



**“MY NAME IS
KIRT VOREIS
AND I’M LUCKY
TO BE HERE”**

MY NAME IS KIRT VOREIS
AND I’M LUCKY TO BE HERE. I HAVE BEEN
A PROFESSIONAL MOUNTAIN BIKER FOR
12 YEARS AND I AM HONORED TO HAVE
THE OPPORTUNITY TO WRITE A COLUMN
FOR DECLINE.

While contemplating ideas for my new column, stories from my past flooded my mind. Stories of Jimmy Deaton and Mert Lawill influencing Yeti back in the early 90’s, getting to know my heroes, Ned Overend and Johnny Tomac, around the globe, and traveling with Shaun Palmer chasing podiums and parties compliments of Specialized.

I can fill pages about my Haro days, which would include a National Championship and taking my riding to a new level with the video *Evolution* and our feeble attempt at distributing it. The stories of the Fox Allride Tour were documented on the Fox website by my wife, Lindsey, and currently the stories of the Santa Cruz Syndicate’s domination are unfolding around the globe. Believe me, I have some stories.

When these stories penetrate my mind, I wonder how I can disclose them to others while at the same time come across as a person who simply loves to ride and who can’t believe the life riding has given him. I know that may sound cliché, but if you have seen what I’ve seen in life before the age of 17, you would understand why I am in awe of the life I am able to lead. Drug dealers, needles in couches, speed-cookers and users, a family member dying on the front lawn from heroine, alcoholics and abuse are a small example of what surrounded me. I should be a crack-head. But I’m not. I escaped through sports.

As the thoughts of my life race throughout my concussion-ridden noggin, one thing always remains the same: I always follow my heart. I may live a life filled with injuries and upsets, crashes and disappointments, and more second places than I can count, but I also live a life

full of excitement, exploration and adventure. I have learned throughout my years to persevere and remain strong within but most importantly, to follow my heart. No matter where it would drag me, I used it as my guide.

At age 17, I came to a crossroads. I was a competitive skateboarder, was learning all of the hardest tricks on a BMX bike and was riding my mom’s junky mountain bike for miles everyday to catch rattlesnakes and to excel at cross-country. In skating and BMX, it was all about trying to be cool and fit in. Cross-country seemed limitless and attitude-free. My heart doesn’t have an attitude nor does it possess any limits. I found my path; my absolute passion and nothing could stop me. My skater buddies ridiculed me for having shaved legs and I discovered that being cool is tough, but following your heart is a lot harder.

My “heart” was given to me by my late father who was killed when I was five by racing a truck on a motorcycle while he was drunk. Sounds familiar...I wonder where I get it from. He also gave me nine lives because there are many incidents in my life that should have killed me. The heart he gave me has never let me down. When he died he left me a bond with which I purchased my first real



mountain bike and I was given the opportunity to truly follow my dreams. His money paid my entry fees for my first year of racing cross-country. Ironically, I was later sponsored by Yeti as a downhill racer and the rest is history. The moral is, if you see your chance, take it. Your heart won’t let you down. No matter if you’re a racer, a “hucker”, a dirt jumper or just out on a joy ride...follow your heart and enjoy the ride.

I don’t think my column will be about anything specific. I will share stories of my past, my present, and throw in some random thoughts along the way. Most importantly I want to keep people stoked on riding bikes. I chose the name “Resurrection” for my column because the last few years have been tough and I feel like this is my time to shine. From half-assed video parts due to injuries to people not believing in me, I feel like I am constantly resurrecting myself from one situation to the next. But that’s ok, I am resilient and I love to ride. ☑

Carpe Diem! – Kirt Voreis

Have a question for Kirt Voreis?
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