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XDL EAST COAST QUALIFIER

WORDS & PICS DAVID AVILA

The competition was fierce at the XDL East Coast Qualifier in Virginia.



It sucks when your parachute doesn't open!



Shane "Rookie" Calovini

"This was my first pro competition and it feels great to qualify and get a chance to ride with everyone at the finals."



XDL's East Coast Qualifier was goin' off this year at Virginia International Raceway. VIR has been the host of a number of XDL events, but this year the weather finally cooperated and allowed riders to pull out all the stops. With the top fifteen qualifiers earning a slot for the finals in California, riders were really throwin' it down. In addition to the coveted Cali qualification, the event also hosted a number of crowd-pleasing exhibition contests for cash prizes.

The first of the weekend's events was the Chatterbox Circle Wheelie Contest. This wasn't your typical circle jerk showing how many circles a rider can knock out in a minute. XDL added a twist: pairs of riders competed in a head-to-head race to 10 circles, with the winner advancing to the next "round." After a number of heated battles, Brian Bubash faced off against Dan Jackson in the finals. Bubash ultimately took the win, the cash and a new Chatterbox (hopefully they gave him two so he doesn't have to talk to himself? -Ed.).

Jackson wouldn't let a second in the circles comp slow him down though, and he took home the cash and a new Brembo brake

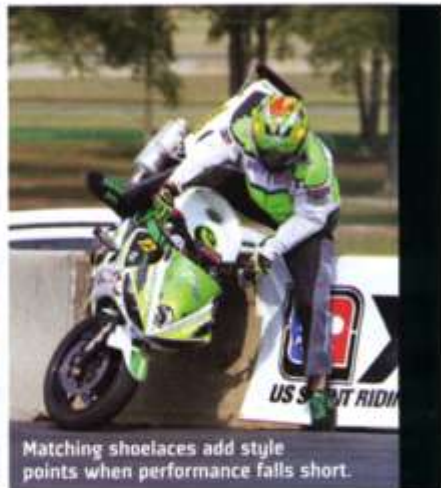


package in the Brembo Stoppie Challenge. This event pitted riders against one another in a race to complete three different stoppies in the quickest time. Competitors had to park their rear tire on a wall barricade, tap their head on one of two walls stationed at either end of the course, and finally throw down a rolling stoppie onto a target from a designated pickup point.

Warped Toys hosted the Sickest Trick comp, and it was a double-trouble victory as the tandem team of Chuck Malott and Kristen Rieckers took home the win with a "minesweeper" stoppie.

Avon Tires' burnout challenge went to Bill Dixon, who blew off a brand-new tire in a loud and exciting, smoke-filled run, while

Aaron Colton lights it up.



Matching shoelaces add style points when performance falls short.



All shapes and styles are welcome to compete.



Chris "Fish" Fisher (Judge)
"The riders put on an awesome show for the fans and made my job a lot harder."



Bill Dixon
"I like speed and danger in my runs."





Dan Jackson
"I liked the [stoppie] event. It was unique and required skill, speed and execution. I picked what I thought was a good line and ended up winning."



...poor scooter.



Exactly what goes on in the medical center?



Stunride.com's Last Man Standing event was won by Rockstar Ronny.

FMF Racing's Individual Freestyle event drew the most attention. Joe "Vertical" Dryden was the first rider in XDL history to earn a perfect score on execution, but in all his excitement he flipped a stoppie on the way to his post-run interview. But it was Chris McNeil who stole the show. His mind-blowing drifts and circle wheelies won him the top spot, but it was also the last time he'll be seen on his beloved CBR600RR because he's inked a deal to ride for BMW.

If the East Coast Qualifiers are any indication of what we'll see in the finals, the XDL finals, set for the weekend of March 22, 2008, at the Queen Mary in Long Beach California, will be the event of the year. Be sure to check out www.xdlshow.com for more information on upcoming events and to find out more about the riders and sponsors that make this event possible.

Dryden demonstrates full stoppie execution.



Chris McNeil
"With the stiff competition this year I was fortunate enough to capture the first-place position once again."

