

Mt. Whitney Makes it Interesting

By Helen Wheales

Photography by Chris McQuillen

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The near vertical climb and descent known as Mt. Whitney that looms large over the vintage track at Glen Helen Raceway was named in honor of fallen racer Whitney Murphy several years back and has rarely been used for vintage racing, until April 17th, when American Retrocross once again visited their home circuit for the fourth round of the 2011 series. The 20 story hill caused some trepidation amongst the early entrants but as wave after wave of racers rolled in from practice sessions with big smiles it quickly became clear that the new track feature was a hit, even with drum brakes crowd.



ARX stalwart, Keith Petrangello, normally a very affable individual, was not on the list of "American Retrocross' Happiest Racers." Seems his BSA was discovered to have a cracked steering stem just before he went out to practice which meant his day was over before it really began. At least that is the way it appeared until ARX head honcho, Mike Johnstone, offered up his first born BSA so Petrangello was not relegated to spectator status. The favor was not taken lightly as Petrangello took full opportunity, winning both motos of the Pre-75 Intermediate division.

Meanwhile Gary Conner roosted to a double win in two of the hotly contested classes on the day, the EVO2 and EVO 50+ Intermediate classes aboard his Yamaha. Rumors of him being bumped up to the Exp. division circulated through the pits all afternoon.





J.C. Baccus may have given up a few of his patented holeshots on the day but not his strong results. Baccus entered three classes and notched second overall in 40+ EVO Expert and the EVO4 Expert. Then, to top it off, he rode his '89 KX250 in the Modern Support class, which he handily won, proving once and for all, that it really isn't hard to be green.

Broc Bonham, son of ARX web-guru Bret Bonham, has shown steady improvement over the past few years and with it, has gained some speed. His battle with magazine icon Brian Catterson was one to watch. It was a classic case of youth and exuberance vs. age and treachery.



The first moto went to Catterson but the final moto fell to Bonham with a relentless ride. What makes his performance even more impressive is that Bonham is a newly minted Intermediate and Catterson is a seasoned Expert, so bragging rights are most certainly at hand.

Round 5 will be held on May 22nd at Competitive Edge and the track design is said to be even more interesting, so add it to your race calendar in red Sharpie!