

TRAILS  
12  
SHOUTING  
segment



# DARIN READ & THE NORTHWEST: TIL DEATH DO THEY PART

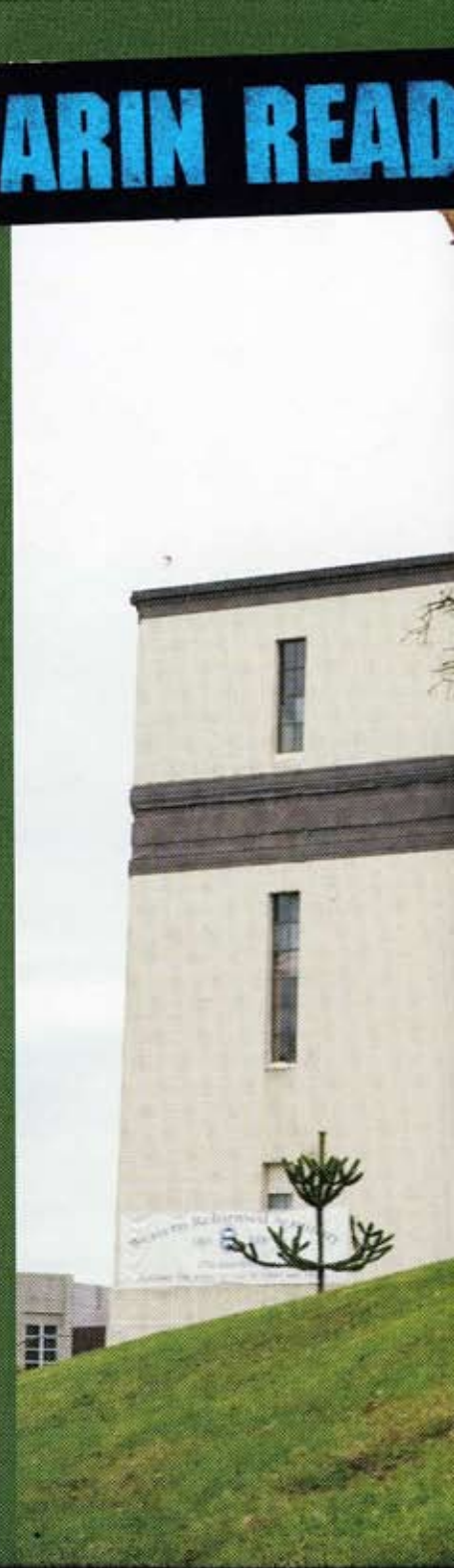
Text/photos: Ryan Fudger (unless noted)

The second most familiar sound right behind a spade packing earth at Solame, would be the sound of a table snapping into place. Darin pushes one around a circle in that same spot in the woods. Photo: Tal

**Darin has been in control of his destiny from the beginning; never afraid to give an opinion when asked for one, in control of when and what he rides, and always down to stir up some trouble with the boys. So, in a turn of fate, when a tape recorder fails to record an entire interview of the typical nature, I decided it would be a golden opportunity to switch things up, give him the reins of a clean tape, a functioning recorder, and a two-week span, and let him put his thoughts down however he pleased... →**



Up on the dinosaur stoop, Darin goes from steep-to-slightly less steep with a can-can footplant.



**"IT'S JUST HOME TO ME"**

Alright, my name is Darin Read; I live in Tacoma, Washington, up here in the great Northwest. I've always lived here; born and raised. I've traveled everywhere, and I couldn't see myself living anywhere else. Just, it's the best up here. All my friends live here, you know? Summertime is the best. It's green. We got good snowboarding in the winter when it's all sh-tty out, but you know, it's just home to me.

**"THAT'S WHERE MY ROOTS WERE"**

I grew up racing...pretty much started racing when I was ten, did it 'til I was like 18. It got me to travel everywhere and just go to the tracks, but I just kind of got

over it. It seemed pointless to try to, you know, strive around a track trying to pedal faster than somebody. The tracks had gotten so sh-tty that it was pointless... you just pedal over everything. So, you know, that's where my roots were. I remember back in the day riding Sheep Hills, I used to do this little camp that I'd go to every summer, and the best day was Sheep Hills day when Brian Foster came and rode Sheep with us. That was one of my best memories of being a kid out there traveling and racing—getting to ride Sheep hills with BF, training him through the lines. I also used to race Aitken...he and I would battle it out. I remember one year I took the number one Gold Cup plate from him... he's probably still pissed at me 'cause of that [laughs].

That's how I met Aitken, and watching that dude, you know, from racing each other when we were like 14 to just watch him quit racing and progress into what I think is the best rider to ever touch a bike. I'd keep looking at magazines and seeing what he was doing, and that was what I really wanted to do. I was like, "Why am I here pedaling around a track, when I can be out there riding trails and just having fun while still traveling everywhere with no competition?"

**"WE'D MEET UP, PARTY, AND RIDE"**

The northwest trails scene has been really tight knit. We'd all just meet up here on the weekend and everybody would go ride one spot, the next day go ride



Somehow it's not all that surprising that street for Darin still involves a whole lot of nature. Gap onto the picnic table and through the tree.

**"IF IT DOESN'T LOOK GOOD, THEN I DON'T THINK IT REALLY COUNTS."**

another spot, and it just seems like everybody up here is on the same page. Everybody gets along—most of the time—but we'd meet up, party, and ride. It's been like that forever—since I can remember riding. We don't really screw around and meet at a skatepark or anything...everybody meets at the trails. And that's just the Northwest Crew's way of getting together. I wouldn't change it for one second, you know? Some of the trails have come and gone—R.I.P. to all the old trails—all the Southwoods dudes, GJ's trails, Circle 8, Stateland, ATL...some of the best times of my life have been at those spots, so definitely rest in peace.

**"I GO BACK TO THE SAME SH-TTY TOWN EVERY SUMMER"**

So, one day my buddy, Black, and I are at Chris Eimen's old little shanty house and all these dudes from Oregon came up to ride. They were just showing us footage of their trails and we just hung out that night. And we're like, "Damn, those trails look good." And shoot, I must've been 17 years old and I couldn't wait to get down there that summer. The first good weekend, we traveled down and met up with the Salem

dudes. And, oh man, I met some of my lifelong friends that summer right there. You know, I'm 25 now and I go back to the same sh-tty town every summer and just look forward to hanging out with the boys and going in those same woods, just doing what we do. It's just one place that I love to be; I feel at home in those woods.

Throughout the years, the locals in Salem have changed; it's just every year there's different people coming in and out, but since I can remember, Bean and Justin are the dudes that have maintained that place forever. I always look forward to going down there and kicking it with those dudes; 'cause those are my boys and if it weren't for them, Salem wouldn't be around. So definitely shout-out for keeping it real there, and I'd like to congratulate Bean on his new kid, too. She'll be out there rippin' Salem soon. Paul also gets a little shout-out for his kid, because she's definitely cooler than him [laughs].

**"NO MONEY, NO PLACE TO STAY"**

When filming *Building The Underground*, we were like f-ck, we need to go somewhere else, maybe go

ride and go hang out—that was pretty much the deal. So we piled into Bean's Four Runner—me, Little Jeff, Bean, and Dr. J—and headed off to Pennsylvania. So, let's see, we got like an hour outside of town, got a bunch of drinks, ended up meeting some random girl at a grocery, and just got loose at her house [laughs]. Bean ended up getting super sick, so the next morning we're leaving her house and Bean couldn't drive, he's puking out the window of his own truck, and we're not even into the town with three days in. So that was funny... We made it to Pennsylvania, got to Stauffer's or wherever, and then Bean and Little Jeff got in a fight [laughs], so we didn't really want to stay there because everybody was kind of salty about that or whatever. So we ended up staying with Bennett, and we ended up riding with everybody there, had a great time. Those guys were super cool. We were pretty much there for a month and then, uh, on the way home, we're all out of money and we decided we should go to Interbike 'cause it just happened to be that time—September or whatever. No money, no place to stay...nothing, really. I don't know why we were there. So we proceeded to get completely annihilated somehow [laughs]...Little →



And the bike goes *braap*.  
Back wheel leads the front  
through a section at Solame.

Jeff got kicked out of Interbike...what else happened? I got smashed in the face at the Hard Rock with a bottle—everybody was all trippin' about that. Bean lost his keys and slept in a bush, so the last night, everybody stayed in different spots and we ended up meeting up in the parking lot somehow, and got money wired to us by our parents, and had some dude come out and make a key for the car and the bike rack, and we [laughs], uh, were on our way back home. It was just one of the best trips ever—we were on the road for a month and just no worries in the world except for riding, chillin', and whatever. I don't know, it was the good life.

#### "IT'S BEEN SEVEN YEARS NOW"

Alright, Diamondback has sponsored me since '02. And that company...just, I've grown with that company. It's been one of the best things that has ever happened to me as far as BMX has been. You know, it's been seven years now and Hammond, Trevor, and all those dudes at Diamondback have had my back. They sent me to the contests when I was younger, and now it's just gotten to the point

where they let me do what I'm doing—filming, riding, you know, just having a good time on my bike. I've been really blessed to have them behind me and supporting me for so long. Diamondback has been great to me—check out their Web site, 'cause I'll have updates going everyday. Bloggin' Inside joke for Trevor there [laughs].

#### AN INTERVIEW BY DAVEY WATSON

Okay, uh, hi! My name is Davey, and I'm interviewing Darin Read—the real interview. Hey Darin, uh, what are you doing right now?

Waiting to get a real question from Davey Watson...

Yeah, but what have you been riding lately? You just filmed a street part for the Shola video, you just got back from a street trip in San Diego, got street spots lined up...

I mean, I'm not trying to be trendy, and be a f-cking new-age street dude or nothing, but sometimes the trails aren't running and you gotta just ride your bike. I'm about to ride down the street right now.

What do you mean new-age trendy?

I just think these days kids want to come up and be known to be a street rider. Back in the day, you know, when I was a "youngster," all the kids would want to go race, like ride BMX—jump and get air. Nowadays, kids got skateparks and sh-t, and just avoid going to ride dirt because they have something easy to ride. Next thing that happens is street... streets is tough.

I know you watch a lot of skate videos, and that sh-t's pretty much all street, but when it comes to watching BMX videos at my place, you're really not too into 'em.

I don't know, I'm not sweating skaters or nothing, but they're like ten years ahead of us, dude. It just seems like riders are trying to follow their path when we're way different than skaters. We need to do our own thing, and it just seems like riders sweat skaters and try to ride street like they're skating. They should have just grabbed a skateboard instead of a bike, because BMX to me is boosting and getting whipped, not f-cking striving on a rail. No offense, Dwatts.

I don't know what you mean. Anyway, so what kind of street riders are you into? I'm not talking about dirt jump riders riding street...

Are you trying to label yourself? I'm into you...is that funny [laughs]?

Kind of gay, but no, riders you like to watch.

But I don't sweat street riders like you do. If somebody is doing something cool, then I'll be like, "Yeah that was rad," but I'm not sweating street riders.

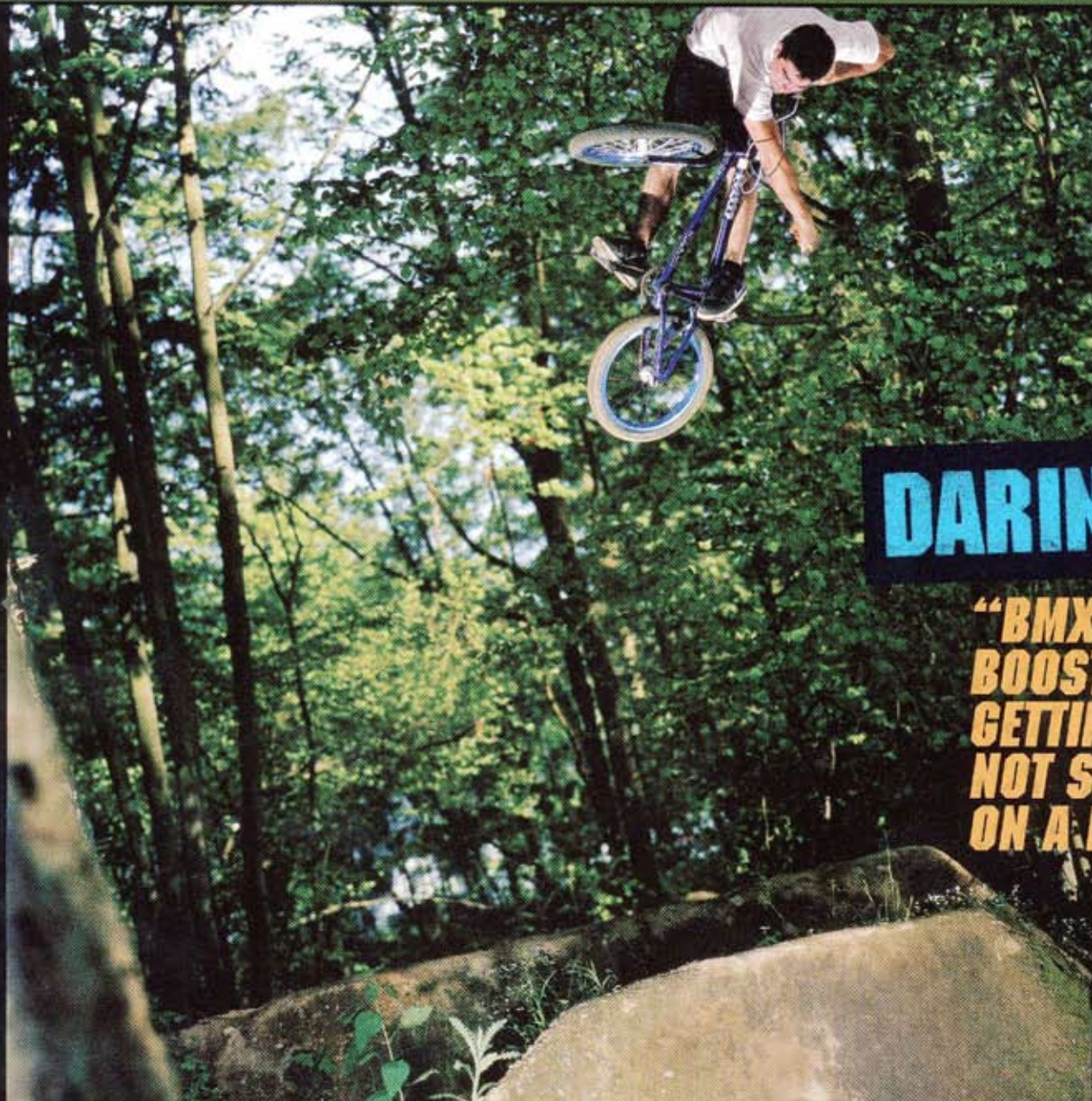
What riders are you into right now then?

The Blue Falcon, Brian Foster, has always been one of my favorites. I just watched his Tip Plus part, if that's what you're looking for. He's street as hell in there; he gets down with some crooked grinds [laughs]. I'm into all my boys up here...that's the reason why I ride, watching them ride, you know? NW killin' it. I'm into other dudes that just have fun on their bikes: Tony C., Chase, and Aitken...those are other dudes that are fun to ride with. Anyone having fun on their bike, not trying to strive out.

[Laughs] I hear you call a lot of people strivers...what does that mean and let's get an example?

Alright, a good example of a striver is everybody is just chillin' at the park and that one dude shows up [laughs], just trying to make a name for himself, so he's out there first run, drops in, and hucks some sketchy whip or something [laughs]. Not even just a flow run... and then he'll like hop out on the deck, do a quick lap, and mean mug you just to show you what's up. A street striver is the first one to get their bike out of the rig, running, putting their gloves on. Dwatts would say Dakota'n out [laughs], but...just going to the spot with a mission, you know? Not just chilling and riding, dude. Just in there to get something done—forcing it. Strivin' it is forcing it.

Yeah, I know what you mean there. You seem to, when riding parks or tranny



## DARIN READ

**“BMX TO ME IS BOOSTING AND GETTING WHIPPED, NOT STRIVING ON A RAIL.”**

Maybe Darin has to strive a bit, but only to get as much as possible out of his three tumdowns. Photo: Tal

**I've seen people force the braap. How important is style to you?**

Style is definitely way more important than tricks. I think even if you're doing Dew Tour sh-t...doing the best trick...if it's not smooth, then it seems pointless to me. Style is the most important thing. You know, street dudes that are just striving tricks and sticking the sickest sh-t—video part of the year or whatever. If it doesn't look good, then I don't think it really counts.

**They're riding dirt jumps, too, and you ride that sh-t. Ryan Guettler doing all this crazy ass sh-t and you're just doing a braap.**

Seems like a job...obviously they're pushing the sport and doing whatever, and I got props for that, but there's way more to riding a bike than hucking yourself into the foam, then stepping it to the resi, and then stepping it to the contest. It seems like gymnastics to me, like a circus. I'd rather see an old-school comp, where you had like one jump and BF was just doing a big-ass superman one hander. Or who was that old dude, Vaun Stout, who'd just hit like a no-footed one-hander-to-x-up? That sh-t should win a contest [laughs]. I'm just glad to see

dudes like Bohan and Aitken—get well soon—but Aitken, he won a Dew Tour and he was just riding the way he's always ridden, he wasn't out there proving his new sh-t. Bohan is always up there and he's not changing his style up, you know? Just dudes keeping it real like that are what bike riding is about to me. Then there's dudes that are making it their job, their occupation...it seems like the money has changed our sport so much. I'm not into that Dew Tour hucking sh-t. Doyle, too, he holds it down.

### **A (SHORT) INTERVIEW BY PAUL KINTNER**

**Paul Kintner, a.k.a. Gang Leader, this is DR's interview and we're in route to the trails to make him dig a lot. How come there are no trails in Tacoma and do you think there ever will be?** Dude, I live in Tacoma and there have been trails. Every time they're about to run, they get torn down...the last set of trails we had, a church group volunteered to come tear them down for no reason. There's probably never going to be trails there...

**With this problem of blacking out and peeing on everything, do you think that will ever stop?**

I don't know what you're talking about [laughs].

**How much does it suck when one of your good friends decides not to ride anymore?**

That's a tough one. Uh, I don't know, it seems like everyone is getting older and finding something else to do. I guess people get more responsibility and can't get hurt...riding is number one to me and I could never just stop riding one day and never look back on it.

**Thanks?**

I would like to thank my parents for all their support by taking me racing when I was young and helping out all the time. My bro J, all my friends in the NW, Solame boys, Bean, Dr. J, Perez, Little Jeff, Don Bong, Tron, Pauly, GJ, Southwoods dudes, Shovel, Black Diamond Trail locals, BG for being the funniest guy ever, D-Watt\$, T Berg, Bruce, Jack, Hoder, Ru Paul, Vdog, and Jaymo. All my sponsors, Mark Losey at Nike, Shola, Gunner with Segment, Foyer Clothing, and most of all, Trevor and Hammond at Diamondback for helping me out for seven years strong now. And all the dudes at *Ride* for this interview: Fudger, Jeff Z., and Mulligan. ☺