

SPORTS & LEISURE

Richard blazing trails on motocross circuits

By **EAMONN MAHER**
Staff Writer

Even at the age of three, Georgetown South's Kyle Richard was hard to keep up with on his motorbike, as his parents Keith and Jackie can certainly attest.

The now 14-year-old Richard has become one of the top dirtbike riders in the province for his age group in the cross-country class, sometimes even darting past adults for top-10 finishes when he moves up in age level for races.

When the Grade 9 Christ the King student first took up the sport on a peewee bike that had a speed limiter with no gears, his mom or dad would follow along and soon were in a sprint to catch up.

"I think my parents got more of a workout than I did," he smiled.

Jackie's heart still races when she watches her son disappear into a forested section of a race course, even when he's in the lead, which has happened several times this summer.

Bichard enjoys traditional motocross racing but he and Keith are among Canada's best in enduro racing, something that could be compared to mountain biking, except Kyle is navigating through an obstacle course with a Honda 150cc four-stroke engine underneath.

In the recent Anthill Classic Offroad Ontario event in Conestoga, near Kitchener, his average speed was about 60 km/h over the hour-long race as he sped away from the pack to take first place.

"My type of racing isn't what everyone thinks it is," he said.

"It's not all about jumping. We race more with tight, technical stuff through trees and tires over logs and tires. I call it 'stupid stuff,' except that most people don't know how to ride through that stuff on a motorcycle and that's what our racing's more focused on, which I like a little bit more."

There aren't many weekends during the summer months when the Bichards aren't away at a race somewhere in Ontario, traveling to tracks in places like Chatsworth, Parry Sound and Shelburne to find top-class competition. On one hectic day back in the spring, Kyle charged to victory at a race in Shelburne, then packed up the trailer with his racing gear still on, grabbed something to eat



Kyle Bichard (above and below) has one race to go in the World Enduro Canada series but has virtually locked up the Kids Enduro Title in the mini senior category (age 12-16) after winning several events this year. The 14-year-old would likely have also claimed a number-one plate in the Offroad Ontario circuit but has been splitting his time between the two series.

Top photo by Alexandra Franklin/Bottom photo by Eamonn Maher



and proceeded to earn top spot at another race in Shelburne.

"You have to be well-conditioned and it's really a breathing game, especially when it gets hot outside," explained Bichard, who also plays rep lacrosse and house league hockey.

"If you work too hard and get overheated, you slow down. You have to keep your arms and legs pumping. It's usually the strongest body that wins and in a lot of my races, my lap times get faster as the race goes on. But it's not about going as fast as you can, necessarily. It's more about bike skills. If you have good bike skills, you're set up for anything, but fast riders are only good at being fast. When you've got a log or a big gnarly tractor tire in front of you, you may not thrive on that as well if you're not slowing down."

If only he could race in two places at once all the time. Bichard has been active in two competing series and likely would have clinched the overall title in one of them had he been able to attend all of the races.

With one race remaining in the developmental WEC Kids Enduro Series, to be held in Shelburne later this month, Bichard holds a 163-point lead in the overall standings. Kids Enduro racing involves three separate, non-timed tests— motocross, extreme and enduro.

He finished third in the WEC provincial mini senior category for cross-country after winning the final four of seven races, and sat in second place in the Offroad Ontario points standings despite missing three of the eight events, winning four and finishing second in the other.

It's likely Bichard, who would like to pursue a career in engineering or auto mechanics since he does a lot of the maintenance on his own bike, will move up to the beginner class next season and clash handlebars with the big boys.

"Moving up is better for me because I'd like to get as quick as possible," he added. "The bigger races you ride in, the better you'll get. The races I was in this year last about an hour, and next year they'll be two to two-and-a-half hours long and I'll be on a 250cc bike."

Dad Keith had an excellent year as well, earning both national and provincial number-one plates in the WEC Series in the Vet Senior category.

Ren's PETS Depot

Celebrate Our New Location

with huge savings!

September 20th to 26th, 2012

Oakville
(905) 257-4611
4002 Trafalgar Rd.

Guelph
(519) 767-5858
20 Brock Rd. N.

Kitchener
(519) 578-4133
1525 Victoria St. N.

NEW!
Waterdown
(905) 689-9611
100 Dundas St. E.

for information on location & hours please visit renspets.com

Pre-K to Grade 12
Grammar

Reading
Study Skills

Writing
Homework

Math
French

Head back to school with Oxford Learning on your team

Get on the winning team with Oxford Learning.
Call today, or visit oxfordlearning.com

905.877.3163
324 Guelph Street, Unit 7
Georgetown, ON, L7G 4B5
georgetown@oxfordlearning.com

Since 1984
OXFORD
LEARNING

