

Bill's Garage

Column by **Bill Dragoo**

"Squidflipper!"

James pokes a stick into the campfire and it flares up, lighting the faces of three well worn dirt riders.

"So Bill, tell us how you became a Squid."

"A Squid? You're calling ME a Squid? Do you even know the meaning of the word?" I ask as it becomes my turn to share a verbal version of "Stupid Videos" with my fellow adolescent minded buddies.

"I do," volunteers George. George remembers everything he's ever read. He makes me sick.

"'Squid' is a term generally associated with a new or reckless motorcyclist seen riding erratically and/or beyond his capabilities, often without appropriate riding gear. It could be a contraction of Stupid and Kid, or since you're obviously too old to qualify as a kid anymore, Squashed and Idiot."

"Speak for yourself, pal. You're older than I am. Where's the love here, anyway? You guys are harsh, but since you insist, I'll tell you what happened."

"I never expected to fall off. I just lost it. I thought I'd show Buddy Moore what the bike could do after the mods. It happens sometimes. I saw more stars than that whole sky up there. Bright lights too, but thank God, no angels or long lost ancestors reaching out to welcome me home. All I wanted was a little more power from my KLX 250. Everybody knows it came from the factory too pooped to pop. I gathered tips from some folks who knew how to hitch a few extra ponies to that anemic little tiddler. Bored it, cammed it, cleaned up the head and installed a flat slide pumper carb. Who'd a thought it would get away from me like it did?"

"Buddy said he thought you were dead," James blurts with a snort.

"So did I, but I guess it wasn't my time. After Buddy ran

the numbers on his dyno and we finished the jetting, I think he knew better than I did what we'd built. I just thought I'd try it out in the field behind the building."

"Dirt?"

"More like brick. Some grass, but the dirt was hard. If I'd have thought, which you guys will say was out of character for me, I'd have brought a helmet...but I didn't. Anyway, I gassed it and the front wheel snapped up like a stepped-on garden rake. It spooled up like I'd hit oil so I yanked it to third. My second mistake. The first was getting on the bike without a lid."

"So how'd you manage to hit your face when you flipped over backwards? I figured you'd land on your butt, although there isn't much difference." George allows.

"You're one to talk. I didn't lose it in the standard fashion. Touched the brake and it sort of skidded to one side. Kind of weird feeling actually, but I thought I could save it. Famous last words. The bike smacked me hard on the knee and stuffed my face in the dirt."

"Squid," says James, shaking his head.

"Lucky Squid," George throws in his two cents worth.

Bill takes a fall he won't soon forget!



"Life without love. I don't know why I ride with you guys."

"Because we keep you humble, Bill," says George.

"Thanks, but give it a rest. The 'Squidflipper' does a fine job of that.

And hand me that helmet. It's a good night for a ride." 

