

Even though Chad refers to him in the third person, don't be fooled—Mark Hillson asked the questions.

What did your parents name you?

Chad J. DeGroot.

How many years have you had that name?

About 18.

What do you consider your home town?

Green Bay, Wisconsin.

What's the population of

Green Bay?

It's pretty small, but you know it's the home town of the Packers, the famous football team.

What made you decide you wanted to freestyle, living in a place like Wisconsin?

I don't know, I think it's better than being a beer-drinkin', four-by-four-drivin', tighty-whitey, Hoosier guy, so I just got into that.

Don't the winters mess up your riding?

Yeah, but that's why I moved to Phoenix. This way it's warmer here. It's too cold in the winter and too hot in the summer, so Phoenix is the place to be.

Do you have anyone to flatland with in Phoenix?

Actually, I moved down here with Mark Hillson, and Chase Gouin. Trevor Meyer moved down, too. We ride with Ells and some guys that live around here, like Leif Valin and a bunch of other

local riders.

There's a big scene.

Okay Chad, what is your sponsorship situation like?

Right now I'm sponsored by Odyssey, Airwalk shoes, and Standard Industries.

Odyssey has helped me a lot, seeing as they've put out some parts and flowed me stuff. Airwalk has helped me a lot by giving me shoes, 'cause shoes are expensive these days. Standard helped me out totally by giving me a frame and pegs and stuff, 'cause I always crack those shitty Haros. Standard gave me what they say is an indestructible frame, and I haven't had a problem with it yet, and they're

helping me out a lot, so I'd like to thank them.

Chad, do you consider yourself the biggest slut in freestyle?

I don't know, I guess I do

"bikers

my part.

Tell me one thing you don't want people to know about you.

One thing? I guess I can't do backflips.

Why does a boy like yourself paint your toe nails?

I guess I tried it once, and now I'm addicted. My toe-nails grow out and it looks shitty cause there's a little worn out part, so I re-paint 'em. I don't know, I like it.

Is there anything in your lifetime you'd like to accomplish, besides being the best freestyle rider?

You mean non-freestyle type things?

Yes, Chad, something outside of the sport.

I'd like to someday own my own business, maybe make a lot of money, live comfortably, settle down.

What is your biggest weakness in your flatland riding?

Well, if I had to narrow it down, it would be that I can't kick the habit of squeaking like a girl. I don't know—my squeaking just needs to be more manly. Aggression—I need aggression.

Is there one moment in your freestyle career that



really stands out from all the others?

It would probably be entering all the BS contests and getting first or second in all of them, and at the end of the year, receiving the belt in

how can you be happy when people are snaking stuff and stealing ideas, and I really don't know where this question is leading.

What's your involvement with the Baco Designs thing?

We—
me,
Chris
Rye,
and
Mark

stress TOO MUCH"

Chicago for first place in the expert flatland class. I think that's the best.

Does Standard have any plans to make you go pro next year?

I really don't know, I guess that's my decision, and I really haven't thought about it much. I'm planning on going pro, but who knows when.

What do you think about all the bullshit in the bike industry, and all the heated fighting between the companies?

I don't know, I don't see a reason for it. Everybody should just be happy, but

Hillson—bought a bunch of video equipment and we decided to make some videos. What we did was go to contests all over and we'd film 'em, put the film together and try to sell them. Then we kind of branched off into making clothing and stuff—we'd just draw up some designs and Chris would print them in his basement, he's still running everything out of his basement. We also have a freestyle team where we do shows all over the Midwest. It could lead to more than that, but we're small right now.

Do you have anything else you want everybody to know?

No.

Come on, Chad, there's a lot of things inside of you that you just want to get out.

I'm not going to say it.

Damn it, Chad, I'm really serious—what else do you have to say to everybody?

Just that Dennis McCoy is kind of interrupting this interview by shaking the car, but any last words would have to be that he wants to get in.

How do you feel about interrupting this interview, Dennis?

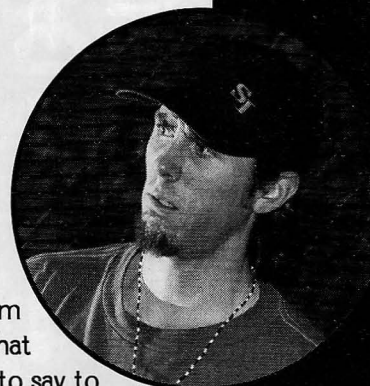
Dennis: I really don't give a shit, I just need to get something.

For the last time, what do you think?

What do I think? I think people should all ride together in harmony, whether the bikers be gay, even lesbian riders, those naked riders that lake

jump—everyone should just ride as one. The stress level—bikers stress TOO MUCH. It's not that stressful. If you're stressing out, you just need a little more practice to get better.

chad



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interview:
Mark Hillson
Photos:
Brad McDonald

