

THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE UGLY

Bailey brutalizes the Badlands

By Joe Colombero



Yamaha's Broc Glover (left) dropped his production-based YZ490 in the slippery hard-pack of Carlsbad's first turn. Kawasaki's Billy Liles (center) had an even rougher time, landing on his face. Glover picked himself up and passed the world's best 500cc riders to finish the moto in second behind David Bailey's Honda.

In this modern age of stadium Supercross, when races are run in the cool of the evening on well-lit tracks, when a spectator can just sit back and order a weenie from a passing barker and see the entire course from his well-contoured seat, we often lose our perspective of the grass roots of motocross.

Carlsbad. The last syllable of the word speaks for the track itself, a nasty outdoor

course with a stair-stepped uphill legendary for its gnarliness.

Carlsbad, where spectators line the hill-sides carrying ice chests full of suds and soda and fight over a square foot of shade in the 110-degree heat.

Carlsbad, where the world's best Open class riders converge to contest the oldest GP in the States.

The DB staff journeyed to Carlsbad to cover the legendary spectacle, that traditional grudge match between the European and American riders.

Fearless Fran brought seven bags of camera equipment, each holding at least 90 pounds of excess gear. One killer 300mm F2.8 lens so closely resembled a bazooka that a contingent of the Marine spectators fled in terror, screaming "incoming!" whenever he pointed it in a new direction.

Webb showed up with his younger brothers, the infamous "Tag Team." Both wore sleeveless *Dirt Bike* T-shirts, and wandered about the pits rifling through ice chests of the unsuspecting international stars. They swiped beer and sandwiches with the same ease that Yogi bear steals picnic baskets in Jellystone Park. I watched all of this with detached interest, until thirst and hunger forced me to abandon morals and join the Taggers. Moments later, we discovered a particularly large Coleman ice chest hidden under Ed Arnet's delapidated camper.

Then the racing started.

THE KID MAKES HIS BID

Eric Geboers, pins and a tight boot holding together his 15-day-old broken leg, got a surprising holeshot in the first moto, with Dave Thorpe and Georges Jobe sticking right to his tailpipe. Honda's Ron Lechien passed all three foreigners midway through the first lap, pegged it, and proceeded to open up a solid lead. Broc Glover was battling through the dust after crashing out on Carlsbad's notorious 180-degree first turn. The defending Carlsbad champ didn't get moving again until he was in nearly last place.

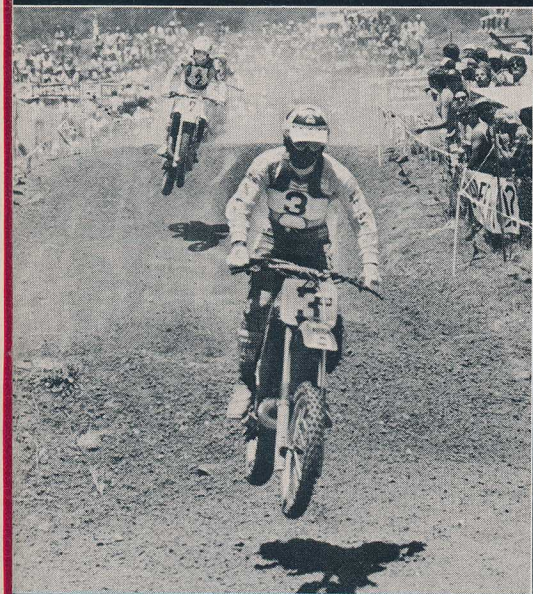
Less than two laps later, Lechien went down and brushed his shoulder, then packed it in for the day. David Bailey moved up from a mid-pack start to challenge the leaders, while Glover began a charge that would eventually lead him to a second-place finish. All this, and the first 40-minute moto was only a few laps old!

The spectators, who before the moto resembled a pack of unfed prison inmates (the Carlsbad heat was getting to them), were hanging on the fences, thumbs up, cheering on their favorites.

GLOVER STRIKES BACK

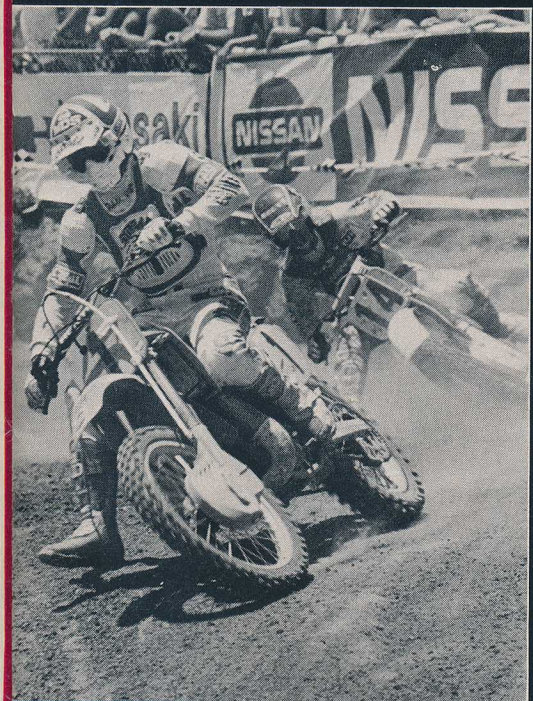
The skillful riding of Honda's Bailey and Yamaha's Glover was particularly inspiring. The track had dried and was as dusty as a

(continued on page 70)



◀ The dry Carlsbad track and intense California heat turned the race into a survival test for many of the riders. However, the heat and dust didn't slow down Britain's Dave Thorpe (3), who took second overall in front of Georges Jobe (2). Thorpe led the 500cc World Championship points chase at the conclusion of the event.

Johnny O'Mara (3) ran away with the 250cc support race with a perfect 1-1 day. Rick Johnson (1) got close but never really challenged the O'Show. Mired in mid-pack is Larry Brooks (157), who managed to break free and pull off 3-3 finishes for third overall behind Johnson (2-2) and O'Mara.



◀ Defending 500cc World Champion Andre Malherbe (1) had a pair of sixth-place finishes which netted him sixth overall. Malherbe now trails behind Thorpe in the standings by a handful of points. Seconds later, Broc Glover (14) smoked by the World Champ.



Ignoring the pain of a pinned broken leg, Eric Geboers finished an inspiring fifth overall on the nasty Carlsbad track.



High-flyin' David Bailey took no prisoners and left nothing to chance, with a perfect 1-1 tally for his efforts. Bailey rode almost flawlessly while winning both motos, and seemed to be the only rider completely unaffected by the high-rise mercury levels.



◀ Where was Magoo? Danny Chandler pulled off about midway through the first moto when his KTM's front brake went into permanent lock mode. Later, a broken shock made him a spectator during moto two.

FROM THE SADDLE

(continued from page 7)

peting to the ramp itself, so the tires would grip, no matter what.

All bases covered, right?

It was a warm, spring day. I had to take a new bike out to the Dunes for a test session. The loading ramp was slipped into place. The doors of the van were carefully hooked back out of the way. All of the area at the back of the van was checked for dangerous debris.

Everything clear? Good. I clutched the bars and started pumping the legs. Bike and pusher picked up speed. The front wheel hit the ramp cleanly and the bike headed up the center of the ramp, straight and true. I kept two fingers poised over the front brake lever to slow the bike down when it was needed. That moment never arrived. Somehow, some way, I had forgotten about the roof of the van. That cold, hard, unyielding roof caught me square in the forehead, putting a crease directly across the faint circular scar still there.

The bike had a great deal of momentum. So much so that, when my hands left the bars (involuntarily, I assure you), the bike hurtled all the way to the front and blasted a chunk out of the windshield and put the radio permanently at 94.7 on the dial. FM, fortunately.

I refuse, absolutely *refuse*, to go into any more details. A man in my position deserves *some* respect! After all, *danger* is my business. □

TANKSLAPPER

(continued from page 8)

ous orifices of the blue soldier.

"Where's Fran?"

Joe looked nervously back down the trail. "He's hitchhiking back to the truck."

It took us six hours to get back to camp. We hooked the throttle cable to the front brake lever, rotated the brake lever toward the rider, and made a makeshift thumb throttle. That only required 16 minutes. Towing my XR back was a real time-consumer. I had forgotten to gas up, and the tank was bone dry at 34 miles.

We sat there, in the plush and rather well-decorated *Dirt Bike* offices, thinking. Planning upcoming issues is tough work. Deciding which bikes we should test and which races we should cover, and thinking up informative "How to Ride" tech stories requires some real thought. We had the test and race parts dialed, but we hit a mental block when it came to the informative "How to Ride" section.

"Joe, any brainstorm?"

"Nope."

"Fran?"

"How about a story on getting flats, using a milk crate, how to start an XR, turning your twist throttle into a thumb throttle, using a tree stump as a hammer, how to fill your gas tank, and how to tow a 200-pound nautic howling at the world 34 miles back to your truck?"

"Good idea." □

CARLSBAD GRAND PRIX

(continued from page 22)

midsummer Kansas tornado. The blue-groove was forming. Bailey didn't seem to notice the heat or the dust as he passed Belgian Jobe on lap 12. He looked relaxed, as if leading a Grand Prix were something he did in his spare time. Glover was working hard to get through the pack for a shot at Bailey. But time ran out, and moto one ended with Bailey first, followed by Glover, and Georges Jobe on a Kawasaki. Geboers, in obvious pain on the rough track, had nonetheless managed an incredible seventh place on a broken leg. The World Championship's points leader, Honda's Dave Thorpe, tallied a respectable fourth, while Mike Fisher and Andre Malherbe, also riding Hondas, took fifth and sixth.

USGP MOTO TWO: BAILEY BLASTS AWAY, GLOVER DISQUALIFIED

Bailey led the start of moto two until Glover shot quickly past on the concrete downhill. David later said his strategy was to keep Broc in sight until the end of the moto, then put on a charge in the hopes that Glover would fade from the hard work of moto one.

Strategy became unnecessary when Glover went down a few laps later. Broc recovered in time to hold second in front of Thorpe, but it just wasn't his day. He went down again during a second charge, trying to catch the disappearing Bailey. That's when Broc's real problems started. It seems that after yet another spill on a slippery Carlsbad uphill, Glover used gravity to help fire up his bike, bump-starting it by rolling back down the hill. A protest was filed by Honda of Europe, and Glover was disqualified from the second moto.

RIDING, WINNING, AND THE BATTLE THAT NEVER WAS

The racing went on, but by now Bailey was more than 30 seconds ahead. Thorpe had second place all to himself, with Kawasaki's Jobe about ten seconds behind in third. Billy Liles, also on a Kawasaki, took a credible fourth and netted himself fourth overall in the process. Eric Geboers, his teeth gritted because of the pain of his broken leg, came in an amazingly strong fifth.

IN THE END

The crowd began to disperse, oozing off the hillsides like hot cheese off a pizza. The people were hot, sunburned and dusty (Carlsbad is not a race that Christie Brinkley would enjoy), but they were happy.

We stopped to ask some of the spectators what had brought them to Carlsbad. A middle-aged guy in a sleeveless Husky T-shirt summed it up. "Carlsbad is like a fine old watch, or a '57 Chevy. It's a classic, and it's always a good time." Enough said. □

RESULTS: CARLSBAD U.S. GRAND PRIX

1. David Bailey (Hon)	1-1
2. Dave Thorpe (Hon)	4-2
3. Georges Jobe (Kaw)	3-3
4. Billy Liles (Kaw)	9-4
5. Eric Geboers (Hon)	7-5
6. Andre Malherbe (Hon)	6-6
7. Broc Glover (Yam)	2-DNF
8. Jimmy Ellis (Yam)	11-10
9. David Watson (Kaw)	13-8
10. Mike Fisher (Hon)	5-DNF

UNADILLA!

(continued from page 28)

People packed in along the fences, standing on their toes, on coolers, on one another—anything to witness the glorious moment. Bob didn't hesitate. He thrust his Honda alongside O'Mara's and throttled it. O'Mara was ready for the move, and though Hannah jumped ahead momentarily, Johnny's counterpunch was enough to grab the lead right back. Moments later, as the two dropped alongside each other in a turn, O'Mara felt the twinge, then the rush of pain in his knee.

Hannah's front wheel had smashed across the right side of O'Mara's bike and crushed Johnny's leg in a rolling vise. O'Mara's momentary stumble was all it took—Bob was free and clear and in the lead. A volley of cheers roared and echoed thunderously across the hills.

Bob Hannah, the 24th-fastest qualifier at the 1985 250 USGP, blasted gloriously around the track, waving salutes to the cheering crowd, and took the first moto win by 14 seconds. What more could you ask for? The fans got their fight, Bob got the win, and the war for the ultimate victory was halfway over.

As the checkered flag dropped, the bottle rockets started flying in the Cavity.

EPILOGUE: BACK TO THE FUTURE

If you think this is some kind of fairy tale with a happy ending, guess again.

This is a story about Unadilla, where you learn to expect the unexpected. And you know, of course, what happened in the end.

Bob Hannah got second. Overall.

It's happened before at Unadilla. Like the time a few years back, before the glory days of American motocross dominance, when the young upstart Hannah pulled a banzai pass on Roger DeCoster at the Trans-AMA, while a wildly partisan, victory-starved American crowd held its collective breath in furious anticipation of a Yankee win.

The two collided, Hannah crashed and that was that. DeCoster won.

Unadilla crowds have seen more than their share of disappointments.

Danny LaPorte won America its first 250cc World Championship in 1982, but he didn't win on his home track at Unadilla.

Unadilla is a weird place.

Did you know that it snowed here once? While the midday sun blazed like a searchlight. Not a cloud in the sky. The riders had frost on their goggles.

No. Hannah didn't win. Johnny O'Mara's brilliant riding got him the second-moto victory and a well-deserved overall. Bob Hannah crashed with Jacky Vimond on the first lap of moto two, broke his clutch lever, got up in dead last, and finished fifth.

And second overall.

While it may not have been a fairy tale, it was the best Grand Prix this side of the Atlantic. Or that side.

The West Coast may very well have its finger on the pulse of motocross, but its heart beats at Unadilla. □