

 **HONDA**

RED RIDER

Official Publication of the Honda Riders Club of America

No. 104



ON THE COVER:

What better way to kick off a celebration of 50 years of Honda Racing than to take a look back at the first machines that made Honda an international name. Truly, these were the machines that launched the legend of Honda Racing.



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Manager's Box

By HRCA Manager Gary Martini

Honda Celebrates 50 Years of Racing

In a sport where success can rise and fall on the strength of a circlip, Honda stands at the pinnacle of motorcycle racing achievement. Yet we are often asked: Besides bragging rights, what does racing really mean to American Honda?

Racing fans the flames of passion across every level of Honda. The challenging spirit of racing is fundamental to Honda's DNA, and this spirit touches every associate and influences everything we do at Honda. We're never satisfied with the current results. Whether it's winning a race, writing a service manual, creating a brochure, developing higher-quality fasteners—we always strive to do better than the last time.

The same attention to detail that you see in the Honda Red Bull Racing CRF450R can be found in everything we do. The words "good enough" are not part of the Honda vocabulary on the racetrack, the engineer's drawing board or the assembly line. Racing is a mindset at Honda, and it defines who we are.

Racing in the U.S. has been prolific. Honda has earned more than 100 national titles in road racing, motocross and off-road competition, including the 2008 Supercross Lites East championship and a fifth consecutive Formula Xtreme road racing title. Highlights over the years of American Honda's commitment to racing include the first-ever AMA 250 National Motocross Championship (1973), 56 AMA Motocross and Supercross titles, 30 road racing championships in AMA Superbike, SuperSport, Formula Xtreme and Formula One, five AMA Flat Track rings and a record-setting 19 SCORE Baja 1000 victories.

Name the motorcycle racing discipline, and you'll find a collection of Honda championship trophies.

Honda's drive to conquer new

engineering challenges—whether on the racetrack or in the production of consumer products—continues to forge the soul of the Honda Motor Company. Racing inspires new heights of creativity at Honda, dismissing traditional solutions in the unceasing search for new designs. This longstanding and deep-seated passion for racing and excellence continues to power Honda to create the dreams of today, dreams that will appear as the innovations of tomorrow.

Racing fans the flames of passion across every level of Honda.



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The Honda Red Riders have campaigned hard, and with four rounds of the 2009 Motocross Championship and two rounds of the Women's Motocross Championship remaining, they are still aiming for top finishes on Honda's CRF250R and CRF450R race bikes.

Honda Red Bull Racing's ASHLEY FIOLEK remains on top after six rounds in the Women's Motocross Championship, recording 10 race wins and two second place finishes to score five overall round wins. The Honda Red Rider has dominated the women's competition all season long, and with two rounds remaining and a 49-point lead over second-place, Fiolek is where she wants to be in the points tally: Way out front.

Leading the Honda Red Rider charge in the 450 class is Honda Red Bull Racing's ANDREW SHORT. Short is third with 267 points after scoring eight podium finishes throughout the season. Teammate IVAN TEDESCO is having his most successful Motocross season yet aboard his CRF450R, recording his first-ever Motocross race and overall wins, and is fourth in the championship with 258 points. Luck wasn't on DAVI MILLSAPS' side when he injured his neck and back at round two in the series, but he rejoined the competition at the Spring Creek Motocross event, where he finished third on the podium in race two. Undoubtedly, the season highlight so far for Honda Red Bull Racing has been winning the Thunder Valley MX in Lakewood, Colorado, as Tedesco and Fiolek stormed home to finish on top of both the 450cc and Women's Motocross podiums. Short finished second behind Tedesco to put Honda Red Bull Racing one/two on the 450 podium.

In 250cc class action, Geico Powersports Honda's BRETT METCALFE leads the CRF250R charge after eight rounds. Metcalfe's consistent top-10 results each week see him positioned third overall in the series. Team rookie JUSTIN BARCIA has revved up the 250cc competition, making six podiums this season and finishing third overall at the Spring Creek MX. The debutant is sixth in the series standings with 210 points. BLAKE WHARTON scored his best finish at the Washougal MX, completing the event third overall and boosting himself to eighth in points.

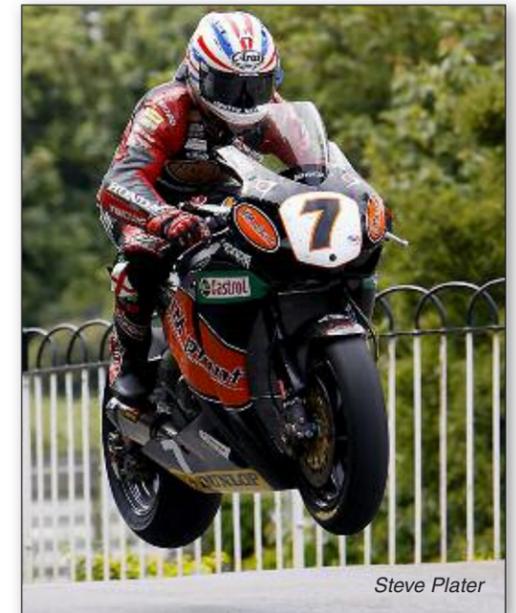
With four rounds to go in the 2009 Motocross Championship—the next round is at Unadilla in New Berlin, New York—look for the Honda Red Riders at the front of the packs.

Honda Red Riders Do Battle Out Front



Ashley Fiolek

Honda Wins 2009 Isle of Man TT



Steve Plater

In a fitting tribute to the venue that launched Honda's international racing legacy 50 years ago, Honda-mounted STEVE PLATER won the 2009 Isle of Man Senior TT aboard a CBR1000RR. In addition, he also took home the overall TT title thanks to earning the most points for the week. Plater's fellow HM Plant Honda teammate JOHN MCGUINNESS set a new lap record of 131.578 mph during the races, but he could not complete the required six laps during the Senior TT event due to a broken chain. Another CBR1000RR rider, GARY JOHNSON, joined Plater on the Senior TT podium by posting a third-place finish. All in all, it was a perfect way to commemorate a journey back to where Honda's worldwide racing efforts first began.

HRCA Event Calendar

For the latest HRCA Member activities, ticket opportunities and current calendar of events:





50 Years of Honda Racing

To view Honda's 50 years of racing you must first climb to the very summit of our sport

Fifty years of success stretch between today and the 1959 Isle of Man TT Grand Prix, between the present and the time Honda made the leap onto the international racing stage with the remarkable RC142. A mere 13 years after Soichiro Honda launched his motorcycle company from a 12x18-foot wooden shed, the company would take its place among the established European marques on the world racing stage.

Since that time, Honda's racing accomplishments have so profoundly influenced our sport that they represent far more than company milestones. They are true motorsports milestones, accomplishments never before seen or never to be seen again: Mike Hailwood's incredible 1967 Isle of Man lap record of 175.05 km/h that stood unbroken for a decade; the NSR500's perfect 1997 Grand Prix season and record-setting run of six consecutive world championships; a record 600 Grand Prix wins; American Honda's incredible string of nine Supercross titles in a row; Ricky Carmichael's historic two perfect motocross seasons, first aboard the CR250R and then the four-stroke CRF450R; a record 19 overall victories in the brutal Baja 1000, including 11 overalls for the amazing Johnny Campbell.

Honda's ongoing commitment to competition has altered the course of motorcycle racing history. The 50-year journey of Honda racing is a climb to the very summit of our sport.



The Dream

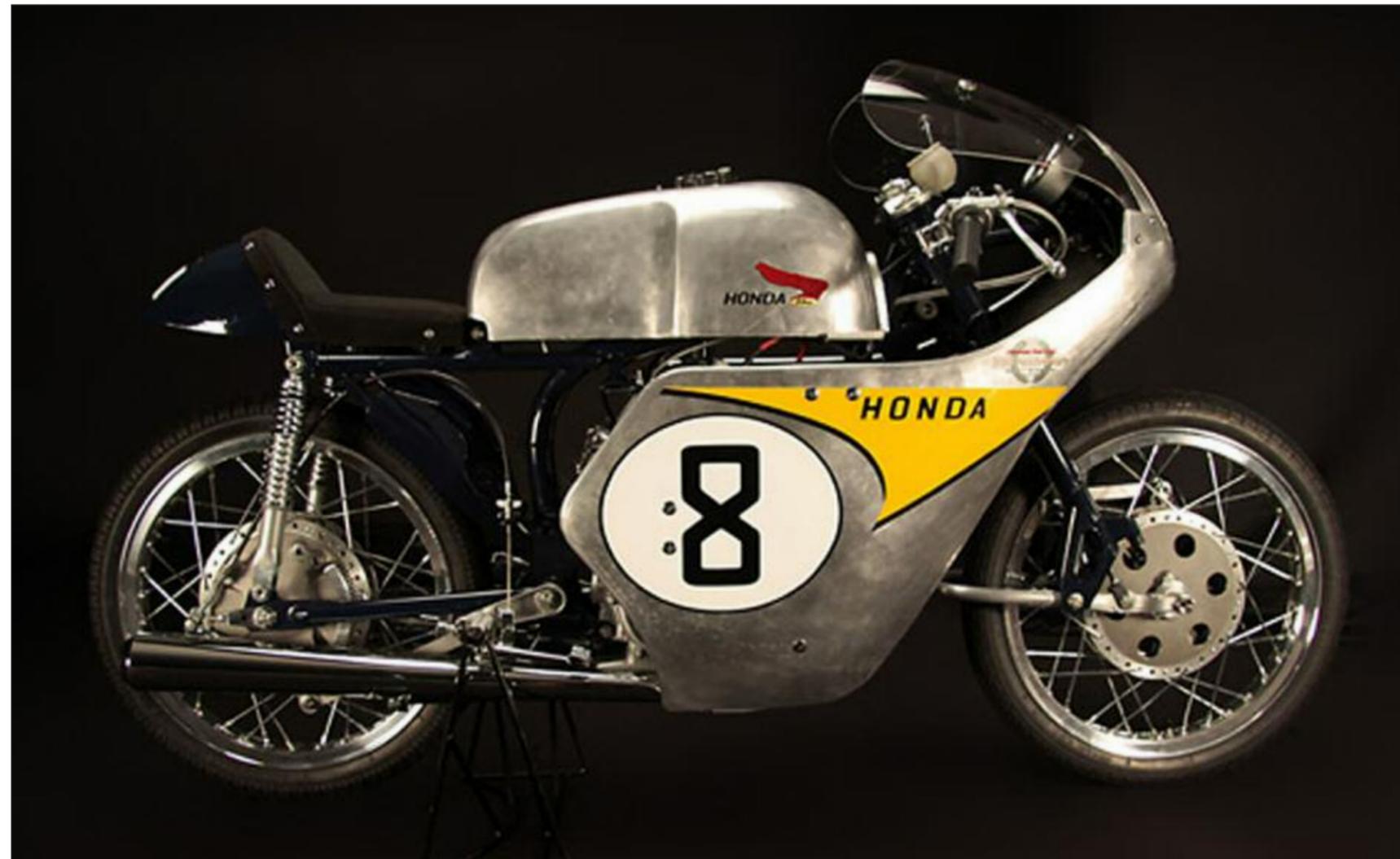
Above all, company founder Soichiro Honda was a man with vision. Amidst the ruins of postwar Japan, Honda possessed the courage to press forward, determined to make his dreams become reality. He began by fulfilling Japan's tremendous need for inexpensive transportation by supplying engines to motorize bicycles. And Honda Motor Company began to flourish, step by step.

By August 1949, the fledgling company had completed its first wholly built motorcycle, the two-stroke 98cc Dream Type D. But at that time, more than 200 motorcycle manufacturers were battling for a piece of the marketplace in Japan. Times called for a bold stroke of engineering innovation, so Honda gambled on retooling his company to produce a new, more fuel-efficient four-stroke engine design. The result was the 146cc overhead-valve 1951 Dream E, which became an overwhelming commercial success. This turning point opened the door to even more courageous—perhaps even outrageous—moves.

In March 1954, Soichiro Honda made a public announcement of profound importance. Distributed to agents, dealers, affiliated manufacturers and the mass media, this ambitious proclamation revealed Honda's plan to enter the hyper-competitive World Grand Prix races, beginning with the prestigious Isle of Man TT. In addition, Honda also declared that his young company would begin exporting machines around the world.

After much development work, in 1959 a Honda team arrived at the Isle of Man to compete in the TT, entering the 125cc class with the RC142. Honda riders finished sixth, seventh, eighth and 11th. Because the first five finishers represented three other manufacturers, Honda's team results earned the manufacturer's prize—an impressive result for the company's first outing. However, Mr. Honda's personal goal remained outright TT victory, which would come in 1961 when budding racing great Mike Hailwood topped the 125 class as the Honda team filled the top five places. Later that day, another Hailwood win, plus a repeat top-five sweep in the 250cc class on Honda's RC162, launched the legend of Honda racing.

Mr. Honda's dream had at last become reality. And his dreams continue to live at racetracks all around the world today.



RC142



1949 Dream D



1951 Dream E



1954 Declaration of Participation in the Isle of Man TT Races

In March 1954, Soichiro Honda made a public announcement of immense importance. Distributed to agents, dealers, affiliated manufacturers and the mass media, this ambitious proclamation not only revealed Honda's plan to enter the world's most prestigious races with only 15 months of preparation, it also declared that this young company would begin exporting machines around the world. Above is a reproduction of his handwritten proclamation.

 [Click here to read the translation of Mr. Honda's Isle of Man declaration](#)



Grand Prix Racing

The history of Honda's Grand Prix racing is perhaps the richest of all its racing endeavors, and not just because it all started there. The technology that drove Honda to the top of the world was simply stunning. Honda's screaming multi-cylinder four-stroke machines of the '60s challenged conventional engineering of the time.

To compete with the two-strokes, Honda used multi-cylinder designs and ultra-high engine speeds: twin-cylinder 50cc racers boasting an astronomical 22,500-rpm redline, and five-cylinder 125s that stuffed four tiny valves into a cylinder bore barely an inch and a third in diameter spun to 21,500 rpm. Perhaps the most intimidating machine of all was the mighty 500cc six-cylinder RC166, whose unmuffled 18,000-rpm wail would resonate through history to the multi-cylinder bikes we ride today.

Factory team rider Dani Pedrosa had the Honda RC212V up to speed and working quite well, thank you, at the 2009 Laguna Seca USGP, where he led every lap of the race.

After a particularly dominating Honda performance, England's *Daily Mirror* wrote: "In the coming years Japanese motorcycles may take over the world."

These prophetic words foreshadowed a run of victories that were simply staggering, more so because they came so soon after Honda entered its first GP. In its first nine years of GP racing, Honda won 138 GPs—including a historic sweep of all classes at the Isle of Man GP—18 Manufacturers' Championships and 16 Riders' Championships. Honda achieved worldwide acclaim with its Grand Prix successes and established itself as a major motorcycle manufacturer.

At the end of the 1967 season, Honda withdrew from GP racing to focus on production development. And when the company returned in 1979, it did so once again with innovative four-stroke technology to take on the ruling two-strokes: the radical oval-piston NR500. With 32 valves, a pair of connecting rods for each oval piston and a 20,000-rpm ceiling, the NR pumped out 130 horsepower. But two-stroke technology had simply advanced too far for the NR to win, so the NR team—which had also been developing Honda's two-stroke motocross machines—developed the NSR500 two-stroke triple mounted in an NR-style chassis. Original and effective, the NSR500 in the hands of Freddie Spencer won Honda's first 500cc GP crown in 1983. Spencer would repeat again in 1985, also winning the 250 title—a historic feat never to be duplicated.

Spencer was the first to win a world title on the NSR and Valentino Rossi was the last before the advent of the MotoGP four-stroke class eliminated two-strokes from competition. Between these bookends, the NSR500 became the most dominating machine in GP history, with champions Wayne Gardner, Eddie Lawson, Alex Criville, and the great Mick Doohan—who would win 54 GP races en route to an astonishing five consecutive titles—preceding the Rossi era.

In 2002, Honda unveiled the four-stroke V-5 RC211V, a 990cc machine that pumped out an incredible 200 horsepower at 15,000 rpm. With a displacement drop to 800cc in 2007, Honda introduced the RC212V V-4—and continues to rack up wins. Most recently Andrea Dovizioso posted his first MotoGP victory—and his first podium—at the Donington race in late July.

But it was the first five years of MotoGP that left the most enduring mark on the Honda record books. The RC211V won 14 of 16 races in the debut MotoGP season and surpassed that the following year, winning 15 of 16 races with Rossi scoring nine wins to take his second title on the 211V. He would win again in 2004, and the RC211V would end the 990cc era with American favorite Nicky Hayden taking the crown. Over the first five years of MotoGP, Honda won 48 of 81 GPs for a win ratio of nearly 60 percent—the best record in Honda's 50 years of GP racing.

 [Click here to link to "Honda History of Challenge"](#)



Mick Doohan



Mike Hailwood

 [Click here to view more photos](#)

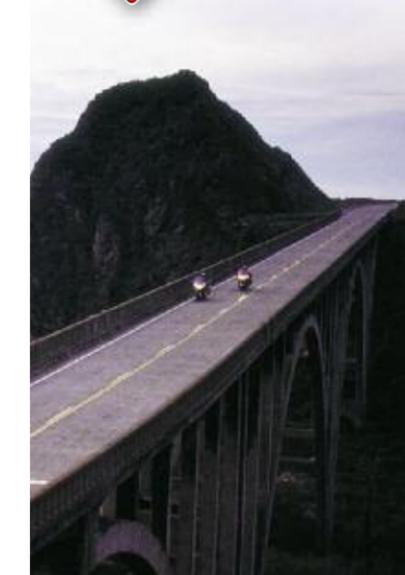


1983 NR500 oval-piston race bike

The Run Up California's Highway 1

For motorcyclists, Highway 1—a ribbon of twisting tarmac draped along the California coastline—is as famous as the destination it leads to each year: the USGP at Laguna Seca. Our favorite stretch of Highway 1 runs from Cambria to Big Sur, about 100 miles of some of the best pavement and scenery you will ever encounter. It doesn't get really interesting until you head north past famous Hearst Castle outside of Cambria, where the road narrows and clings to the craggy cliffs that kiss the sea. There is much history on this part of the coast, but it's the rhythm of the road that's most compelling. Highway 1 underscores the axiom that getting there is half the fun, and for proof we strapped a few cameras on to our CBR1000RR for the run up the coast to the USGP this past July.

 [Click here to watch "The Road to Laguna"](#)



The History of Honda Motocross

Honda's impact on American motocross is difficult to define. With an endless stream of innovations that have kept Honda riders at the top of more championships than any other brand, Honda's influence on the growth and ultimate worldwide dominance of American motocross cannot be understated. Today, the American motocross and our uniquely American Supercross series are recognized as the most coveted titles in the world, sought after by the best riders and teams on the planet. Honda helped push the sport to this level over decades of championship commitment.

The newfangled European sport of motocross had only just arrived on the shores of the U.S. when Honda released its first production motocrosser in 1973, the CR250M Elsinore®—which Gary Jones promptly piloted to two consecutive championships. In 1974, Honda's CR125M Elsinore made its debut, and this fresh arrival likewise took the first two AMA 125cc motocross championships in the hands of Marty Smith—historic beginnings for this budding sport.



Honda Red Bull Racing's Ivan Tedesco scored a clean sweep aboard his CRF450R this year at Thunder Valley Motocross Park in Colorado, as he grabbed both holeshots and led everyone else to the checkers in both motos.



Gary Jones



Johnny O'Mara



Jeremy McGrath

When Edison Dye had the idea to bring motocross indoors and call it Supercross, a uniquely American stadium sport was born, and come 1982, Donnie Hansen kicked off an avalanche of Honda championships when he topped both the 250 National series and the Supercross title chase. Honda riders who would become legends proceeded to win 13 Supercross titles over the next 15 years, including an incredible string of nine in a row—marks that have never been eclipsed and perhaps never will be. Honda championships abounded as well in the 125, 250 and 500 National outdoor series as riders, including David Bailey, Johnny O'Mara, Ricky Johnson and more, took charge in U.S. racing. That domination extended around the globe as that same trio crushed the world's best contenders in the Motocross des Nations, the "Olympics of Motocross." At the 1986 des Nations, Bailey, O'Mara and Johnson achieved a complete sweep of all three classes, finishing first and second in all three motos. This triumph signaled a definitive turning of the tide, as the sport that had originated in Europe now saw the best riders in the world racing within the U.S.

The American Honda team continued to churn out championships and legends. Jeff Stanton collected six championships for

When Edison Dye had the idea to bring motocross indoors and call it Supercross, a uniquely American stadium sport was born.

Honda before handing the torch to a teenaged Jeremy McGrath, who tallied four consecutive 250 Supercross titles plus a 250 National championship aboard Honda CR250Rs. Ricky Carmichael followed McGrath with five more

crowns, including the first two perfect motocross seasons—winning every moto of every round—ever recorded in the sport, first with the CR250R and then aboard the four-stroke CRF450R.

Honda's motocross legacy still flourishes as Trey Canard captured the 2008 AMA/FIM East Supercross Lites Series Championship. History was made again this year with the signing of Ashley Fiolek, the first woman to join the Honda team. At press time, Fiolek has a huge lead in the WMA championship, and her Honda Red Bull Racing teammates Ivan Tedesco and Andrew Short are both in the hunt for the 2009 Motocross Championship.

From the very beginning to today, Honda's goal of racing not merely to compete but to dominate has always been the same, and the company's record speaks for itself.



[Click here to view more photos](#)

From Obscurity to Dominance



Honda's first foray into U.S. road racing came a scant two years after the company opened its doors here, and a year after the closure of Daytona's wind-blown beach course. Moto Kitano rode an RC161 250cc four to win the FIM-sanctioned 250 Grand Prix of the United States at the new Daytona Speedway in 1961. Almost a decade passed before Honda won its first major race at that venue, when Dick Mann rode a modified CB750 to victory in the 1970 Daytona 200, the first of 11 Honda victories in that race.

The dominance of dirt-track made road racing a minor sport here until 1976, when Superbike became a recognized AMA class, ruled by production-based 1000cc four-strokes. It wasn't until the CB900F that the company got serious about Superbike, with teenaged sensation Freddie Spencer getting Honda's first win in 1980. Between 1984



Miguel Duhamel

and 1988, Honda won championships with Fred Merkel (three times), Wayne Rainey and Bubba Shobert, these last on a production-based VFR750. During those years, Honda also played a major role in AMA Formula 1 racing, with Mike Baldwin winning four championships from 1982 to 1986. The list of Honda-mounted Superbike champions now includes more icons of the sport—Miguel Duhamel, Ben Bostrom and Nicky Hayden. Rule changes in 2005 brought back the large-displacement twins and fours that populated the class in its early years, and 2009 gave it a new name: American Superbike.

In 1987, the AMA added a new class called Supersport, a place where manufacturers could showcase their 600cc products. It quickly became one of the most hotly contested championships in AMA racing. In the first year, Honda's 600 Hurricane

swept all nine races. Since then, five more generations of Honda's CBR600 have dominated the class, most often in the hands of Miguel Duhamel, whose record of race wins and championships is unmatched in SuperSport racing.

In 1987, the AMA added a new class called Supersport, a place where manufacturers could showcase their 600cc products. It quickly became one of the most hotly contested championships in AMA racing.

With more race wins than any other rider in

AMA history, it's no surprise that Duhamel's name appears at the top of the records for Formula Xtreme as well, along with the sixth-generation Honda 600, the CBR600RR. Originally an open-displacement class with few rules, Formula Xtreme later adopted a 600cc limit when speeds became too high. It has since morphed into Daytona SportBike, with a wide range of eligible twins, triples and fours. The one thing that won't change, however, is the presence of Honda's CBR600RR.

As a transitional year in American road racing, 2009 brings a wide range of changes to the track. Despite the shifting sands of American road racing, the Honda name has remained an anchor for close to a half-century.



[Click here to view more photos](#)

Off-Road Racing: A Legacy Built in Baja



More than 45 years ago, American Honda executives had a bold idea to introduce a brand-new machine, the CL72 Scrambler 250. At that time, Japanese manufacturers did not make off-road scramblers and Baja was not a race: It was an obscure Mexican desert wilderness that barely registered on the public radar.

So Honda drafted the services of a couple of Southern California off-road racers named Dave Ekins and Bill Robertson, Jr., who agreed to ride a pair of CL72s down the length of Baja to demonstrate the machine's toughness and reliability.

Ekins and Robertson launched their adventure from Tijuana in March 1962. Given the primitive nature of their undertaking, they knew friends and industry watchers might question the veracity of their accomplishment, so they had a local telegraph

office stamp two sheets of paper with the time and date of their departure. By the time Ekins rolled into La Paz near the southern end of the peninsula 39 hours and 56 minutes later, he'd had a lifetime's worth of adventure. Robertson finished as well on an identical four-speed, four-stroke twin, just a few hours behind.

And so was born the legendary Baja 1000, which would become an official race only a few years later. As the first motorcycle company to conquer Baja, Honda has long been committed to racing in these untamed expanses, and it has a record of success to reflect that commitment. Honda has won more long-distance races in Baja than any other manufacturer, and

In 1962, Baja was not a race: It was an obscure Mexican wilderness that barely registered on the public radar.

Honda racers have become synonymous with desert dominance, including champions Chuck Miller, Bruce Ogilvie (see sidebar, right), 11-time Baja 1000 winner Johnny Campbell and young gun Kendall Norman.

From the XR350 to the XR500, and from the XR600 to the XR650 and now the modern CRF450X, Honda off-road machines have won the prestigious SCORE Desert Series Class 22 (Open Pro) Championship—comprised of the Baja 1000, Baja 500 and San Felipe 250—15 times, including the last 12 years in a row, and have scored a record 19 overall Baja wins. Along the way, Honda racers have also collected seven Best in the Desert overall championships and a handful of 24-hour World Off-Road titles. Roll in Scott Summers' incredible run of five Grand National Cross Country and six National Hare Scrambles championships on the legendary XR600, and it's clear that Honda's original commitment to prove the speed and durability of its off-road machines has never faltered.



[Click here to view more photos](#)



Bruce Ogilvie
1953-2009

No historical look at Honda's racing accomplishments would be complete without a pause at the name Bruce Ogilvie. A master Baja champion whose personal victories in the Baja 500, Baja 1000 and San Felipe 250 spread out over four decades, Ogilvie was perhaps even more influential as the leader of Honda's Baja team for more than 20 years and the senior test evaluator for Honda's Product Evaluation department.

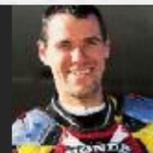
In 1984, Ogilvie was hired full-time at American Honda. In addition to being in charge of everything off-road at Honda—including motorcycle and ATV racing—Ogilvie made unparalleled contributions to the direction and development of all of Honda's off-road and motocross products. If you can't imagine racing or riding anything but your Honda off-road motorcycle or ATV, it is because Bruce Ogilvie helped make it that way.

Ogilvie was in charge of planning every detail of Honda's off-road racing, and he was particularly brilliant at plotting the strategy of long-range races, such as the Baja 500 and Baja 1000. And when the race was on, it was Bruce O. who advised his riders while hovering overhead in a helicopter, conveying information through two-way radios to his riders below. Baja is a dangerous place, with deadly obstacles that can pop up out of nowhere as the riders tear across the desert at 100-plus mph. Ogilvie had an understated, deliberate manner of speech—when things were looking grim, there was nothing you'd rather hear on the other end than that voice, calmly talking you through.

Bruce Ogilvie passed away April 13, 2009, after a two-year battle with cancer. He fought cancer the same way he raced motorcycles all his life: with everything he had. For more about Bruce go to bruceogilvie.com.



[Click here to watch an interview with former desert racer Dave Ekins](#)



[Click here to watch a behind-the-scenes video of Baja champion Johnny Campbell's poster photo shoot](#)

World Superbike and Supersport

Superbike and Supersport Go international— With Predictable Results

Like Supercross, Superbike racing was a uniquely American invention. Back in 1976, Superbike racing sprung from four-stroke production-based streetbikes when other racing classes were filled primarily with purpose-built two-stroke racing machines. It wasn't until 1988 that this extremely popular form of racing went international, and not surprisingly, Honda led the way.

In America, Honda's Interceptor® had been on a tear since its introduction, winning five championships in a row with Fred Merkel (1984-1986), Wayne Rainey (1987) and Bubba Shobert (1988). Merkel led the Honda charge into World Superbike competition, winning the inaugural 1988 season aboard Honda's new racing-focused version of the Interceptor, the RC30. Merkel followed that achievement with another WSB championship the next season, and in years to follow, some of the sport's biggest names—including John Kocinski, Colin Edwards and James Toseland—would continue Honda's winning ways.

In parallel fashion, Supersport racing for 600cc machines—another American racing invention—was quickly gaining popularity, spurring WBS organizers to add World Supersport to their weekend championship schedule beginning in 1997. In the dozen subsequent years, Honda's CBR600 did to World Supersport competition what it did to the AMA Supersport field—dominate, with the most poles, podiums and race wins, and seven world championships. Fabien Foret, Chris Vermeulen, Karl Muggeridge, Sebastien Charpentier, Kenan Sofuoglu and Andrew Pitt owned the class from 2002 through 2008.

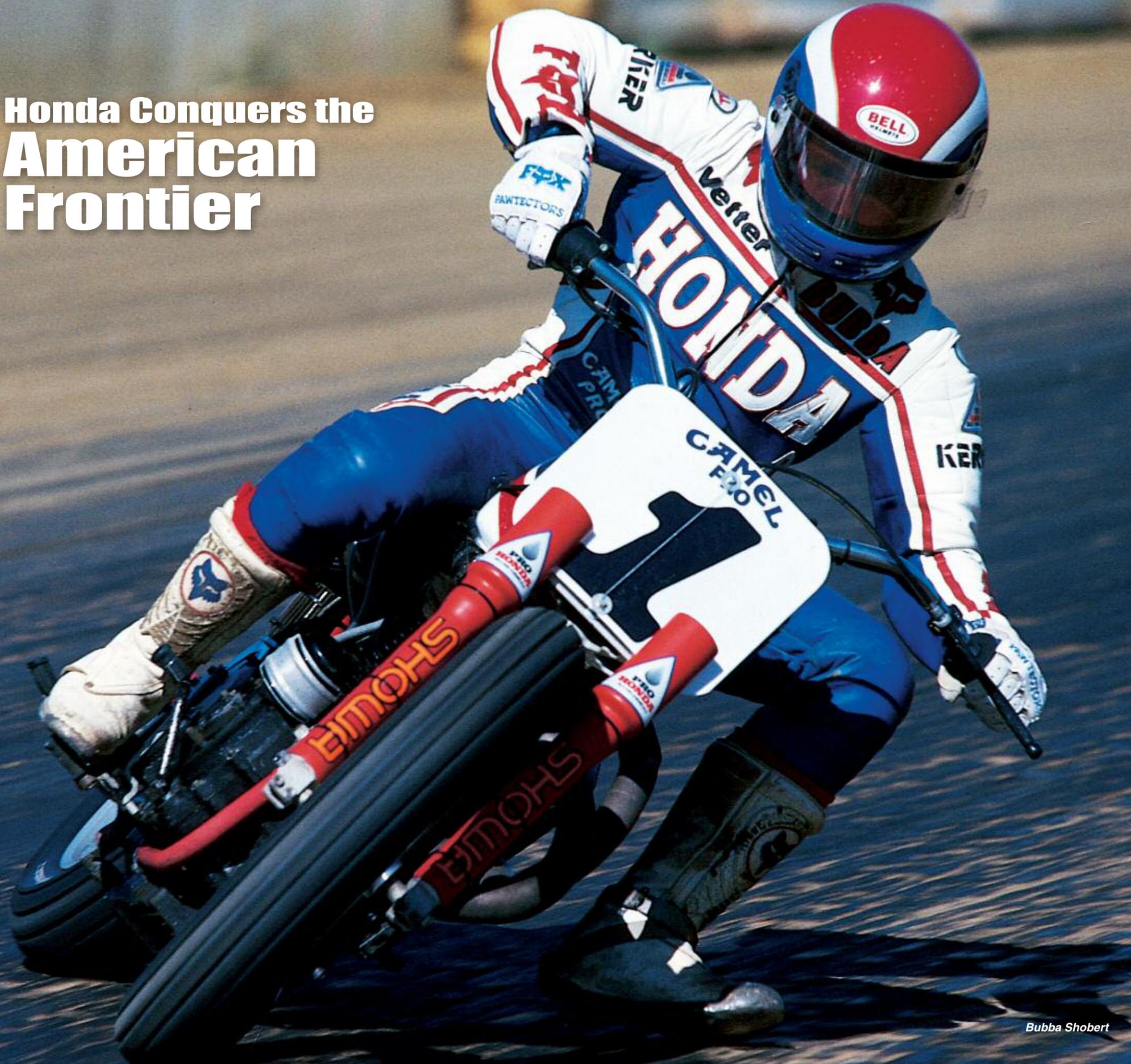
With both 600cc machines and literbikes, Honda has been—and remains—an irresistible force in Superbike and Supersport racing the world over.



[Click here to view more photos](#)

Carlos Checa

Honda Conquers the American Frontier



Bubba Shobert

By the mid-1980s, Honda Racing had conquered just about every major form of motorcycle racing extant save one: AMA Dirt Track. For years, Harley-Davidson had retained this uniquely American form of racing as its single last redoubt. But that was about to change as Honda set forth to capture a Grand National Championship.

Beginning with the European-market XLV750R, a dual-sport bike powered by a liquid-cooled 52-degree SOHC 742cc V-twin, the American Honda crew hand-built the RS750 racer—and to magnificent effect. The RS750 won its first race at the Du Quoin Mile in mid-season 1983, and with a bit more development it stood poised to alter history the next year.

Today, Honda's dirt-track legacy continues in the CRF450R.



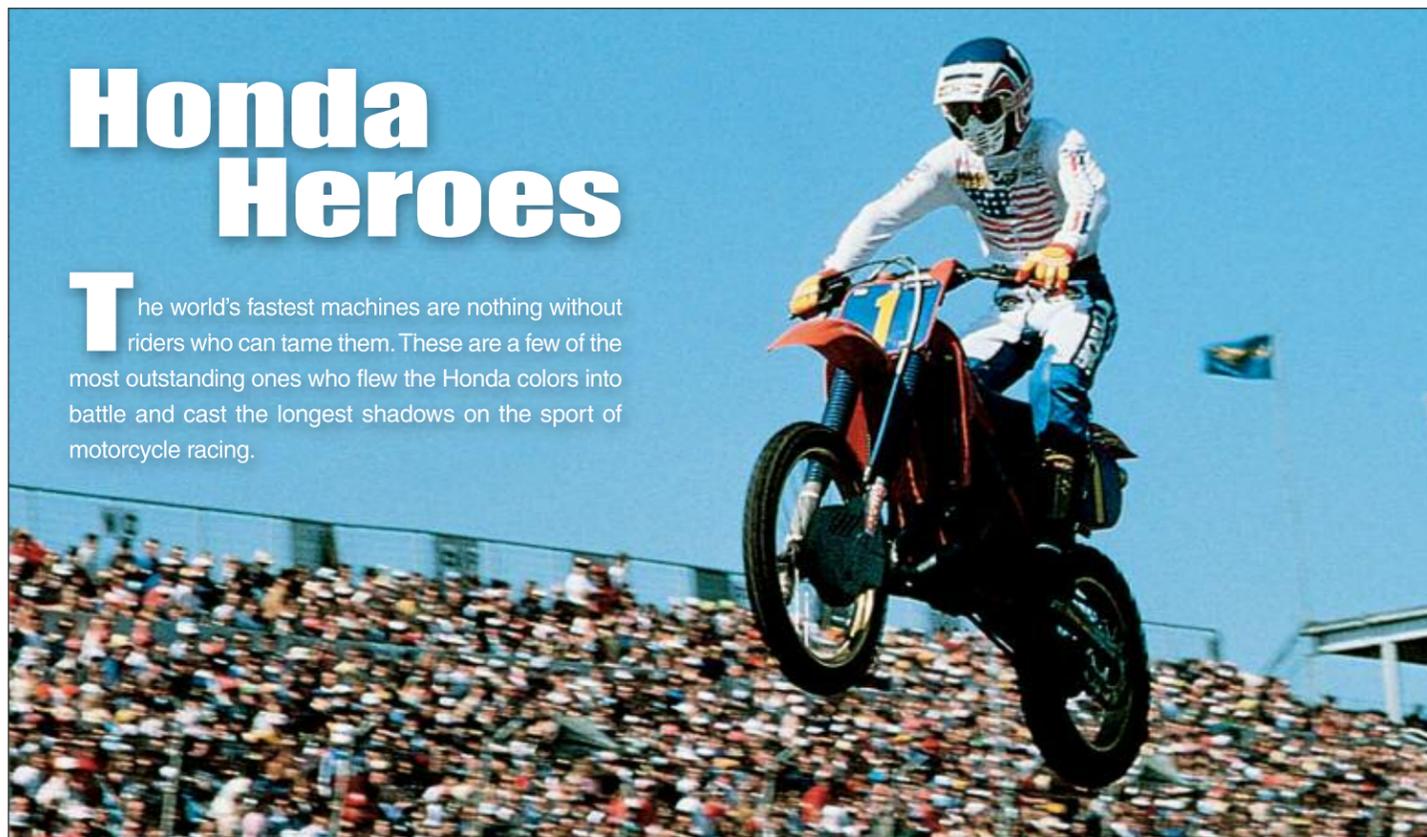
In fact, the 1984 GNC season evolved into an epic battle between two Honda RS750 riders, Ricky Graham and Bubba Shobert, who battled down to the wire for the championship. Both riders won six races apiece that year, with the final tally favoring Graham by one slim point.

Shobert rebounded from that disappointment and erased any doubts about his abilities and the capabilities of the RS750. He dominated GNC racing in 1985, taking the title with 56 points to spare. He backed up that feat with two more consecutive championships in 1986 and 1987, with the RS750 racking up an astonishing record of 10 wins in 11 races on the mile during 1986. Although Honda officially retired from the series in 1988, Graham soldiered on to win one more GNC title with the RS750 in 1993 as a privateer, bringing the Honda total to five championships.

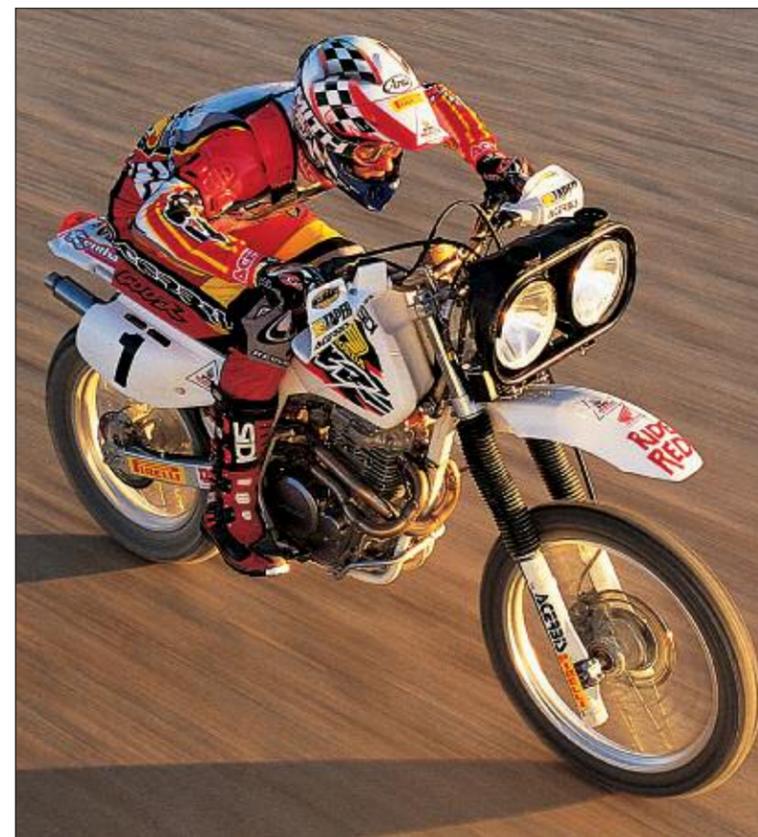
The rocketing trajectory that lifted the unlikely XLV750R to the championship-winning RS750 will forever remain a proud testimony to the ingenuity of a handful of Honda tuners. Today, Honda's dirt-track legacy continues in the CRF450R, which has been racking up AMA national flat-track victories on tracks across the country in the hands of privateers.

Honda Heroes

The world's fastest machines are nothing without riders who can tame them. These are a few of the most outstanding ones who flew the Honda colors into battle and cast the longest shadows on the sport of motorcycle racing.



David Bailey



Johnny Campbell

David Bailey, Motocross

- 1983 AMA Supercross Champion
- 1983 AMA 250 National Champion
- 1983 MX and Trophy des Nations Champion
- 1984 AMA 500 National Champion
- 1984 MX and Trophy des Nations Champion
- 1985 MX and Trophy des Nations Champion
- 1986 AMA 500 National Champion
- 1986 MX and Trophy des Nations Champion

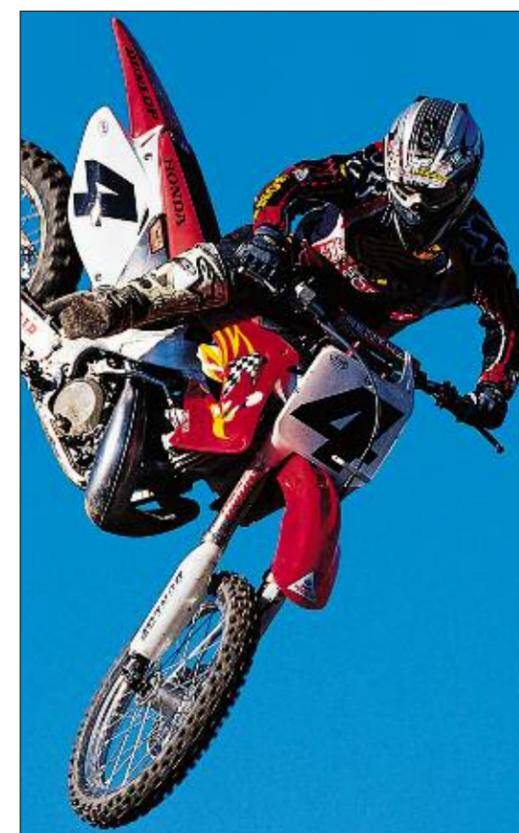
Freddie Spencer, Roadracing

27 GP wins, 19 AMA Superbike wins

- 1983 AMA Pro Athlete of the Year
- 1983 500 GP World Champion
- 1985 AMA Pro Athlete of the Year
- 1985 Winner, Daytona 200
- 1985 250 GP World Champion
- 1985 500 GP World Champion
- 1985 Only rider in history to win 250 and 500 GP titles in the same season



Freddie Spencer



Ricky Carmichael

Johnny Campbell, Off-road/Desert

11-time Baja 1000 Winner

- 1997 Winner, Baja 500
- 1997 Winner, Baja 1000
- 1998 Winner, Baja 500
- 1998 Winner, San Felipe 250
- 1998 Winner, Baja 1000
- 1999 Winner, San Felipe 250
- 1999 Winner, Baja 1000
- 2000 Winner, San Felipe 250
- 2000 Winner, Baja 2000
- 2001 Winner, Baja 1000
- 2001 1st privateer (8th overall), Paris-to-Dakar Rally
- 2002 Winner, San Felipe 250
- 2002 Winner, Baja 500
- 2002 Winner, Baja 1000
- 2003 Winner, San Felipe 250
- 2003 Winner, Baja 500
- 2003 Winner, Baja 1000
- 2004 Winner, San Felipe 250
- 2004 Winner, Baja 500
- 2004 Winner, Baja 1000
- 2005 Winner, Baja 1000
- 2007 Winner, Baja 1000
- 2008 Winner, Baja 1000

Ricky Carmichael, Motocross

2 perfect seasons (2002, 2004)

- 2001 U.S. Open Supercross Champion
- 2002 AMA Supercross Champion
- 2002 AMA National Motocross Champion
- 2002 Winner of all 24 motos, perfect MX season
- 2003 AMA Supercross Champion
- 2003 AMA National Motocross Champion
- 2004 AMA National Motocross Champion
- 2004 Winner of all 24 motos, perfect MX season

[Click here to continue reading "Honda Heroes" and to see more photos](#)

Honda's Greatest Racing Machines



CR250

Here's the short-take: Honda's CR250 has been the most successful motorcycle in American motocross history. Beginning with the 1973 CR250M Elsinore® (shown left) in the hands of Gary Jones, the CR250 flat-out ruled motocross in this country for more than three decades. A recurrent pattern in the CR250's brilliant history is its theme of rapid change, innovation and setting new standards for technology and performance. Over the years it pioneered many innovations, including liquid cooling, cartridge forks and an



Ricky Carmichael on the 2004 CR250R

aluminum frame. When one machine made history doing what was previously impossible—completing a perfect, unbeaten season in motocross—what name did it bear? Answer: Honda CR250R.



[Click here to continue reading "Honda's Greatest Racing Machines" and to view the complete image gallery](#)

A motorcycle is merely a clever collection of alloy, rubber and plastic. So how can these rolling assemblages of inert materials occasionally cause our pulses to race and our mouths to salivate like Pavlovian hounds? Call it infatuation, love or even full-blown lust that makes motorcycle fanatics just a little cuckoo about certain machines.

If your cardiologist has waved you off from any activity that might endanger your ticker, read no further. For here we present

some of the greatest racing machines ever to fly the Honda wing. We don't pretend to have the complete lineup of every two-wheeled Honda racing star in this piece, for such a task would prove to be nearly impossible. So we'll beg forgiveness up front if we have left your favorite Honda racing machine out of this overview, ask you to indulge in the sampling of Honda stars we have on hand here and give way to your more base instincts to drool over these amazing machines.





In the last issue of *Honda Red Rider* we introduced you to Chuck Aaron and the Red Bull stunt helicopter he pilots. Click the button at right to view the part 2 video coverage we captured of Aaron and this remarkable machine.



[Click here to view additional video footage of Chuck Aaron and the Red Bull Helicopter](#)