

**Old bikes are back
on track after an
eight-year gap, as
Jennifer di Joseph
reports**



Return to Laguna Seca

A s part of the celebration marking the Fortieth anniversary of Laguna Seca Raceway, the Sports Car Association of Monterey Peninsula (SCRAMPP) and

Team Obsolete Promotions hosted a weekend of Vintage Motorcycle Exhibition Races and Parades during the AMA Toyota Superbike 'National'. This event was a landmark for Vintage Racing after an eight-year absence from Laguna Seca, arguably America's most spectacular race circuit.

The highlight of the Vintage weekend was the Exotic Motorcycle Parade, with Jim Redman on the Honda 'Six' screaming through the Corkscrew to delight thousands of fans. He was closely followed by Don Vesco (Of land speed record fame) on the ex-Agostini MV Augusta 500/3; three-time AMA Grand National winner Dave Aldana on the ex-Dick Mann BSA 3; Yvon Duhamel on the ex-Pasolini Benelli 350/4 - and last but not least, Team Obsolete stalwart Dave Roper on the ex-Rod Coleman AJS 7R3 'Triple Knocker'. This excitement was only bettered when the riders let the bikes fly at speeds nearing their former race-winning paces!

The Vintage races were another thrill, featuring all makes - from a 1929 Scott Flying Squirrel to a 1972 Harley-Davidson XR750 - in the six classes, run in waves. Gift certificates totalling \$2400 were provided by Team Ob sponsors Megacycle Cams (F750), Avon Tyres (350 GP), R/D Springs (pre-52/Class C), Works Performance (500 GP),

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Above: Dave Aldana (7) on Team Obsolete's ex-Dick Mann BSA 3, and Don Vesco on their ex-Agostini MV Augusta 500/3, in the Corkscrew at Laguna Seca.



Jim Redman, very much at home astride the Honda six, chats calmly to Steve Crevier of Smokin' Joe's Honda Superbike team following his rabble-rousing circuit of the track...

AirTech (250 GP) and Vanson Leathers (Historic).


Results hardly do justice to some of the gripping dice: notably Sunday's 500 GP, with British Classic Champion John Cronshaw on his ultra-trick Unity BSA fighting it out with Californian Craig

Team Ob: it's the pits! From left to right: Dave Aldana, Jim Redman, Rob Iannucci (standing), Yvon Duhamel, Don Vesco, and Dave Roper.



McLean on his G50, with Cronshaw the ultimate winner. Yvon Duhamel (whose son Mario won the 600 SuperSport race the same weekend at Laguna) rode a Team Ob 7R (350cc) to third. Formula 750 had a close competition for first, with Richard Haas on a 1972 Rob North Triumph triple and Tim Silva on a 1968 Honda CR750. Haas won, but Silva blew by everyone to nip at his heels for almost all six laps. Randy Bradescu of Fastrac, the weekend's Vintage Race director, came in third on his BMW. West Coast British Racing's Mike Green, although having to do battle with a cracked megaphone during the 350 GP race, found he did not have to battle anything else as his 1965 Ducati Sebring left all other competitors far behind. He crossed the finish line with Team Ob's Erik Green a distant second on a 1963 7R. Charlie Sexton followed in third place on a 1967 Bufraco TSS. In 250 GP it was Mike Green again, this time on a 1965 Ducati Diana, with Robert Brangaccio on a 1972 Ducati in second. Michael Moore, despite a bad start due to a last minute battery change on an unfamiliar 200cc 1963 Ducati, took third.

The response of all riders was the same no matter their placing: Bring Vintage to Laguna every year! The fans enjoyed the sights and sounds of the old machines, and the track is very challenging - fun, but safe for the riders.

The combination of old and new together is a potent one which appeals to a wide audience of racing fans, and Laguna Seca is a near-perfect place to see it all. 

Photography: Joe Weinroth