

BOB HANNAH'S ENDURO TACTICS

What do you do when the best aren't good enough?

Ask any northwestern enduro rider and he'll tell you: Dave Bertram is a superman. When he shows up at a District 36 enduro, everyone else is racing for second place. Ask anyone about Charles Halcomb, you'll hear he's one of the toughest men alive. In fact, you'll hear the same type of thing about Kelby Pepper, David Rhodes, Steve Hatch and Scott Drafs, too. Each rider is king of his own private forest, and that's why each has been chosen to represent the U.S. in the International Six-Day Enduro.

As good as they are, though, not one is good enough. "We're just too slow," admits Bertram himself. "When U.S. riders go to the ISDE, we're about three to five percent too slow in the special tests. Not that far out of the hunt, but we need to improve." The record shows that Bertram is right. Our premier six-man team has never done better than second overall, and more typically finishes about sixth or seventh.

Why? Because the U.S. version of enduro riding means sloshing through mud, bouncing over logs and wiggling between trees. In Europe, however, enduros have come to be more like outright motocross.

That's where Bob Hannah comes in. If we had six Hannahs to put on the ISDE team, we'd win, hands down, but Hannah's busy schedule won't let him go, so this year we're doing the next best thing: We're sending riders who were *trained* by Hannah.

At a recent training camp held in Northern California, Hannah took this crew of enduro riders, all of them already considered the best in the country, and taught them how to ride all over again. "It was just typical go-fast technique," says Hannah. "I drilled them on gripping the tank with their knees, on where they look, on slowing down. They all ride well, but they have different styles."

Hannah admits they aren't riding at world-championship level. "They aren't GP riders, but I don't want to bust these guys for be-



ing too slow because they don't ride for a living. *I'm* too slow to ride GPs right now. Considering that these guys are a little older and have full-time jobs, they're pretty good. I can see them whipping my butt if we were going down some steep, rutted muddy hills or something. I can teach them a lot, but I'm sure they could teach me a lot, too.

"I really can't say if they'll do well in the Six Days, though. I don't know enough about the event. I'm not interested in ever

riding it myself, but I'd teach another school in a second."

So the school, which was put together by the "Ride to Win" organization, didn't cover logs, ruts or any of the usual enduro things. Hannah taught what he knows best: turns, jumps, whoops—motocross stuff. "It was all stuff that I already knew," said Halcomb, "but not stuff that I necessarily practiced. When somebody like Hannah tells you to grip the tank, you listen."

Steve Hatch agreed. "Hannah made things real clear. In just one day, he probably saved me five years of practice and learning things on my own."

On the official *Dirt Bike* self-grading curve, the class of '90 did fairly well, with the class giving itself a solid 3.3 GPA. This is how they scored themselves, based on what they felt they learned:

REPORT CARD

David Bertram, Trophy Team A+
 Charles Halcomb, Trophy Team B+
 Steve Hatch, Junior World Team A
 David Rhodes, Junior World Team B
 Kelby Pepper, Junior World Team B
 Scott Drafs, Junior World Alternate B

Will that be enough? Probably not. Randy Hawkins, Kevin Hines, Jeff Fredette, Matt Stavish and Jimmy Lewis were no-shows at the school. This year some of our best riders, most notably Larry Roeseler, Kurt Hough and Aaron Hough, will be no-shows at the ISDE because of a budgetary crisis in Kawasaki's Team Green racing department. An outright win looks doubtful.

So we haven't yet fixed the U.S. ISDE team, but for the first time, we've at least noticed that it's broken and we're doing something about it. Plus, we've got the right repairman on the case. □

◀ *Fast is fast. When it comes to riding motorcycles, there isn't a man alive who couldn't learn something from Bob Hannah.*



Our ISDE team listened as motocross techniques make the transition to enduro tactics. ▶



Photo by Jim Bowman