

## ***STEVE LEIVAN ~ 2015 Race Report***

**Event:** Round 1 National Enduro; Sumter, SC; February 1, 2015

**Bike:** 2015 KTM 300 XC

**Result:** 2nd +40 "A"

Info: The National Enduro series kicked off a month earlier than normal; this past weekend; under ideal conditions in South Carolina. With an earlier start, it was a bit more chaotic and a bit of a thrash to get things lined out before round one was underway. With that said, it was probably the same for many of us.

I've switched over to a 300 after riding a 250 2-stroke for the last three years. In reality, I had very little time on the bike, so a week prior to South Carolina, I made a last minute trip to Texas for a round of the TORO series to get in some race miles (I finished 6th OA). I spent half of that race figuring out how to ride the 300 since it seems much different than the 250. It was a good move though since I found some things I wanted to change - most notable a stiffer fork setting with the guidance from Checkpoint Off Road and a change to a quick turn throttle tube, thanks to G2 Ergonomics.

Confident that my changes were a step forward, we loaded up the van with my stuff then loaded a trailer with the three bikes that I will be prepping and transporting to the races this year. 18 hours and 1100 miles later we were in sunny South Carolina.

I was fortunate that my entry sponsor (Proud Sis) is always on the gas when sign up opens and she got me on a great row (28) yet again. With 825 (!) riders, being at the back wouldn't be awesome. The first test was pretty rough and it seemed difficult to get out of the chopped up stuff. I was pretty tentative and it took me a few miles to trust my settings and the terrain. Overall, that section went alright but at the end of the test I decided to switch rear Dunlops. I had started with MX11's front and rear, but the terrain had a harder base than I expected so I went with the MX32 on the rear the rest of the day.

The next three sections kind of all run together in my mind and nothing particular stands out. I was trying to be smooth, stand a lot in the rough stuff, and let the bike do the work while keeping it in the meat of the power. The 300 is much different and I found myself riding it with a less exciting style than the 250. Whether or not it was working, I didn't know. I felt okay, but not overly "fast".

In test five, I had my only crash of the day. It was one of those "bounce from tree to tree with some whiskey throttle" deals. The bike was still straight and it only cost me 30 seconds or so, but

with the depth in all of the classes at the NEPG's, 30 seconds is a lot.

I thought the final section was the best of the day as it started out tight and then opened up with some sand mounds and fast trail. Some of it was slippery with lots of pine needles and since it was a Pro/A only section, it wasn't as beat in. But they saved the best for last, I thought.

Ultimately I ended the day second in class behind some "old washed up has been" that still gets around the woods pretty good. I am happy with the result and hoping to get some more time in on the bike before the next trip back to South Carolina in three weeks.

Results: 1. Watts (KTM); 2. LEIVAN (KTM); 3. McCall (KTM)

Thanks for reading and to everyone that supports my program (still and again!)

***THANKS FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT!***

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