

**SUPERCHARGED KAWASAKI 1000's FOR STREET AND STRIP**

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# **HOT BIKE**

PDC



**TESTS: YAMAHA IT400E,  
KAWASAKI KZ 750,  
MOTO MORINI  
3 1/2 SPORT, And  
SUZUKI'S DIRT  
SCAMP FUN BIKES**

MARCH 1978  
VOLUME 2, NO. 3

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U.K. 60p



**TRACK TESTING A FOUR-VALVE  
JAWA SPEEDWAY BIKE  
ALCOHOL For Racing Applications**

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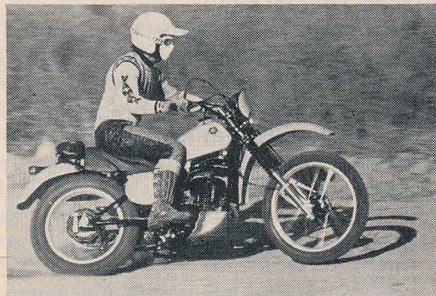
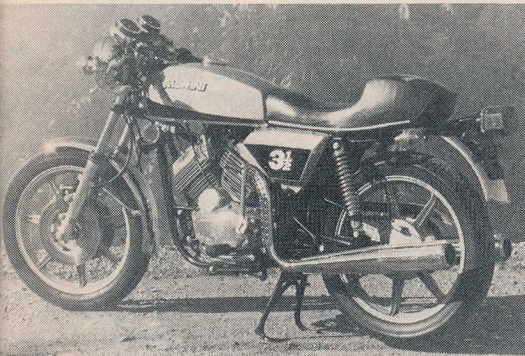
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# HOT BIKE

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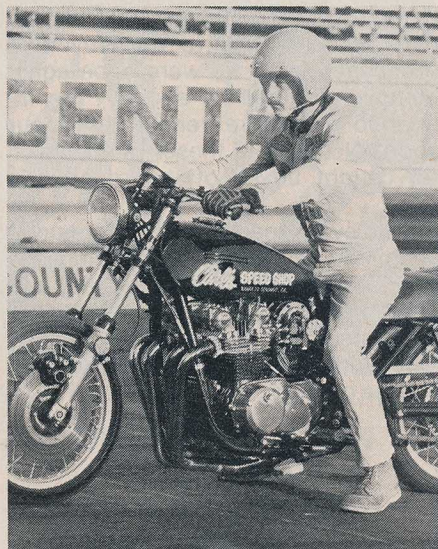
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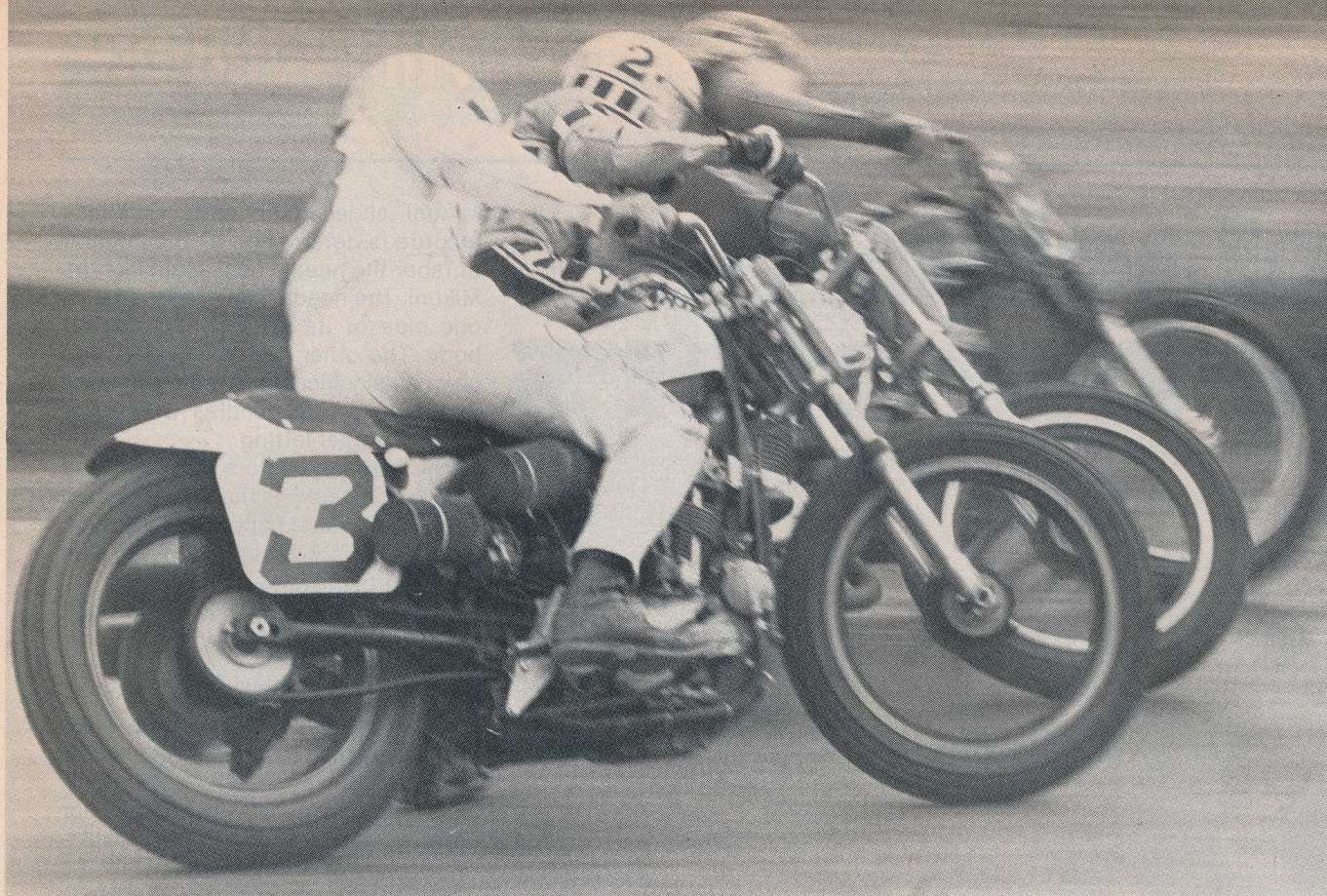
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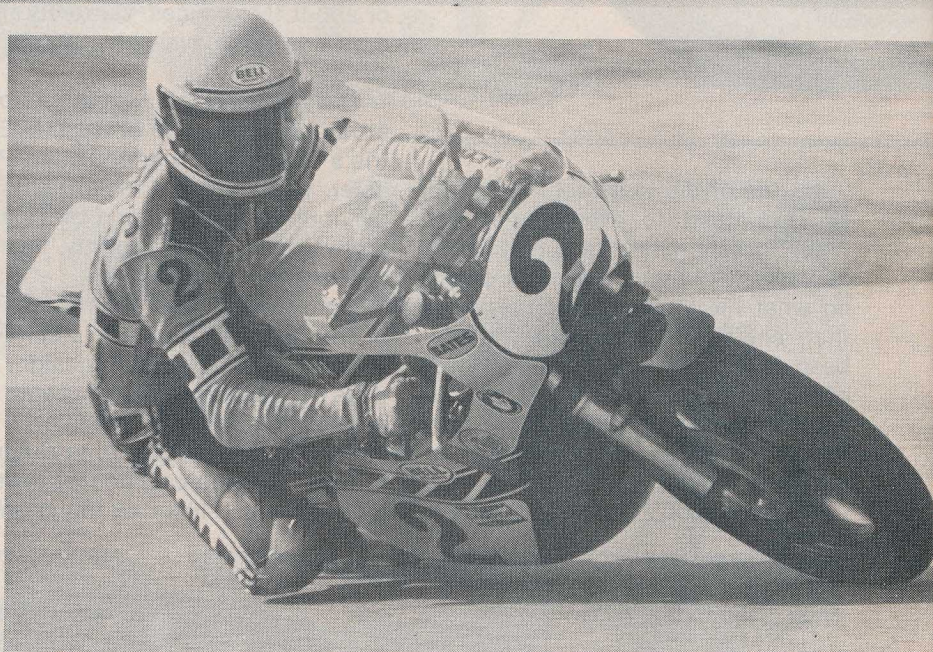
*On the Cover:* Yamaha's IT400 was plenty of fun riding through the hills of Malibu. Extachrome by Mike Griffin. The Kawasaki KZ750 was photographed by Dain Gingerelli.



# FIGHTING FOR OL' JOE'S MONEY

by Dain Gingerelli

The Battle Will Be Decided In the Trenches for AMA's Number One.



Now that we have our winter lull in racing, it might be a good time to see what is in store for this coming year. At the time of this writing, the AMA race schedule for the Camel Pro Series was still in the planning stages. Also, some riders hadn't quite formulated their entire plans for 1978 either. And lastly, the first race of the year, the annual kick-off at Houston, will have just gotten underway when

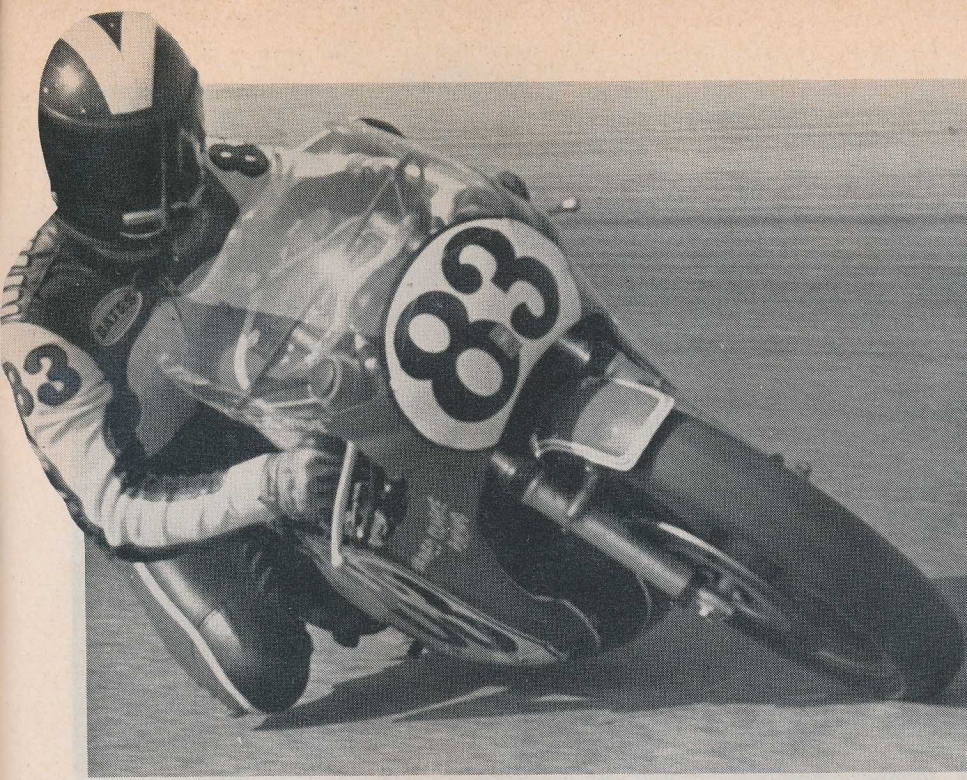
this issue goes on sale. So some of the news and forecasts will be old news, or totally false, due to change in plans by AMA or some of the riders.

One of the most startling news events at the end of the last season was Yamaha's withdrawal from AMA Class C dirt racing. After two frustrating years, of which the Harley XR-750s so thoroughly dominated the miles and half-miles, Yamaha decided they had

Roberts won't be racing as much in America as he has in the past. At present, he is scheduled for only two or three American road races.

had enough. They spent thousands of dollars trying to develop their blown-to-750cc 650 twin in an attempt to make it back to the top, but never quite did it. Exit the OW72 and Yamaha, and Ken Roberts.

The announcement came only the day before the Ascot TT. The following



Steve McLaughlin put in a fine showing at the Riverside road race last October. Without Roberts in the Camel Pro Series, some of the better privateers might win for a change.

night, Roberts set a new qualifying record for the half-mile at Ascot. But the bike appeared good for two or three fast laps, then the handling would go sour. They had it dialed in for speed, but the dependability just wasn't there.

What are Roberts' plans? Don't think Yamaha forgot about him. At the conclusion of the season, he had several options open to him for 1978. One would be to race his TZ750 in Camel Pro Series events only. His salary would be adjusted accordingly, and he would be free to compete the flat tracks

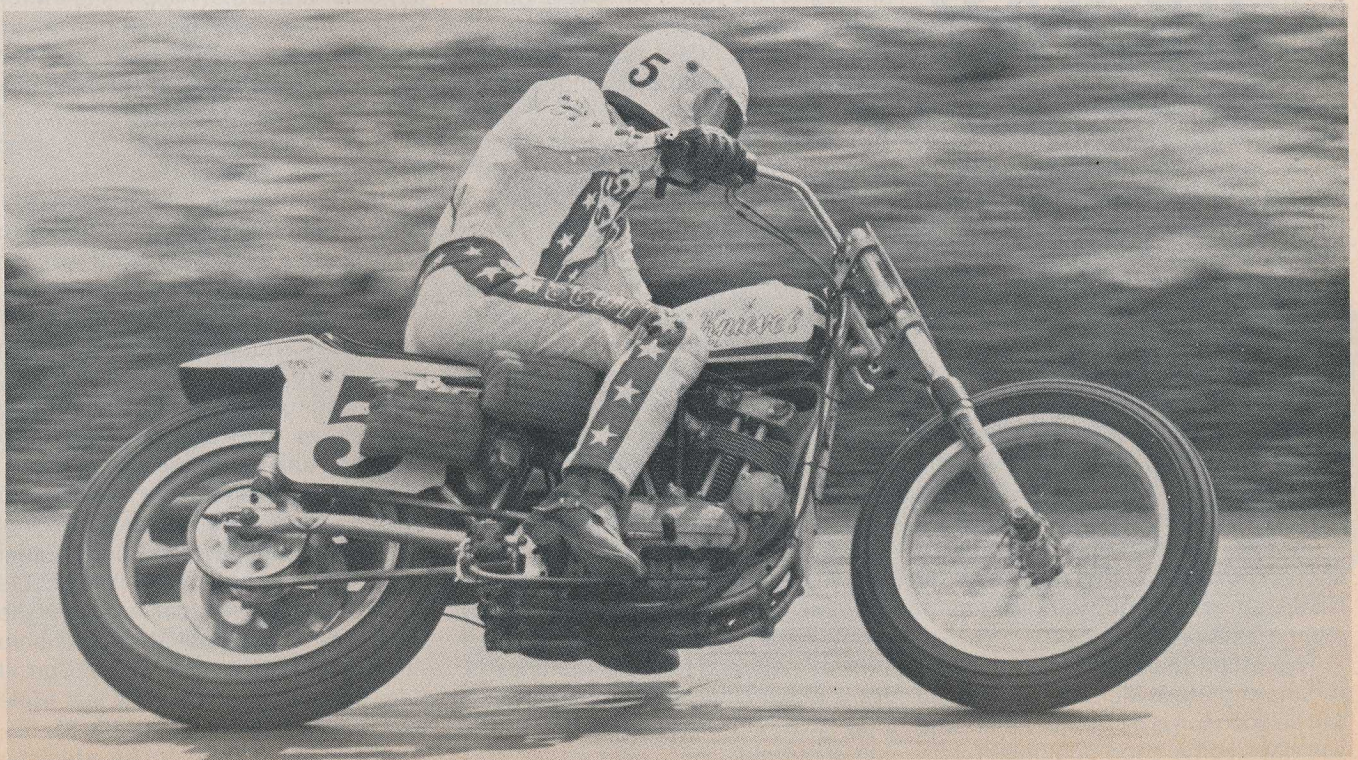
on a Harley; which would be nice to see. Or he can race Camel Pro Series road races only, and not ride anything else, unless Yamaha says so. He would still make his same salary as in 1977 taking this route. Or, and this is what he has appeared to do, he can race Yamahas in U.S. road races, and compete in Europe on the Yamaha factory team, riding the 500 and Formula 750 series. That is the most recent rumor, and it appears true, although people at Yamaha still aren't giving concrete answers at this time. It's not known for

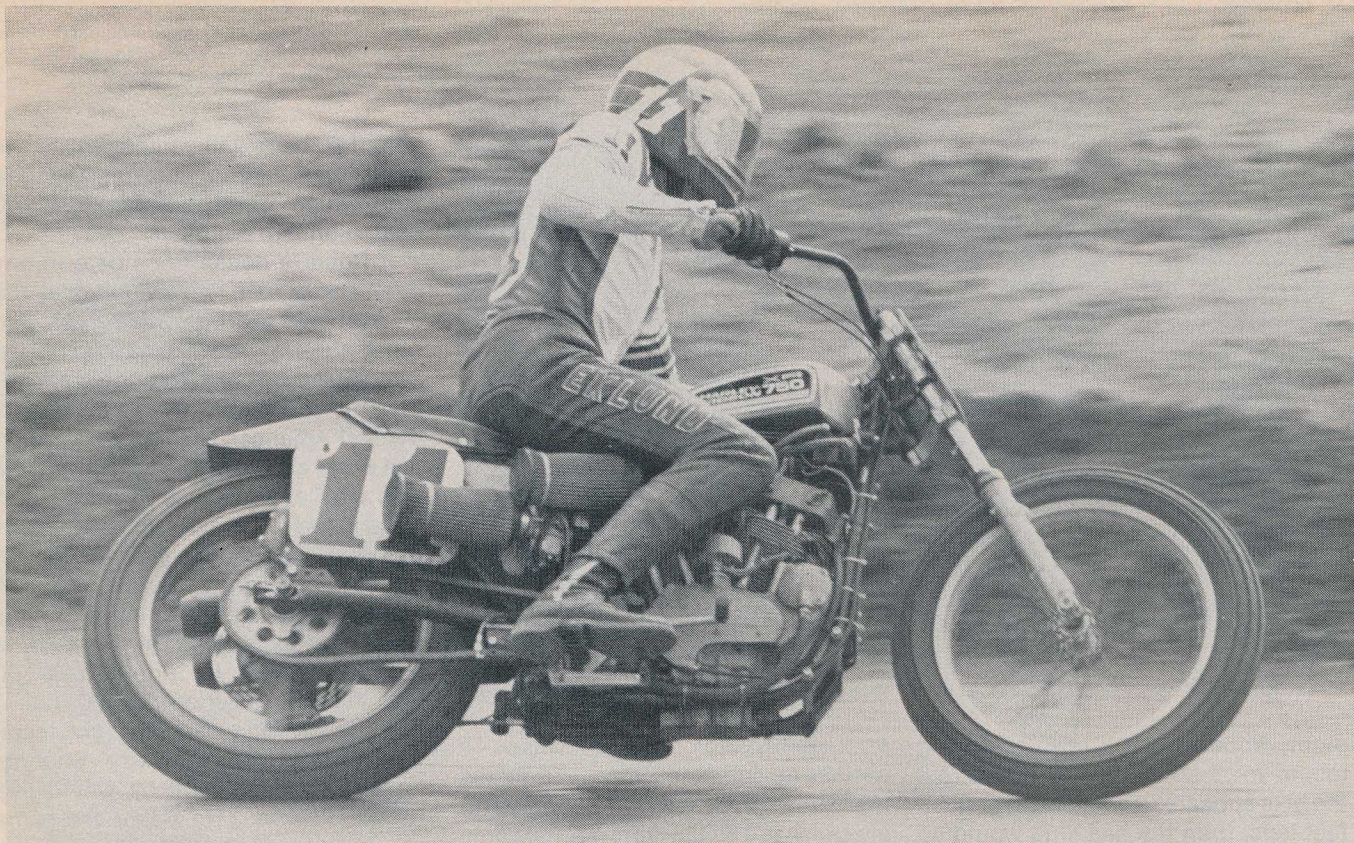
sure if Roberts will compete in all the road races here, or just the Daytona 200, which gives full Formula 750 championship points.

If Roberts doesn't compete in any other Camel road races, don't think the competition will be off the hook. Another surprise move by Yamaha had Steve Baker nixed from the team. Although he won the Formula 750 crown, the first American to ever be champion in a world championship series, Yamaha was a little displeased at his second place in the 500cc class. Thus, no Baker riding for Yamaha. He has signed with Yamaha of Canada, his old sponsor, and will ride their 750 in how many Camel races is uncertain. But he is also purported to ride a RG-500 Suzuki square four on the 500 trail. If he does, he will be an unofficial teammate of champion Barry Sheene. Sheene has said that he would like to have Suzuki give Baker the same "trick" bike as he will ride. If Baker competes on the 500 series, he probably won't make all the Camel road races, as the money and time to travel back and forth won't make it justifiable.

So these two latest events may alter the road race portion of the Camel Pro

The best non-factory rider to have a chance of winning the Number One plate is Gary Scott. He goes fast on the miles and half-miles.





# FIGHTING FOR OL' JOE'S MONEY

Series immensely. Maybe now we will have some good racing for first place. So before we talk about the series itself, let's consider who will be some of the front running asphalt riders. Ranked number one will have to be Skip Aksland. He proved himself last year, placing second or third to Roberts at most of the races during the summer. His 250 win at Sears Point proved he could win. So watch Aksland.

We can't discuss road racing and not mention Gary Nixon. He's a little older, sure, but he still rides like the Nixon of '73, when he won three races in a row for Kawasaki. Kanemoto should be turning the wrenches for Nixon, so he will have the best equipment available.

Two other riders to watch are Dave Aldana and Steve McLaughlin. Aldana will be sponsored by Paul Dahmen, and will have some good equipment with

which to work. Those that saw him at Riverside last October know he still has the charm to move a road race bike around the track at a decent clip. McLaughlin has been telling us he is one of the best privateers on the circuit, now he may just have the opportunity to prove it. He too went good at Riverside. He will also be riding the lightning fast Yoshimura Suzuki superproduction bike.

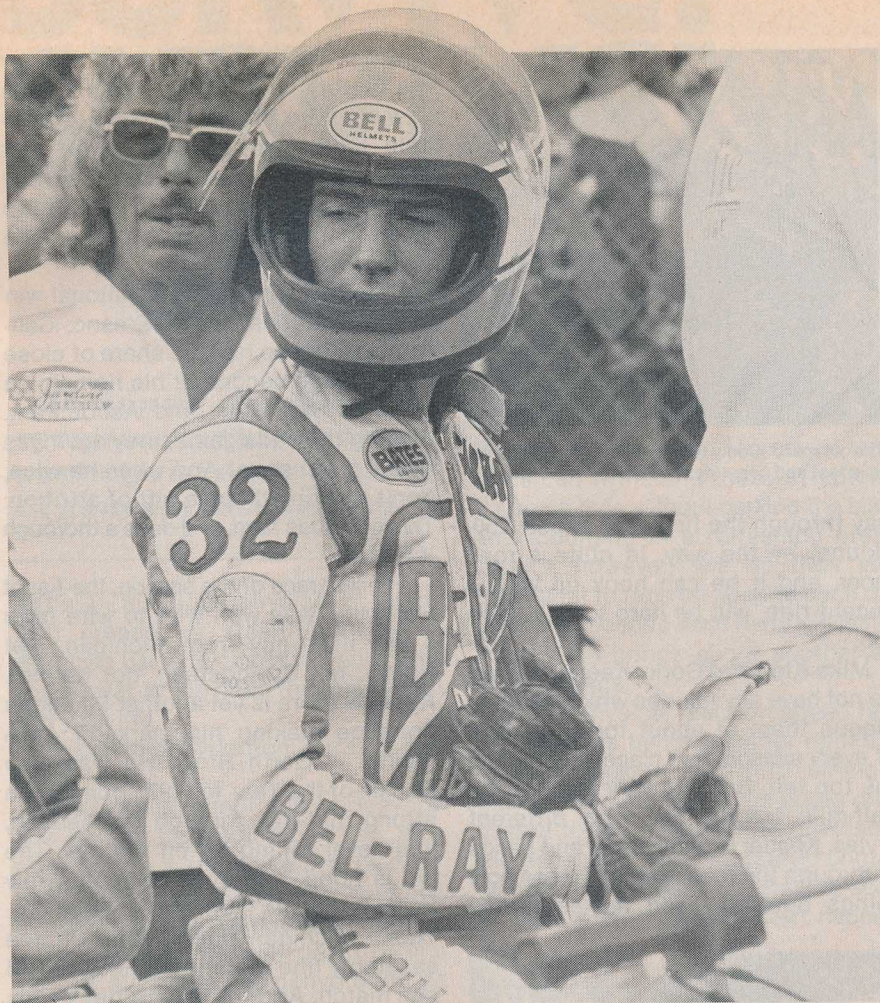
Two young riders to watch for are Dave Emde and Randy Mamola. These two California youngsters took one-two in the 250 championship last season, and will have rides on 750s for 1978 (Emde rode a 750 for Vesco most of the year, but the bike wasn't a front row bike). Emde will ride for either Mack's Cycle, or Mel Dinesen. Dinesen tuned for Dave's older brother Don in 1972 when he won Daytona, so maybe there is good fortune in the wind for him if he pairs up with the tuner from Bakersfield.

It is still uncertain as to what Mamola is planning. But he had worked with Kanemoto on their 250 during the last half of 1977 so maybe he has plans to ride a Kanemoto 750? It would keep Erv busy on two bikes, and Randy would have a nice bike in which to get himself adjusted to the faster speeds. He is rather small, and the large TZ750 may give him some problems in the initial outings.

For two years now, Steve Eklund has placed high in the standings. His third try might be the charm. He is also a fine road racer.

But the road race portion of the Camel Pro series is only a small fraction of the 28 race series. The real battle is won or lost on the flat tracks, where the Harleys have the edge on any other brand that happens to invade their domain. 1977 proved one thing, too. The Team Harleys didn't have that big an edge on most of the privateer Harleys. In fact, Team Harleys won a total of seven races, four by champ Springsteen. One of those wins was on the short track bike at Houston, so they actually won only six miles or half-miles, or TT's. Gary Scott was the single biggest privateer winner on XRs, winning three (not including his two TT wins on a Triumph.) The edge, then lies in the reliability of the Team Harley bikes. Springsteen and Boody finished more races than anybody else. And they took one-two in the Camel Pro.

With those references, we have to give the favor for a repeat by Springsteen, with good favor to Boody. Either one of these two Michigan riders could do it for 1978. No rider has won the AMA Grand National Championship three years in a row since Carroll Resweber did it in 1961. The last triple winner was Bart Markel (1962, 65, 66), so the odds appear to be stacking



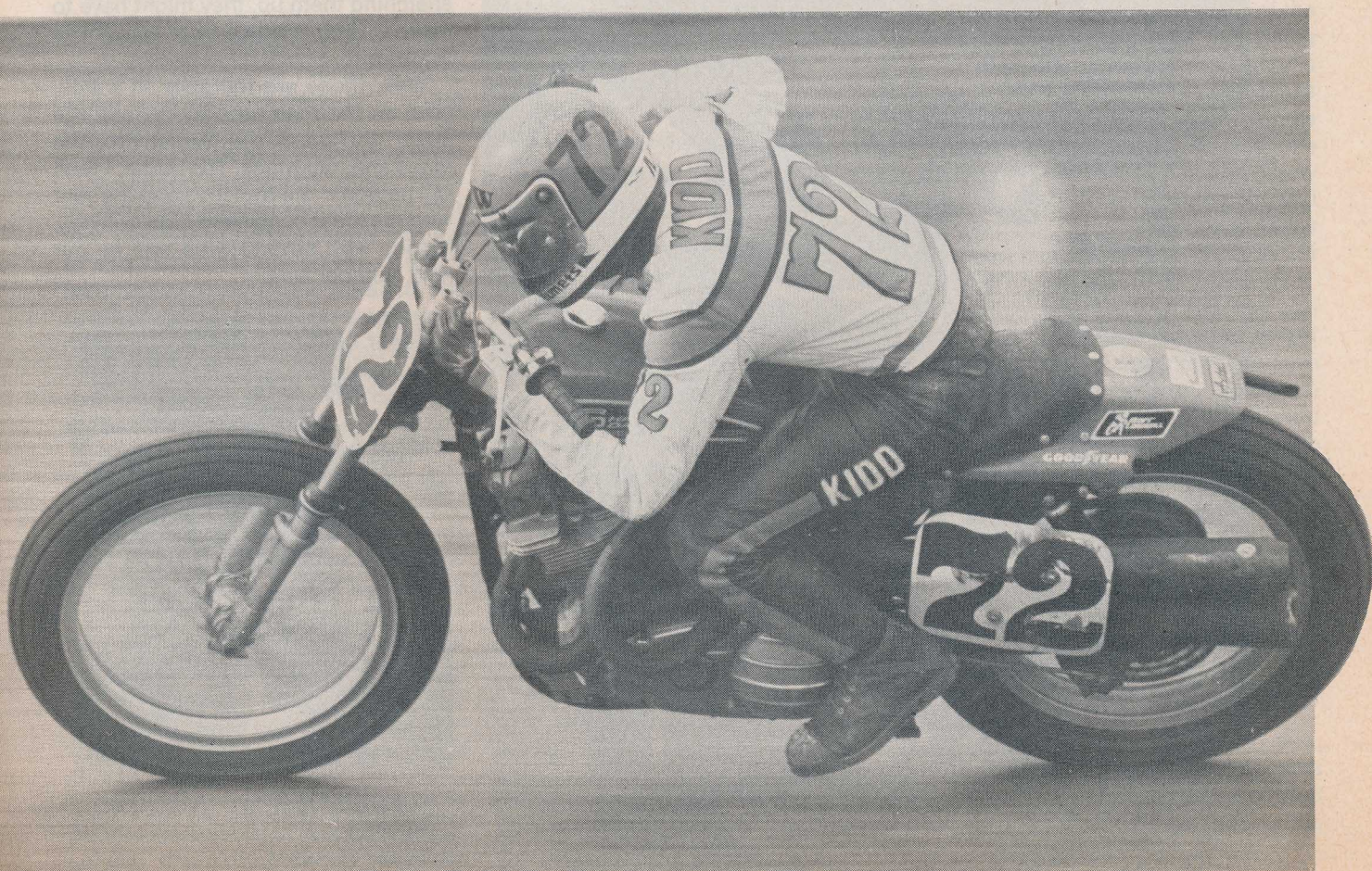
Another Michigan Mafia member, Garth Brow has big plans for 1978. The latest from Flint, he rides half-miles like an old pro.

up against The Springer. But he has the support of the factory and one of the best tuners in the country, Bill Werner. And he's hot.

Boody seemed to lose some of his edge at the end of last year. He didn't have a chance for Number One by Ascot time, but still had a decent crack for second spot, one he wanted badly at that point. He rode smoothly and consistently at Ascot both nights, but just didn't have the dynamic charge he displayed during the first couple months. A winter rest might pump him up again.

Springsteen and Boody rank as top favorites for 1978, but with Roberts almost totally out of the picture Gary Scott, the former champ of 1975, must be counted in right behind the Harley pair. Scott has the advantage of riding whatever bike he decides is best for the event, and so can pick up some valuable points on the orange/white/black guys. He also won more events last season than any other rider, plac-

The hottest half-mile rider last year was Texan Mike Kidd. If he should return to ride for Lawwill again, look for more half-mile wins.



ing first five times. Two were at Ascot's TT's, both times on a Triumph. And as noted, he won three on his XR. If he can keep his road racer in one piece throughout the year, he could earn those extra points to put him once again at the top. It would be the first time a privateer ever won the AMA GN since 1963 when Dick Mann did it. As with Springsteen, the odds are against Scott, for that very reason.

Two riders that came on strong at summer's end were Hank Scott and Skip Aksland. Hank missed winning more than once, and even finished a close second to Aksland during Skipper's first National win at San Jose. Both will ride XR-750 Harleys, and so should be quite in the hunt. Aksland, like Gary Scott, can road race, and is capable of picking up some needed points (as he did in 1977) to place high in the Camel Pro.

When talking about high placing at the end of the season, one rider that has placed in the top five both years is Steve Eklund. The San Jose rider always goes fast on any type of track, much like G. Scott. He will also be eligible to ride in road races, having earned his



"The old man," Corky Keener likes the half-miles. He is fast and consistent on them.

way through the first-year expert 250. Eklund, by the way, is quite a road racer, and if he can hook up with a decent ride, will be hard to beat here too.

Mike Kidd and Corky Keener, if they do not have any injuries which seem to plague them at about the first third of every season, can place very high in the top ten. Both do very well on the half-mile tracks, but with different styles. Keener is consistent, and hangs in through the race, waiting to see how things develop. Kidd makes things

develop, Texas Style. Keener rides for the factory, and Kidd gets help from Lawwill, who in turn has semi-factory help. Lawwill, by the way, tunes that 750 motor just about as well as any wrench on the trail. Watch for Kidd to lead the freight train at San Jose once again.

One rider who is due a National win is Alex Jorgensen. The Fresno, California rider has had his share of close calls, taking second at his hometown track of San Jose, and Ascot Park. Playing the odds game, they are in his favor to win soon! And when he wins, don't think it will be a gift of attrition. This guy rides hard, and does a thorough job of it.

The last race of the season, the Ascot Half-Mile, was won wire to wire from a tiny little guy from Michigan. Not Boody, not Springsteen, not Keener. No, now there is yet another Michigan hot-shoe making his mark on AMA racing — Garth Brow. He was also Rookie-of-the-Year for 1977 coming on strong mid-way through the season, and never rolling off on the gas. The kid is good, and once he logs a few miles under his steel shoe, watch out. Those Michigan riders come off the assembly line faster than Ford or GM can match. And the way Harley keeps snatching them up, they might have to move O'Brien's office from Milwaukee to Detroit.

Well, those are the guys to watch, both on the road race scene, and the major portion of the Camel Pro, the miles and half-miles. The battle, I feel, will be won in the trenches, and the rider with the most consistent high finishes, topped with several wins, will be our next Number One.



It is only a matter of time before Alex Jorgensen gets his first Grand National win. Skip Aksland got his at San Jose. He should be a prime factor on the asphalt courses.