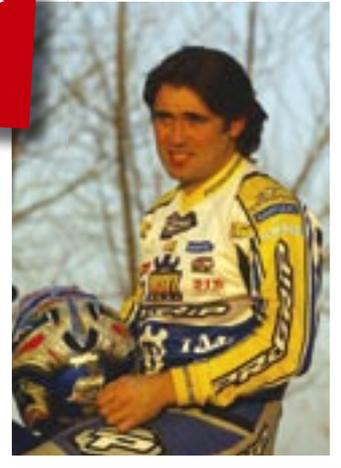




# TOP TIPS



Another one of Enduro's nasties – the protruding root. It's rarely seen on motocross tracks due to the lack of trees (obviously), but when you're weaving in and out of the forest during Enduro and Cross Country races roots can become really exposed and, as the track becomes worn and eroded, they can be quite gnarly.

# Fancy a Root?

**Y**eah, roots can be pretty crap. Annoying even. They pop up everywhere – sometimes halfway through an event as the soil around them gradually gets eroded away – and they can trip you up, sending you flying through the air, without warning. I've lost count of the times I've cursed a root. Roots can be really slippery when they're wet too, which can make steep climbs particularly tiresome, not to mention painful and embarrassing. Arghhhh, bloody roots. But it needn't be all bad because once you figure out a few ways to

tackle them – and there's more than one way to cook a goose in this instance – then you should find inner peace with the little, woody buggers. Either way, whether you're a total novice or a seasoned pro, roots will always find away of catching you out eventually. I think they have little, fiendish minds in their little heads and they go out of their way to get you on the deck. Maybe it's just the tree's way of saying: "don't ride that noisy thing in 'ere?" Mmmm, hadn't thought of that before. Anywho, before I drift off onto a tangent, here's my dos and don'ts...

### DOS AND DON'TS

**DON'T brake or accelerate**  
They are generally quite slippery and will cause the front, or rear wheel, to step out (not good), so it's best not to do anything sudden when you're traversing them. So yeah, no accelerating or braking unless absolutely necessary (say you're going uphill or something).

**DON'T turn on them**  
It's the same when turning on them, this will really wash the front wheel out (quickly) and you will end up on your ear (even worse). So try to avoid it.

**DO hit them square on**  
If you have to hit a root the thing to remember is always try and hit it square on, if you're looking far up the track rather than down at your mudguard (as you should be, of course) you can see them coming and get lined up to hit them well in advance.

**DO think about your front wheel**  
Another way to deal with them is to place your front wheel where the root ends, or vees with another root or stone. Doing this should prevent your wheel from stepping out, simply because it will have nowhere else to go (hopefully).



## AVOID IT!

Right, not sure how much of the root you can actually see in these pictures but trust me, it's there. In these images I am taking the obvious line around the root, even though it's the long way round it's by far the safest. Obviously, to do this is dead easy, however, to be in a position to do it is the tricky thing. Well, it's not tricky, you just have to make sure you're looking ahead at all times. That way you'll see the offending root in plenty of time, meaning you can reposition yourself and the bike to avoid the root and a possible painful dismount.

## BUNNY-HOP

Another technique is to bunny-hop over the root. In this case I was fortunate to find a little bump just before the rut. I used that to gain lift and jump over. This will need a bit of practice perhaps, and you have to be fortunate enough to find something to get air off. But try it, if all else fails you'll just wheelie over it anyway, and that's a sound technique too. If you do choose to do it this way (show off) just make sure you don't land on the root because if you do you'll be properly rooted...



## WHEELIE

Another way to tackle roots is to treat them like a log, or some other obstacle. They may not look as threatening as a big log in your path but, seriously, these things can be more slippery than a oily penguin. Basically you want to loft your front wheel over the root in exactly the same way I showed you in issue 28. By picking the front up and wheelie-ing over the threat of the front washing out is lost, however, you still have to be careful that the rear doesn't spin on the root, causing it to step out. A little speed can help here.



## TELL THEM I TAUGHT YOU

Chris Hockey (AKA Kiwi) offers one-to-one or group tuition to those willing to put their lives in his hands (only kidding – he knows his stuff does ol'Kiwi). So if you're interested in learning from the hairy one...

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