

There are only a few things about getting older that I like. For a guy who never wanted to grow up in the first place, becoming a ‘senior’ is about as exciting as walking home in 5th grade with a report card full of Ds. You know you have to face the music as you desperately try to think of any remote scenario that can soften the collision ahead ... “Hey, look, Ma, no Fs!”

One of the perks is the relaxation of judgmental attitude that usually comes from a been there, done that kind of experience. You learn that not everybody is as cool in approaching life in such a brilliant manner as you are, so you just have to deal with it. Simply, simply put, what fun would life be if everyone else was a genius like me?

What you learn as you get older is that life is all about passions. I have no idea why anyone would want to be a trucker.... But now that I’m a genius senior, I understand that there are many who have a real passion for that lifestyle so I shut up about it. It’s not for me, but that doesn’t make it a bad thing. On the other hand, I love baseball, but I understand not everybody does. If I meet someone who doesn’t like baseball, I don’t judge them ... they are not idiots, they just have poor taste and I know if they hang around me long enough, they’ll come to understand the beauty of baseball.

You see, that’s the genius of a senior. I keep calm because I fully understand that I can never be wrong.

So here I am heading up to southern Kentucky with my daughter, her husband and a friend for a day of dirt bike racing. I know I know ... Andy Smith and dirt bike racing doesn’t exactly conjure up thoughts of harmony and peaceful co-existence but you learn that if it has anything to do with your kids, it’s worth going – hey I spent many hours at track meets and never understood the attraction to that world.

I have no idea what dirt bike racing involves. Ben, my son-in-law, explains to me that it’s not like NASCAR where you drive around in circles for a couple of hours, it’s an 8 mile course that takes you over hills, through creeks and down cliffs and the idea is to get as many laps in by the designated finish time (1pm). You’re not really racing against the other bikes as much as you’re trying to get around every obstacle as fast as you can so

you can complete as many laps as possible. Ben hopes to complete three laps and stay at between 35-40 minutes a lap. Sounds like a Sunday drive in the park to me.

We watch them start which is loud but fun. Now they are out of site for about 30 minutes until they come down the hill, through the creek and down the straightaway past our camp site. I make a mimosa and take in the ambience. There are a lot of people that are obviously from a different world than mine, but I really don't feel like an outsider.

I start to crank up the hot dogs when I hear this rumbling sound, then a few seconds later, this blue blur flies by me ... "What the hell is that?" ... it's one of the Pros, I'm told. A few seconds later ... ZOOMZOOMZOOMZOOM at a rate that makes me dizzy. As the dust settles on my hot dogs, I realize that my jaw is now resting on my left foot.

"Oh, they are going WAY tooo fast... they need to slow down!"

My daughter looks at me with that 'now, why did we bring him?' look and reminds me that it is called a race for a reason.

Ben completed his three laps as he wanted and came in 5th in his division. He was very pleased. My daughter was very pleased to see him cross the finish line with all his limbs in tack.

For me, it was another lesson in older but wiser. There is a lot about dirt bike racing that I do not understand. But there is one thing that I do understand – I understand passion. These people have a passion for this sport that I can truly appreciate. And let me tell you, these dirt bike racers are more athletic and skilled than any NFL lineman without question. I gained so much respect for these people by taking the time to live in their world for a day. And the next time Ben hits the trails, I certainly want to be there.

It may not be my cup of tea, but its Bens. And his passion for this sport is enough to make this city-slicker take note with a lot of admiration. I still don't like becoming a senior, but I certainly am glad to have stuck around this planet long enough to have this experience with my family. Zoom, zoom!

Just A Thought