

Notes on Spokes

December 2002

Andrew McClellan
Hillbilly racing at
Aurora

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TID BITS

Are you ready for an adventure? How does 10 days in Baja, Mexico sound? Lee Glenn called the other day and said he, Rick Helmick, Jay Williams and one other rider from the Kansas City area are heading to Mexico the last week of January for 10 days of riding. Lee plans on driving to Phoenix, AZ, with a trailer load of bikes. The rest of the group will fly into Phoenix. The bikes all must be street legal, so they can ride across the border into Mexico. They are going to be carrying everything they need for the trip on their bikes or their bodies. They are looking for a couple more riders for this adventure. If you are interested, give me a call, I'll get you in touch with Lee.

Speaking of adventure, Mel Gere is preparing for the adventure of a lifetime. It's called retirement. Mel has found a buyer for Action Cycle. The scheduled sale date is January 1, 2002. I'll have more on this next month. Mel did say he will be still be at Action for several months. He said he would be helping the new owner get things figured out. I think Mel said the new owner's name is Deral Moore.

Clear your schedules, there is a lot coming up in the next few weekends.

This coming Sunday, December 9, is Toys for Tots at Possum Hollow. Practice starts at 10 a.m., racing at noon. Bring a \$15 toy as your entry fee. If there are enough mini-racers for a minibike race, we'll have minibike racing between motos.

The following weekend on Saturday, December 15, is the OMTRA Christmas Party at Shawn's house. See page 9 for details.

Sunday, December 23, is the annual New Year's Day Clean Up. It's going to be early this year for a couple of reasons. First, the Ozark Mountain Trail Riders have a work commitment to the Forest Service that must be completed before the end of the year. Second, some of the key folks in the Ozark Mountain Trail Riders are not going to be available on January 1 and we are not going to let Kevin and Shawn get off that easily.

And finally, December 30 is the third Hill Billy GP. This one will be at Marshfield.

Starting on the next page is a story written by Karl Harris about Karl, Darin House and Mel Gere heading to California for the Elsinore GP. Darin brought a video of the trip to the last OMTRA meeting. It's great. After I saw the video, I asked, no—make that begged, Karl to write about the trip. Karl didn't write about the moped race. It's on the video and it's a real hoot. But after seeing the video, I don't know if Karl remembers enough about the moped race to write about it.

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The 29 hours of Tim Helen (one-way)

When I first moved to Fair Grove from the Kansas City area I had few local friends or riding buddies, which to me are pretty much the same thing. One of the first people I met was Mel Gere at Action Cycle Parts. I started buying parts from him and on one Tuesday afternoon he invited me to eat wings with him and some buddies at Hooters. Darrin House and Tim Hall were among those buddies. Tim was so disgusted with my behavior that he moved 1,700 miles away soon afterwards. His move turned out to be one of the best things that ever happened to Mel, Darrin and me. You see, in his haste to escape our red-necked hillbilliness, he went and moved right into the middle of Lake Elsinore, California. Home of the legendary Elsinore GP. A few Tuesday night beers later, we came up with a plan. Just 3 short years later we managed to sell enough goat's milk and emu eggs to put our plan in action! We planned to load up Mel's 75 Chevy box camper (old Bessie) with all of our important worldly possessions, i.e.: motorcycles, helmets, Merle Haggard CDs etc., leave Tuesday before the race and drive straight to Timmy's house. Our plan seemed to be in jeopardy early as I could not resist the urge to race the Hill Billy GP at Lou's place the Sunday before we departed. Some hurried elbow grease action put me back on schedule and then Tuesday morning Mel discovered another setback at the shop as some idiot had tried to short-cut through the shop ceiling en route to doggy tranquilizers next door. It was the type of day that really makes you appreciate a vacation. When we did get to Bessie I started her up so she could warm up while we loaded. Some time later we de-

cide at the rate we were going she would be out of gas before we got loaded so we shut her off. Guess what happened when we decided we were loaded and ready to go! That's right—nothing. A quick jump start later we were sitting in Wal-Mart parking lot 2 hours behind schedule installing a new battery and scratching our heads wondering if Bessie was up to keeping it charged! We didn't dare shut her off until the next morning in Amarillo, Texas. Luckily she was up to the task and old Bessie deposited us in Tim's side yard 29 hours after we left Springfield.

Poor Tim must be pretty lonely out there in sunny California cuz he hugged each of us and he even tried to kiss Darrin. Lucky for Darrin Tim didn't have his flamed platform shoes on at the time and he couldn't quite reach Darrin's altitude. Timmy's current residence is directly across the street from the Lake Elsinore beach i.e.: perfect place for a sunset or sunrise. Our first sunrise in Cali' found Darrin and me hopping back in old Bessie and making the 45 minute commute to Glen Helen Motocross park for their Thursday practice session. Neither Darrin nor I are motocrossers by any stretch of the imagination (ask Spud—he saw the video) but if they made tracks like this around these parts we would give it a try. Anyone could have a blast on the national MX track, it was challenging for sure but there was not a scary spot on the track, none of that do or die double-jump BS you see around here just lots of BIG table tops, sweeping corners and fast straights. The track was perfectly groomed for our arrival, but I learned that perfectly groomed tracks can turn into slick hard-packed monsters as I sampled the soil on the starting straight. Luckily there was enough wind blowing that I couldn't hear anyone laughing. The track was a blast, but it wasn't too shabby in the pits, either. It was like riding straight into a motorcycle magazine. Steve Hatch and Rodney Smith were testing some extremely trick Yoshimura DR-Zs. Tom Webb was testing a gaggle of pipes on an RM250. Somebody unloaded a truck load of trick VORs. Factory box vans were everywhere—KTM, Kawasaki, Suzuki etc.. Heck, you could walk around all day just trying to read the names on the backs of jerseys. Then Darrin started chasing Tom Webb around the parking lot like a lust-filled schoolgirl with a pen and a Dirt Bike magazine in his hand. No, Tom didn't stop. I think he was frightened. That's when we decided maybe we should go.

I'll just say the next couple days were full blown tourist days—Newport Beach, The Crab Cooker, Troy Lee Designs, Hollywood, Beverly Hills, the Sunset Strip, Whiskey Go Go, Chinese theater, Mel's Drive-in (no 2x T-shirts in stock), Hustler, San Diego, The Gas Light district, Cheetah Club, etc... We were just killing time waiting for the weekend and boy-howdy was it worth the wait. Friday afternoon GFI (the promoters) blocked off main street Elsinore and went to work turning it into a national caliber race site. These folks know how to put on a show. Every detail was attended to from sign-up to course barriers for the street portions of the course to prepping and watering all the dirt sections of the course. I have never been to an event

(Continued on page 4)

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(Continued from page 3)

that required so much in the way of coordination and these folks were up to the task. Within one afternoon they turned the quiet town of Elsinore into a race Mecca. Somehow in this world of liability fears and self centered money grubbing pricks, GFI managed to bring the town's citizens and government together with a horde of crazed dirtbikers, and everyone had a great time. I really would like to thank the citizens of Elsinore as they really made us feel at home. I never have found an official number but I was told that this race draws over 2,000 entrants. At \$100 per entry it doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that there is some money being made. That is probably small compared to the numbers brought into the town through local business and vendors. It really opened my eyes as to what is really possible within our sport.

GFI organizes this event similar to an outdoor national with Saturday consisting of a seemingly never ending procession of 40 minute class races that finished up Sunday around noon. Classes were broken down to displacement, rider age, vintage motorcycle, bombers, ATV and side hack (yes, they were nuts). Within each class experts (read pros), intermediates, novices, and beginners raced at the same time. Somehow amid all the crashes, breakdowns and general chaos, GFI managed to get all the races going on time and they did so well they actually had a short lull in the action before the big race Sunday afternoon. The big race is the Harvey Mushman 100. The late Steve McQueen once signed up for the Elsinore race as Harvey Mushman, and

this race now memorializes him. Had I known how high the speed average was I certainly would have entered this race as it lasted about as long as a national hare scramble. Luckily, though, I missed the chance to race and gained an opportunity to watch some great racing. Most of the course is accessible to spectate, but it is an off road race and as such it is fairly spread out. Mel saved us here as he brought along a couple of mopeds that worked out perfectly for getting around to the different spectating areas. Of course Darrin and I also looked very cool on them.

When the green flag dropped the pros wasted no time showing us why they get paid to ride. Scott Sheak, Shane Watts, Rodney Smith and Steve Hatch set a blistering pace. In the first few laps the racing was very tight with Watts taking the lead from Sheak early on. Right behind Sheak, Smith and Hatch were settling in for a long race, blissfully unaware that a young man named R.J. Thompson had brought his RM125 through a mid pack start to show those big 400s how to fly. I know we had never heard that name before Saturday when he just flat out ran Watts in the 125 race. R.J. is a name to watch, and guys, he is a blast to watch as he rides just a touch over the edge. Within five or so laps Hatch had put his Yosh machine in front of Smith's and then R.J. got by Smith! I went nuts. I would have loved to see the look on the guys' faces at the Yosh semi when Smith came around behind R.J. It didn't last long, though, and Smith dug deep and found his way back by but R.J. did shadow him for the duration of the race. From that point on, the order was pretty well set for the rest of the race and keeping up with any positions farther back proved nearly impossible as lappers had already become a factor as early as the second lap. There were definitely some standouts, though. Scott Harden rode a bone stock KTM Paris—Dakar type bike and he rode it fast! I can just imagine how demoralized I would be to have him fly by me on that tank. Speaking of that, Kelly Yancy was flying on her KLX. I had seen an interview with her in Dirt Rider magazine and of course I thought she may have been getting the press because of her sex. I was dead wrong; that chic is FAST! She also displays a "perfect" riding style, standing most all of the time except during hard cornering. It looks like she could go fast in the woods, so we had better watch out. Speaking of perfect, Greg Albertyn showed us lap after lap the perfect way to whip a DRZ. He would flatten that beast out like an RM 80 over the big table top jump. Another rider who impressed me was a big fellow named Scott Myers. He kept his KTM 520 up towards the front of the pack for most of the race. This was after I witnessed him crashing hard on the pavement that very morning during the over 30 race. It didn't seem to slow him down in the least. Later in the race riders started their pit stops and things were a little mixed up for a lap or two, but a few laps later things had settled back to the way they were. I don't know the details, but somewhere late in the race Sheak's Pro-Circuit CRF 450 took a shot in the rear that left the silencer dangling. Let me tell you, folks, if you think these big four strokes are loud with a muffler, you should have heard Sheak rip through the downtown area without one. It was absolutely ear splitting! I'll bet his ears are still ringing. The only thing I saw bother Watts, though, was trying to open his champagne bottle with champagne in his eyes as he stood on the top

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Nesbitt Wins Smithville

By: Frank Leivan

Smithville, MO; October 7

While he might not have led much during Round 14 of the Missouri Hare Scrambles Championship, Team Green rider Chris Nesbitt led when it mattered most, at the checkered flag. After two kicks on the starting line relegated him to the rear of the pack, Nesbitt fought his way into contention and collected his second win of the season.

An 11-mile course laid out by the Platte County Trailriders greeted the 235 competitors. The trail, laid out along the banks of Smithville Lake, had several open field sections as well as many tight woods trails. It took right at 30 minutes for the leaders to negotiate the course, although Nesbitt and runner up Doug Stone were able to slide in four laps just under the two-hour time frame and head out for a fifth lap. It was this fifth lap that would decide the race.

A rather depleted field of AA riders were led into turn one by Stone on his Dells Honda/Works Enduro Rider CR-250 and Aaron Shaw on the number five Yamaha. Nesbitt left the line in last, but within a mile had worked his way into fourth, behind Carl Hansen.

Shaw worked his way around Stone and into the lead while Hansen gave way to Nesbitt in the battle for third. After the first lap, the top

three riders were nose to tail with Hansen just a few ticks back. Stone was pushing hard and put a high-speed pass on Shaw in the grass track section. Nesbitt then followed suit and pressured Shaw into a mistake just a few seconds later to take over second.

From that point on, it was effectively a two-man race. Shaw, who was feeling the effects of a recently injured knee, wisely backed off in an effort to salvage points and lost touch with the leaders. After an hour, Stone and Nesbitt were still hooked together, Shaw was a safe third, Hansen was fourth, and Kevin Borts held fifth, while leading the A class.

At the start of lap four, Nesbitt tried to overtake Stone for the lead but wound up in some barbed wire. This allowed Stone to open up a small cushion, and it would take Nesbitt the entire lap to make up the deficit.

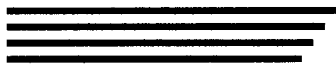
"After I got out of the fence, I rode as hard as I could, because I knew this might be it. I finally got him in sight at the last woods check and followed him all the way to the pits. I sure was glad to see we had another lap to go," explained eventual winner Nesbitt.

In fact there was another lap, as the two riders had turned up the pace and knocked nearly a minute off their previous lap times. Stone blasted through the pits and opened up a bit of a lead while Nesbitt stopped for a splash of fuel and a goggle change.

Behind them, Shaw soldiered on in third while the man on the move was Borts, who was riding his strongest race of the year and had his DR-400 up to fourth, with Hansen in fifth.

Nesbitt was hard on the gas and had caught up to Stone near the four
(Continued on page 11)

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Possum Hollow Awards

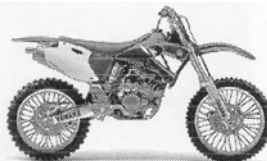
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Redhawk Ranch



Kevin Boyle stylin' in the woods

By Bob Fuerst

The second race of the 2001 Hillbilly Grand Prix Series was held at Redhawk Ranch outside Aurora, MO. Again the weather was perfect. Spud and crew laid out a 4.2 mile loop for the motorcycles. Almost 100 bikes and 40 ATVs attended the race.

The organizers added mini-bike racing before the regular racing got started. At 9 am 14 little bikes took off.

Not all of the little bikes had little riders, though; three of the little bikes had big riders—Chili Roberts, Sammy Snider and Kevin Borts. The mini-bike course made a few laps around the grass track. All the little riders got trophies. In fact, I overheard one of the riders tell his dad; "I beat two other riders!" The big riders got more beat up than they did during the big bike race. Sammy said he went over the bars and crashed harder than he had in a long time.

This big bike course was more difficult than the last race at Bolivar. The first turn took you into the first creek crossing. The course went

back and forth and up and down this creek for the first mile. Recent rains made this normally dry creek about 4 inches deep. Not too deep to cross, but deep enough to get you good and wet, if you went down. Or if another rider went down in front of you, as Dale Willis found out. The course on the west side of the creek was grass track, up and down a hillside, with all the left hand corners being off-camber. The east side of the creek was woods trails with lots of rocks, finishing up with a shot down a very tight rocky draw and one last blast up the creek.



Chili also styles in the woods

Then riders got a short break across the field. I do mean short, just enough time to grab a sip of water. Then, it was up and down a hill into --- you guessed it, another creek, followed by a hill. This hill almost always had somebody stuck on it. Fortunately, most of the time you could pick another line. At the top of the hill was an old logging road, but even it was off-camber. The course then dropped down this hill where you had to wind back and forth between downed trees. Across another creek and up hill, there were several good hill climbs in this section that lead to the course split between the bikes and ATVs. There

(Continued on page 7)

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SUZUKI

KAWASAKI

(Continued from page 6)

was a nice off-camber single track. It was pretty much straight, dodging trees and logs. Then, the course made this 180-degree downhill right turn. And you had to make this turn because the trail went between two big trees. If you slid just a little bit, you would end up downhill from the trail, and it was tough to get back to the trail. The course didn't let up a bit. At this point, I wanted to have the DRZ in second gear for the upcoming hill. It was a real loose gravel uphill and in second gear, I could just keep accelerating up the hill. Once you made it up the worst of the



Last month, I reported that Cliff Davis was between bikes. Cliff got a new bike and got second in the 250cc class

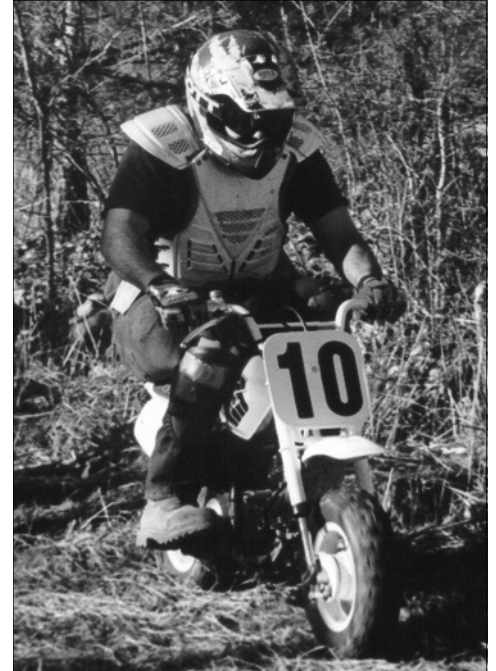
hill, you had to make a couple of log crossings and as you got to the ridge, the rocks got softball size and loose, bouncing you all over the place, making it hard to get a drive.

Once you got past the ridge, the trees opened up for a while and the ground was a loose gravel, reminding me of a few of the trails at Chadwick. The trees got tight for a while, dropping you down into a ravine with a sharp left hand corner heading straight up another steep hill. On one of my laps, four riders, all on two-stroke motocrossers, were stuck

on the hill and the DRZ would just keep motoring, even when I had to go off the trail to get past them.

At the top of the hill, the bike trail merged back with the ATV trail and turned down the hill leading to the end of the loop. The loop ended with a grass track section, but even the grass track had a few nice rocks planted in it.

Rusty Reynaud won overall and Dale Rector got second. They had a race-long duel with Rusty coming out on top in both motos, but Dale has definitely taken it up a notch this year. Don't miss the next race on December 30, 2001.



Kevin Borts – add your own caption

Stone Captures Overall Win at Sedalia

By: Frank Leivan

Sedalia, MO; October 28

After coming "oh so close" to capturing his first-ever Missouri Hare Scrambles Championship event win at round 14, motocrosser turned woods racer Doug Stone showed up at the season finale with his game face on and captured the overall win. Stone's rock-solid ride proved to everyone in attendance that the 29-year-old will be a force to be reckoned with in 2002.

An 8.3-mile course consisting of rocky, rooty, slippery trails laid out by the Poor Boys welcomed the troops into the final event of the 2001 campaign. The top 20 riders in the day's final overall tally were able to negotiate the trail a half dozen times.

With SCR/Yamaha rider Steve Leivan having already clinched the series championship and being forced to sit out the event with a knee injury, most eyes were focused on the battle for the number two plate. Aaron Shaw held the upper hand, needing only to finish within a position of Chris Nesbitt and the spot would be his. Nesbitt needed some help if he was to lay claim to runner-up honors. Both riders knew the situation and that is where the drama began.

Team Green/Moose/Dunlop/Renthal/Pro Circuit-backed Nesbitt shot his KX250 into the lead at the start, hoping to control the pace and get some help in the points chase. His lead lasted about 50 yards when he plowed the front end exiting turn one and went down. And who would go down with him? The number five Yamaha of Shaw, of course. Shaw got going first and stayed in front of Nesbitt until the second turn when he locked bars with another rider and smashed into a tree, breaking his handguard and knocking his exhaust pipe off of the cylinder. By the time Shaw was up and rolling, he was more than a minute down.

Stone was the rider who capitalized on the situation and controlled the pace out front. By the end of lap one, Nesbitt had moved all the way to second with Bobby Duncan in third. Clarke/ProClean/Cycra/WD-40/Thor-backed Duncan was adapting quickly to his borrowed KTM 200. 30 seconds later came Shaw, who was riding like a man possessed and was convinced he was going to the front.

That turned out to be just the case. Shaw was able to go all the way to the lead during lap two and Nesbitt was hanging right with him. Stone took a big tumble and lost some valuable time as well as some skin from his forearm while Duncan struggled somewhat as well. The top four riders were all still separated by less than 45 seconds.

Once into the lead, Shaw continued with his aggressive pace and by the end of lap four had a half-minute lead over Nesbitt, who had his hands full with a rejuvenated Stone and Duncan. Nesbitt smashed his hand during the early stages of lap four, breaking his ring finger and dropping back to fourth, figuring his bid for series runner-up was

over.

"I was convinced I was going to be number three next year. Then, a few turns later, I saw Aaron sitting off to the side of the trail. I couldn't believe it," explained Nesbitt.

Indeed, Shaw was out of the race with a broken chain and made the long walk back to the pits. Even with Shaw out, Nesbitt still needed to finish in the top three to beat Shaw in the points race and with his banged up hand, that would be no easy feat.

None of this mattered to Stone, who was putting together a spectacular late race surge and the Works Enduro Rider/Dells Honda rider knew it. "The fourth and fifth laps I was really riding good, hitting all the little trail cuts, and getting through traffic. I had a little bit of a lead, so Steve (Leivan) stopped me for some gas on the last lap, just to be safe," said Stone.

The late race pit stop allowed Duncan to close the distance on Stone to about 10 seconds. Stone was up to the task, though, and pulled away a bit, taking the checkered flag 20 seconds ahead of Duncan, who matched his best finish of the season and his career.

Nesbitt soldiered on to claim third and runner up in the series. Lars Valin finished a personal best fourth overall and claimed his first A class win of the year. The Honda rider's fine performances have earned him a spot in the AA ranks for 02. Another rider turning in a career best was XR250 pilot Travis Pilant, who grabbed fifth overall and second in the A class. Pilant has also been the picture of consistency and will carry some positive momentum into next year.

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OMTRA Christmas Party

December 15, 2001

Place: Shawn Hall's House

Time: Riding 12:00 Noon until dark. Food and drinking until as late as you would like.

Plan: We will have a family Christmas party. You are welcome to come out around noon and ride on the trails until dark. Bring your kids (if you have any), we will have room for the kids to play in the house or outside if the weather is nice. We will eat around 7:00 PM. The food and soft drinks will be provided by the club. Bring your own Beer!

Directions:

Exit Hwy 65 like you are going to Chadwick. About 1 mile from Murfins in Ozark on 14 you will come to Hwy W. Turn south (right) Look at your odometer, you will go 10.2 miles from that point. Stay on Hwy W for about 8 miles of normal pavement. The road will fork at the end of the pavement (the road will now be chip and seal) take a Right. Stay on that road for about 1.7 miles until you come to a T in the road (Large Metal Barn will be directly in front of you) Turn Right. You should see a Dead End Sign. Go past that for about .6 miles. Shawn's house is the only house on the right side of the road.

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Other activities will include: Ping Pong, watching videos and drunken brawls.

OMTRA Stuff

The Next OMTRA Meeting:
Christmas Party at Shawn's.
December 15 at 7PM



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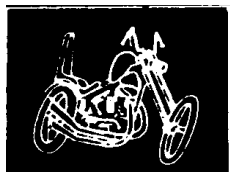
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Mark Your Calendar

OMTRA

12/15/01 – Christmas Party at Shawn’s
12/23/01 – Clean up day at Chadwick. Be at the Pavilion at 9am.

Toys for Tots – December 9th at Possum Hollow.

2002 BJEC Schedule

www.BlackJackEnduro.com

- 03/24/2002 – White Rock, AR
- 04/28/2002 – Claremore, OK
- 05/19/2002 – Park Hills, MO
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(Continued from page 4)

spot of the podium. The most striking thing about his riding is the fact that if he was on the course alone he wouldn't look or sound fast he is just so darn smooth. We sat around and listened to the post race interviews and such. Then we headed back to Timmy's house for some moped race action! I'll get into that some other time. If this all sounds like fun, it was. It may just be the best time I've ever had around bikes, and I want to thank Mel, Darrin and Tim for letting me eat wings with them and making all of this possible

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(Continued from page 5)

mile mark but was unable to find a way around. Both riders were putting in a nearly flawless, final dash through the woods. Stone seemed to have an answer for every pass attempt Nesbitt made and held the Kawasaki rider at bay for nearly the entire last lap.

Then with less than a mile to go in the race, Stone slowed and pulled off to the side of the track. He was out of gas. With a dry fuel tank, Stone could only watch as Nesbitt scooted by and headed for the finish line to claim victory.

With an “oh well” shrug of the shoulders, Nesbitt took the win on his Moose/Renthal/Alpinestars/Scott/Dunlop backed KX-250. “I wasn’t sure what was going on, so I looked back one more time and he was just sitting there. So I just cruised in from there. That’s all right though, I’ve had it happen to me before.”

After having some friends bring him some gas, Stone rolled in to take second. He was a bit disappointed in the end result, but upbeat none the less. “I didn’t have anyone helping me, so I went for it. We were on the main jet a lot today and that made the difference. I rode good, though, and proved to myself that I can run with these guys.”

Shaw rounded out the top three, holding off the charging Borts who hammered his way to fourth, just 50 seconds from a trip to the podium. Hansen finished fifth, in his second appearance of 2001.

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