

ACES Championship Banquet
Ross County Fairgrounds
Chillicothe, Ohio
January 10, 2011



By: Steve Wheeler
Photos: Bob Scott

True to their roots, cold temperatures and blowing snow did little to deter the 2010 Appalachian Championship Enduro Series (ACES) class champions from celebrating their success. The chill of the evening was quickly erased as the 170 in attendance walked into a nicely decorated facility courtesy of Heidi Claytor, Sam Claytor and Leann Meeker. In its third year, the banquet continues to grow and some of that credit must go to Chillicothe's Smoke House Restaurant. This is truly the best catered food I have had and I think everyone in attendance would agree – especially if the leftovers (or lack thereof) are any sign.

After an hour or two of bench racing, ACES president Kevin Claytor seated the class winners at the champions table and then turned the microphone over to Sam Phillips to offer blessing. Sam represents the Christian Motorcyclist Association which has become an integral part of the ACES series. You will find CMA members at nearly every event, leading the riders in prayer, offering fellowship and staffing road crossings.

After dinner, it was time to honor our overall champions. KTM and Sport Cycles Racing backed Josh Gaitten accepted the Overall award for the second time. Josh had an impressive season, tallying six overall and two third place finishes before setting out the last round with a broken collar bone. Nearly as impressive was KTM mounted John Yerkey's run at the Overall B award. John recorded three overall, three second place finishes and never finished out of the points on his way to the title. KTM rewarded the efforts of both riders as Josh earned \$500 in KTM Performance Bucks and John picked up \$100 for his class win. Yamaha pilot Anthony Glasso was unable to attend the banquet to pick up his Overall A award and the good news that he will be welcomed into the AA ranks in 2011.



Josh Gaitten - 2010 Overall Champion



John Yerkey – Overall B



Gary Spencer`

Before moving on to the class awards, two members of the ACES family were recognized. Gary Spencer has been around the sport forever and has become a pinch hitter of sorts for some of the ACES clubs. If not riding an event, he is likely helping AMC, ADR, ERA or ZTR in some aspect. True to his character, Gary was surprised and humbled by the honor. Series champion Josh Gaitten then presented flowers and a gift card to his mother, Lori, on behalf of the New Straitsville Enduro Riders. Lori works sign up as well



The Gaitten's

as checks at NSER events and made the ultimate sacrifice by donating a kidney to the 7 year old daughter of a coworker. In the grand scheme of things, Lori was the true champion this night.



Brown, Ghearing and Johnson

The evening continued as each of the class champions was recognized and given the opportunity to thank (or jab) those that helped them this season. Open A champion Brian Rickard (KTM) remarked that he probably learned more about what not to do from his Senior A riding partner Kevin Brown (KTM) this year than what to do since a couple of mental lapses may have cost Brown a chance at his second class title. Jeff Johnson (Yam), Todd Ghearing (KTM) and Brown found themselves tied after 9 events and when their low score was dropped, Johnson prevailed with 126 points to Ghearing and Brown's 124.

The Super Senior B class also had a close battle as Ronnie Jarvis (KTM), Marvin Popp (KTM) and Ron Valdman (KTM) battled for the championship down to the wire with Jarvis winning the last event and claiming the title. The Jarvis family has been a mainstay in the southern Ohio motorcycling

community since the 70's and Ronnie commented that although he has been riding enduros "since Moby dick was a minnow", this was his first championship. I'm sure his brother Denny will remind him that it is not quite like etching his name alongside John Penton, Terry Cunningham or countless other legends of the sport on the "Milk Jug" rotating trophy at the Athens event, but it does put another notch in the family's win column and gives Ronnie some bragging rights too.



Best, Valdman, Popp and Jarvis

As the evening came to an end, competitors began to pack up their swag and start thinking about the Chillicothe Enduro Riders opening round of the 2011 ACES season in March. Many had new Kenda tires in hand, so they should be ready for the spring mud that Ohio will surely offer up. Some were thinking about what edge they might be able to gain if they spend those KTM bucks wisely, while others were confident that their new MSR gear would be just what they needed to protect them from the elements and propel them to victory.



Appalachian Dirt Riders 2010 Favorite Enduro

ACES is a traditional format enduro series in Southern Ohio and we encourage you to check ACES out at aces-races.com. As a testament to our commitment to providing the rider a quality experience, ADR was voted as "favorite enduro" by the riders making them the third club in three years to win the award. Keep an eye out for event and sponsorship news as we set out to make 2011 our best year yet.

Thanks to the following sponsors for contributing to our success:

Osburn Signs not only for continuing as our series sponsor for the third year, but doing a great job on helmet graphics and event T's as well.

Sport Cycles of Athens and Lancaster for being one of our biggest supporters from day one and bringing bikes and goodies to the banquet.

Kenda Tires – entering their third season as the tire of ACES

MSR – Entering their third season as the riding gear of ACES

Enduro Engineering – Entering their third season as aftermarket / hard parts equipment of ACES

KTM – Providing KTM Performance Bonuses to our KTM mounted riders from Overall to Third place

Caton’s Cycle Supply - Entering their second year as an ACES sponsor – providing event and banquet prizes and serving the riders in our western boundary

Appalachian Offroad Motorcycles – In their first year of series sponsorship and helping to fill out our prize packages

Trial & Enduro News – for their subscription package and reporting of the ACES events

J&M Cycle – Banquet Door prizes

MJ USA– Banquet Door prizes

Brush Creek Cycles– Banquet Door prizes

Iron Pony– Banquet Door prizes