

NEPG Interview: Kurt Hough

Former ISDE U.S Trophy Team and Junior Trophy Team member Kurt Hough made a return to the AMA/Rekluse National Enduro Series scene after a 20 year absence from the sport. Hough recently rode the Rad Dad National in Westpoint, Tennessee with his 14-year-old son. Hough, from Indiana, was a top competitor as a Kawasaki Team Green rider from 1988 to 1994, but now, at 43 years of age, is content to enjoy competing in the Senior A division.

Q: What brings you back to the AMA/Rekluse National Enduro Series circuit?

A: Well, it's been a long time since I rode an Enduro. I've been chasing my boys who have been riding motocross. When I retired from competition in '94, I went and did some car racing - some ASA and NASCAR All-Pro - and when the boys got old enough they wanted to do some motocross, so I've been following them. Mitch, my oldest son, just turned 17, and he's been to Loretta Lynn Amateur Nationals and a lot of other races and I just decided this year I was going to do a little something for myself.

Q: Are your boys riding Enduros with you?

A: Well, my 17-year-old is at the prom this weekend, but my 14-year-old was also chasing the Amateur nationals and he really didn't want the pressure so he started doing some Hare Scrambles with my dad and he is here with me this weekend. This will be his first Enduro.

Q: Things have changed a little since you competed. What do you think of the new rules?

A: I love the new rules. I wish they had these rules back when I competed because I couldn't keep time. I've won maybe 12 or 14 ISDE Qualifiers and that's basically what this is like, with the special tests and such. You don't have to worry about burning checks, you just go as fast as you can for that seven to 12 mile section and then you regroup and do it again.

Q: What made you get into Enduros in the first place?

A: GNCC was just getting started and I was doing Hare Scrambles, but I just liked the single track trail and reading arrows that you find in the Enduros. You've got to know how to read terrain and when you're racing and you're going as fast as you can and you've never seen that trail before it takes a certain skill to do that. And that's what I liked about it, having to figure out what's coming up next.

In the GNCCs, the first lap is kind of tough, but it's still kind of follow-the-leader. And if someone misses the trail then someone else takes over. But you don't have anybody to follow here, and you have to be able to read the trail, read the arrows and try to figure out what's coming up. In GNCC, once you go one lap, then you pretty much know what's over the next rise, where in Enduros you never know what's over that rise.

Q: Have you done any other motorcycle racing at all since you retired from competition?

A: I ride about two Hare Scrambles a year and that's it.

Q: Have you run into any riders here that you used to race with back in the day?

A: I actually saw Terry Cunningham earlier and that's kind of neat. I would like to start doing some Enduros again. The boys are still wanting to race motocross but we are backing off the Amateur Nationals and just doing it more for fun. That's kind of why we are here, last fall a bunch of buddies from home and me went down to Brimstone in Tennessee and went trail riding. I took my boys and we had a blast riding all weekend and so I talked them into coming to this Enduro so they would have a chance to see what it is like.

Q: I guess your goals at this event are little bit different from what they were a few years ago.

A: Yes, my goal is to get back to the motor home. Even at the Hare Scrambles, it's basically a trail ride for me. I can't go the pace and I don't want to go the pace.

Q: Talk about the atmosphere here at the Enduros.

A: It's a great family atmosphere here. Everybody here is staying at the track which is great. We never stayed at the track. We signed up and went back to the hotel room then got up the next morning and went to the track and raced. This is so much neater, you've got the kids riding the Junior Enduro and I'm really happy with how things are now.