

## RACER NEWS

### Ian Sherwood's ISDE Race Report

**Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup>, 82<sup>nd</sup> International Six Days of Enduro, La Serena, Chile**

**Silver Medal**

Travel to Chile & the rest of the week prior to the event went smooth. I picked up my rental bike a day early on Tuesday from KTM Chile. I got it dialed in with plenty of time to get it through tech inspection & into Parc Ferme on Thursday with no problems. Friday & Saturday were long days with team Canada full of driving to & walking nine special tests. Saturday night was the opening ceremony that the city of La Serena pulled out all the stops for; the main road to the beach was closed & lined with thousands of local race fans for the parade of race teams from thirty nations. The parade ended at the lighthouse where grandstands full of fans watched as all the countries were introduced & the show began, with some speakers, dancers, & a big fireworks display. You could easily see how big this event was & how happy the people of La Serena were to have us there.

#### Day 1

The weather was perfect for riding, about 70°, sunny, & just enough wind off the ocean to keep a chill in the air & to get the dust off the trail, it would stay this way the rest of the week. On the bike the first thing we rode was a deep sugar sand special test (ST1) at the paddock, a test we'd be riding twice a day every day. It was like my backyard in Florida so I had a good score. From the test we went straight out to the beach for a wide-open ½ hour ride where we had a short stop at the lighthouse to wave at the kids. This was an open public beach lined with resorts & locals who were gathered at the water crossings watching the racers go by. A short ride through the city got us to ST2, a hard packed, dry, dusty course on the side of a hill located in the middle of the Coquimbo. I had a decent score in this test, not too fast but it was clean. Then it was up into the mountains for an hour where we got our first taste of the dust & some technical rocky climbs. Then, until we hit the same mountain on the way back it was all desert trail that had a bit of everything from rocky washes to sandy dunes & it was all fast 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> gear stuff. We stopped at a couple of cool little fishing villages (TC3 & 4) for our service stops. ST3 was a lot like ST2 but with more rocks & more off-cambers, I had a clean lap but I didn't set the clock on fire. ST4 was on the beach & in the sand dunes so I was on the gas the whole lap & had a great score.



Day 1, ST3



Day 2, ST4

Back-tracking now through the mountains & the climbs on this side were definitely steeper. The dirt that was between the rocks on the way out was now gone so getting around the fallen riders was challenging. I was wondering how we'd make it over this mountain again tomorrow. Another



## RACER NEWS

### Ian Sherwood's ISDE Race Report

clean ride at ST5 (which was ST2 earlier) then the beach back to the paddock & had a good time around ST6 (ST1 backwards). At my first end of day service I took it easy & just changed the rear tire, did an oil & air filter change then impounded easily before my 15 minutes where up. After seven & a half hours on the bike & a good clean day I ended up 22<sup>nd</sup> in class & feeling good. One of my club team members didn't finish today so my team isn't doing any good.



### Day 2

Same trail as day 1 & another good lap around ST1. ST2's first uphill had become badly rutted & the dry silty dirt offered little traction. Riders were having troubles getting up this hill including me, so I lost some time in this test pushing the bike to get around a stuck rider. Just when I thought I was getting used to the rocks in the mountains I fell on a down hill, crushed my pipe & bent my silencer. I nursed my bike into Tongoy where my crew had a replacement pipe waiting. I got it changed & stayed on time but I still had worries since my silencer was bent & is a marked part that can only be changed & sound tested when I impounded at the end of the day. On the trail coming into ST3, my bent silencer fell out of my pipe so I had to do some trail side repairs. I got the silencer to where it would finish the day but this put me 2 minutes late at TC5. Still worrying about my silencer & now dealing with slower rider's dust my score in ST3 was definitely off the pace. At sandy beach ST4 I had a great run which helped me get back on track for the rest of the day. The trip back over the mountain had become impassable & was



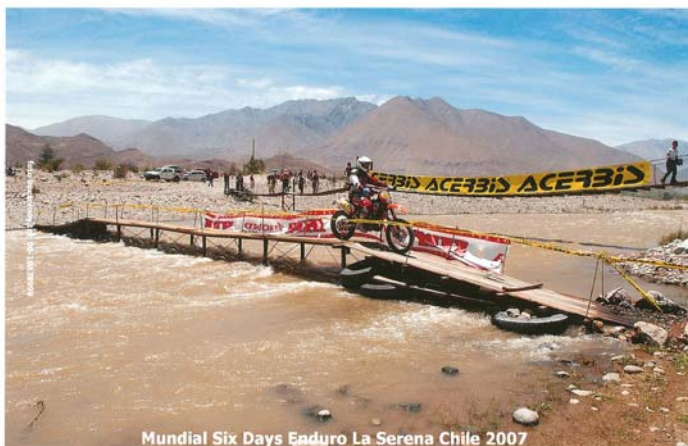
## RACER NEWS

### Ian Sherwood's ISDE Race Report

cancelled so we rode highway back to Coquimbo (ST5). Arriving at ST5 (same as ST2) I learned that the difficult hill had been cut out of the course shortly after I had come through that morning. I didn't have a great time in this test, being 2 minutes back had me dealing with passing 6 slower riders & their dust. Back to the paddock & my lap around ST6 was slowed by a clogged air filter. My end of day service was quick again changing front & rear tires along with replacing the silencer (which was re-sound tested) all within the allowed 15 minutes. Another seven hours on the bike today & I'm still feeling good, my day's results slid to 47<sup>th</sup> due to 2 minute trail penalty & trouble in TC2. My other teammate on my club team didn't finish today so with me being the only team member left my team is done.

#### Day 3

New trail today & we're on a faster schedule today so time could be tight. We'd be heading east over some mountains & up the Equi valley towards the vineyards & Vicuña. Another great test at ST1 then some fast rocky trail up to ST2. ST2 wasn't timed this morning so I took a good look at the track that ran up & down some rocky desert washes. Then the trail took us over some huge dunes & onto some hilly desert trail where I had my big get-off. The one we don't tell Susie about. Probably running about 50mph I glanced up the trail at a downed rider, big mistake because I'm sure I nailed the exact same thing that got him. I went over the bars & got pile-driven by my bike a couple of times before landing upside-down in a cactus about three feet away from the other guy. I slowly got up & found that the German rider had fared worse than me with a broken collar bone. I went on to the checkpoint where we informed the race officials about the injured rider & with 10 minutes for service we began assessing the damage. Only an hour into a seven hour day & I had really hurt the bottom of my right foot, took some skin off my arm, & been impaled with cactus needles on my whole right side, this was going to be a long day. All I had done to the bike was bent the sub-frame & rear fender, nothing to worry about. On the way to TC3 I learned to ride with the pain from my foot while going up some rocky dry creek beds & technical mountain trails. After TC3 it was into the higher mountains for more than an hour, we followed an old mountain road with sheer drops on one side that you didn't want to get near. Closer to the summit we were back on trails & had some silty climbs to the top. Some long down hills brought us into Vicuña, a wonderful village where town center was shut down just for TC4.



Day 3, ST3



Day 4, ST4

Hundreds of people showed up, some selling their local crafts but the best part of it all was the fans. Children of all ages showed up with their notepads awaiting an autograph, it was a cool





## RACER NEWS

### Ian Sherwood's ISDE Race Report

experience. Still in Vicuña we had ST3 beside the river full of football sized rocks & a big crowd of race fans. I was smooth through this one, I'm not sure how you'd go fast in them rocks. We were straight back up into the mountains but these had no rocks in sight, they were just silt & on the uphill you had to keep your momentum up or you'd spin the wheel, dig a hole & stop. Next was the never-ending creek bed to Falernia, it was probably 15 miles of varied rocky terrain & you never thought you were making any ground because you were always looking at the side of a mountain. TC5, Falernia was in the middle of a picturesque vineyard, I finally had to take some Advil to numb the pain of my now enormous pounding foot. From here through TC6 & to TC7 it was all paved road that winded its way through little villages with locals all out waving at the racers. I think the temperature dropped 10° on this road. At TC7 I was told to ride hard because time was tight coming into ST4 (ST2 earlier that day). Back tracking now I rode hard over the trail that I crashed in & got into ST4 with 4 minutes to gas the bike & get into the test where I ended up with a good score. Then it was a short ride back to the paddock & a time around the sand track that was slowed by my foot. The end of day services were getting easier, I'd gotten both tire changes down to 8 minutes which left me plenty of time to bleed the brakes & check all my spokes. Despite my problems on the trail my test times were good enough to get me into 20<sup>th</sup> position for the day. Heading to the hotel with my black & blue foot I was glad I already knew tomorrow's trail & that it wouldn't be as tough as days one & two.



## DAYS 3 - 4

14 / 15 NOVEMBER 2007



### Day 4

Considering how hard I hit the ground yesterday my body was in really good shape besides the foot that I tried to forget about once I had my boots on. Same trail as day 3, I started off the day with a good time around the sand track & found that there was a good line around ST2 now so it was more fun. I tried not to find the rock or whatever had put me on the ground yesterday & arrived at TC2 with no problems. On the way to TC3 I had one bobble that put me off the trail &



## RACER NEWS

### Ian Sherwood's ISDE Race Report

onto steep hill full of loose gravel that slid me further down the hill & away from the trail with every move I made. Luckily the first rider to come by stopped to help me get the bike back onto the trail, he said he was tired & just wanted to finish, I told him he would if he'd made it this far & thanked him for the help. I was riding a little easier today since I knew I made it to all the checks with plenty of time yesterday. The trip over the mountain was more fun today & there were some better lines down the mountain so I made it into Vicuña with about twelve minutes for service & enough time for some more autographs. Into the rocks of ST3 again & right off the start I got out of the good line & bounced around like a ping-pong ball for 50 feet trying to get back into it, I never did get a flow going & was a little slower than yesterday's time. The creek bed to Falernia didn't seem too long today but the roads to TC7 seemed even colder. Time was tight once again getting to ST4 but I did have a smooth ride in the test. I almost ran over a photographer on the way back to the paddock where I had a good sand test again & no problems changing tires or impounding on time. I definitely had more fun today since I knew what to expect & Susie kept me pumped up on Advil so my foot wasn't really a problem, I finished the day in 22<sup>nd</sup> place.



Day 4, under the highway, almost hit the photographer

### Day 5

It was a good feeling this morning knowing that this was the last day on the trail. My forearms & hands were worn-out but at least the swelling in my foot had gone down a bit, it was still painful to walk on & putting my boot on was hell. My laps around ST1 & ST2 were fast & smooth again then we were heading north on new trail. The trail to ST3 was a lot like the desert trail & mountains from day 1 but the mountains weren't as big. ST3 was a flat sand test, it was still smooth when I put my lap in & I had a good time. Only ten minutes away was ST4 on the beach, it was sandy but nothing like ST3. Definitely one of my favorites it had really deep sand, was fast & had dunes that produced some steep down hills where you could almost jump to the bottom. We would hit this test on the way back & I had some of my best times of the week here. Still heading north we rode up the coast through some huge car sized rocks to TC3 then did some supermoto for ten miles on a smooth curvy mountain dirt road that brought us into TC4. TC4 was where we turned south & rode some high speed rocky desert power line road back towards the tests on the beach. ST5 (ST4 earlier) was even more fun now that it had gotten rougher & so was ST6 (ST3 earlier) but a couple of falls hurt my score. Then back over the



## RACER NEWS

### Ian Sherwood's ISDE Race Report

mountain towards ST7 where we'd have our last test of the week. I had a clean test but after everybody had hit this test twice a day for the last three days it had gotten chewed up pretty bad. This ride back to the finish was my last time on the trail & I was thrilled that I'd almost completed this amazing race. There were a bunch of kids at the culvert crossing under the highway so lit up the back tire & gave them a smoke show all the way through the culvert, they loved it. The sand test at the paddock was cancelled today so the motocross track could be prepared for tomorrow. I got my bike ready for the next day's motocross at my last service stop & impounded on time. A nice touch here; Franco Acerbis the organizer of the whole event & an icon in the motorcycle industry shook my hand congratulated me for finishing my first Six Days. Staying on time all day & having some good tests put me in 27<sup>th</sup> for the day. I had no problems with the foot today other than walking, my hands & forearms are even more worn-out, but the rest of the body was feeling good.



### Day 6

It's final moto day, just a 20 minute motocross race against the top 40 guys in my class. My moto wasn't until noon so I was able to relax & watch some of the earlier motos. Going into the moto I was sitting in 22<sup>nd</sup> for the week & on silver medal time, with no chance of moving up to gold I was hoping to move up a few positions in class. I got a mid pack start then made a lot of passes on the first couple of laps into about 11<sup>th</sup> position. Then my hands & arms just didn't





## RACER NEWS

### Ian Sherwood's ISDE Race Report

want to work anymore with seven more laps to go. I had to back off my pace just to hold onto the bike & luckily only got passed by one guy. After running 5 days of the best organized race I've ever been to, with flawless scoring of six hundred racers the one scoring problem occurred. All the morning club team races had some bad transponders so some racer's laps weren't accounted for, I was one of those. Due to this problem they went back to the end of day five's times for the official final scores, the good news about this was it didn't affect my silver medal status. 30 minutes later I got my bike out of impound & I had officially completed the Six Days on my first try, it was a great feeling.

After about 34 hours on the bike & over 800 miles of trail I earned a silver medal & finished 22<sup>nd</sup> in the C2 class that had 143 racers of which 80 finished. My club team finished in 76<sup>th</sup> place out of 92 teams, so we weren't the first team to loose riders.

This was an unforgettable experience, a totally unique race where I was proud to represent Canada with a strong finish at an ISDE that was said to be one of the tougher ones. It was probably the most fun I've had on a bike, being able to ride almost every type of terrain you can imagine from the rocky mountains that was new to me, to the sandy beach tests that were just like home. The organization of the race was top notch & atmosphere around the paddock was really amazing, any rider or country's support crews were willing to lend a hand with anything. The locals were so friendly & appreciative to have us there, they made for great race fans & really added to the experience.

All of team Canada & especially the support crews at every check point where a huge help. The two people that I couldn't have done this without was my support crew Susie & Ben, they chased me all week in the truck meeting me at the check points & tests. Ben has been to a few ISDE's so he was my coach & ran my support for the week. Susie, my girlfriend perfectly ran my nutrition program keeping my body fueled & strong all week. Thanks to all my friends & family who bought my t-shirts & made donations, this trip wouldn't have been possible without your support.

I'm hooked now, guess I'll be in Greece in September.



Team Canada



RACER NEWS  
Ian Sherwood's ISDE Race Report



Parc Ferme, almost 600 bikes



Opening ceremonies





RACER NEWS  
Ian Sherwood's ISDE Race Report



Day 1, ST2



Day 1, ST4



RACER NEWS  
Ian Sherwood's ISDE Race Report



Walking the tests, day's 1 & 2, ST4



Walking the tests, day's 3 & 4, ST3





RACER NEWS  
Ian Sherwood's ISDE Race Report



Downtown La Serena, lined with Six Days banners



Day 5, up the coast after ST4

