

TAKE

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Luke Smith

REBECCA MURDIE CHATS WITH ONE  
OF MOTOCROSS'S MOST EXTREME

## 1 Who does your business card say you are ... and who are you really?

**LUKE:** My business card says Luke Smith – Graphic Designer and Director of *Moto Mayhem*. Who I am really is a big kid with a list of bones I haven't yet broken and an unquenchable thirst for speed and adrenalin! *Moto Mayhem* is my life, and since I was knee high to a grasshopper I've been into bikes and cars. Three years ago I became a graphic designer so I could take my love for motorsports and love for art and design and put the two things together. What we came up with is a street-wear fashion label that young people could wear and be proud to show they have roots in motorsport.

## 2 How did you end up with a career as an extreme fmx rider?

**LUKE:** My parents always wanted me to be me – and what I wanted to be was a professional motocross rider and make a career out of it. My family knew a nine-to-five job wasn't how I was wired and they encouraged me to live my dream. I remember back in school the teachers laughed at me when I told them my plans. They said it was never going to happen. Well, look who's laughing now!

## 3 You mentioned your list of not-yet-broken bones ... what's been your worst near-death experience?

**LUKE:** Just weeks before a *Crusty Demons* tour in 2009 I had an accident on my bike that put me in a coma for eight days with a brain injury, and in hospital for five-and-a-half months. I had two years solid



of rehab – learning to walk and hearing that I would never ride again. Being so close to death really made me hold my family and my partner and my friends close. We never know what's around the corner – life can be ripped away so fast.

## 4 The greatest highlight of your career?

**LUKE:** Despite being told I would never ride again, I was able to get on my bike and get back to an international level. I signed with *Nitro Circus* and performed in the 2012 New Zealand tour, where I rode in front of my mum and dad to a sold-out stadium. After the accident the odds were stacked against me, but I got to go full circle. I proved hard work pays off and dreams do to come true.

## 5 What does it feel like to go upside-down in front of a packed-out house with blaring music, raging fans and pyrotechnics?

**LUKE:** It's the best thing since sliced



bread! Nothing can compare to doing that trick. But when I'm doing it in front of a sold-out crowd, it just blows my mind. The rush it gives you goes to a whole new level. I guess it's the same feeling for any artist performing in front of 40,000 fans.

## 6 Biggest misconception about the life of an extreme athlete? For example, all play and no work?

**LUKE:** There are loads of misconceptions for sure. Like all professional athletes, we work hard in what we do to get to where we're at. At this level these tricks don't come easy. It's a gladiator sport. Our bodies get beaten up – we spend a huge amount of time in hospital, at the doctors and with chiropractors. So it's definitely not all play!

## 7 How on earth do you unwind and stay so positive during tough times in a performance-based sport?

**LUKE:** Just play with my dogs, hang-out at home, mow the lawns and spend time

with my partner. I have an action-packed job, so in my down-time I like to just chill. When it gets tough I slap myself and say, "You could be doing far worse jobs, now get on with it!"

## 8 Best tip for any kid wanting to get into this sport?

**LUKE:** The first bike I ever owned was a step-through moped, when I was just 10 – it was a heap of fun! And if your kids want to ride and you're keen for them to do this, encourage them to ride their bike as much as they can. They will need to know it inside-out. This sport takes practice. And if you want your kid to be the next FMX star, you should get them used to hospital food! This sport is dangerous, and there'll be many trips to the hospital – sorry to say, but it's the truth.

## 9 One thing you've learnt in life so far that you'd like to pass on?

**LUKE:** Hard work gets you where you want to be. If you really want something in life, you have to put in the hard yards to get it. Unfortunately, there are no short cuts.

## 10 There are many extreme sports brands out there – what's made *Moto Mayhem* such a fast growing and on-going success?

**LUKE:** *Moto Mayhem* is real. It's not some brand trying to be cool. Motor sport junkies and extreme athletes can relate to me and I believe this is a big part of the brands growing success. *Moto Mayhem* comes from the heart. I eat, sleep and breathe it – always have, always will. 🌟