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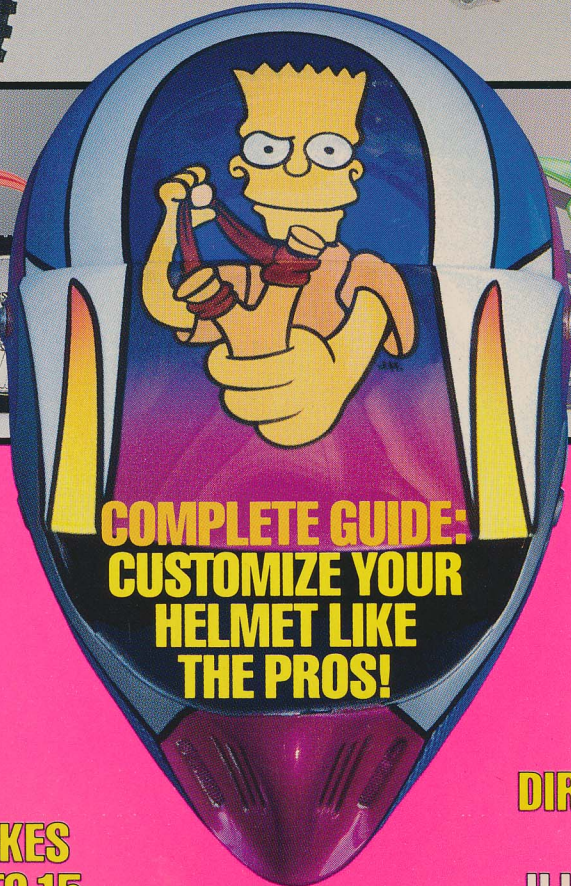
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ISSN 0364-1546

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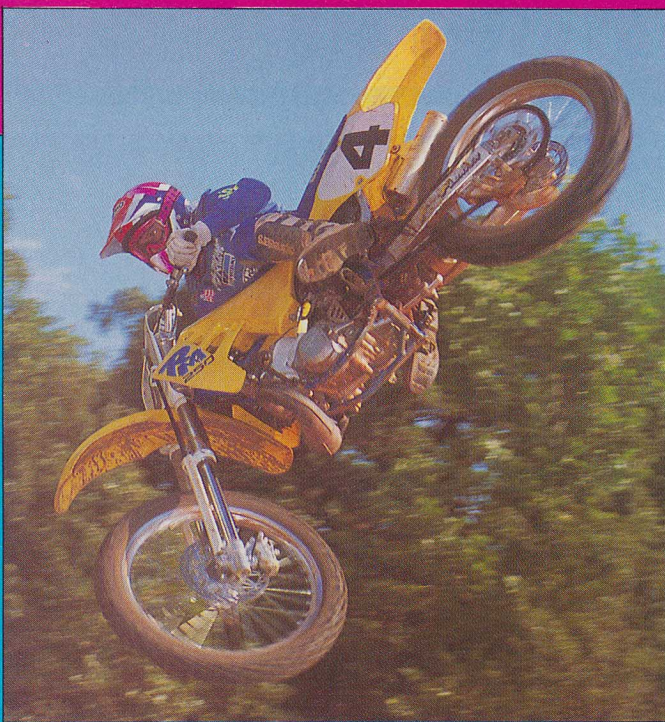
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ON THE COVER: 1991 motocrossers from Yamaha, Honda, Kawasaki and Suzuki vie for "rarest bike" honors without even moving. Kirby Concepts' custom-painted Arai MX-Pro helmet demonstrates how paint can identify you as a pro racer and say a bit about your role models at the same time. Photos by the press relations departments of the respective motorcycle manufacturers and by Kirby Concepts, except for Tim Tolleson's RM shot. Cover design by DeWest; color separations by Valley Film.



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WARNING: Much of the action depicted in this magazine is potentially dangerous. Virtually all of the riders seen in our photos are experienced experts or professionals. Do not attempt to duplicate any stunts that are beyond your own capabilities. Always wear the appropriate safety gear. *Dirt Bike* does all of its testing and photography legally on public land, or private land with permission from the owner(s), and we abide by the local laws concerning vehicle registration and muffler/spark arrester requirements. We are not responsible for quality of aftermarket accessories we use.

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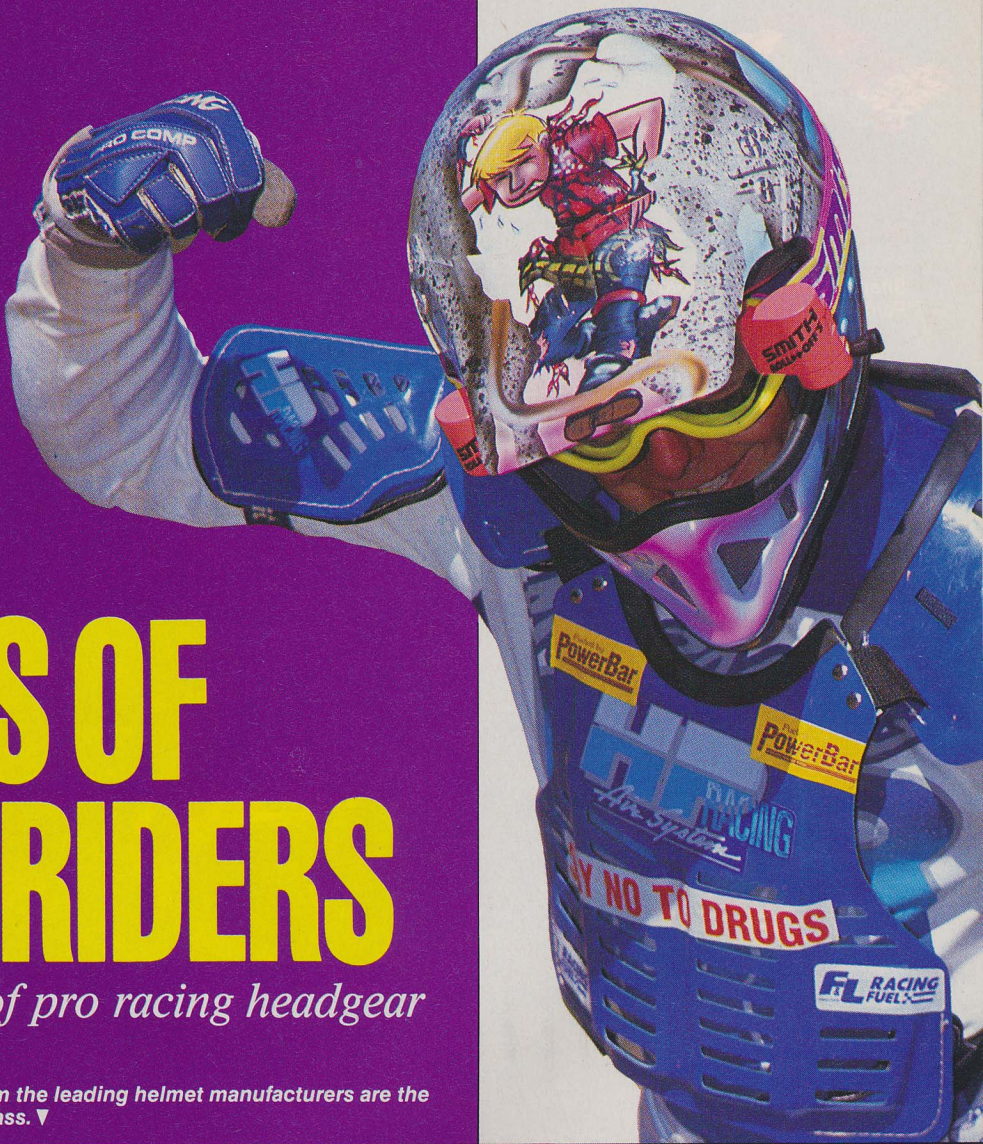
Throughout the history of civilization, hats have been used to indicate one's status, fashion sense or occupation, or purely for some function of head protection. The hat of the professional dirt bike racer, the helmet, serves all these purposes. Are we suggesting that dirt biking represents the zenith of man's endeavors, the very height of civilization? Well, yes, but helmets are the issue here and whether you're a pro or just want to look like one, you're going to want to know about the helmet manufacturers and painters in this article. There are many more fine helmet manufacturers and painters than we've listed in this article, but we're spotlighting only the top guns in paint and head protection in the pro racing scene here, so feast your eyes—this show is in color!

TOP HATS OF THE TOP RIDERS

Painters & purveyors of pro racing headgear

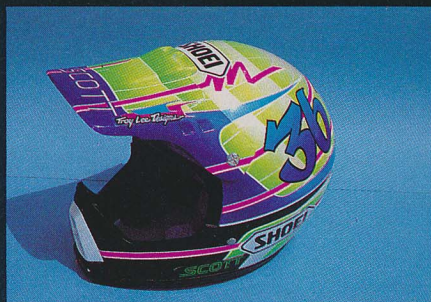
By the DIRT BIKE Staff

Custom-painted, top-of-the-line helmets from the leading helmet manufacturers are the headgear of choice at the front of any Pro class. ▼

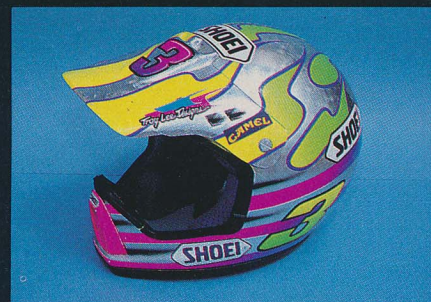




Shane Trittler's Bell Moto-5.
Paint by Bob's Crazy Brush.



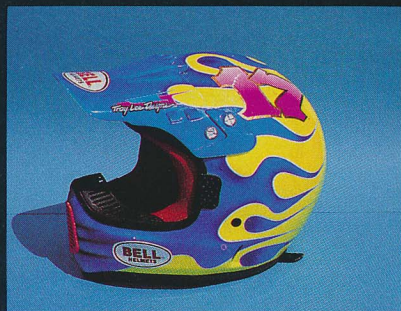
Jeff Emig's Shoei VX-5.
Paint by Troy Lee Designs.



Jeff Ward's Shoei VX-5.
Paint by Troy Lee Designs.



Jimmy Gaddis' Bell Moto-5.
Paint by Serrano Designs.



Larry Ward's Bell Moto-5.
Paint by Troy Lee Designs.



Jean-Michel Bayle's JT ALS-II
with JT graphics.



Buddy Antunez's Shoei VX-5.
Paint by Designs in Motion.



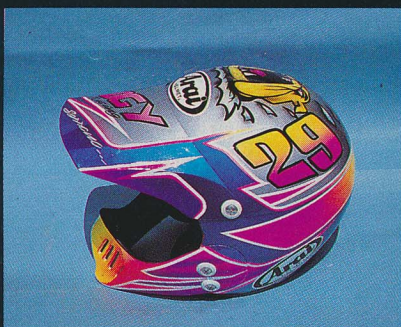
Jeff Stanton's Arai MX-Pro.
Paint by Arai.



Tallon Vohland's Bieffe BX-6.
Paint by Koller's Kolors.



Jeff Matiasovich's Bell Moto-5.
Paint by Troy Lee Designs.



Steve Lamson's Arai MX-Pro.
Paint by Gerard Designs.



Billy Whitley's Bell Moto-5.
Paint by Factory Art Designs.

SPHERICAL CANVAS

Trend-setting helmet designs from Arai, Bell, Bieffe, JT and Shoei get to wear most of the work of the masters of helmet art. Then the helmets and artwork are further glorified by being worn by many of the best riders. The riders then show their appreciation for this art and technology by throwing rocks and dirt at the masterpieces. This strange, sophisticated ritual begins with the helmets and so will we. All of the helmets in this guide have fiberglass shells except for the Bieffe, which uses fiberglass/Kevlar composite. These materials offer excellent protection and hold paints better than most

plastic helmet shells. Most helmet makers, including the ones we're featuring, offer their helmets in color and graphic combinations that would shame the wildest custom paint jobs of a few years ago. Some even have designs by big-name helmet painters right from the factory! Answer Products' Tek 4 by Bell has a Troy Lee Designs visor and graphics, TX-10/Hondaline has a Bell Moto-5 with Troy Lee Designs graphics, HJC offers its top-of-the-line helmets with Gerard Designs graphics. Suzuki sells a special Arai MX-Pro, and Bell makes special Moto-5s for AXO, Kawasaki and Yamaha in addition to their own Rick Johnson

replica Moto-5.

If stock graphics don't suit your style you are probably interested in a plain white helmet because you'll have it painted anyway. These are usually the cheapest to buy and paint. This is because helmet dealers usually charge more for helmets with graphics and most helmet painters charge a fee for removing any graphics so they can begin with a bare helmet.

Arai: Arai's \$222.99 plain white (models with graphics to \$274.95), MX-Pro has a removable chin piece so it can be worn as an open-face helmet. Japanese attention to detail gives this helmet an excellent fit and ap-

TOP HATS

This Bell-manufactured helmet has excellent venting and a removable, washable liner. The graphics on this helmet are decals which are not clearcoated, so they're simple to remove—a bonus for riders who want to have the helmet painted.

Shoei: Shoei's VX-5 \$274.95 plain white (models with graphics to \$318.95) is typical of the high-end helmets in this group in that it's loaded with features like venting passages that enter at the top and bottom of the helmet and carry cooling air through the interior to exhaust vents at the back of the shell; a truly comfortable and absorbent liner material and excellent detailing. Great care in design, detailing and quality control make this helmet look and feel like an article of fine clothing rather than just a piece of good riding gear.

THE ART CLASS OF 1990

Whether we realize it or not, we all have artistic preferences, helmet painters included. All the painters in this guide will do outstanding work, but before you pick one at random to do your helmet, study the painting they've done for others. Some lean toward angular shapes, lifelike figures or chaotic designs because they enjoy them and do them extremely well. See whose style matches your taste to get the helmet that fits your style as well as your head.

There's a fairly standardized "menu" of services in the world of helmet painting, so we've arranged this guide to follow it. The least expensive custom painting service most helmet painters offer is lettering or numbers. The next step up in price is a basic graphic treatment. This is a fairly simple multi-color design or striping. Since this type of paint job involves painting the entire shell, you will have to pay the painter to strip the helmet shell of old paint and graphics so he can begin with the custom design, unless he begins with a new, solid-colored helmet. The final step up is a complex design or cartoon with fades from one color to another. For a small additional charge the painters will do a spare visor or two painted to match the one that's custom painted with your helmet. You should also consider the time it will take to have your helmet painted, so we've listed the painters' typical turnaround times. Some helmet painters sell much more than painting services and many are helmet dealers (which means you can call them, request a helmet and a design and wear your old lid while you wait for your stylish new one) so we've listed the additional products and services they offer, too.

Arto Designs, 45 Denver St., Pawtucket, RI 02860; (401) 722-6989. Lettering or numbers, \$15-\$20. Stripping, \$25. Basic graphic treatment, \$100 (Moto-5, \$125). Extra visor, \$15 (paint only), \$25 (includes visor cost). Cartoon, \$50 and up. Turnaround, two to three weeks. *Additional products and services:* Dealer for Arai, Bell, JT, Shoei helmets and Troy Lee Designs visors.

Designs in Motion, 1914 Woodrow, Fres-



Guy Cooper's Arai MX-Pro.
Paint by Arai.



Mike LaRocco's Bell Moto-5.
Paint by Mototime.



Mike Kiedrowski's Arai MX-Pro.
Paint by Troy Lee Designs.



Damon Bradshaw's Bell Moto-5.
Paint by Troy Lee Designs.



Shawn Wynn's Shoei Jet-X.
Paint by Designs in Motion.



Jimmy Button's Shoei VX-5.
Paint by Troy Lee Designs.



Arai's MX-Pro.
Paint by Kirby Koncepts.



Jeff Dement's JT ALS-II.
Paint by Kirby Koncepts.

pearance. It's got the only visor among the helmets in this group that will hold paint. You must buy a Troy Lee visor for the other helmets in order to have the helmet and visor custom painted.

Bell: Bell's Moto-5, white only must be purchased from Troy Lee Designs as part of a helmet/custom paint package; otherwise you'll have to buy a \$266.99 factory tri-color model, or the \$299.99 Rick Johnson replica. The Moto-5 is a major step forward from its predecessor, the immensely popular Moto-4, in styling and function due to its clean, aggressive looks and very effective high-volume venting system. It's also got a re-

movable, washable liner.

Bieffe: Bieffe's \$119.95 BX-6 plain white (models with graphics to \$149.95) has been a popular helmet in Europe for some time and is catching on with American pros. At three pounds, five ounces, it's about two ounces lighter than most fiberglass shell helmets. Its exotic Kelvar/fiberglass shell material is the reason. Bieffe has an even lighter carbon fiber/Kevlar model, the MX-Hi Tech, in the works!

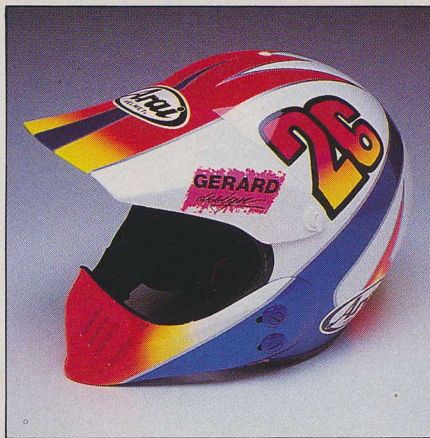
JT: JT's \$267.95 (plain white or with graphics) ALS II is the helmet that set the trend for integrated visor off-road helmet design years ago and it still looks modern.

TOP HATS

no, CA 93703; (209) 251-8713. Lettering or numbers, \$15-\$20. Stripping, \$25, free with helmet jobs costing \$175 or more. Basic graphic treatment, \$100. Extra visor, \$15 (paint only), \$25 (includes visor cost). Cartoon, \$50 and up. Turnaround, one to two weeks. *Additional products and services:* Dealer for Troy Lee Designs visors.

Troy Lee Designs, 1985 Aviation Dr., Corona, CA 91720; (714) 371-5219. Lettering or numbers, \$15-\$30. Stripping, \$25. Basic graphic treatment, \$160 (free Cross-Top billet aluminum helmet screws with paint job). Extra visor, \$15 (paint only), \$25 (includes visor cost). Cartoon, \$100-\$160. Turnaround, 14-16 weeks. *Additional products and services:* Dealer for Arai, Bell (plain white Moto-5s are available from Troy Lee Designs), Shoei and Simpson helmets, Troy Lee Designs visors (free visor with helmet purchase), Knowear shirts, hats sportswear and cycling clothes, CrossTop billet aluminum screw kits, Sticky Colors helmet graphic kits, Stickit sticker kits, Spy visors. Lycra helmet bags, Jet-Ski custom paint jobs.

Bob's Crazy Brush, 1948 Del Amo Blvd. #D, Torrance, CA 90501; (213) 327-2553. Lettering or numbers, \$25-\$35. Stripping, \$25-\$35. Basic graphic treatment, \$150. Extra visor, \$15 (paint only), \$25 (includes visor cost). Cartoon, \$40 and up. Turnaround, two to three weeks. *Additional products and*



Ty Davis' Arai MX-Pro. Paint by Gerard Designs.

services: Dealer for Arai, Bell, JT, Shoei helmets and Troy Lee Designs visors.

Gerard Designs, 7103 Owensmouth Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91303; (818) 703-6589. Lettering or numbers, \$25-\$35. Stripping, \$25. Basic graphic treatment, \$120. Extra visor, \$15 (paint only), \$25 (includes visor cost). Cartoon, \$40 and up. Turnaround, three to four weeks. *Additional products and services:* Dealer for Arai, Bell, JT, HJC, Shoei helmets and Troy Lee Designs visors. Auto, boat and mountain bike painting.

Kirby Concepts, 7902 Shelbourne Circle, Spring, TX 77379; (713) 320-9639. Lettering or numbers, \$5-\$15. Stripping, \$20. Basic graphic treatment, \$100. Extra visor, \$15

(paint only), \$20 (includes visor cost). Cartoon, \$35 and up. Turnaround, two to three weeks. *Additional products and services:* Dealer for Troy Lee Designs visors.

Koller's Kolors, 10734 Kenney St. #F, Santee, CA 92071; (619) 449-4787. Lettering or numbers, \$15-\$20. Stripping, \$25. Basic graphic treatment, \$100 (Moto-5 \$125). Extra visor, \$15 (paint only), \$25 (includes visor cost). Cartoon, \$50 and up. Turnaround, four weeks. *Additional products and services:* Dealer for Arai, Bell, JT, Shoei helmets and Troy Lee Design visors. Jet ski hull repair and paint.

Serrano Custom Designs, 35603 Morley Pl., Fremont, CA 94536; (415) 793-1848. Lettering or numbers, free with basic or full graphic treatment, not available separately. Stripping, \$30. Basic graphic treatment, \$180. Full graphic treatment with cartoon, name, numbers, \$240. Extra visor, \$25 (paint only), \$30 (includes visor cost). Turnaround, two weeks (appointment required). *Additional products and services:* Dealer for Arai, Bell, JT, Shoei helmets and Troy Lee Designs visors.

SND Custom Paint Designs, 9101 Boyds Turn Rd., Owings, MD 20736; (301) 257-7865. Lettering or numbers, \$3 per digit. Name, \$5. Stripping, \$25. Basic graphic treatment, \$100. Extra visor, \$15 (paint only), \$35 (includes visor cost). Cartoon, \$15-\$50. Turnaround, three to four weeks. *Additional products and services:* Dealer for Troy Lee Designs visors. HRP lexan shoulder pad painting, \$50. □

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