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## Tuesday Conversation: Ben Bostrom

August 4, 2009 by [Jesse Cecil](#)

Filed under [Tuesday Conversation](#)

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*The simple bio on Ben Bostrom's twitter page is a quote from Steve McQueen: "I'd rather wake up in the middle of nowhere than in any city on earth," and it's an apt introduction to the easygoing, outdoorsy guy known as B-Boz. Bostrom's also very fast on the unforgiving asphalt these days aboard his factory Yamaha R1 American Superbike, though, and we caught up with him in Colorado just prior to the Heartland Park Topeka round, where he was doing some cycling sans engine.*



B-Boz atop Mt. Evans, which features the highest paved road in the United States. - Courtesy Bostrom

**RRX: I know it's a little late, but congrats on your Daytona SportBike win at Laguna. You seem pretty dominant on the R6—any plans to ride it again this year?**

Ben Bostrom: There are lots of plans; I'm always planning. I would like to ride the R6 in New Jersey, which is the last race of the year. You know, the R6 is really just a great platform, it pretty much rides

itself, plus it gives me more track time, and I love riding it. I'm going to talk to Yamaha and see if we can get it on the truck. We'll see.

**The Yamaha R1 is really competitive now and you look pretty comfortable on it, whereas in the first part of the season, it seemed like you were still looking for something setup-wise. Can you shed a little light on what that was?**

Yeah, well, we pretty much wasted the entire first half of the season, and we threw a lot of stuff at the bike just trying to get it to work. It helps a lot to have Josh, [because] we bounce stuff off of each other. He was having front-end troubles, and I was having other problems. Now, just since Laguna we've gotten it dialed in and it's a completely different bike; it's great to ride. In the beginning of the season, my team just really wasn't gelling, and by Laguna my old team fell apart. Now I've got a whole new team and it's great. We brought in a new suspension guy and that made all the difference in the world.

**Do you think there's more to come from the R1, or is it now just a matter of out-racing the rest of the field?**

I think it's totally up to us now. The R1 is awesome, and if it doesn't win, it's because of the rider.

**Your brother Eric raced Yamaha superbikes last year. Even though it was a different bike, was there any exchange of information between you two that was at all helpful?**

Zero. It's a completely different bike. I tried that bike and it was a no fun at all. Eric and Jason basically white-knuckled that thing around the track all season long, and by the end, it was enough to make a guy not want to race bikes anymore. But this new R1 was never like that—it's so great to ride. I honestly can't say that I've ever ridden a superbike like this before. It may be better than the R6.



With a new crew and a newly dialed-in R1, Bostrom's making a new start in the second half of the season. - Brian J. Nelson photo

**What's going on with your bicycling endeavors? Are you planning to do the 24 Hours of Moab again?**

Well, I've hooked up with a great team, Team Sho-Air, this year. Johnny O'Mara is captain of the team, which is awesome. Specialized has really been taking care of us. I've got to say, my new bicycle is insane. I've been putting in a lot of miles, getting ready for some events coming up. The first one is CrossVegas, the biggest cyclocross in America, and I'm ready to go slay myself for an hour. It's just an hour, wide-open. We also have the last National for mountain bikes, and I'll be entering that. There's also the hardest Iron-Man in the world, and we got a few friends suckered into it as well, so that will be in November. And we're doing the 24 hours of Moab, which is now the National Endurance Championship.

There are a lot of races coming up on the bicycle; it keeps you very in shape all winter long. When you start the [motorcycle] racing season, you're kind of itching by March to get off the bike and onto the motorcycle, because the bicycle is hard work! There's no just sitting back and twisting the throttle—you just have to keep pedaling! Makes you appreciate your job, but in the off-season there is nothing more fun than making your friends suffer and racing bicycles.

### **What do you think of the new regulations this year?**

It was looking a little shaky there for a while, with the new rules and everything. When DMG came in with the strong-arm and thought they were going to rule with an iron fist, it upset a lot of people. There are safety issues, and bike development issues that the manufacturers need to deal with in order to keep progressing. So it went back and forth and finally DMG made some concessions that basically gave back some rules, which made people happy.

To make everything gel, both sides have to come together and make a plan for what's going to be best for the series to progress safely, and it's got to be close racing. I understand all that, but it all has to come together. The DMG has maybe folded too much lately. They've been trying to bring other manufacturers into it, and decided to bend their own rules. That upset some of the factories. They were like, "Hold on, we just went into compliance with what you had previously said. Rules are rules, they're set in stone. You can't bend for this fact over here, because we've been asking for you to bend for us on something else and you said 'no.'" So, we've all got some lessons to learn, and we're all trying to make it better.



At Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, Bostrom notched a second

Daytona SportBike victory in his second '09 R6 outing. - Brian J. Nelson photo

**Lately you've had a string of really solid results on the Superbike, you currently sit fifth in the points, and it seems a win could come at any time. What kind of expectations do you have for the rest of the season?**

I want to win all the races! I'm serious, with the way the R1 is right now. I wanted to win them all starting at Laguna, but I had a little trouble hanging onto the bike and got hurt. Then I wanted to win them all starting with Mid-Ohio, but had a little trouble there, too. I don't like coming in second, and I'm happy for Josh, but I'm here to win! Now that my elbow is starting to feel good again, I want to win the rest of the races this season, and we've got six more.

**What are your plans for next season?**

I'm on a one-year contract with Yamaha, but I love my team, I love my bike, and this is where I want to be. The R1 is such a joy to ride, and now that we've gotten it sorted out, I'm excited for next season.

**Do you think you can challenge for the championship next year?**

I can guarantee it. I know I keep saying it, but with how good the R1 is, we'd have to be riding really poorly not to win. It's that good.

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