

On the eve of his debut as a MotoGP racer in the Red Bull US Grand Prix, Bikeland's Princesskiwi sits down with Kawasaki's Roger Lee Hayden at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca to chat about life, llamas and racing motorcycles...



PK: I really enjoyed the article you wrote for Superbike Planet and the Kawasaki commercial you acted in – do you think you are going to do more acting or writing in the future?

Roger: I think there is definitely a possibility of doing some more commercials. My brother is doing something for MTV right now – we've been doing some stuff for that too. Definitely the commercial went over a lot better than we all thought, it was pretty easy and it was kinda fun actually. A lot more people say stuff to me about seeing the commercial than they do about my racing! I go to the gym at home, some guy is like, "Don't I know you from somewhere – oh yeah, you're in that commercial". That's pretty cool!

PK: Do you think you will ever start a race school or put your name on an exhaust system?

Roger: It's definitely something I have thought about, maybe more the school than the exhaust system because all the schools are such a success right now. I mean you just don't know what you are going to do when you retire. I haven't looked into it yet because I am not ready to think about life after racing quite yet - but it has crossed my mind.

PK: Is there anything you would like to accomplish before you turn 30?

Roger: Lots of Championships and lots of wins. That's about it really.

PK: Was it hard not racing with your brother Tom on your team this year?

Roger: Not really – it took a bit of adjustment. We still travel together and things like that. We still hang out, we just don't share a truck. I guess it is kind of nice now having my own truck because Jamie always uses his motorhome, so that's pretty nice but it's cool having him as a teammate I definitely miss hanging out with him a little bit more, but it is just part of it. He

went on, you know and wanted to do something different so I'm happy for him.

PK: What is your favorite color?

Roger: Red!

PK: If the AMA introduced racers like they do in the Supercross with flames, fireworks and music – what song would you pick for your theme song?

Roger: My theme song? Hmm, not really sure – Country Boy Can Survive maybe? Nobody else would have anything like that – so it would probably stand out pretty good!

[Click to hear "Country Boy Can Survive"](#)

PK: What's the last movie you saw with your friends?

Roger: Knocked Up.

PK: Did you like it?

Roger: It was ok, it could have been a little better I thought, but it was pretty funny.

PK: If you have a night off, do you stay home or do you go out?

Roger: Both.

PK: What's the last gadget you bought for your house?

Roger: Not really sure – I don't really buy much stuff - I bought a dog!

PK: What kind of dog did you get?

Roger: Old English Bull Dog - and I got it fixed – that was 200 bucks.

Bikeland: What's the dog's name?

Roger: Ralphy.

PK: Do you have a lucky charm?

Roger: I wear a Saint Christopher a lot because I'm Catholic.

PK: How important is it to have your family at your races?

Roger: Really important because there is always so much stuff going on and there are so many fake people around, you can always depend on your family – you know your family is always there, always supports you when you are having a bad weekend. There are always people around when you are winning, but whenever you get 5th, 6th or crash – those people don't come around knocking on your door, so it is always nice to have my family around.

PK: Do you have a favorite llama?

Roger: Favorite what?

PK: Llama – doesn't your family have llamas?

Roger: Yeah. I don't really have a favorite one, I don't really see the point of them, really – they just sit out in the field. We have an alpaca, which is pretty cool – I kind of like it. We also have a miniature pony, I kind of like that, that's about it.

PK: What's the one thing your friends know about you that other people may not?

Roger: That's a secret.

PK: What is the biggest misconception about you?

Roger: A lot of people think that I am really laid back and easy going, but on a race weekend I have this hidden temper that nobody really sees, so hopefully I can keep it like that! My Crew Chief sees it a lot, but I think as long as you keep it hidden – it's ok.

PK: When did you find out that you were going to race MotoGP this weekend?

Roger: About a couple of weeks ago. They were talking to me about it and then we went and tested the bike. I knew I was probably going to do it. I really didn't say anything because they never really just said, "Be here at this day..." I was almost sure I was going to do it, so I knew for a couple of weeks. Then they wanted to put out the press release and stuff and I really didn't say anything.

PK: That didn't really give you a lot of time to prep for the extra race?

Roger: As far as the training goes, I have a trainer so we had the same schedule because I am used to racing two classes in the weekend anyways. It took a little extra work, helmet and stuff like that. Lots more interviews and people calling. So it's definitely made me a little more busier – that's for sure!

PK: How different is the bike? – the ZX-RR?

Roger: It's a lot different. I mean, it's smaller than a Superbike, it handles a lot different. It's a lot more rideable. With a Superbike – you are just trying to hang on to it, get it to hook up and a bunch of different things. This bike is more of a race bike - it's really small, fast, and flowing. I just can't believe how small it is.

PK: Which do you like better the ZX-6R or the ZX-10R?

Roger: Every place is different. The fast tracks I like the 10 because you can go a lot faster with it, but when you get to a tight track it's kind of hard to ride because there is so much horsepower, the 600 makes it easier. It just depends on the track.

PK: Do you have a street bike?

Roger: Actually no, I don't have a street bike. I used to have a street bike permit – but it expired! I plan to get my street bike license again, just in case I ever do ride on the street. I don't really have any desire, I guess because when you race to see how fast you can go and then you go on a street bike and only go 35, it just feels impossible!

PK: If you were to arm-wrestle your brothers who would win?

Roger: Me, for sure.

PK: For sure?

Roger: Yes.

PK: Do you have a MotoGP Nick Name?

Roger: No – not really. They put “Country Boy” on all my stuff already, just because it was on my helmet and all that.

PK: So, is that your name – are you going to stick with that?

Roger: Uh-Huh.

PK: What’s the most valuable lesson you think your family has taught you?

Roger: They have taught me a lot of lessons. I guess the most important one is never give up - stay true to your self. I think that’s the most important one.

PK: If someone were to do a track day for the first time – what advice would you give to him or her?

Roger: To listen to whoever is instructing. There is so much more to learn out there then when you get out on the street. I did track days and I still go there. A few years ago I went to the Keith Code School, Freddie Spencer School – even when you are a pro there is always stuff you can learn.

PK: Thank you very much!