

Yetifan sent Jared Graves a few questions, back when he was racing 4X

- 1) You've been riding bikes since you were a teenager and doing BMX racing back when you were younger, at what point did you realize you were pretty handy on a bike, and start to take it more seriously?

I'm not sure really, I was always an XC bandit in my junior years, Got medals at national champs and selected for junior worlds team and that, so I guess I knew I was going ok around that time, But as far as DH/4X goes, when I got 3rd in juniors at national champs in 2000 in my first ever race DH I thought I was doing pretty good. In 4X I was getting Norba podiums and World cup top 10's in 2004 with zero training, I was literally sunbaking and playing pool all day, and beating top 4X dudes at the time, that's when I thought Maybe I should do some training, I could go OK at this!.

- 2) I'm sure pretty much anybody who takes part in BMX & MTB racing has a star that they look up to, who were your heroes back when you started out racing MTB's & did you ever beat them?

Kovarik, Rennie, Nico and Peaty, and in the 4X side Eric Carter and Prokop. I did my first national round in Elite in 2001 in Newcastle, and although I crashed and finished 3rd my qualifying time held up as the fastest time of the day, and afterwards Rennie invited me to come out partying with him, so damn pumped! haha. That was the first time I went faster than my idol, a good day!

- 3) Do you remember your first Mountain bike? What was it? any fond memories?

Easy! 1995 model Giant Rincon...Blue, actually I still have it at my parents, its hanging up on the wall! So many fond memories, we used to go out for all day rides EVERY day in school holidays, any trail we could find. cruise up then race down!

- 4) Have you ever had a non bike job? If so, what was it?

Yes haha, working for my dad as a pattern maker (nobody these days knows what a pattern maker really does, lets just say I did a lot of sand papering, and cutting wood on machines, oh and sweeping the workshop to keep it clean) I started an apprenticeship with him, but to be honest, I hated it wayyyyyy too much to ever think it could be a part of my future. But he paid me \$15 an hour tax free, which is pretty rad for a 17 year old, and I farted around more than I worked, so whatever!

- 5) You live in Toowoomba Australia, what's the riding scene like? Did you move there because of the riding? Or always lived near there?

Toowoomba born and bred, and proud of it!!! You know Toowoomba cops it a bit of crap around here, coz were in South East Queensland which is a bit like the Southern

California of Australia, and its a pretty boring town. But for mountain biking we live right in the middle of the biggest mountain range in Australia, We have 3 seperate mountains I can Build on, the club is all about building and maintaining trails. Ive had many top guys stay at my place over the years, Justin Leov, Sam Blenkinsop, Aaron Gwin, Bryn Atkinson, not to mention the local Pros that come to ride for the day like Kovarik and Rennie and they love our trails, so I cant complain at all, except for our clay dirt, which means that when it rains its impossible to do mud runs, because when clay is wet it sticks to everything and basically stops your wheels from turning, so I have to travel when the weather is right....or should I say wrong, for mud practice.

6) What do you miss the most when you are away racing the world cups?

Being home! Jess, My Spastic Dog Josie, My car, Riding at home with my crew (Scott, Louis, Pete). The biggest thing riding has going for it is the social side of things. And If you don't ride for fun the you should just quit!

7) From 2011, you will be doing more DH stuff, did you miss racing the DH in 2010? Or was it a good break to leave it for a short time?

Ive only just announced in going to be focusing on DH again in the future and already people Ive switched for this year....2011 is still about 4X and 2012 ill be focusing on DH. Sorry, just wanted to get that clear! Well I really missed DH is 2008 when I was focussing on BMX, so I wanted to come back for 2009, but As I hadnt won a World Champs or World Cup overall 4X that ended up taking my focus. I found myself doing the minimum for DH to save energy and not get hurt for 4X. 4-5 practice runs maximum before racing, and I was riding well within myself. It really was a waste of time. But yeah after doing no DH in 2010 I really felt like I was missing out.

8) What was the very last ride you did? and on what bike?

Today...14 DH runs on my 303. although, 5 days a week are still dedicated to 4X training at the moment.

9) You've now been on the YETI Team longer than anybody in its 25 year history, whats so special about YETI than made you want to keep racing for them?

Well Ross Milan has been with Yeti longer, but I suppose I have been on the factory team longer. Yeti is just a rad brand that I fit in with perfectly. I call all the employees my friends, Ive had offers from other teams over the years, and for more money than Yeti, but they know me so well and do all the can to get me what Im after. I ride because I love it, not for a fat paycheck. And Yeti make the best bikes to keep me happy, and the pay isnt bad at all either haha! They are so loyal and im hoping my loyalty will be rewarded with some form of job after im done racing

professionally...hint hint Conroy haha

10) Hows the 370z going? Do you let Jessie drive it?

My Princess! Of course she can drive it, she knows how angry I would be if anything happened, so she treats it with due care! Its becoming a money pit, but I love it!

11) I saw you have a new 303, what do you think to it?

It floats my boat! Its a plow machine that pedals like a hardtail, what more could you want!

12) Whats the greatest thing about racing bikes for a living?

I do what I want...all day....every day! Luckily all I want to do is ride.

13) OK ,nearly done- special thanks must go to?

Of course Yeti....Monster Energy, Oakley, Family.

14) (Cant leave it on 13 questions), one from a gravey fan called Shaun Hughes- why is your bum so big?

Because I squat deep and dont half ass my training! wow, thanks Shaun, im going to try and smash my bike now just so you have more work! (NOTE_ Shaun is Jareds mechanic)