

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

**Event:** Springfield Endurocross; Springfield, MO; February 20-21, 2015

**Bike:** 2014 KTM 250 XC

**Result:** 2nd Pro (Friday) – 12<sup>th</sup> Pro (Saturday)

Event Info: With the typical crappy winter weather in Missouri, we are fortunate to have an indoor race each February where we get to take the racing indoors. This past weekend was exceptionally crappy outside and if there had been any local races scheduled, they no doubt would have been cancelled due to the snow, ice, and cold. Indoor races offer an alternative to "dealing with the elements".

The track was tougher than in years past with a tricky rock-turn section as well as the firewood corner. There were two jumps (for some) and they were both fairly sketchy and got no better as the night went on and the jump faces got chewed up. They reminded many why woods guys ride in the woods - cause most of them do NOT need to be jumping.

I got a good start in the first moto on Friday night and found my way into second place early on, despite getting held up in the rocks. Tucker Smith led the way and pulled a gap until the tables turned and he got hung up in the rocks. With the white flag waving, we exited the rocks together, but I dropped in behind him as he held the inside line. It got very close on the final lap when we both took different approaches to getting around lapped riders in the rock section, and he was able to get to the checkered flag just in front of me. Second in the moto was a good start to the night and a front row pick for the final moto of the night.

It seems I was about fifth starting the second (and final) moto and things were fairly chaotic throughout the race. There were about three instances when I got hung up in the rock section and positions changed frequently. Early on, I got around Smith and then a few corners later, the leader Justin Freund went down in the firewood and I moved up to third. It was short lived as I had a moment in the rocks and Smith passed me back. Caleb Haynes was the next to make a mistake and I got around him and back up to third.

We were eight laps in or so (of 14) and I just about threw it away over the log double. It took a big effort, a panic rev, and some luck to ride out of it. My heart rate went through the roof and I tried to control my breathing. It didn't happen though, since I heard Kole Henslee banging his four stroke off the rev limiter trying to escape the rock section. I berzerked my way past him for second - heart rate still pinned - thinking "stay calm" - then nearly looped out doing the tire jump. So I had three "moments" within about 10 seconds.....but I survived them all.

The final laps of the moto were anything but a "formality", but it worked out quite well and I held on to finish second in the moto and second overall for the night. I collected my three bills at the pay window then set out to deal with slippery roads and a slicker hotel parking lot.

We were back at the arena just after noon on Saturday for another night of chaos. For everything that went right on Friday, I had three things go wrong on Saturday. Whether I say that I struggled, was always in the wrong place at the wrong time, or couldn't find my ass with both hands, all of those things seem accurate.

Saturday night was a complete disappointment and 100% battle just to continue putting in the laps. It has been a LONG time since I have wanted to quit a race so badly. The finish could not come quick enough. But I didn't quit - and that is about the only thing I did right. When I got asked how my weekend went - "Friday night was awesome but Saturday night I let a "C" rider wear my gear and ride my bike".

One good night wasn't too bad of a weekend and I didn't do any damage to my body, so all is well.

Results: FRIDAY 1. Smith (Yam) 2. LEIVAN (KTM) 3. Henslee (Hon)

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

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