allan Lachapelle. Stapleton was granted a special exemption and was allowed to receive the award since he is an honorary Canadian. That special exemption was later reconsidered and Chris Van Hove, who placed fourth, was added in Stapleton's place.

The young Aussie came to the Cord with no expectations and managed to show everyone that he is someone to watch for.

"I was just trying to have fun and learn the trails and they were really nice. It was hard having to go so fast; it was like treating every stage like a special test," mentioned the quiet Stapleton after the final day of racing.

KTM's Beaulé came out as top Canadian behind the recent import and was consistently fast, placing second on both days and was very happy with his result.

"I was nervous this year because we were not used to the new concept (FIM rules) but my brain helped me out a lot," he said. "I

had two bad specials but I was happy to see that I was still leading (the times for the special test)."

Lachapelle, also on a KTM, took third place on both days, proving once again that he is consistently one of the fastest riders around. Lachapelle also seemed to be happy placing third, but seemed to be more excited about the performance of the new kid on the block, Stapleton. The two were seen talking for quite some time before and during the awards ceremony about Stapleton going to races in Quebec and around Ontario. Lachapelle was excited about the prospect of Stapleton dominating everything that he would enter.

"What I was trying to do was get him to come down and do some events here in Quebec, because it would open up the guys' eyes here," Lachapelle said.

"Everybody has been getting beaten by (Quebec champion) Guy Giroux for so long that they think he is the fastest in the world, but let's face it, he is not. He is a very good and talented rider. I think it would be pretty cool if he (Stapleton) came down and have guys say that he is really fast."

Lachapelle also thought that the new format for the Cord would be a positive thing for Canadian riders.

"First of all, the Cord is my favourite off road event and I think this was a good change, it brought out more riders," he said. "I'll be honest, I love time keeping. It is the type of enduro that I have always done and I prefer those. But the way they





In Expert, KTM's Philippe Chaine pulled in to the paddock after the first day with the lead through the first 100km of trail, which was made a little more interesting by a light morning rain. Garret Meyer came out of the woods in second place holding off Frances Ouimette. Both were also on KTMs.

The next 160km on day 2 were a grueling test for man and machine, but once it was all said and done Meyer had made up enough time to take top spot away from Chaine, who slipped to third place. Ouimette also had a good day, making up enough time to sneak in front of Chaine and capture second.

Doug Post solidly took the win in the Vet Expert class on his Honda, winning both days and having the best time in the special tests. Following Post was Paul Andratis, who dropped only a few more points on his Husqvarna and was slightly slower in the special tests. Randy Zuest fought hard, but could not quite make up enough time to catch the two frontrunners to finish in third on another Husky.

This year's Cord was the result of the hard work of Sharpless and the numerous volunteers that spent countless hours trying

to acquire trails and them making them rideable. Everyone who participated in the 54th running of the Cord owes them a huge debt of gratitude.

The course was excellent and was accessible to those who had only an off road plate, which is becoming harder and harder to do these days. The addition of the FIM rules not requiring time keeping also makes this event less intimidating for inexperienced enduro riders to enter and can only help to grow the sport. **IM**

RESULTS

Masters: 1. Jake Stapleton (YAM); 2. Pat Beaulieu (KTM); 3. Allan Lachapelle (KTM)
Expert: 1. Garret Meyer (KTM); 2. Francois Ouimette (KTM); 3. Philippe Chaine (KTM)
Intermediate: 1. Jean P. Faureau (KTM); 2. Steve Thayer (HON); 3. Theirry Lacombe (HUS)
Vet Expert: 1. Doug Post (HON); 2. Paul Andratis (HUS); 3. Randy Zuest (HUS)
Veteran: 1. Scott Crichton (KTM); 2. Guido Kneiling (KTM); 3. Gilles Bussiere (HON)
Super Veteran: 1. Frank Sutton (KTM); 2. Kelly Goreski (KTM); 3. Joel Lepley (KTM)
Vintage: 1. Helmut Clasen (HER); 2. Gary Richards (ZUN); 3. Chuck Berhain
Novice A: 1. Eric Langford (KTM); 2. Barry Armstrong (KTM); 3. Jason Griffith (HON)
Novice B: 1. Owen Gunn; 2. Sean Fitzpatrick; 3. Matt McAnama
Ladies: 1. Sophie Charest (KTM); 2. Sue Cannell (KTM); 3. Jessica Cannell (KAW)

did it, they kept the checks really tight so the riders did drop trail points and that kept it a good race, I thought. It seems like there are tons of trails there, if the person has the hours to put in to get them rideable.

"I thought he (Sharpless) did a great job this year. There was a lot of trail, there was a little bit of road near the end, but I think that most people were happy to see it. The start of day 2 was pretty tough right from the get-go so I think it woke a few people up and got them on their toes."

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