

NEPG Interview: Brad Bakken

KTM rider Brad Bakken had a career-best second overall finish at the AMA/Rekluse National Enduro round in Louisiana. The Virginia rider also had fourth place finishes in Georgia and Florida and sits in third overall in the series standings at the midway point of the season.

Q: How have things gone for you so far?

A: The series has gone great. The first race at Sumter was tough and I got eighth. But in Georgia it was good, other than the second section where I caught my neck on a vine. I ended up with a fourth at that race. The Alligator was good for me too and I ended up with another fourth. That's a tough track, it's just different from anything else. I did the GNCC on the Tuesday before the Alligator and that helped me get used to the sand. Then Louisiana was awesome. I loved that track and I got a second place there.

Q: Have you always ridden Enduros?

A: Last year was my first year to ride an Enduro. I missed four or five of the rounds and I still ended up in sixth. Before I got into Enduros I was riding the Virginia Hare Scrambles series. I started racing that when I was three years old and I raced that up until last year. I decided last year that I wanted to move up and do some national stuff. I did the AMA/Rekluse National Enduro Series last year and all the GNCCs I could. I got second in 250A last year in GNCCs and then I got sixth overall in the Enduro series.

Q: Do you like how the rules are set up in the AMA/Rekluse National Enduro Series?

A: I love the series. I did some SETRA races before I did the nationals and I just like how the nationals are formatted now. It's just like six mini hare scrambles and it just suits my style better. You don't have to think as much, you just go as fast as you can and the fastest guy wins.

Q: It's different from Hare Scrambles though because you ride more than one lap in those, right?

A: Yeah, I like riding new sections of trail because it doesn't get beat up as much.

Q: You are leading the 250 A class in the GNCC series. Is it hard switching back and forth?

A: Yeah, it's kind of weird because the two are completely different. Enduros are tight and tough where GNCCs are just wide open and rough. We run different bars and settings for each series so I switch everything over on Mondays and try to ride as much as I can to get used to it for the next race. Also, the hard part is when the series conflicts. It conflicted for the Louisiana Enduro National because they moved the weekends and I decided to go to the enduro and I'm glad I did.

Q: What are your plans for the future?

A: I would love to do ISDE. It's not on my top priority right now, first I would like to get a ride so I would have more support before I do ISDE. It's pretty expensive to race the ISDE and it's just not in our budget right now. Next year I would like to race mainly the AMA/Rekluse National Enduro Series because I like it a lot better than GNCCs and we'll see where I am at.