

**1.) What is your best advice for traveling to a world cup?** Always bring a spool of twine. You never know what you might have to tie to the roof of the rental car. Darian, Teal and Alicia laugh to no end, when I suggested we find some "twine", to tie my massage table to the roof of the car at the Albany airport. Our rental car was packed to the ceiling, w/ Teal and Alicia sharing one seat in the back and luggage packed all around. Fun travel times. Back to the twine....so, the laughter had to do with the fact that **apparently**, in saying "twine", I "dated" myself and was thus deemed really "old school". In the end, Teal magically found a huge zip tie behind a gas station (where we intended to buy some twine) and then used the shoulder strap of the massage table case, with the zip tie, to tie the bag to the roof rails. No twine needed and plenty of laughter by all, as we knew we must have looked like the dirt bags from Colorado, causing quite a scene. The story the gas station attendant gave us, was that a homeless man who lived behind the gas station, had passed on and we might find some twine in his disagreed belongings out back.

**2.) What was the coolest world cup you went to? Why was it so cool?** Cape Town South Africa was by far the coolest WC I attended. Although, Italy was always my favorite country to race in because I love the low key Italian vibe and the food is outstanding. Cape Town SA was cool, simply because it was such an exotic destination, that you never imagined you would go to, let alone race your bike at. Not only that, I won the race with by a landslide margin of time and was given the largest bottle of champagne I have ever seen. I had to sequester the help of many people to help

**3. What is it like to go to a world cup or worlds?** Exciting and exhilarating to race against the best in world, but at the same time, somewhat horrifying and incredibly intimidating. World cup racing has a whole other level of anticipation that one does not feel at a US national event. The sense of importance of the event is at an all time high, especially at the top level, when you have self imposed pressure, or pressure from a sponsor or the media. As a first time WC racer, it is magical and gives you that feeling like being a kid in the candy shop, as there is no end to new and exciting things to feast your eyes upon. Euphoric also, because you are finally getting to race a world cup. Frightening, because you fear you might get crushed like a small child on a tricycle, but also beautiful and innocent, because you have very little expectation and are simply just stoked to participate. The seriousness and vibe in the pits is intensified X 10 with all the foreigners and there sometimes more serious level of racing. The Euro racers have their super serious race faces on and the staff of the factory teams are obviously stepping it up a notch. The UCI delegates (fancy way to say officials) are everywhere making every one nervous with their important looking Polo shirts with UCI insignia. The Mnt staff is on red alert, trying to make everything perfect for final UCI inspection of courses. Generally, it is one cool experience, especially when one comes to your home town and you meet the racers you idolize.

**4. What is the course like in Mont St Anne and or Windham?** Classic east coast riding is what these two race venues are all about. Typical WC style short courses on smallish ski mountains, crossing the open ski run on off camber grass and then transitioning into dark wooded, rooty and rocky steeps with many ups and downs. Generally muddy, but sometimes with occasional eastern droughts, these courses can be bone dry and dust like Durango. The Windham course right now, is drying from some recent heavy rain. It was raining in Albany when we arrived, continued to rain over night and is now in a 1/2 dry 1/2 wet situation. It is expected to continue to dry, so it looks like a mostly dry course with the occasional soft or wet spots that never dry because spring water pushes up through the ground and keeps areas wet. Windham was described to us as a wet Mnt. The Mt St Anne course is very technical and known for being so. It also has the added element of becoming a messy and slippery situation in the rain. Mainly, it just gets more technical with rain, where roots exposed and are get incredible difficult to navigate.

**5. How did you control your nerves at big races like what we are going to?** Use your inner ninja to contain the beast within. Harness the nervous energy and use it to your advantage. I would attempt to explain this strange concept, but I am sure you will all think I am a whack job. I guess I'll try anyway though, just for entertainments sake. So First ,you need to chose a spirit animal, whose characteristics you admire and respect or even emulate. Then, embrace this animal and all its amazingness and channel your energy into this notion. The best exercise to do this is to imagine an energy portal on your breast bone near your heart. The place your chest feels tight when you are nervous. Focus on drawing and channeling all the amazing energy and excitement around you, in towards your energy portal. Use each deep breath you take, to draw it in. Develop a pattern of rhythmic breathing, while thinking of your spirit animal...let the energy build (this will make your chest tight with anticipation, like a caged animal eager to get on the course and run ). Think of how this animal, with its unique characteristics, has strength and power to help

you with your race. Animals have fierce fighting instinct...the same instinct you can feed on and feel when you are competing to win. You are a modern day warrior, going to battle. Your trophy is the glory of standing on the podium...imagine yourself there!!! Are your tires hungry???? Let them eat up the course!

**6. What is the best advice you have for the days leading up to race day?**

Stay the course! Do what you know works and stick with it. Be sure to get enough time away from the exciting venue/expo area. Too much time around all the excitement can be deceptively draining and tap your energy for race day. In the event that this happens, take a nap with a cat.

**7. In the mud and slippery roots and rocks with so many people on the course, what is the best way to ride?**

In slippery rooty conditions you must enter and exit turns in tricky and skilled ways in order to avoid the roots, or look for the "V's" and either aim for them or avoid them. This is executed by observing what direction the roots are facing and if the roots has its skin peeled off or not. All of these signs and characteristics dictate what is going to happen to your wheel when it hits a slippery root. You must anticipate what is going to happen and prepare for the bike to move...or, ride like a ninja and have the smoothest of unweighting of the wheel skills. The rule of thumb with the "V's", is to point your wheel towards the roots where the top of the "V" points towards you and thus use it as a slot to keep your wheel in a groove. You must avoid the "V" where the bottom of the "V" points to wards you, as these ones land you on your tail quickly. If you are highly skilled, picking the fastest line is still the way to go, but you better be darn good at unweighting the wheels at just the right time over the roots.