



Post Bulletin file photos / Traci Westcott

Millville's Alex Martin races in a 250 moto during the AMA Pro Motocross national championship series races on Saturday, September 19, 2020, at Spring Creek MX Park near Millville.

# Martins are back on track

## Millville natives hope return home is sign of better things ahead

BY JASON FELDMAN

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Alex Martin descended from a jump on the track at Thunder Valley MX Park in Lakewood, Colo., during a qualifying session on June 6 and didn't see the soft spot on the track where he was about to land.

"I landed in some soft mud on the downhill and went right over the bars," Martin said. "I knew I'd broken my arm immediately."

Later that same afternoon, as Alex Martin was seeing a doctor near Denver and getting prepared to have surgery that day, his younger brother Jeremy had the same bad luck strike. During the second round of the AMA Pro Motocross National Championship series, Jeremy, while landing after a jump, hit a soft spot in the track and tumbled off his bike.

He suffered two broken fingers and aggravated wrist and shoulder injuries that



Millville native Jeremy Martin flies over a jump during the 2020 AMA Motocross Pro Nationals at Spring Creek MX Park near Millville in September of 2020.

he had been dealing with for more than three months.

"I started the season very strong and felt like I was really going to win the 2021 championship, even with a dislocated shoulder," said Jeremy Martin, who won the 250 class national title in 2014

and 2015. "It needed surgery, but I opted to just rehab it ... and still felt like I could control the series.

"Unfortunately, I had a crash (at Thunder Valley), fractured my pinky and ring finger to the point where you have contact with the

(handlebars) and I couldn't escape that kind of pain. I missed (Round 3 of the motocross season) at High Point (Pennsylvania), so the title is pretty much gone."

Indeed, Jeremy Martin's title hopes are incredibly slim after missing one round of the series. He sits in eighth place in the 250 class standings, 79 points out of the lead. Alex, who has missed four of the series' first five rounds, is in 26th place.

But as the series hits its halfway point this weekend, the brothers from Millville are energized. This week is their busiest week of the year, and also their favorite, as the series makes its annual stop in their hometown, at Spring Creek MX Park, the track owned and operated by their parents, John and Greta Martin.

"This is definitely my favorite national of the year, for so many reasons," said Alex, who will be back in action just six weeks after

suffering his broken arm. "We always have lots of friends and family here and I love the track. ... I'm super fortunate and grateful my body has healed fast enough to even think about racing in the national this week."

Alex hasn't missed the pro nationals at his home track since he made his pro debut there 13 years ago, in 2008. He was able to get back on his bike just 26 days after having surgery and trained and rehabbed hard, with the hope of being able to race at his home track.

"It's not so much pain when I'm on the bike, but definitely some soreness," the 31-year-old said. "Every day and every week it's been getting better. I've seen big gains from just a week ago. This past Saturday was the big test. I knew I couldn't race the Spring Creek national if I couldn't do two 35-minute motos, and I did that last Saturday.

See **MARTINS**, Page B4

# Doctor Soccer: Aro-Lambo balancing med school, play on the pitch

BY PAT RUFF

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The best part of Mazed Aro-Lambo's day might come in the evenings, when he puts down his medical books and prostate-cancer research thoughts, and slips on his soccer shoes.

Aro-Lambo, 26, is pursuing his master's degree in clinical and transitional science by day at Mayo Medical School, and playing minor-league soccer for Med City FC by night. In the not-so-distant future, he'll graduate from medical school, complete a minimum of three years of medical residency, before becoming a full-fledged doctor of some sort, possibly specializing in urology.

For now, though, the Brooklyn, N.Y.-born Aro-Lambo is enjoying a beautiful mix of his favorite things, capped most nights with him playing the "beautiful game." Soccer was passed on to Aro-Lambo through the generations, ones with

their roots in Nigeria, and one where he built a name for himself while attending Strawberry Crest High School in Dover, Fla.

It was there that the fast, sleek and skilled Aro-Lambo became the school's all-time leading goal scorer, an all-state player and a guy who drew extensive Division I college interest. That was before making the decision to go the decidedly academic route, accepting a full-ride scholarship to renowned Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. Aro-Lambo graduated from there in 2017 and landed in Rochester and Mayo Medical School the summer of 2019.

But Aro-Lambo is not just about school books and medicine. Those evening sessions of soccer — be they practices or games — go a long way toward completing him.

"I look forward to soccer so much every day," said Aro-Lambo, who played club soccer at Northwestern. "Sound body, sound mind

comes to mind. And I've always built soccer into my schedule. I've always played soccer while having a difficult course load. So it is a natural to do it while at medical school. It hasn't held me back at all. It has just put more fire in my belly to tackle everything."

It was the death of his father that put a fire in his belly to pursue medicine. Yussuf Aro-Lambo was diagnosed with lung cancer at 31. Two years later he died of it.

Not only was Mazed — 8 years old at the time — crushed by his passing, but it inspired him to become a doctor. His mother, Nurat, and sister, Zainab, had similar responses. Both went on to pursue nursing degrees after Yussuf's death. Nurat now works as a nurse practitioner, Zainab as a nurse.

### PRIORITIES ARE STRAIGHT

There was one question that loomed for Mazed. That was whether to dive into soccer in



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Med City FC's Mazed Aro-Lambo (7) controls the ball during a soccer match against LC Aris FC Wednesday, June 2, 2021, at Rochester Regional Stadium.

college as fully as he would dive into his academics. In the end, he took the advice he'd heard for so many years from his parents, that academics needed to be his unquestioned No. 1.

That came with little regret. But he also made sure to immerse himself into all that

Northwestern had to offer, including its proximity to Chicago, which sits just 30 minutes from Evanston. Aro-Lambo, who also describes himself as a "foodie," found plenty of it in culturally-rich Chicago.

See **SOCCER**, Page B4