

YAMAHA'S "HURRICANE FORCE" YZ250D

DIRT BIKE

JUNE 1977

34355

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UK60p

**THE FIRST
FEATURE LENGTH
MX MOVIE,
SIDEWINDER I**



**MOTOCROSS -
FLORIDA WINTER - AMA
DAYTONA SUPERCROSS**

MONTESA'S NEWEST AND NICEST - THE 250H ENDURO



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**TAKE ON THE WORLD
ON WHALEY'S FACTORY BIKE
ENDURO: HONDA TAKES FOUR (STROKES)**

DIRT BIKE

JUNE 1977 VOLUME SEVEN NUMBER SIX

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The world team. From the left: Zenon Plech, Anders Michanek (obscured), Jim McMillan, Jiri Stancl (kneeling), Peter Collins, Barry Briggs (leaning) and Ivan Mauger.

Ten. Count 'em. Ten. Not dancing girls. World championships. That's how many world titles, earned by four riders, were skidding around SoCal tracks for a three-round "them versus us" speedway matchup. The series was canceled last year when the AMA withheld an FIM sanction. This year promoter Harry Oxley rounded up just about every world champion still on wheels. Ove Fundin, who retired with a record five world titles, was supposed to ride but bowed out with an injury. Two-time titlist Ole Olsen was about the only notable who couldn't be coaxed over.

Consider the array. A pair of four-



US vs the WORLD

Photography by Mark Kiel and Pat Brady.

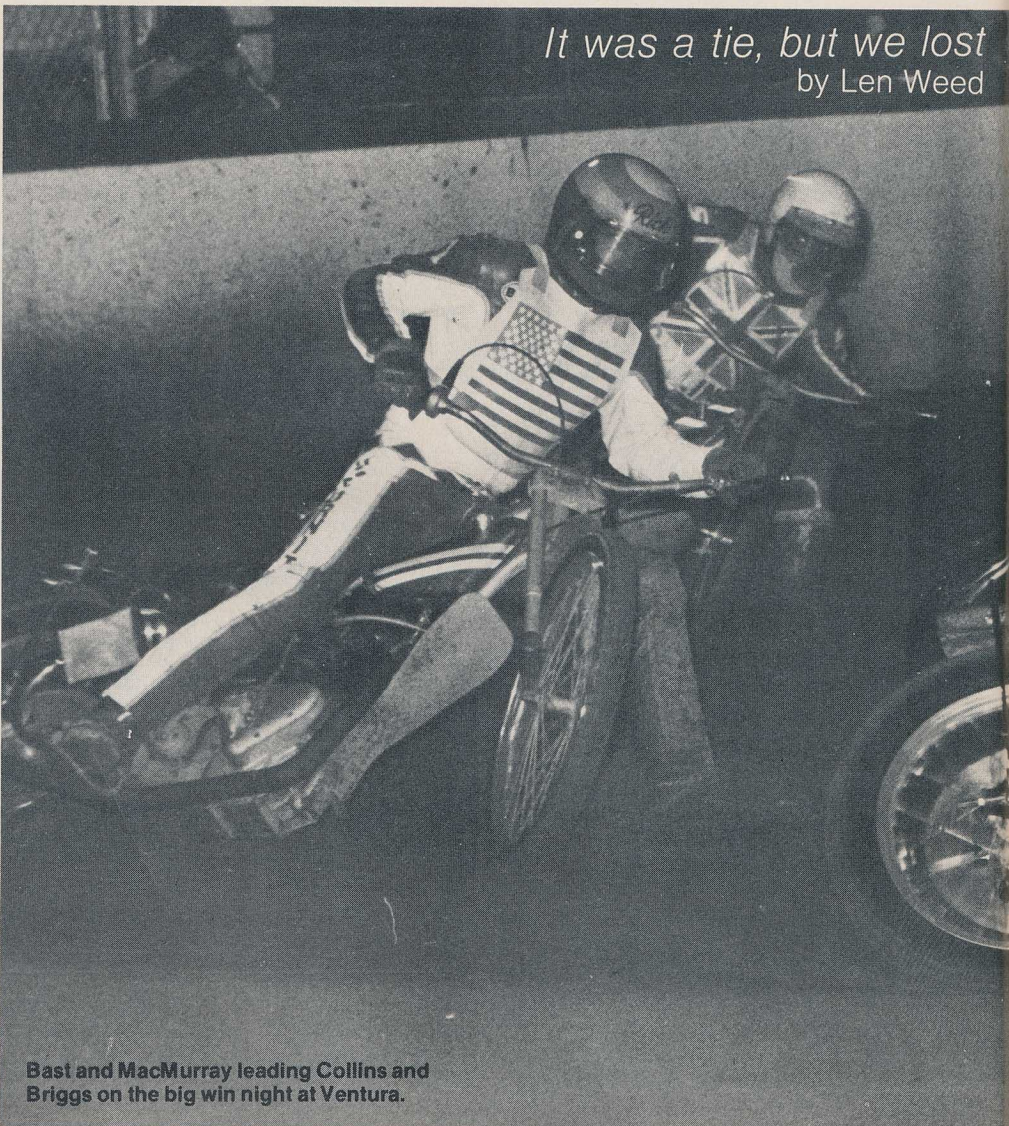
time champs from New Zealand. Ivan Mauger, M.B.E., four-time world champion, three times runner-up, plus three world Longtrack titles. Barry Briggs, M.B.E., four-time world champion. Peter Collins, the wide open 22-year-old Englishman who won the world title in 1976, the first for his country in 14 years. Anders Michanek, the Swede who took the world title in 1974. And rounding out the team: Scottish champion Jimmy McMillan, Polish champion Zenon Plech, and Jiri Stancl of Czechoslovakia.

The U.S. team, managed by Sonny Nutter, was led by captain Mike Bast. Others included his league racing teammate Bruce Penhall, second-best scorer in '76, Larry Shaw, who finished second in the '76 National, Bobby Schwartz, Rich MacMurray, top runner in Northern California, and a couple of overseas experienced competitors — Scott Autrey and Mike Curoso. Autrey became the first American in almost 40 years to crack the top ten in a World Speedway Final last year. Curoso earlier this year edged Autrey in a runoff at the Houston Astrodome for the AMA's version of the national championship.

Each meeting had 18 team heats with four-man scratch races, two partners from each team racing six times each evening. Scoring was three points for a win, two for second and one for third, allowing for 5-1, 4-2 or 3-3 team results each heat unless somebody DNFed.

The Americans, who had easily won both Southern California meetings in 1975 after losing at Houston, were favored to win the opener on the Costa

It was a tie, but we lost
by Len Weed

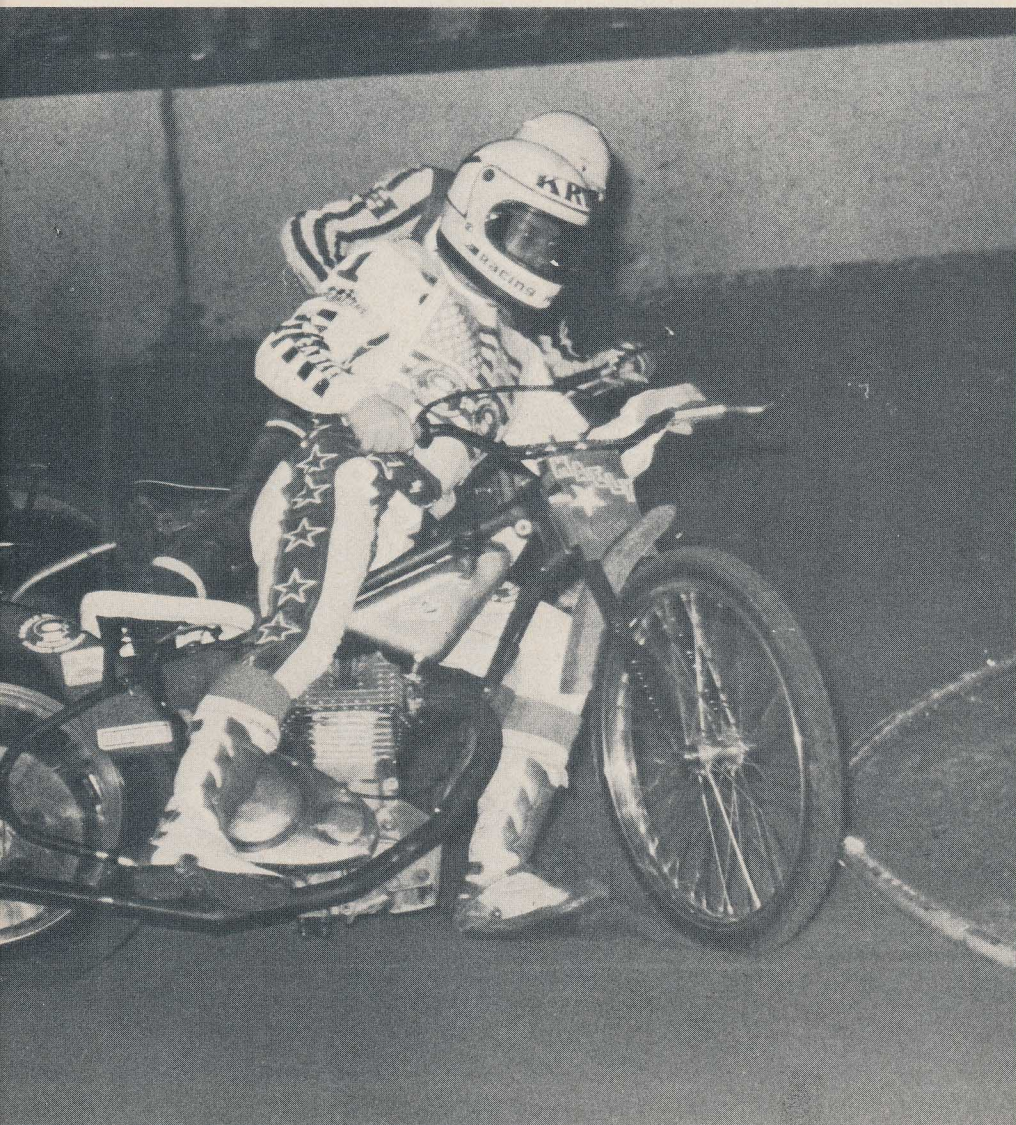


Bast and MacMurray leading Collins and Briggs on the big win night at Ventura.



The U.S. team. From the left: Bobby Schwartz and Mike Curoso (kneeling), Larry Shaw, Scott Autrey, Rich MacMurray, Mike Bast and Bruce Penhall.

SPEEDWAY



Mesa track, which is shorter than those normally raced overseas. After the cinders had settled it was close, but no cigar. The American team, down by eight points at one time, fought back to tie with two heats remaining. The penultimate heat didn't break the deadlock, setting it up for the final go. The visitors looked like they had it as Collins and Briggs led Autrey and Curoso, but then Autrey moved into second and Curoso came right behind him as Briggs went wide. That positioning would have sent the meeting into a sudden death runoff. But then on the final turn to the checkered Curoso's engine lost power and Briggs scooted by, giving the visitors a 55-53 victory.

Collins was high point man for the evening, winning all six rides for the maximum 18 points. Mauger was second high with 16 points while Bruce Penhall, with three wins, topped the Americans with 14 points. National champion Mike Bast, riding with an burned arm, was off par, grabbing just one heat victory and scoring only seven points. It was his local debut on the new Maely machine and with its builder, Ken (The Hot Shoe) Maely, and most of his crew back at Daytona, the bike was not without a few bugs.

The action shifted to Irwindale the following evening and, as expected, the visitors had an easier time of it on the longer track. Final score was 58-50 as Peter Collins and Ivan Mauger won five heats each to share high-score honors with 15 points. Bast topped the Americans with 13. Collins was disqualified for breaking the start tape in one heat and Mauger's prototype four-valve factory Jawa deposited its bottom end all over the track in his single shutout.

Tape dominated the evening's racing program. The starter was switched for the second evening after the Americans protested that their guests were allowed to get rolling starts. The new starter employed a random (perhaps hesitation) start pattern that caught several riders from both teams jumping the gun ... er, tape. Collins, whose leave-it-on-and-pitch-it-into-the-outside-line riding style dazzled the audience, was caught in his first heat and banished to the pits.

Later U.S. champion Mike Bast was exiled ... sort of. They asked him to leave and he said no. He refused to budge, claiming that a European broke the tape with him. He removed his helmet, placed it on the track and



Zenon Plech (left) is Poland's top rider. He finished fifth in last year's World Final. That's Collins with him.

resolutely stood . . . er, sat his ground. A flurry of bodies and conversations followed and finally European team manager Barry Briggs, out of the evening's racing after injuring his shoulder, suggested they let Bast ride.

Two heats later Bobby Schwartz broke the tape but then 1974 world champ Anders Michanek volunteered that he shared the blame. Briggs and Nutter requested that both riders remain. Then two heats later Plech was banished only to be recalled when Nutter returned the favor.

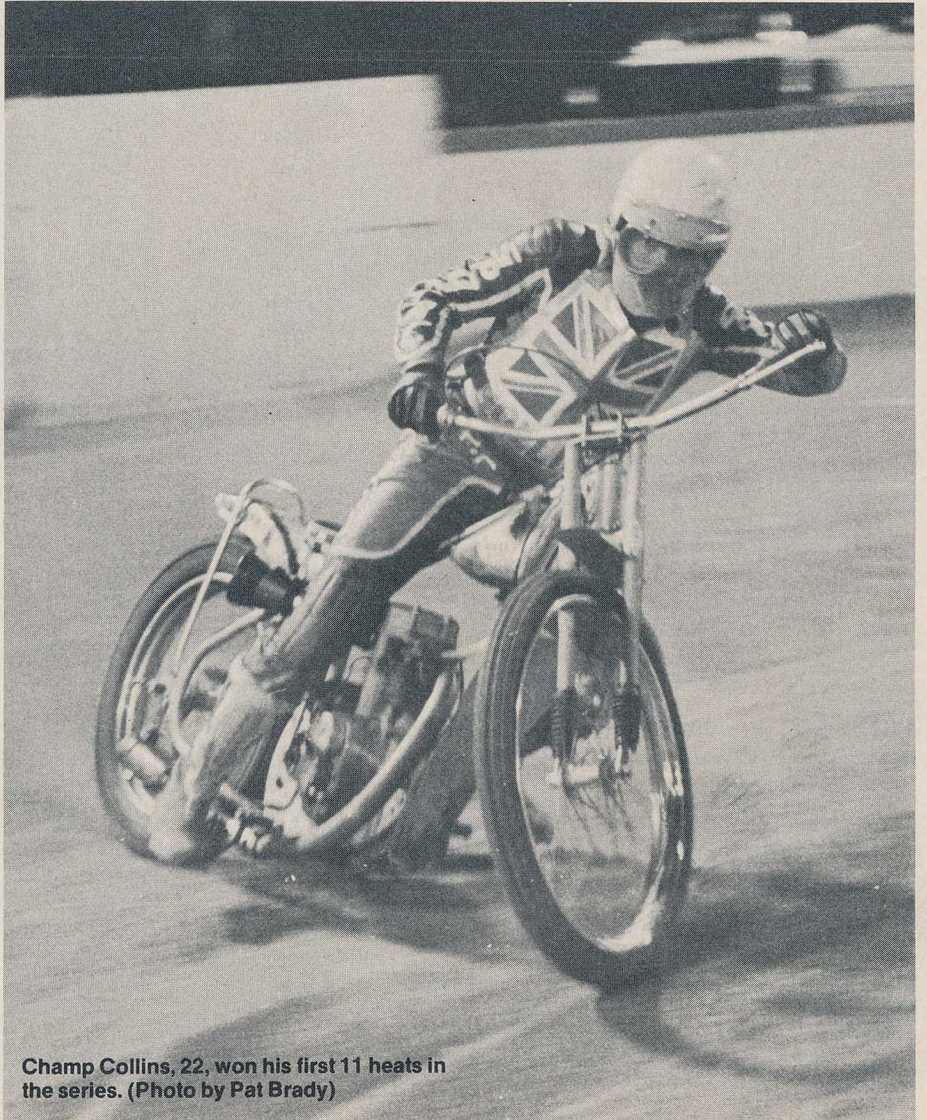
The finale at Ventura was anticlimactic, but the Americans announced their intentions to whittle away at the overall ten-point advantage the visitors boasted, 113-103. And whittle they did. Successfully. Their 59-49 win evened the series on total points scored, 162 apiece. They came out roaring and after just five heats held an eight-point lead, subsequently boosting it to a spread of 12. Collins, with 11 wins, had a perfect streak going except for his one disqualification. But Ventura was Mike Bast's turn to be perfect. Maely was back from Daytona and the pair spent the week working on the handling bugs. The sessions paid off as the national champ swept his six races for a perfect 18 points.

Collins broke the tape on his first ride and was sent to the pits. There was to be no courtesy as no offenders were given reprieves for the evening. The current champ posted just two wins. Mauger also had his problems and Scott Autrey finished second high scorer for the evening with 12 points. Mauger and Michanek paced the world team with ten points apiece.

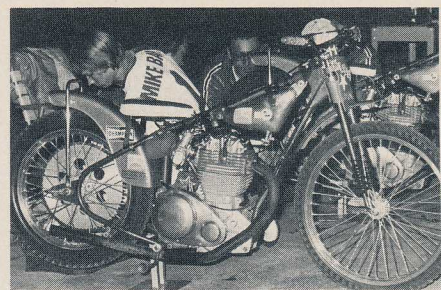
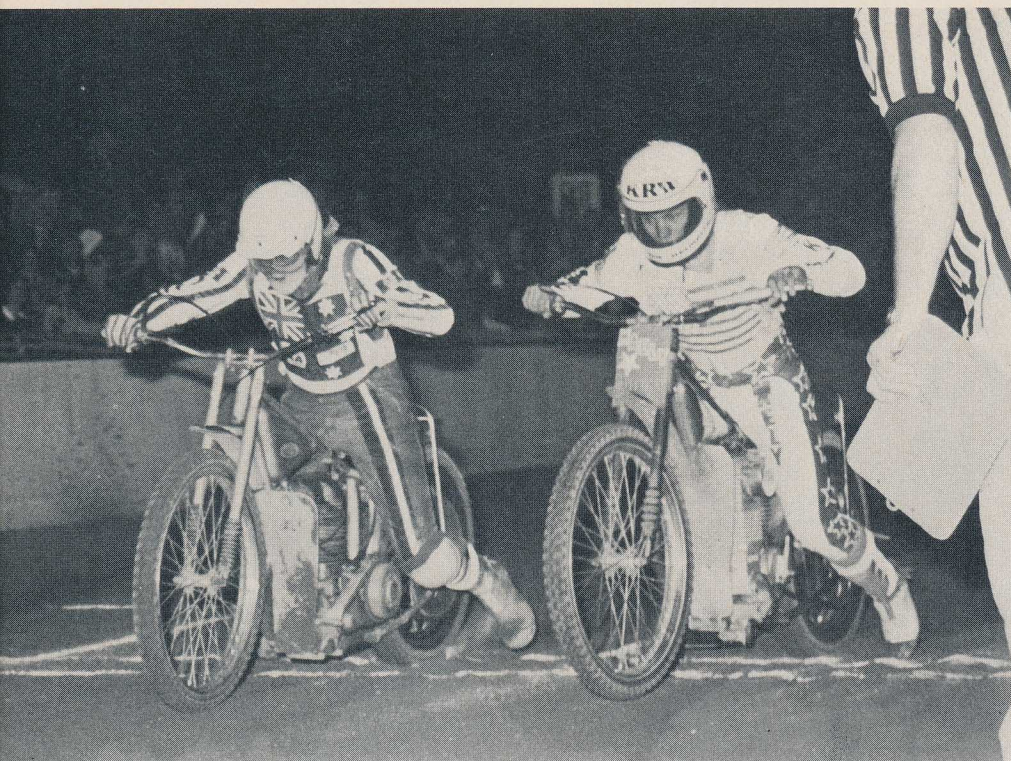
As Bast wheeled to the staging area for his final ride, Larry Huffman announced that Peter Collins was



Bast on the pole, with Briggs, Lightning Larry Shaw and Collins to his right.



Champ Collins, 22, won his first 11 heats in the series. (Photo by Pat Brady)



The American Maely bike.

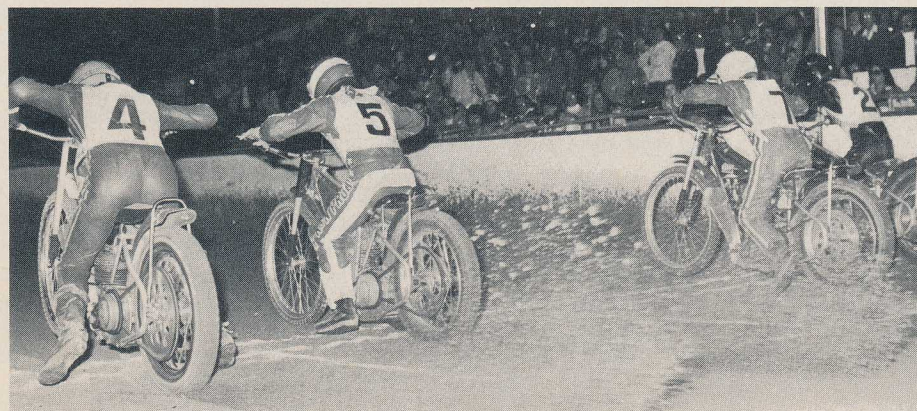


Barry Briggs raced his first World Final in 1954.

willing to meet him in a two-man match race, provided it was a four-lapper. Then Rich MacMurray grabbed the holshot with Bast glued to his rear, holding off Michanek and Stancl. Our champ went for the pass on the final turn, edging his Northern California teammate at the flag.



Ivan Mauger, 37, won world title in 1968, 1969, 1970 and 1972. The New Zealander won his third world longtrack title last year. (Photo by Pat Brady)



US vs the WORLD

	Costa Mesa	Irwin	Vent.	Total Points	Wins
1. Peter Collins (GB)	18	15	8	41	(13)
1. Ivan Mauger (NZ)	16	15	10	41	(10)
3. Mike Bast (US)	7	13	18	38	(9)
4. Scott Autrey (US)	8	11	12	31	(4)
5. Mike Curoso (US)	12	8	10	30	(5)
6. Bruce Penhall (US)	14	8	6	28	(4)
6. Anders Michanek (Swe)	7	11	10	28	(4)
8. Bobby Schwartz (US)	7	9	10	26	(1)
9. Barry Briggs (NZ)	6	5	5	16	(1)
9. Jim McMillan (Sco)	5	5	6	16	(1)
11. Zenon Plech (Pol)	0	3	8	11	(2)
12. Jiri Stancl (Cze)	3	4	2	9	(0)
13. Larry Shaw (US)	5	1	0	6	(0)
14. Rich MacMurray (US)	0	0	3	3	(0)

Bast declined the match race after the regular card, acknowledging Collins as the world's best. He stated that he'd prefer to go home with his perfect eight for eight (including two match races) evening. At the time he was unaware that \$250 had been pledged for the winner of the matchup, but he was aware of the intermittent engine miss caused by a loose CDI wire.

The Americans succeeded in tying up the series in points at 162 even though the world team won 31 of the 54 heats. Collins and Mauger shared the scoring lead at 41 each with Bast leading the Americans with 38. Collin's 13 wins led all racers.

Barry Briggs, 39, on the pole with Mike Curoso beside him. Briggs, a native New Zealander now semi-retired, winters in California when not racing Down Under. Curoso will race in England again this year, is listed as the AMA's national champion.