



# SUN SHINES

## The American Round of World 500cc Motocross

**O**n the sun-baked adobe of one of the roughest, most abusive motocross courses in the world an American rider—Chuck Sun—won the 500cc United States Grand Prix for the second year in a row. Like 1980's winner, Marty Moates, this year's winner was not a regular competitor in the World Championship. Team Honda rider and former 500cc National Champion Sun was among the local Americans who showed the European stars the fastest lines around Carlsbad International Raceway, posting 6-1 moto scores that would give him his first Grand Prix win.

The points leaders in the 500cc championship at Carlsbad were Andre Malherbe ahead of Englishman and Honda team-mate Graham Noyce, followed by Yamaha riders Hakan Carlqvist of Sweden and Andre Vromans of Belgium. But the win at Carlsbad wasn't expected to go to a European rider. It is well known these days

that our riders are just as fast as the Europeans, even if they don't compete regularly in the world championships. With the added advantage of racing on home turf in the broiling Southern California heat, which the Europeans are not used to, an American National rider taking the win at Carlsbad was almost a certainty. Broc Glover was the current 500cc National points leader with his Yamaha and seemed to be the best bet. Chuck Sun, along with local factory Kawasaki rider Goat Breker, could be expected to push Glover the whole way. Last year's winner Marty Moates might have been a contender if he hadn't just terminated his sponsorship by LOP Racing and had to compete as a privateer on a stock Suzuki. Brad Lackey, ninth in GP standings with an unfamiliar bike and a foot injury, wanted to win badly.

Thirty-thousand spectators were on their feet and cheering. Glover catapulted

his 495cc works Yamaha out of the starting gate and into the lead of the first moto. Latched in behind Glover were Sun, Lackey, Noyce and Carlqvist. The race was for second as Glover began pulling out a slight lead over the next 10 laps. Sun was hard-put to maintain his second place spot and then, when he began experiencing suspension ails and stomach cramps he was forced to back off his pace, letting Malherbe, Carlqvist and Lackey battle their way past. The fight for second place continued up until the halfway point in the 45-minute moto. Then Lackey broke free of Malherbe and Carlqvist and reeled in Glover.

Glover knew that Lackey was closing in: "I just tried to ride at the same pace. My mechanic was letting me know that Brad was coming. Then, at the ledge going into Rattlesnake Gulch I hit a bump, got sideways and almost fell. That's when Brad got around me." >





# 5 AT CARLSBAD

Was—For the Second Year—An American Race. by Jim Gianatsis



Sun and Malherbe on factory works Hondas display completely different riding styles. Both styles worked but Sun put in the best two rides for overall win.





Broc Glover won the first moto but got bermed on the first lap of the second moto. He still rode a credible race coming from last to 11th place. Overall he finished 6th.

## The U.S.G.P.

Recovering quickly, Glover locked onto Lackey's rear wheel for three laps, applying pressure but waiting for the closing laps of the race before mounting a serious effort to try and retake and pull away with the lead. Each lap as they sailed off the Carlsbad downhill it was side-by-side. Lackey could see Glover in the corner of his eye and was determined to hold him off. Later, in the pits, Glover recounted what had happened at the bottom of the downhill.

"We came down the downhill and I was kind of ahead of him. He tried to hold his throttle on in the corner as I cut over on him to take the line. He tried to get back around me there and that's where he fell."

Lackey slid out and crashed into the outside fence without ever contacting Glover, just 10 feet beyond where he had crashed the year before trying to race with Moates for the lead.

While Lackey recovered to finish back in sixth place, Glover cruised the remaining few laps to the checkered flag. Carlqvist, smooth and steady the entire moto, closed to within three seconds of Glover at the finish line. Noyce took third place and a large jump in the point standings when the reigning World Champion and points leader, Malherbe, fell midway through the moto and retired since he was too far behind to earn points. Chuck Sun collected fifth place behind four-time Carlsbad winner Gerrit Wolsink on a Netherlands Honda-sponsored bike.

After a malfunction of the starting gate necessitated a restart, the second moto got

underway with another California rider jumping out front. Team Suzuki's Darrell Shultz quickly pulled out ahead of Belgian Ivan van den Broeck on a factory single shock Maico, Marty Moates and Andre Malherbe. First moto winner Glover bogged at the start, tried to get going but crashed twice with Dutch Suzuki rider Jean Jacques Bruno before they both got halfway around the first lap. That left Glover half a lap behind the leaders and out of contention for the overall win.

Fifteen minutes into the second moto Shultz held a 10-sec. lead over Malherbe, who was 10 sec. ahead of Sun. Then came Lackey, Yamaha's Mike Bell, Suzuki's Danny LaPorte (who had missed the start of the first moto because of bike problems), and Carlqvist. Moates and van den Broeck had already pulled off the track with bike problems, as had pre-race favorite Goat Breker. In the first moto Breker lost the damping in the shock of his factory Kawasaki. No replacement was available from Kayaba so Breker tried to start the second moto with his blown shock, but the Carlsbad track was just too rough and dangerous to race on at Grand Prix speeds without a working rear suspension.

Five minutes later, Shultz blew a seemingly secure lead. "I just got sideways coming out of a really fast corner and by the time I got it under control, I was headed straight toward the fence. I mowed down a few people! Nobody was hurt, though. I just couldn't believe it! They got up and yelled at me to get going!"

Malherbe had inherited the lead but Sun was quickly closing up on the World

Champion. Damping changes to his RC490 Honda's suspension between motos had made all the difference in how fast Sun was now running. With 15 minutes to go he caught Malherbe by going wide at the top of Rattlesnake Gulch, blasting by to take control and lead to the finish.

"I just tried to ride a steady race," said Sun from the victory podium. "I don't think the Europeans were able to handle the heat as well—and that must have affected Malherbe. I also knew he didn't want to race with me since he was running for points, and I wasn't."

Trailing across the line in third was Lackey, his finish good enough to give him second overall behind Sun.

Graham Noyce finished the moto in sixth place behind LaPorte and Bell after a hard fight with Wolsink and Carlqvist much of the race. This gave Noyce third overall, but more important, closed the points gap on series leaders Malherbe. The title could go right down to the wire between the two European Team Honda riders, each looking to add a second jewel in their World Championship crowns. And when the series is over and the title is won, perhaps they will remember Carlsbad where they were beaten by the Americans. And they may be a little bit grateful that top American riders like to stay at home. ☐

### RESULTS

1. Chuck Sun (5,1)	Hon
2. Brad Lackey (6,3)	Suz
3. Graham Noyce (3,6)	Hon
4. Hakan Carlqvist (2,8)	Yam
5. Gerrit Wolsink (4,7)	Hon
6. Broc Glover (1,11)	Yam
7. Danny LaPorte (9,4)	Hon
8. Mike Bell (8,5)	Yam
9. Steve Rhyan (14,10)	Hus
10. Rex Staten (11,16)	Suz



Chuck Sun enjoys a well-deserved moment of glory.