



by Jacob Doran

## Join us for the **Six Days Challenge!**

It's Saturday morning, July 20, 2019. The truck tank is full, the camper is hooked up and the bikes are loaded. Jacob Foster and I are on our way to Michigan's Upper Peninsula to start our week long adventure with The Cycle Conservation Club on the annual Six Days of Michigan trail ride. We've spent the past week preparing for our biggest ride of the year. The bikes are in tip top shape with fresh fluids and new parts along with many extras packed for the week long journey. Jacob and I have been on many trail tours, but this is only our second year riding the Six Days and our first time ever riding dirt bikes in the Upper Peninsula.

The 2019 Six Days of Michigan started in Kinross in traditional CCC style, field camping at the Chippewa County Fairgrounds. We were welcomed by (*then*) CCC Executive Director Lewis Shuler telling us where to set up camp and handing us a map book almost as thick as a Sears catalog.

The next few days were strictly about riding. Each day began at 7:30 am getting dressed right into your riding gear and grabbing a quick bite to eat for breakfast. Then off to the riders' meeting, where you'd receive important information about the day's ride, such as mileage

to each gas stop, places to stop, landmarks to look for and other crucial notes to add to your map. Then it was out on the trail.

As mentioned before, Jacob and I never rode in the UP so the trails and landscape were new to us. We rode awesome trail systems like Kinross, Brevort, Trout Lake, Bay City Lake, Birch Hill, Foreman Lake, Cranberry Lake, and Drummond Island. Drummond Island (aka: the Rock) was one of my most memorable days of riding. A place like no other. Gnarly terrain! Ironically, my favorite day of Six Days was on Drummond Island where I bent my rear rotor and got a rear flat tire. Those rocks on Drummond will get you! Have you ever ridden back to camp with zip-ties holding your rear tire on the rim? Well, I did and needless to say, the Rock lived up to its notorious reputation for challenging, technical terrain. Aside from the great trails, Drummond Island also offered lookout points you can only get to by ORV. I would even say some were accessible only by dirt bike! We spent quite a bit of time on the limestone shelf rocks doing our own "trials riding." Tons of great memories from this day.

While Days 1-3 were in the Upper Peninsula, Days 4-6 were

in the Lower Peninsula where we camped out of Indian River and rode trail systems including Tomahawk, Red Bridge, Bummer's Roost, and Black Lake. Throughout the whole Six Days event, each rider averaged over 125 miles of epic trails per day.

In addition to the great trail, we also met some great people. The Six Days of Michigan brings a host of first time participants each year with a good mix of riders from all over the country. To name a few, we met guys from Quebec, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Alabama, Georgia, Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Texas. Michigan is so blessed to have such a vast trail system that many out of state riders come to experience it. In fact, Six Days has become a vacation destination for riders from all over.

The Six Days of Michigan was a great way to experience new trails, meet new riding buddies and of course, have a week long blast! Not to mention, a solid week of seat time allowed me to improve both my riding skills and endurance on the bike. So with that, I challenge you to come out and experience the Ultimate Trail Ride! Weigh your options and we think you'll agree it's your best excuse to get out and ride! See you on the trail!