



# 7 REASONS WHY

JAY DE JESUS  
DESERVES A  
SECOND CHANCE

\*He was ahead of his time. In 1991, the trials/dual-slalom rider started Eastern Woods Research. EWR bikes featured high bottom brackets, aggressive geometry and were made for riding everything from trials, to dirt jumps to XC trails. They were unusual then, but similar geometry can be found on many bikes today.

\*Seriously, the old bikes rocked. They were ridden to three National Championships, but a lack of resources and changing bike market forced de Jesus to close shop in 1998. Demand, however, never slowed. "I was approached almost weekly by people looking for frames," he says.

\*He has a stockpile of good Karma. In the past decade he has coached and mentored Jeff Lenosky, Chris and Nick van Dine, Rob Lichtenwalner and a dozen younger riders. He's never asked for a dime.

\*In October 2006, he was nearly killed by bacterial meningitis. "I was within a hair of dying," he says. de Jesus spent six days in a coma and three weeks in the hospital recovering. "The whole experience put a different perspective on things. It reset my values."

\*Fate is on his side. Exactly one year after leaving the hospital, he met former EWR employee Ken Rymdeko, who offered to help resurrect the brand. "I had offers through the years, but it never felt right. With this guy and our history, it was a serendipitous relationship that pushed me to do it."

\*He's living his dream. In middle school de Jesus created a fictitious bike company called Jay de Jesus Racing Products. "I seriously almost got kicked out of middle school for doodling bikes," he says.

\*The new bikes rock. They feature new designs, updated geometry, advanced frame tubes, and are still built in Pennsylvania. With 29er and full-suspension models on the way, de Jesus hopes the brand will appeal to even more riders. "I've been reinvigorated by all the people who are really into what we're doing," he says. —Lou Mazzante

