

Hangtown Motocross isn't just for the pros

Pros are the headliners, but amateurs are the heart of the event

By Matt Long Telegraph Sports Editor



Anne Stokes • The Telegraph
Dave Desrosiers and his kids, Lauren, 12, and Cade, 8, will be competing in the amateur motocross races at Hangtown this week. Desrosiers has been riding motocross since he was a kid. Lauren began riding before she was on a regular bicycle, while Cade just began racing last year.

On Saturday the top motocross riders in the world will descend upon Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area in Rancho Cordova to strut their stuff.

It's the amateurs, though, who race the other three days of the event.

The Desrosiers family from Folsom will have three riders competing: Dave, 43, and his kids, Lauren, 12, and Cade, 8. Dave's wife, Shelly, will cheer her family on.

"To me Hangtown is the real deal, especially with the pro racers," Desrosiers said. "The track is a pro level track and the competition is heavy. The track is intimidating. It's big and fast and it gets torn up and there's a lot of traffic. You get to measure yourself against the real deal."

Desrosiers, an account manager for a GPS monitoring company based in Florida, began riding motocross as a young boy in Southern California years ago. After taking a few years off and getting into mountain biking, he started up again a little more than a decade ago when he living in Florida.

"After Lauren was born I was looking for something to do that had the same fun factor as mountain bike racing but something that maybe you didn't have to be in as good of shape to do," he said. "I began competing right away. I enjoy motocross for the adrenaline rush and because it keeps me off the couch. A lot of people my age aren't active and in motocross you're not just out there giving the bike the gas. It's very good anaerobic exercise and you have to be strong and fit to be able to control a 250-pound bike."

Desrosiers has helped work the pro event the last few years, and this will be his second year of racing at Hangtown. Lauren, a sixth grader at Folsom Middle School, started riding about seven years ago and was in fact riding a motorbike with training wheels before she was riding a bike with training wheels. She became interested in the sport from watching her dad. Cade, a second-grader at Folsom Hills Elementary, started riding a year ago and took an interest from watching his sister.

"I like to be around my dad and brother and having fun," Lauren said. "I like the thrill of racing and having to train for it."

In 2007 Lauren was one of 15 girls selected to race at the Las Vegas Supercross event. It was the highlight of her young career.

"That was a really fun and tough and a good experience for me," Lauren said. "It gave me a lot of confidence."

Cade recently began riding and said that he enjoys the jumps the most.

While the Desrosiers will enjoy competing at Hangtown, they will also enjoy watching the pros. Desrosiers said his favorite rider is Kevin Windham, while Lauren roots for Ryan Dungey and James Stewart.

"I also like the girl racers, of course," Lauren said.

Being an experienced rider, Desrosiers has a great deal of respect for the pros.

"I enjoy working the event and watching the pros race," Desrosiers said. "Watching their skill level on the track, seeing what they can do, it's very humbling."

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Hangtown Motocross, May 19-22

Pro races, Saturday, May 21, Prairie City State

Recreation Park

12:30 – 12:50 p.m. – Opening ceremonies

1-1:35 p.m. – 450 class Moto 1

2-2:35 p.m. – 250 class Moto 1

3-3:15 p.m. – Women's Moto 1

4:05-4:40 p.m. – 450 Class Moto 2

5:05 – 5:40 p.m. – 250 Class 2

6 – 6:15 p.m. – Women's Moto 2

Tickets: Hangtownmx.com