FREESTYLER VS. ENDOUCROSS. WHO WINS?

2011 250F MX COMPARISON
LAP TIMES, RADAR RUNS, OPINIONS, SETTINGS AND A WINNER!

STREET LETHAL, DIRT WORTHY
HUSABERG FE 570 S

SHORT INTERVIEW
ANDREW SHORT IS READY TO RACE

DIRT RIDER
MARCH 2011

DIRTRIDER.COM
WORLD'S LARGEST MX & OFF-ROAD MAGAZINE

SHOOTOUT
WINNER

DR TESTED
HRC WORKS PARTS
FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Are you hungry for knowledge? Craving an answer to that burning question? Starving for something to read when you're not on the bike? Then feast your eyes on our tasty letters section for all the intellectual nourishment you can handle. You can even cook up a letter of your own and serve it our way; we promise to do our best to give you some feedback. Bon appétit, happy eating and, as always, Letter Rip!

Your Mechanic Shouldn't Swear

My mechanic swears it is better to change the oil on a dirt bike when the bike is cold. He claims all of the particles and contaminants are closer to the drain for a quick exit by allowing time to settle at the bottom versus churning them up when warming up the bike. However, I've heard and read that it is always best to warm a bike up for a few minutes prior to an oil change to allow particles to exit better. Who is right? Has anyone actually tested or proven which strategy gets rid of dirty oil the best?

Christian Chenier
Tampa, FL

For the right answer to this question, we turned to Chris Real. He not only helps us sound test our bikes, he moonlights as a certified lubrication engineer with over 40 years of real-world petroleum industry experience, and here is what he said:

"It is proper to have the oil warmed up, even better, at operating temperature when you go to drain it. That way the particles will be suspended in the oil, as well as the other contaminants like moisture inside the engine will be absorbed, not separated, and will drain right out with the old oil."

Dirt Rider says the best time to change the oil is right after a ride, just make sure you capture the used stuff and dispose of it properly. Now go ride so you can change your oil and save the swearing for improperly trained mechanics.

The Ladies Man

First off, great magazine, guys. I ride ATVs and dirt bikes, so I subscribe to both ATV Rider and Dirt Rider. I mainly ride dirt bikes, though, so I still give the upper hand to you guys, but in the latest

Hammer Time

I own a 2008 CRF250R and have shimmed the valves a few times now. Today I went to do this again, but I couldn't remove the left exhaust shim. All of the others came out but this one. I had a magnet on it and even tried to get a set of pliers on it, but it sticks up only about 0.020 inch above the bucket so I just couldn't get hold of it. Any suggestions? I did put this shim in myself, and it was a bit snug but I didn't force it in; I just gave it a slight push and it went in fine. Now I don't know what else to do, so I am asking you experts for help.

David Marsten
Coquitlam, AK

Finally, a good mechanical question! Your Impact Video DVDs are on the way, David. Now, the shim issue: Don't be afraid to tap on it with a light hammer.

There is likely a piece of debris along the side of the shim and the spring retainer. It should loosen up. It may also be in slightly crooked and the tap will nudge it straight and then the magnet will pick it up. Notice I said "light hammer" and not a Husky- or Maico-sized hammer.

Another possibility, use something like a soldering iron or a targeted flame torch to heat up the spring retainer pretty good. Next, take an ice cube and touch it to the shim for about 15 seconds, and then try and get it out. Also, you could put a socket over the top of the spring retainer and tap on it (lightly) as this will likely force the shim up as well, but it might release the keepers off the valve stem, so you'll have to be careful. Now, if that doesn't work, use the Husky hammer and be prepared to replace parts!

—Jimmy Lewis

LETTER OF THE MONTH