

## 2003 TECATE SCORE INTERNATIONAL BAJA 1000

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Ensenada, Baja CA, Mexico

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### SCAT SCOOTs AS FORTIN FLIES TO TOWNSLEY

by

Tony Tellier

SCORE International put together a most-challenging “Baja 1000” that weeded out the unprepared, the uncertain, and the unaware. When the silt settled it was, once again, a Class 1 car that took the overall four-wheel crown. Doug Fortin and Charlie Townsley – seldom considered players, even by the Top Tips touter – drove the Scat V4 Fortin Jimco single-seater to the prestigious win, on time, ahead of physically-first finisher Mark Miller and Ryan Arciero. Fortin later stressed the value of “patience” as they slowly, OK, not *that* slowly, reeled in the lead cars from their thirty-second starting position. Townsley eventually dispatched their closest buggy rival – Andy McMillin – at race mile 600 (RM600) north of the San Felipe “Zoo Road” with a wake-up-call, then settled in behind Miller’s Prophy-Truck for the run to the finish, 808 miles after the start.

“We knew the splits and we just kept within that time for the win,” Doug said. Their elapsed time gave them a margin of victory of a little over four minutes: 16:24:02. Doug and Charlie were able to beat Mark, on time, at every BFG pit, except one. Reeled him in, for sure. The Miller truck was run so hard that the “right rear rotor was on fire as they finished.” – Tom Willis.

As one might imagine, keeping track of all potential threats to a team would be a tough task ... requiring real-time Excel spreadsheet updates and good radio contact, right Steve Roberts?

In what some may consider one of the toughest races in the history of the legendary desert race, 272 entries headed off into the no-person's-land of zee Baja, si. One hundred fifty three vehicles survived within the thirty-two hour time limit.

Be advised that the overall Overall team was the Honda XR650R motorcycle of Johnny Campbell, Steve Hengeveld, and Andy Grider in 15:39:52. Fortin was second overall Overall and Miller/Arciero third. John Gregory, Doug Eichner, and Tim Farr were the top ATV, a strong 16<sup>th</sup> OA!, on the bellowing Honda TRX450R. Gilberto Santana’s “500” tricks were circumvented by SCORE wisely placing checkpoints early on the race course.

“Only” an intermittent competitor, Doug, Jr., was able to jump into the car, run with the best, and beat the rest. Very impressive. “Sr.” offered an opinion, as he is often wont to do: “When will Sal start the ‘Ones’ up front? Hell, there’s only about five Trophy-Trucks that can win; we all know that.”

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Well, the Top Twenty-five finishing cars had nine Trophy-Trucks, six “Ones”, three “1600s” (Wow!), one “Five”, two “10s”, two “12s”, and two ProTrucks. All the usual suspects, I might add. Except for “1600” winner Cameron Steele, who is taking over the SX commentary from David Bailey! What’s up with *that*?

Looking at the Top Ten, however, there were five “Ones”, four “Trophies”, and one “10” so any data reduction and subsequent analysis could be “iffy”. There are liars, damned liars, and statisticians! But we all know that a few of the T-Ts ARE moving roadblocks.

Not Robby Gordon, however. RG started twenty-first in the Red Bull “31” and split the cars like Moses and the Red Sea. He was three-wheel-styling at the Ojos road crossing (RM38); God help the Sportsman bike riders from Hiroshima! However, this bravado was all for naught when his day would fold like a cheap tent, later, when a rushed wheel change came up short with under-torqued lugs. Low air pressure on the ratchet? No X-wrench check final torque check? “For the want of a nail ... the battle was lost.” B. Franklin, early off-roader?

The loose “Gordon” wheel beat up that corner, a lot, necessitating weldments, machining, and field repairs out by the Pacific. Eventually it was trailer time. Dad Bob bummed for fuel for the tow rig at the Trinidad Checker pit.

With twenty-four Trophy-Trucks and thirty Class Ones the action off the line was hot, heavy, and dusty. It was even heavier from the KM13 “El Refugio” turn onto the Highway 3 pavement to the Pepsi Stand turnoff. The “blanco y negro” proved true to their Drivers Meeting word as they had tow trucks, multiple radar guns, and officials flagging down discretionarily “unsafe” racing cars.

Stuart Chase (#110) wrote: “A few miles down the pavement I see four cars pulled over by the local John Waynes. I was aware of them and my speed and had downshifted to second to go around a corner and up a slight grade. I had my eye on the cop and saw no radar gun, just a red flag waving me over. Kind of a subjective thing on the part of the cop! Ron Brant and another guy come over to me and said: ‘You might as well get out, we are here a while’.”

Just then I saw the Herbst truggy and Fortin pull in behind me. They have the cop’s attention and no one is coming to my car. Herbst and Fortin are cut loose, so I follow.”

Kenny Freeman got pulled over by the cops at RM17 – the “Pepsi Stand”: “Se vende Queso”, actually -- after passing a chase truck that pulled over and waved them by. “There were six cars there and more down the road. The cop said that we were out of the race and they were going to impound the car. I got out and tried to reason with the cops for twenty minutes ... with no luck. In the meantime a ProTruck TV crew showed up to film the PT that was being hooked up to the tow truck. All of a sudden the cop decides to give everyone a ticket and lets them go!

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At that spot there were two cops, side-by-side, with two radar guns clocking traffic. I know it's a no-no to use a radar gun next to another one because they pick up each other's signal and give false readings."

One "NASCAR" moment was on the sweepers out of Ojos heading toward the Highway 3 crossing. Danny Martin had already had his driver's license taken away at the Pepsi Stand and had been told that another traffic stop would result in an impound ... he was soft-pedaling it when Alberto Coppola tried a zig, and a zag, touching wheels with Martin's Jimco. Coppola vaulted up, over, and into the ragged asphalt shoulder where he hooked a wheel and barrel rolled, breaking a rear arm and shoving the axle through the hub= DNF, RM36.

Danny went on, subsequently dropping the ring and pinion just before the Goat Trail – at the Cattle Guard. At Valley T, Tommy Dittfeld, Martin's banded (non)driver, forced a smile and cracked a Coors: "Hey!" he laughed, laughing his 5/1600 laugh, "I'm not nervous any more!"

### CONTINGENCY AND TECH

Contingency and Tech Day was also the Mexican National Revolution holiday. On November 20, Mexico celebrates the anniversary of its Revolution. On this date, in the year 1910, the war to overthrow the dictator Porfirio Díaz, began.

All this equates to no work, no school, no access to the Blvd. Lázaro Cárdenas – the multi-lane street in front to the Convention Center. Which made getting race fuel next to impossible due to the huge parade scheduled.

Junior Hinkle (#44) said: "The number of people crammed into that Tech area was unbelievable. Just a sea of people. When some EJR guys attempted to pass out posters, they were swamped and rushed so hard that they feared for their safety! They dropped the stack of posters and ran for their lives. I ended up handing out posters through/over the fence between our parking spot and Contingency. I stopped and put them away when the crowd began crushing the kids up front against the fence and the fence appeared to be on the verge of collapse" (like a Cincinnati Who concert!)

We got car #110 in line at 0600 and got out by 1100. I had to go back for some badly needed stickers from Tim Cecil ... my name ... and the place was IN-sane! Babies in strollers; wheelbarrows full of nuts; tartlets; drunks ... the driver of the #305 Bronco lost his cool and was leaping the horse into people. Decidedly uncool. "Get OUT!"

Mister Reliable Source: "A Class 22 competitor who was illegally prerunning the VdT-to-Ensenada section last Tuesday night said that locals set up a clothesline across the course in vicinity of Tres Hermanos, knocking him off the bike and then four guys started kicking the snot out of him. He flipped on a helmet light and they ran off; he grabbed the bike and split. Catch 22: He couldn't report the incident since he wasn't supposed to be there anyway. Apparently a lot of bikes had been prerunning this section at night."

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### RACE COURSE

The car start was moved back an hour to 0930 in order to allow the bikes and quads some modicum of breathing room. At least they were not subjected to a Trophy-Truck every thirty seconds! Tom Willis: “The start went well; hearing twenty-four T-Ts light up at once was impressive.

Scooby (Scott Maloney, actually) #82:

“We jumped in the new (high-zoot, ultra-swank Geiser) pre-runner with Bob Shepard to run the start to Ojos. Got into the wash in town, first bridge, big water hole on left, mud in the middle, short on right. A gringo with race clothes says he saw a car go through the mud section; no problem. We go through the mud section; problem. The truck sits right down on the axle and arms; Sponge-Bob mud. Several attempts to remove the vehicle by a Nissan SUV, a 4WD van, and a Bronco ... finally, our monster diesel chaser snatches us out. EJR (#44) chase guys helped us out, a lot.

During that part of the process the pre-runner’s bumper is forcibly removed and nearly takes out an EJR chase guy. He picks up the tube bumper and cuts his hand open on the chrome that is peeling off. He insisted on continuing to help. We offered some first aid, but he said it was ‘OK’ ... as blood dripped off his hand. Tell him “Thanks’, again, for Bob and I.” The EJR bleeder was Zonnie, Mark Cowan, of Stewart’s RaceWorks. He came back with a nasty cut.

The scenic Rio Ensenada had been groomed and de-watered during the night, to some degree, but that did not prevent the Brian Collins #12 Trophy-Truck from ending up hung up at the wash exit ramp. Collins would then lose a transmission and be way back, taking almost six hours to reach the Jamau BFG #1 pit (Miller was there in 2:13)

Scooby continued: “Of course we gather up quite the crowd of onlookers who I had to keep telling to get back. After our chase crew pulls us out we pre-run to Ojos, uneventfully, with the occasional reverse course traffic. I GPS-ed that portion, marking all the surprises. We had pre-run the "loop" a couple weekends before.

The torturous, convoluted track out of town, through the “suburbs” was fraught with red dust, barbed wire, fence posts, cottonwoods, and moved arrows. One enterprising local re-routed the course though a stadium section; they even had fliers printed! SCORE Ops nipped that in the bud, thank very much. The “pool” highway stretch looks scary, with decreasing radius, off camber, blind turns. Bike riders kept an eye open for spilled diesel fuel.

While there were a few “bypass” areas into the Ojos Negros Valley after “Piedras Gordas” (literally, “fat rocks”, referring the spherical weathering of local granites) they were not instrumental in an event of this length.

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“Ojos Negros”: named because the Apaches under Geronimo made an excursion into the area and their war paint featured painted band of black across their eyes! Sorta like Darryl Hannah in “Blade Runner”, ya know?

After the insane Ojos Negros Highway 3 crossing – loads of farm, local, weenie vendor, chase, spectator, truck, and VIP traffic – the racers got “some” breathing room heading south to the Tres Hermanos split off back toward KM78. This well-used section caught some experienced racers out ...

### Bad News; Good News Section

Both Vic Bruckmann and Brandon Piorek, racing ‘12’ cars, hit the same hole, g-ing the car at speed and breaking both racers backs. Brandon damaged the L1 vertebrae in his back requiring twelve hours of surgery. Wise Men suggest that the passengers were OK since they could brace on the foot rest but the driver has only one dead pedal” and he may have been on the clutch, too. Stunt drivers use a suspended seat – hung from the roll cage.

Brandon will get normal food as soon as they remove the chest tube, then they will fit him with a body cast and he will go home. He did not damage up his spinal cord and has been told he should be back to normal, *no paralysis*.”

Vic Bruckmann went to Scripps-La Jolla with a compression fracture of fifth vertebra, *no paralysis*. Long-suffering girl friend Michele Gastelum is fine. Vic is fitted with a removable back cast/torso brace. He will be laid up for three months. Vic is in good spirits.

Scooby found that same hole with Shepard in the orange ex-Jesse Jones T-T: “We hit the same hole Vic hit ... 'bout RM58. Shoveled our bumper, my helmet slammed into the roof, got a little pain in my neck. I tightened the belts some more.”

Stuart Chase #110: “In the BitD Baja Mex 300 race I almost hit that one but saw it at the last sec. Someone stuffs there bad at every event; crowds love it. I went back in from the highway after prerunning it to run the 200 yards before it; always dust in that section.”

The freight train moved on through a moonscaped burn area to another highway section. First starter Al “Pflying” Pflueger was in the rare air and was making dust to keep Mark Miller in arrears. Miller had pulled his hood at Ojos for brake fluid and was still the fastest Truck to the Jamau BFG pit #1. The Catarina section to the Goat trail was over “farm” roads and washouts and fence lines. The Goat Trail was as amusing as always.

“Never A Dull Moment” Scooby, again: “We make it to the Goat Trail after a bit of a wild ride (with a sticking throttle. See class report). I'm relaxing a little bit, calling our VT chase crew, been down the Goat Trail plenty of times with no fear. ‘82 Chase, we are coming down the Goat Trail about to get on the asphalt’.

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We make the last corner, hit a little dip, the throttle sticks, Oops. we are twenty feet above the asphalt with the two right wheels suddenly falling off the edge. Bob gasses it and points it into the roll as it starts to go over. We almost make it to the pavement where we are only about four feet above the asphalt. But she goes over and lands hard square on my side of the truck. 'Chase 82! Chase 82! We are on the asphalt on our side, we are on the asphalt on our side!' 'Roger that, Race 82. Let us know when you make the corner.' 'I repeat, we have crashed and are laying on our side in the middle of the road!' 'Oh ... we're getting in the truck to get you.'

As we are lying there, the rest of the T-Ts and some of the 1s go by. They seem to be about ten seconds apart. Spectators push us back onto our wheels, and we try to go, but nothing happens; the rear axle is hung on a rock. The spectators are trying to push us off while avoiding the chase traffic on the asphalt and the race traffic coming off the hill. A chase crewman in a big yellow shirt brings his truck over and straps us off the rock."

The race down the Goat Trail left no stone unturned, as they were bumper-to-bumper, nose-to-tail, hook-to-ladder, left-to-right. Looked like a NASCAR restart, but without the whining! Without the yellow flags for "Debris on the back stretch!" That drop-away downhill turn into Valle de la Trinidad had those Projects squawking, squealing, and squalling. Close racing put Post and BJ Baldwin side-by-side, with "loser" BJ sliding into an imprudently-placed RV. A Minnie Winnie made a bit wee-er.

Getting out of the populated areas was a blessing, with only rocks, 'n' rills, 'n' templed hills to deal with. The juniper-studded roller road up to Rancho Mike's was plenty wide and fast, always kept up for the tourist trade. The road out to San Telmo was "technical", so to speak.

Steve Roberts #1607:

"This course was a really treacherous, technical course. About three to four hundred miles of new terrain was added to stuff we had run before. It went way inland, in through the mountains, and up through a bunch of passes. Then it would loop in again, back into the area of Highway 1, where most teams set up their pits, and then would go back out again.

"When you are way out there on the loop and you have trouble, its really hard for your team to get to you. Tons of silt, really tight, sheer cliffs, and tight up-hills. It was fun, but very technical."

Stuart Chase #110:

"From Mike's to RM204 (Hwy 1 'Ruins') it was technical and boring. Fuel and light bar at RM204, now approx 1400. The next section was VERY technical; pay attention. Passed a couple slower cars and one wounded T-T. As dark approached we came on a section where the course went right but an obvious line had formed straight ahead. I do not take lines I am unfamiliar with. As I got around and up on the high side my 'Co', Mike Childress, (of D37 motorcycle fame) said 'HOLY SHIT!' There are four cars

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down in the hole we just went around, all on top of each other; were we lucky we did not take that line.

My rule: Never take new lines, especially at night.

Chased Brant for miles but could not get past his dust; many turns, berms, gullies, hills, etc. As it was, I blew one turn and hung the front bar on a tree, but Mike got it off. At the Highway 1, RM305, we proceeded at a 'safe speed' per instructions at the Drivers Meeting (80-110) until RM319. Kept one T-T behind us that stretch; think those guys were geared tighter.

Change co-dudes here, Mike out Eric in and hit the Pacific side of Highway 1, miserable silt, but passable. Saw cars in various silt beds in this section, other than that, uneventful-but-silty area technical.

Back at Catavina, fueled, and we are told 'Sixth Open car, top 15 OA'. We were passed by ten cars where we could not maintain speed but many dropped off in the bad spots. Catavina to Coco's turn-off was as fast as the car would go. Very heads up here with oncoming cars, had to loosen up at these periods. I was concerned I would spook a vehicle and bring him at us.

Turn-off to Coco's graded and fast; same to Gonzaga. WFO to Puertocitos.

Billy and I take the Olde Puertocitos road which has had the crap beat out of it over the last few decades: exposed bed rock, blocky alluvial fan material eventually grading into the nose of Matomi Wash and unceasing whoops past Huatamote and Chanate. The double-wide well road was totally to the floor past the camp fires and pits. The "booby" trap jumps were built by boobies: utterly trivial: "Yawn .... Zzzz."

The Power line Road to Three Poles was total chop – I almost felt sorry for the "9" cars. Almost. Then the engine laid down and it was difficult, if not impossible, to keep the car on top of the rollers. The car wanted to dance closer and closer to the tree Chollas. Nerve-wracking.

After the sweeper at 3 Poles the north wind battered the car through the uphill gravel wash past Borrego – pit crews were hiding behind trailers as tents flapped and flattened; gravel and sticks were flying and the smoke trees were bent over. Check 9 crew were in woolies, longies, snoods, caps, and face masks, Not happy.

A subsequent post-mortem revealed: "I pulled the injectors and sent them to Motech, they have a flow bench, and guess what, the injectors have internal filters. They were ALL clogged, two badly. I did not know they were there until the techie called. I had them delivered today, in tonight, and as crisp as fart on a winter morning."

3 Poles: "Mark Miller in the silver Prophecy-Truck went by @ around midnight followed by two Class One cars about ten minutes behind. It was a long time before we saw any

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more four-wheeled vehicles. In that area, with the whoops, the Rivera (#3) T-T sounded the smoothest on the throttle. Was constant before and after the pits ... was pulling really well ... almost all of the others were on and off the throttle in this section.”

### TROPHY-TRUCKS

Dinner at the Locos Mocos RM365 pit – Mark Naugle:

“Larry Roeseler: #1 stayed for breakfast. The balancer was broken; the crank trigger being out of whack was the reason for the dead in water. The wrong part was delivered. Close, but not the same. Required some creative spacing to make it functional. Also, the crank bolt had to be cut off w/ a wheel = green Loctite. The new balancer was welded in place. The folks at Shaver will LOVE that.”

Be advised that LR also rode the 900cc KTM vertical twin: “I can’t pick it up if I drop it.” Hell of a motivation to keep it up, so to speak.

Steve Sourapas #6:

“I’m sure glad this year is over as it hasn’t been very productive for the Corona Team. Our 1000 started out O.K. ‘til we got to the pavement section at RM12 and were stopped for going 55 mph and then let go. As we proceeded with ‘caution’ we were passed by Robby Gordon who came about as close to a head-on collision with a police car as you can have. Then things got worse -- just before the Ojos Negros high speed road we were changing lines in heavy dust and Marty Coyne hit our left front tire at 50 and bent the spindle badly (This was just a racing accident, with no fault to anyone).

Danny Porter was at Ojos, worked his magic, and repaired the damaged parts. After one-and-a-half hours of down time we carried on and made it to RM150 before we lost second gear. I was just milking it to El Coyote while driving directly into the sun; I drove into a large ditch that broke off the repaired spindle and the lower trailing arm. After many hours, and some great help from the Damon Jefferies crew, we were able to drive it out on three wheels to the highway and put it on the trailer. BEERMAN”

Alan Pflueger #28:

Alan Pflueger had the front start and made the most of it, knocking down fence posts and generally making a lot of noise, dust, and commotion. The effort fell to pieces, literally, as the truck (reportedly – I wasn’t *everywhere*, sorry) broke at the bulkhead. They did patch ‘er back together for a finish in it’s debut race.

Brian Collins #12:

On-site report complication: “An ATV crashed into one of Collins’ pit crew. This rider was hauling a\$\$ on San Telmo road, way too fast, drifted on a right-hander, and smashed into their Chevy pickup. He hit so hard that the impact actually broke the spindle! The guy had a broken leg, or a really messed up knee. It wasn’t pretty.”



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“He was chasing parts for their race quad and was in a four-wheel drift around a corner when the quad slammed into the front spindle, breaking it, on a ¾-ton, handlebars punched a hole through the door and the bike ended up under the rear axle.”

Robby Gordon #31:

“Robby started twenty-first, and was the eleventh car at Ojos. “I was at RM75 when Robby came in with a left rear flat. He pulled up to his pit (the 4-seater, a van, and about ten people with blue shirts on), they not quite ready for him, and were having problems with the air gun. Robby threw the window net down and handed them the one out of the cab; they used it, then started looking at it, tried to get the socket off of it, then handed it all back to Robby and he took off. It took about two minutes when it should have only taken forty-five seconds. Robby was pretty cool for the first minute but started to get hot. I think it's a combination of them not being totally prepared and being extremely exhausted trying to get that truck done in time.” - Wardy.

(He was talking about entering the 4-seater in Class 1 at Laughlin just to prove what the car would do. I was at Ojos as Bob Gordon, driving the 4-seater, almost passed the T-T entry from Japan on the highway. Bob later he said he would have passed him if he didn't have to turn off the road to Valle Trinidad ... hahahahahaha ... classic. Gawd, I love the off road mentality!)

At Valle de la Trinidad, RG had made up three-and-a-half minutes in thirty miles, sliding sideways off the highway, then 80 mph down a crowded street. The rushed tire change did not provide a full torque on the studs and things deteriorated from that point on. “RG and crew were doing some hub repairs at RM304, which included machining some parts in Coyne trailer.”

Larry and Chad Ragland #80:

“Arnold only made it to RM100. The nut on the driver's side lower control arm came off, and subsequently that corner came apart. We had no way to fix it. Not that it matters, but my dad had made his way from starting 14th to 7th physically before he had to drop out. But we both know that to finish first, first you must finish.”

The T-T's came through RM589 @ 2100, Miller had ten minutes on McMillin, and McMillin up one minute on Fortin, Vildosola thirty minutes back, and Rivera two-and-a-half more, Herbst ninety seconds more.

BJ Baldwin came in with Adam Wik injured, big rock thrown into cab, hit the front of Adams helmet and chest, chin cut, needed stitches, he was pretty worried about blood coming from ear, I looked him over, answering questions the way he was suppose to, thought he might of broke an ear drum, sent to hospital in ambulance just for precaution, Robbie Goerke picked him up.

Ikue Hanawa #14:

The Japanese Tundra of Ikue Hanawa was well, unusual, as compared to the traditional planform for T-Ts. The mid-mounted V8 went into a large auto box that mounted to a

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rigid transfer case. A short shaft coupled to the tiny rear diff about the size of my '86 2WD Toy PU! A long propeller shaft went to the front differential. The center-seat rig looked, OK, just not very robust, particularly the A-arms – front and rear – and specifically the pick-up points.

“The car was pulled over two miles south of the power station on the way to Mike’s in Valley T. It looked as if he had hit a ditch in one of the turns and broken a rear link.” But it was running well even at Puertocitos. However, the BFG pit reports do not show any passing times past RM324. It was parked in a give-it-up attitude along Highway 3 near the Mike’s turnoff.

Dave Ashley/Dan Smith #8:

The #8 Enduro team broke a steering ram and were down an hour but made up mucho time to get fourth in class and fifteenth overall (bikes included)

Rich Hoffman #44:

Jr. Hinkle: “The Rich Hoffman ‘EJR Racing’ T-T finished it's first 1000. We needed every bit of the allotted time, however. We cleared the checkpoint before BFG 4 (Catavina, RM441) by five minutes! They got stuck on the Pacific side for seven hours, then behind a stack of stuck cars in the silt beds for five more. Truck performed flawlessly, not even a flat.” Rich had originally planned on soloing but thought better of it and tried to find Jason Cobb to drive but “Hasten” was out of the shop. Jeff Hoskins of the IV signed up; Hoskins has a road named after him in the Brawley/Holtville area, just like Steve Scaroni!

Bob Shepard #82:

Scooby: “Got the ‘Ready-To-Race’ T-T (“Just wipe off the dust”) two weeks before race day. Fine-tuned the prep, found some tranny cooling issues (Corrected them by moving some overhead HIDs that were disturbing the cooler pass-through airflow - Ed.).

Drivers meeting: Walked in just in time to receive the brunt of the Mexican brass.

We are ready to go at 0730 ... kinda curious why the other drivers are still getting breakfast. Oh, **0930** is race time.

Staging: Double-check fluids ops; check pee tube. My intercom cuts out for a millisecond so I check all the connections and solder points; looks good. Ready to go, everybody stops by the truck and wishes us well.

Mario Andretti works the green flag. Clean start, concerned about the first bridge; water is gone, and hole is filled with sand. A couple corners later, as the wash gets back up on the road, Collins is hanging over the edge tail-down, fifty-degrees nose-high, neither one of us said a peep.

Caught #81, Mark Miller, fairly quickly but we are held off by the dust. I was actually calling turns off the GPS because we could barely see. Get to the first asphalt section and

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passed him within three seconds. He is going kinda slow (!?); we are going pretty fast. As we round the corner, with all the tires squawking, we see all the T-Ts lined, up nose-to-tail; three cop cars and cops waving red flags all over the place. We take our spot behind the car in front.

Miller motors right past us and goes to the front of the line before the cops stop him. We are upset about this move. We find out that they knew the cops were there and they were doing the speed limit; they had a discussion with the cops that they were doing the limit and the cops let them take go as the second T-T. Several drivers were out of their cars, one of them in an all-red fire suit, was talking to the cops, then waves at the race cars to say "Lets go". As we take off the cops yell at us and point their finger.

The first turn right after the cops two T-Ts were bashing into each other trying to run each other off the road. Didn't get a close look -- saw tire smoke and trucks sideways on the asphalt around the fourth position. We all 'cruised' around a car length apart until we got back onto the dirt, then it's instant dust-out.

We fight the dust with assistance from the GPS, until I make a reminder about "Only 780 miles to go". I get vertigo because I'm looking down at the GPS in the dust; I relieve myself of my breakfast in short order then I'm good to go.

The first two checkpoints were terrible; it was amazing we didn't kill those guys. Both of them were in silt beds. At the first we are closing in on a truck; he becomes visible so we go for the pass, next thing we see (barely) are checkpoint workers and cones.

Next we come up on one of the Riviera trucks that appears to have blown through and was stopped sideways across the course, just past the checkpoint. The stub sticker sticks our stub then walks to the Riviera truck, blocking us, and gives him his stub. We are just starting to take off and we get rear ended by another truck, snapping our heads back. We get clear air for a bit because race cars are taking different lines in all directions.

We get to Ojos, run through there nice and fast, every time the truck gets light we can hear the drive shaft binding. I call a few turns off the GPS and they are way off, according to it we are paralleling the course ... then I notice that the turns are not a nice curve.

I figure out that we pre-ran everything but the section from Ojos to VT. All I had was the BFG track and PCI's danger points. So now I have time to look out the mirror; I only can see one car length behind the truck ... great.

A black truck catches us and we let him by, then we see him stopped on the side and pass him back, heard that, later, one of them slid into a motor home. Bob discovers that the throttle is sticking: if we take it above 4K rpm the throttle stays at 3K for a bit, so Bob is having to set up a lot earlier for the corners and has to use more brake to fight the engine.

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Bob gets the hang of the throttle sticking, but already is starting to tire from having to use so much brake. We get to our chase crew, and they have the Sourapas crew helping them out, and Ricky G. They pull the hood and find some of the throttle linkage missing (!); they pull the engine skid plate hoping (Ha! - Ed.) to find a few pieces with little Heims on them, no luck,

At this point the 10s, some 8s, and 16s are going by, with the whole race still in front of us and most of the field, and we are iron-manning it. We decided it wasn't worth busting our balls and using up the truck for fifth or sixth place. So we packed up and went back to Ensenada.

We didn't know Arnold was out behind us until much later; Lightning and Bob had an agreement that if Arnold broke that Lightning would be a relief driver at Puertocitos ... I would have stayed in the truck.

We sent the race truck to Puertocitos to put it on the trailer and take it home. We beat our Pacific crew back to the hotel. Had an appetizer with LR's crew, then had the best dinner I've had in Ensenada with the whole crew at Sano's, had a bunch of margaritas, had some more at the Coral, along with some shots with Arnold mechs, then back to San Nicholas for a few more. Had an energy bar and half a Camelbak of water before I went to bed; woke up fine.

### CLASS 1

Class One had a good mix of top finishing motor types: Scat V4 (Fortin – 1st), V8 (Andy and Scott McMillin – 2<sup>nd</sup>; Brant and Boyles – 4th), V6 Toyota (Dos Ebberts and Castro – 3rd), and a dunes-fugitive Northstar (Jorgensen – 5th). No “formula” here! Alert the media: John Marking finished! Phwew ... what a relief! Finally. Kash Vessels was borrowing it from Bob, he didn't buy it. In the race he was doing real good on time until he hit a rock in heavy dust. Bent up the front end pretty good. The battle between Andy/Scott McMillin and Fortin was pretty classic! Lots of bumping and honking. Apparently, Fortin hit him pretty hard, leaving a huge dent and cracking lots of welds, almost took out his power steering! Not really necessary! Andy was said to have snapped that A-arm bolt.

Mark Weyhrich #106:

“Gary was following the Herbst T-T for about twenty miles, enduring many dust storms brought about by their helicopter (They bring it down to about 25 ft AGL' in silty areas to try to slow you down -- ). The last five miles of that ‘twenty’ Gary was banging on the back of them and they would not move.

(Heard the same thing from Marking's co-dog, Todd Tenbroek ... slamming the Herpies and wouldn't let them pass. Common issue, I guess?)

(Saw this too; helo was one truck height above the truck in front of us)

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He was so close on some of the mountain switchbacks he could see into Timmy's eyes, so he knew who was driving. Anyway, it appears that something hit the front of our steering rack, which caused it to fail, sending them into a tree at about fifty mph. It was irreparable and took us five hours to get to the car, so we just parked it. The car is in Vegas for the BITD finale, so hopefully we will be Class 1500 champs!"

Stuart Chase #110:

"It was fast and furious to Ojos and the same gremlin that we had at the 500 begins, felt like either an injector or an ignition bug. It did not do that at the MORE Barstow race a month ago, but reoccurred while suspension testing, which sent me back out again for more testing prior to the race. On that day it was perfect.

From Ojos to the first road crossing it felt like it was down one cylinder. From there to VdT it would not pull at low speed; good enough to continue, but cars got around us. At VdT I got out and checked all that can be checked in an electronic system and got back in. At the top of Mike's it was worse than ever but within twenty miles it cleared up to as good as it would, no low end but fair on the pipe, and good enough to keep in front of two T-Ts on the first highway section. (At 0300 Bob Gordon was at the VT Checker pit with RG's toy looking for tow car fuel, and said with a smile, 'That's why I like carburetors!' 10-fing-4 to that.

Glad to get to Puertocitos, 0930 to 0000 is a long run. When I got out, one of the Checkers pointed to the coil carrier; the seal cap had backed off and was on the lower end of the shaft. The car's tabs kept it somewhat aligned and it held the car up to the end; the bypass did its own job.

Billy and T-T get in and from there to SF all systems were go, in the whoops north of SF the motor got worse and the decision was it would not make it the 110 miles from VdT.

Eric and I went to town to get the trailer, drove back, it was 0700ish, warmer, sunny, had a coffee, tried the car on the asphalt and it was good. Borrowed a helmet and suit and hauled ass to the finish. It is the best ever feeling to finish the Baja 1000, absolutely exhilarating. I think we were eleventh open car, last in, WAY down in the OA, but home.

Aside from the motor plaguing us all day the car was perfect, we didn't lay a wrench on it or change a tire. Checker pits were better than excellent, all our help was where they had to be, mostly a perfect day. Like in one of Kris Kristofferson's songs at the end of a set at the Crazy Horse in NewPorsche Beach: *"You might as well go home, it don't get no better than this"*.

The orange #116 Cam Theriot "Luck Sperm" car was seen in a BFG Pit, #3 or #4. "Was getting a new outer CV. Mucho time down, but I got a great chance to look it over real close. Very nice detail and a very simple car. LS1 and a Fortin. It had the Gordon shocks. Big four-inch diameters with bolt-on reservoirs -- one per wheel all around. It's hard to make a car look simple. All 4130 and MIG to boot."

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### CLASS 3

There were some misinformed Early Broncos on site. A pair of KC HiLiTES and a pumper cooler box; you know the drill. “A thirty-year-old weld, on a ½-inch steel plate mounted on the front spring upper mounts that was welded on three sides, broke the driver’s side broke off, damaging the shock and bump stop. The right side was cracked two inches. There is no way anyone could have thought about that unless the whole vehicle had been Magnafluxed before the race.” They spent 7:33 getting to Jamau. Their web site solution? Bumping the compression ratio.

The Moss Brothers in their later Bronco kept moving and took the win over the Beals – a “1000” surprise, I would offer.

Billy’s Bunch by Kurt Phul #1749:

“I was down at RM305 with Rich Minga in a JeepSpeed, waiting for our car. Got in the Jeep about 2100; things were going great till the first silt bed (RM350), which was a virtual parking lot, must have been forty vehicles stuck there when we came thru -- trying to dodge the other vehicles and the silt, as best as we could we with next-to-no visibility.

We hit a downed cactus that tossed the Jeep on its side into a deep rut. Lucky for us there was no shortage of people stuck who helped us push the Jeep onto its wheels.

Off we went only to get stuck and proceed to dig for the next hour! Those silt beds were bad -- and that was with a 4WD Jeep.

Made it through the rest of the silt beds with no problem, got backed up at a hill climb for twenty minutes until some of the trucks and buggies that couldn't make it (an alternate route was blocked by four stuck cars) moved out of the way enough for us and a Hummer could charge up the hill. Chased down the Hummer in no time and had smooth sailing the rest of the way. We passed a ton of vehicles from Check Six (fish camp) up to BFG Pit 4 and down Highway 1 past Catavina to our driver change where the course hits the dirt again towards San Felipe.

We finished first in class, JeepSpeed, since we were the only JeepSpeed -- the MDR, JeepSpeed race was Saturday. They combined us with Class 3 for the money, which we took second, so, all in all, a good outing.

### PROTRUCKS

After years of racing and racing the SMD Scaroni group captured the big race. Junior and the vegpacker.com enlisted a third Rick Johnson: the motocross star.

The Fire Guys from Snow Mass were enlisted for the Dan Hunt #228 effort but the 37:10:17 elapsed time from Santo Domingo to Guayquil seems excessive.

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### CLASS 1600

Matt Sherard #1606:

“Rick Sherard started and at RM15 a bunch of cars all blew a 90-degree turn. As he was correcting to take off an unknown 1600 racer backed into my dad trying while trying to beat him out of the mess. The hit was hard enough to rip up a body panel, dent a rear shock, and crack our transmission case. Unfortunately, the crack was not discovered until RM109 (VdT) where upon the trans grenaded. Naturally from a lack of trans fluid. After a long attempt to locate and replace the trans, we gave up do to the lack of time. No bueno at all.”

Steve Roberts: #1607:

“The lure of the open desert road race is apparently just too much to allow Steve Roberts to retire, even temporarily, from the SCORE series. Coming close to grabbing the golden ring can be more motivating than snatching it. All of that comes into play as Steve Roberts looks to 2004 after taking third place.

"I was so close to that first place. I think that if we had won this year, it might have been easy to walk away for a while. It would have been easy to take a year off. I think we are going to go back. I think we are going to keep at it next year. At least, we'll run the Mexican races.

"Partner Rick Boyer is going after the SCORE points for '04 and we may be able to use both our cars and run for his points, with him as the driver of record.

"Some of my sponsors, Questek, Deco Foods, Adult City (!), and BFG tires, want me to run Laughlin. I'm not excited about that. It's a lot of work for a short little series of sprints. It's a technical course and easy to get damaged. It's not an endurance course like we run best. It's a course for those who go really fast and can take a lot of punishment," said Roberts. "The 1000 is my kind of race."

Capturing the win in Robert's class, which had twenty-seven starters, was ESPN sportscaster Cameron Steele, of San Clemente, Calif. Their time was 21:00:10. Steve Roberts, and drivers Rick Boyer of Bakersfield, along with Kent Lothringer, finished in 21:11:24, 11 minutes and 14 seconds behind the winner.

Of the eighteen class finishers, the only other 1600 car that could get by Deco was Jose Estolano and Daniel Gutierrez. Their time was 21:03:23.

The Deco Racing Team, which included co-drivers Derek and Dave DeAtley, and Kevin Streety, riding with Lothringer, were even closer to the class win than the 11 minutes might indicate.

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"We didn't know it at the time. We actually had first place locked up. We were thirty minutes in the lead, ninety miles from the finish. Boyer was really pushing hard and missed a turn and slid off into a wash-out. It was pretty deep and they hit pretty hard. Tore up the tie rods and smashed the car pretty good. Luckily, we were about fifteen minutes away; we ran down the course and pulled them out with the chase truck," said Roberts.

"We got the car out and it took a while to get the cobwebs out for Rick and Dave DeAtley. They were rattled pretty good. But they got it back together and finished the race. They finished just 11 minutes out of first place and eight minutes out of second place. So we were running in first place at the time; we just didn't know it.

"We were twenty-fifth overall car. We beat a ton of Class One cars and Trophy-Trucks.

"It was a near perfect run with just that one glitch. Don't get me wrong. It wasn't the only thing that cost us time, but it cost us. Rick and Dave were driving their hearts out. They thought they were in second place and were pushing for the win. That particular situation could have gotten any of us. They just missed a turn. It was at night and about 5:00 in the morning. They were really fatigued and pretty much rung out. They had been in the car since about 2100. It was 0500 in the morning, just two hours from the finish."

There was another incident where we lost some time. I was about five miles from my driver change out. I'd been going for ten-plus hours. I was really tired and hungry and the GPS said to take the left fork and everyone was going right, so we went where everyone was going. Luckily we didn't try to push it too far that way and when we got stuck that's when the two local gentlemen pushed us out. We back-tracked to the fork.

"We had another bullet that we dodged earlier. We had been running with another '16' car. We were pushing this car real hard. He ended up flipping right in front of me, in a big canyon, and he wedged his car so it couldn't move and it was blocking the course.

"There was a big tree on the left about four inches around. Our car couldn't knock it down. There were about ten cars backed up. Derek got out and brought up a Pro-Truck to knock down the tree. While Derek was getting back in the car a whole bunch of our class went by. We got 'em back, but that could have been different.

"There was another canyon where there were a whole bunch of cars high-centered and had the canyon blocked. We helped a couple and worked some deals. It's what goes on in these races.

Roberts continued with the story, "We ran a super-clean race, just a little pushy, but mostly just steady. We used a little different plan than past years. When the hot-heads ran up on us, we just let them go by. We'd usually see them on the side somewhere down the course. They'd have gone over a cliff, or turned over, or something.



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"This course was a really treacherous, technical course. About three to four hundred miles of new terrain was added to stuff we had run before. It went way inland, in through the mountains, and up through a bunch of passes. Then it would loop in again, back into the area of Highway 1, where most teams set up their pits, and then would go back out again.

"When you are way out there on the loop and you have trouble, its really hard for your team to get to you.

"Tons of silt, really tight tracks, shear cliffs, tight climbing hills. It was a pretty fun course, but very technical."

The course was opened to the teams in the week prior to the actual race and all teams send crews down to pre-run the course. It is the only way to truly prepare for the event.

Roberts continued, "We pre-ran it all and then sat down at a team course meeting and decided that the team that didn't make any mistakes would have a chance to win. You had to run a flawless race to win.

"I ran my first 325 miles and never got out of the car. We made a few wrong turns, but managed to get back on course. We got stuck once, but some of the locals helped push us out of a silt bed.

"We ran a new GPS system this year. There are a lot more points per mile this year than before. The accuracy is phenomenal. It's so good, you can almost drive by GPS. Almost like a rally car race. Derek DeAtley, my co-driver, was sometimes able to call out turns before we got to them, and other things we had marked.

"All three of our teams were down there early and we pre-ran every section of the course. It was raining and snowing when we pre-ran and we used about a whole week, Thursday through Wednesday, to work out the whole course.

"I ran about 325 miles and Kent Lothringer, who's been racing all his life, said all he wanted was about 140 miles. He ran a short middle section, one that was real technical. Then Rick Boyer had about 345 to the finish line.

"It was great to have experience in the car and the area that Lothringer ran was a disaster for some teams. There were some silt beds in that area and at one time there were about forty teams hung up or lost in the silt beds. The area was on the Pacific side along the ocean. Kent got through that somehow. It had to be the experience. We just kept dodging one bullet after another.

"Logistics this year? It was a really drawn-out race course and it ran 300-400 miles down south. It required a whole lot more people, and chase trucks and a lot more driving," said Roberts.

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"Lothringer brought his own support crews and they handled that very technical area he ran. We really needed that third team this year. The planning and preparation paid off."

Pete Seane #1610:

"Thanks to the McMillin crew that took care of our guys in the Garth Hutchinson 1610 car 1. It was the guys with the Jeep. They turned the car back over, gave them some warmer clothes for the night, fed them, towed them out to Camalu in the morning, and bought them breakfast."

Eric Allen #1625:

My adventure started on Thursday around 0530 when we left for Baja. Didn't get one mile into Mexico and a greedy cop already had us for "speeding". Even though our POS truck was barely climbing the grade out of TJ and we were getting passed right and left. Finally made it to Ensenada for the fun to begin.

We left in the prerunner to prerun the first 40 miles, but the race frequency we are members of was covered with nonmember chatter. We told them they were on the wrong channel and that it was for paying members only, but they literally told us to stick it and that we had no choice but to put up with them for the race. Thanks a lot, Donahoe Racing!

We decided to switch to a new frequency, and continued the weekend with that.

The race started off pretty much uneventful. I drove the first 305 miles and did it very conservatively. At RM120 I was told I was fourth, physical, and after one more turn, and running over an upside 1600, I was third! At RM205 I was in leading on the road and on corrected time and decided to back-step the pace down to a crawl. It was getting dark and I didn't want to take any chances. At about RM260 I took reverse out trying to get out of a silt ditch that I had gotten stopped in. Totally related to driver error.

At RM305 we decided to do a tranny swap. The tranny probably would have made it to the finish, but all we needed was a finish to win the class points. After an hour-and-twenty minutes the car was back on the road with Rick St. John. Rick had zero problems all the way to Puertocitos where he got out. Adam Pfankuch took over to the finish. In Valley T, we had to swap in another tranny, because the one we put in at RM305 was a POS 002 that came with the car and didn't have a third gear that wanted to stay 'in'. After the tranny swap and another two hour down time. Adam didn't even make it to the goat trail and a CV broke. That was changed on the Goat Trail along side the cattle crossing. Adam drove it to a ninth place finish after that without any more problems.

We had zero flats on our Yokohama tires. We had only one flat all season. The finish was enough to get us the 1/2 1600 championship, and a small piece of the True Grit. (They missed the OA championship to Dale Ebberts by eight points, 460, to 452. That used tranny reared its ugly head.)

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Thanks to Scott Steinberger (#7) for passing me four times and never hitting me, even when I didn't pull over right away. Went 41 hours without sleep; it was nice to finally be home and showered

James Golden was parked in Ojos and it was 6:25 on the clock before he got to Jamau. Not a good start

### CLASS 5

What was supposed to be the battle of the Decade for the uncontested class crown became moot as the Gentleman Joe Heger/Shawn McCallum Vs. George Seeley/Roger Byrd/Dwight Forell - The Colonel/Rick "Crumbco" Crumb struggle was reduced to a "finish" mentality for Seeley – and the Championship. The Imperial Valley team spread their lead at every stop, finishing five hours ahead. But with the championship in sight, George saw no reason to push the issue ... that would be as ridiculous as a chicken eating ice cream. Seeley drives just fast enough to a champion, or so I was told. With two wins this season, Seeley won his seventh Class 5 SCORE title, his fifth straight. Besides the last five years, he won Class 5 in '93 and '97. Rick changed a CV by the light of his wife's Bic lighter.

### CLASS 5/1600

This was an Ensenadan class, to be sure, as Marcos Nuñez, demonstrated his complete superiority of the class, finishing just after nine Saturday morning with Miguel Rosales and Mario Reynoso in tow. "Tito" Arambula was an hour or so back. Pretenders-to-the-throne Jason Lakin and Todd Cunningham could not complete the course and dropped out of the season's Top Three. In fact, Nuñez and Reynoso tied for the crown; Marcos won by virtue of his number of wins. Carlos Iribe was a DNF, tsk, tsk. Never made Catavina ... just like Lakin and scores of others.

### CLASS 7

The two-drive trucks did not fare well; three, out of ten, finished. And it was Craig Turner taking the measure of Victor Herrera and the Home Saga Ranger of Hector Salazar. Turner did not have an easy day ... 106<sup>th</sup> OA ... but better than Doug Siewert and Jeff Lothringer. "Ringer" had the measure of the class into and through the silt: "That truck worked great! We never came close to getting stuck. However the loss of an alternator spelled trouble and strife, as they had to continuously drop lights off-line. It was just before the BFG pits when they were down to one ... then a flashlight. In the gloom Jeff stuff the trucking a rigid highway abutment, requiring some weld repairs.

On the San Felipe side, however, they had an undiagnosed distributor issue: "The truck runs an odd-firing ignition system so a 'yonke' part was not acceptable." They sent a crew over to the other side with a replacement part. But something went awry and they never made it to the busboy parque: "*Béisbol has been bery bery bad to me!*"

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### CLASS 7S

Only one mini-truck finished – Ted Moncure. Bob Land and Johnny Unser took six hours to get to Jamau.

### CLASS 7SX

Dan Fresh won ... and none of the three McNeil trucks – in “7” and “7SX” -- finished ... very unusual!

### CLASS 8

David Sykes and Dave Westhem had a tough day at the office on the first four hundred miles but were able to hang on for the victory. The Vanderweys broke a trailing arm in the Milk Truck and was down for something like ten hours and when they were able to repair they were not able to make the checkpoint in time before closing.

Chris Wilson #839:

By Mike’s water crossing, Chris Wilson had stopped to remove a broken right front brake caliper so the left front was working hard, as seen by the steam coming off it as it hit the water. The missing fiberglass is from an earlier low speed roll onto the passenger side.

“We withdrew the truck when we hit the pavement at RM315 after inspection found a ball joint ready to pull out. I was not willing to risk further damage. We did not believe there was any way the ball joint would last another five hundred miles. It's a uni-ball and welded into the A-arm (no C-clip), requiring a grinder and welder to service. And there was no spare, anyway. It's Kurtis Kupiec’s truck and I do not know how long that ball joint had been in service or if the roll damaged it! It's a good truck but, IMHO, needs some time spent on set-up for Baja courses.

All in all, not a good race for us but unlike some friends, we all returned home safe to race another day. Despite the down-time, I think we were in second place when we withdrew. At the time we withdrew, Sykes was buried in a silt bed a few miles ahead of us. It was a tough decision to quit.

### CLASS 9

Eric Fisher and Isaac Chapluk – “Bronco’s Steak House” --never faltered as they swing-axled (#900) their way to the win before noon, Saturday. Archrival Arturo Velasco was two-and-a-half hours back. The other two cars were DNFs: Tony Modica and Mike O’Donnell. Mike did not get to BFG/Jo-mama Junction; Tony did not reach Catavina.

Mike O’Donnell #949:

The Irish Racing Team – “Faith n begora!” - out of Phoenix had quite a roller-coaster ride this year leading up to the 2003 Baja 1000. There were troubled times around every corner. While prepping for this race, if there was a challenge to be had, we faced it and

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hit it. Irish Racing runs a strong 9 car that had a good year in Arizona and Mexico. The car is no stranger to the 1000, as it was previously raced by Red Balls Racing (i.e., David Viera) out of Los Angeles.

We were hit with many challenges from last-minute tranny problems to the co-driver bowing out, at the last minute, due to back problems and Dave “Dave N. Port” Davenport signed on. I am fortunate to have the support of the racing community around Phoenix, including BFG, Competition Engineering, Lee-Bob’s Race Shock, and Tatum Motorsports. I couldn’t have made it without them. The sophomore effort of the Irish Racing Team ran a very competitive race until the car ripped a cir-clip out of a rear hub that, ultimately, put a stop to everything. We certainly learned a lot this year and are collecting our notes and setting-up a plan for 2004.”

### CLASS 10

Kory Halapoff and Harley Letner showed a strong field how the hog ate the cabbage with an expected win and nineteenth overall. Kept that little wound tight all day! The two Derek Krieger cars came in second and third. Musta been the hand of Lucas Hand, you think?

The battle was lost but the war was won by Martin Christensen “The Melancholy Dane”, i.e., Hamlet, and Dave “Hasten” Mason; the team persevered during the latter stages of the race to fourth place and the season championship – again. A rare back-to-back! Martin’s gritty competitor, The Yees, and Steve Myers/George “50w” Erl both lost engines.

But it was tough sledding for the BMW team, as a hard impact on the left rear had bent the caliper mounting plate – the brake was lost for the race but, worse, the flat mounting surface was bowed and the carrier bolts could not be seated. With such a gap the preload could not be constant; the ten-millimeter bolts fatigued. Again and again. Martin had to get out of the car eighteen times and remove the headless bolts, now studs and replace them. Eighteen times!

Often a chaser would have to tack weld nuts onto the exposed bolt shank in order to facilitate unscrewing. “I started with a big bag of bolts,” Martin smiled, “I have one left!” He also offered his halftime “pump” speech: “It’s the responsibility of the driver to keep up the spirits of the crew!” An august eavesdropper questioned that: “Bullshit! It’s the job of the crew to bring their own spirits!”

The Myers Toyota of Escondido blew a motor, bad, dropped a valve, after the Ojos crossing. Perhaps you heard the question posed to the Weatherman: “Can a team change an engine, continue, timed, then tomorrow run that first section on time and total them two legs?” Bob was diplomatic to a rare extreme: “No!”

That was the Myers team’s question.

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All Ways Racing/All German crewmen were at the site of the Myers car and kept a close eye on things: “They originally said that the tranny was bad, too, so they were going to pull it ... but as the car is mid-engined, you have to pull the tranny, first, in order to pull the engine, we stuck around until it was officially over.” Myers’ gang *finally* got the \$\$\$%.going only to hour out at next checkpoint, which had closed.

The Yees had told Martin after the Primm: “You can call me ‘Champ’ already!”  
Counting those *pollos* way too early? Yep – they popped an engine – the cam drive belt.

Dave “Hawk” Bonner drove car #1047 with Jim Anderson and Guy Evans; Jim started and went to RM306 running trouble-free the whole run and gave me the car third on course. I made it through the silt beds and passed a lot of stuck cars there. I continued to RM78 and gave the car to Guy. I had absolutely no problems at all and, in the process, even passed Kory and Harley.

So with Yee the only car ahead of us Guy raced towards the end. Midway through his run he passed Yee down and out: *WE WERE LEADING THE BAJA 1000!*

Guy just started cruising to the finish.

We were all at the finish line at 0400 when Guy radioed to us and said he just turned off the highway and was headed for town. Then what seemed like seconds but was really minutes later he called and said the trans had jammed in two gears and the car would not move.

So after having the perfect race (no flats, no dinged wheels, no unexpected pit stops, no driving errors) and leading the race that all off-road racers want to win, we made it within miles of The Dream!

### CLASS 11

Some things you hope for; some things you believe in, and I believe in Class 11. But for the first time, in a long time, none of rth “Elevens” compelted the 1000! The four entries were a Who’s Who of “Onces”: Solorzano, Flores y Mexia, Sarabia, and Ruiz. Flores passed the Guayaquil BFG Pit 3. Ands that’s that.

### CLASS 1200

The Jim Greenway/Ty Goode car came into the Checker pit before the silt beds on three wheels: “You’re doomed,” he was told. His chase crew was down south and would backtrack, meeting the car at the highway ... after the silt beds. It was never ever seen again. Bad decision?

“El Tiburon” aka Omar Dipp Nuñez:

I was pitting for Gus Vildosola (#4), Brian Ickler with Vildosola, Jr., and Arturo Honold – El Abogado de las Arenas -- at RM570, off Puertocitos road. The only guys that went

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by while it was still daylight were Campbell and Blais; then some quads and a couple more bikes. Miller went by hauling a\$\$\$. Gus Vildosola came into the pit twelve minutes behind and we did a two-minute pit: two rears, gas and Willie took a leak. Herbst went by five minutes back. Honold came in with a forty-five minute lead over Ickler, who had some shifter problems that the McMillins helped him out.

When Arturo got in for gas and a driver change, they reported some trouble with the headers. We noticed a cracked tube. We went to the Mag 7 pit in front of us, where a close friend was helping. He started welding and made a huge hole in the pipe; Jose Paramo took over the welding, finished, got the car started. El Abogado's engine kept running well, but he later broke a CV and got a flat; he was leading by forty-five minutes at Puertocitos, lost twenty minutes on the weld, and that's where Gus, Jr. passed him in Ickler's car.

Shows how a pit can make, or break a race, especially a long one like the 1000. A great experience; I will never miss it again. I love racing, but chasing for a good team is not too shabby.

Ken Tapert #1011:

Kenny Freeman got pulled over for passing on the highway. He said the car in front pulled over for him but the cop didn't care and took his co-drivers (?) drivers license and told them to pick it up at the police station after the race. Lost the rear section of the roof with both antennas going with it. I jumped in the car at the RM319 as they replaced a broken light and duct-taped an antenna to the frame. Got to the silt beds and we were doing well until one trail led to a huge ditch. Stopped the car with the left front tire hanging in space. That's when we found out we had no reverse.

I had to get out and lift the front of the car out while trying to push it backwards. Got it out. Came over a ridge after the fish camp and saw cars wandering around. Scott was wondering what was going on and I told him they were all lost. I watched the course markings really well and we made it through. Looked in the mirror and they were all following us!

Five miles before hitting the pavement, the tranny locked up in third gear. Stopped at the pit before Catavina and got some 'good advice': 'Keep hitting the shifter', duh. Been trying that since it got stuck!

We drove to the Chapala pit in third gear because the guy that built it was there. He pulled the nose off the tranny and found that the 'hockey stick' had pulled out from the shift forks. Got that fixed and took off.

Didn't see another Checker pit until Puertocitos -- wasn't there supposed to be one above Coco's Corner? Tried calling on the radio but I think they were sleeping. Passed the pit at Puertocitos and told them everything was good, then at the checkpoint not even a half-mile further the hook on the clutch pedal broke, and we were blocking the checkpoint.

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We put it in gear and hit the starter; it got us past the check. Tried to fix the pedal but it didn't work. Put it in gear and hit the starter, started it, 'cause we don't need no stinkin' clutch pedal.

Drove it that way to San Flip to the driver swap. They worked on the clutch for a while and finally got irritate, so Tommy Bradley drove the same way: "Just don't stop for nothin'!" Finally got to Valley T, refueled at the Checker pit, bolted the roof on, then watched the car go up the Goat Trail.

While they were going through that section the came up to a dickhead chase truck stuck on the course and stalled the motor. They were facing downhill and needed someone to pull them backwards to get out. Someone threw the tow strap into the back of the car where it wrapped around the axle and took out the brake line on the right side. Then when they hit the asphalt the oil light came on. Checked the motor and saw where the metal hook from the tow strap had beaten the shit out of the valve cover.

Grabbed a valve cover and took the old one off and said 'Oh, shit!' 'cause there was a huge hole in the head. So McGyvered the thing with a shop towel, a lot of duct tape, and sent them on their way with lots of oil. Met Freeman at Ojos and tried to make a better band-aid. The first band-aid only leaked three quarts in forty miles. The second didn't make it five before the oil light came on.

They made it to the highway where we put another on band-aid like the first one and sent them to the finish – yee haw. Ended up fifth in Class 10, 102nd overall in a four-seat, air-cooled prerunner with two spares in the back seats."

Skippy Kontilis #1208:

"Had two flats at RM76, loose wheel bearing at 110, greased and sent out. Worked on wheel bearing again at RM204 and changed it at RM330. Got hung up in the canyon before the hill for a few hours and had continued wheel bearing problems. Gave up because of time; caught hell for that one. We had a good team and car, too many gremlins."

Red Burgin/Andy Kisner got 'slammed' 2wice ... first a truck and second time was Heger's "Cal Worthington" Five car. McCallum had the proper Timken gadgets to repair the damaged inner King Kong Fod/fixture that was most likely stressed tested earlier in the day, hence the two flats. Front-end repairs were performed by BFG Pit 3 at 2130 hours.

"Gordo" Teeny Tommy Brown assumed command of the Burgin flyer. "Oops ... should have tried the car on for size ... length not width. Needed binoculars to find the pedals and steering wheel. Those Letner kids must all be 6'-4" or better. Took rookie Del Skinner out right into those famous silt beds and rock piles, aka, SCORE Parking Lot. The internet said they bypassed the silt beds ... oh well. We got through well enough;



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the '800' boys were on hand to relieve us of our only mishap back there. We all took an oath to drink more milk ... calcium you know.

Then we found the big desert party at the rocky uphill. Seems a few kiddies got their tinker toys all bunched up blocking a few of the racers (about forty of us) that took about two-and-a-half hours to get through.

After that little social function we scampered into BFG 4 at 0545 to find the entire group under heavy 'siesta'. 'Skippy', our fearless leader, pulled a triple shift. He was to take the Burgin buggy to Ensenada for a cold beer, only 350 miles away ... via the back roads to San Felipe.

Upon closer inspection, bearing assembly was rearing its ugly head again. So as not to put our chase talents to test later in the day, and knowing the Bearing King of Baja was nowhere in sight, we opted out, called it a day, and broke out the BBQ and commenced a fajita breakfast like no other at 0700 in the BFG parking lot. We may not have finished, but we ate better than anyone out there that morning.

(Locos Mocos challenge that: "Roeseler *claimed* that 'Baja Jones' food was the best he'd had in Baja all week." – Mark "BCG1" Naugle.)

The stories were true ... a bunch of cars/trucks stuck back in there overnight ... like 40-50, easy.

Heger 'nudged'" them somewhere in the upper section.... Red's car needs a little cosmo work to get it back in the pageant...nothing to dramatic.... Red and Andy were fighting off the flat tire demons early on. They did a 'drive- by' at BFG 1: 'Wow! That's a nice big trailer with a BFG steeker on it; what are they doing out here?'

Kirk and Team Burgin are a fun bunch; would go with them anytime. His '12' car has a pretty 'snackie' paint job for a desert racer. Most of us use vinyl steekers; the air brush work was quite 'Motorama' quality. I was actually worried about scratching it, so I avoided contact with all natural and man-made structures as best I could. Haven't got a bill from Chino Valley Custom Auto Body and Paint ... yet.

Jim Dizney, et al, by Mike McClintock #1249:

RM205 - Matias Arjona started last and got the car to Jim Dizney and I in fourth.

We got fuel, the light bar, and a new rear tire (Big nail found its way in).

RM219 – McMillin pit - stopped to fix sticking throttle, oil leak was allowing dirt to cake on cable.

RM219 - Oil leak fixed - very close to being dark

RM223 - Missed our turn into the wash, same turn we missed prerunning (figured it would be light); no time lost

RM?? - Saw Chris Wilson's '8' truck -- broken

RM?? - I got car sick

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RM?? - We got a flat, blew a few corners, had to be helped back onto course. Those Class 7 guys aren't too bad.

RM270 – All Ways crew there with new spare; missed them; Oh, well

RM280 - Heavy fog, slowed to twenty mph

RM290 - Bill Thompson got a great photo

RM305 - Pavement - I got out and Jim and his new passenger continued

Shortly after hitting the beach Jim fell victim to the silt beds and spent all night there along with a lot of others. They lost reverse trying to get out and the shrapnel from that locked up the tranny. Jim was towed out at 1500 Saturday by a checkpoint worker. My day quit being fun when I got sick; Jim's joy lasted twenty-four hours.”

### STOCK FULL

The Halls:

We throw everything we have at the 1000, just as we do at the last race of the year, if we are running for the points! It is almost as important as a points title, because it's the only race, which, like a points title, our sponsors can use in their advertisements all year! This year we are going for three in a row in the H1 and we will win or break in the effort.

Well, OK, the H1 of Chad and Josh Hall took first by about four hours. “We had no flats and no problems. It was one of those rare moments when everything went right all day.” In fact, Chad and Josh beat the winning “8” truck, the brother of Marc Stein, rival-of-rivals!

The H2, under the steady control of Rod Hall and Mike Winkel, finished third after sucking a ball joint off an upper control arm ninety miles into the race. “We were down for twenty-five minutes for repairs. Other than that, we had no troubles but just cruised around for the finish at 0300 on Saturday.” Thompson did not say, but should have, that the expertise of cRal-Mike Perez, of the Mesa (AZ) GM Proving Ground, proved to be a major factor in the H2's success in the Baja.

We have discussed a fix and will implement it before the rocky hell of the Las Vegas 250. Early H2s did not have enough ‘crush’ on the ball joint. We will tighten the press fit of the ball joint and this should not cause us problems. This truck certainly seems like it is going to be reliable once we get the little issues sorted out.

It was a good day for Team HUMMER, which we needed after a mediocre year. This makes three Baja 1000 ‘Stock-Full’ wins in a row for the H1, which has probably seen it's final Baja 1000 race. We are building a new H1 with the Duramax and Allison combination and hope to introduce the new H1 and the new H3 at next year's Baja 1000.

Nothing ever stays the same for long in racing.

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I had a TV photographer with me all day and a few miles after he got into the car, told me he was recovering from a bad cold. Now I have it. I guess I took one for the team ... gloom.

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Marc Stein #863:

With Ace Motorsports winning every race it had entered this season the team looked forward to closing out our last two races by winning every race this year. The team had the mixture for success at the 36th running of this legendary off-road race.

The vehicle of choice was the ACE Motorsports '02 Ford Expedition. Driving duties were split between Marc Stein, Mark Handley, and Travis Walser.

The class had five Hummers and another Ford Expedition; we tangled with the leaders were ahead of the pack by RM60; we started in fifth place. We had our share of unluck' early as a primary front shock seized and our team put together a half-broken frame at RM90, Valley of the "T". We battled our way back to second by RM205, where I turned the truck over to Mark at 1730.

“San Mark-os” Handley handled the driving from 205 to 305, keeping the SUV in place while keeping his cool, and the undercarriage, in working order -- the body and lights told of some damage as the cows went a-running.

I took over at RM300 and plowed through the silt beds. Pat Sharp and I ran the section using GPS as our primary guidance through this section from 2145 to 0430 (!).

At San Felipe, I had the truck twenty minutes behind the Hummer of Chad Hall. A chase truck was stuck across the course with a trailer and our 4WD drive was broken. As Travis rounded the corner he landed on a buggy and it put us out of the race for two-and-a-half hours until the mess was untangled.

The Expedition ran flawlessly (other than the “broken” 4WD, half-broken frame, and shock woes ... Ed.) when bad luck struck, again, not far after RM700. A chase vehicle blocked the course. After being stuck, the truck was running fast when the wheel studs sheared. Quick repairs got the truck up and running again, but by this time first place was lost and it was time to preserve second.

STOCK MINI

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Kreg Donahoe drove the Tacoma to the race and hoped to drive it home. He had journalists from 4-Wheeler, and Racer magazine riding with he and Dylan Evans to promote his Tacoma and Tundra suspension. The truck did well until a rear wheel bearing failed causing the rear axle to fail around RM300. They bent a tie rod near El Coyote. It was removed, straightened, and they went on. Nothing Kreg built failed. The Tacoma was brand new and totally stock except for safety equipment and shocks.

### SPORTMAN TRUCK

The Sporty Truck ranks had only one finisher out of four: Dour Doug Granger and Richard Czerlau, #1501, from Dorchester, Ontario, Canada, ay? “This is the only race we race,” the crew said. “No deserts in Ontario, ay!” Last year, on the run to La Paz, over-exuberance overcame ability and they flipped the Steve Mizel-like square-tube-framed 4WD Jeep “Scrambler” on the wide open spaces south of LA Bay.

Tuner Tip: In addition to GPS, Weatherman, etc., they have a trucker’s satellite link, which used a hardened not-so-smart keyboard-only terminal to send e-mails from the field! The Wescor system is surprisingly light and clips into the console. FedEx and UPS use these. They can communicate with identical units in all the chase vehicles. Never a blind spot!

This year they were far more successful, getting the 401 cid AMC V8 home in 122<sup>th</sup> OA. “We had a Hummer pass us, in the air, I guess. It crumpled our top and part of the rear fender, but that’s it.” They gave a lot of credit to the Holley throttle body injector that replaced the old Holley four-barrel: “The support tech gave us unprecedented support getting it set up” ... and it doesn’t stumble in the whoops.

The Mark Floyd Hummer #1502 was reported being hauled north on two (2) trailers. Not a good sign. Ivan Loomis took 6:22 to get 102.78 miles. Ivan is “famous” for entering that yellow exoskeletoned Toyota Tercel at Laughlin AND Henderson!

### MANXSTER

Dave Dietrich – The Battling Barrister of Baja #1976:

“Bruce Myers started the race with myself sitting shotgun. It was obvious that there was a transmission problem that cropped up immediately. Within several miles, the transmission was losing 1st and 2nd gear. We made it the first road crossing and I took over driving chores. I became immediately aware that there was no feeling of a detent between 1st and 2nd. It felt like sloppy mush. I drove the car to BFG1, pretty much in 3rd and 4th all the way.

One in a while I could find 2nd, but it was hit or miss. Bruce and I passed a goodly amount of cars; the Manxter was extremely stable and the ride was very cushy. You really had to work to get the car to bottom. It is obvious that the Manxter would outclass 5-1600 cars, as we passed the slower cars in that class without effort.

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I had one 5-1600 that refused to let us by. We followed him for well over a mile, less than about two feet behind. That long, I had no choice but to not-so-gently let him know that we were done with the rolling road block. The result was a crushed center Lightforce light, lots of bumps, scrapes, and paint on the front bumper of the Manxter. I turned the car over to Gnarly Dave Collier (The man who made Ed Fries famous!) at BFG1, just above the goat trail. I had passed lots of cars. The Manxter was very capable of comfortably picking off car after car.

Gnarly Dave continued to have the same gearbox trouble. During his run he came upon an Open car and a 9 car that were heading straight at him, backwards on the race course. Naturally, that caused some concern for Gnarly. He looked at the GPS to make sure that HE was not traveling backward on the course. While leaned over, the car dropped a wheel off a ledge and the Manxter tumbled over twice into a ravine. He was able to get the car righted, but the new Lightforce HIDs did not survive the trip. At the end of his run, Gnarly reported total exhaustion. He was spent.

Gnarly turned over the car to Rafael Navarro, Jr. Rafael reported the same nasty transmission, plus oil everywhere out of the engine. The plan was to change the transmission in San Felipe, however Rafael spent a considerable amount of time in the silt beds. He said they looked like used car lots, with high-dollar, high-horsepower machinery lying about everywhere.

He was able to get out with the help of a 7 truck and turned the car over to Dyno Dean Watkins and Mean Dean Moore at Puertocitos. Dean<sup>2</sup> made it to Trinidad, where the engine literally hand grenaded. There were rods, bearings, cap bolts, and everything else littering the rear skid plate!

A transmission had already been brought up from San Felipe and plans were made to bring up a spare engine as well. However, a quick calculation demonstrated that time would run out minutes before the deed could be accomplished. (It really was academic, because you cannot change an engine under SCORE rules, in any event. Just ask the Myers'!)

We announced our retirement from the race at the Goat Trail. The Manxter proved its worth in that not one of the modifications that we had made to the car failed. The Fox Shox and Eibach springs were perfect: many thanks to John Marking for all of his help in setting up the shocks. We did not make any changes to his set up.

Thanks to Lightforce Lights. Because of their generous support, we had extra lights, bulbs, etc. to sustain us during the race. We gave the lights a beating, having nerfed cars with them and rolled over on them, but we still had lights in the morning!

If it had been a 'Baja 600' we would have finished with ease! A survey of the car reveals that it needs more lights, a new roof, a new engine, and a new transmission. For whatever reason, when the engine suffered its spectacular end the transmission seized up solid.

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Overall, we performed well. The only parts of the car that failed were those parts that we did not disassemble and survey, having relied upon professional tranny and engine builders. I suggest that we engage Rick St. John to build us a 'Power Box' and immediately seek a sponsor for the engine. Believe it or not, there is not a single dent in the Robby Gordon wheels.

Well, thaaats all for now, folks.”

### WOB CHALLENGE

The Baja Challenge cars had eight finishers out of eleven starters, an admirable percentage, considering. Considering how these guys (and gals) hammer the gearboxes ... reverse is particularly sensitive to left feet.

Bekki Freeman #1810/BC8:

“I started the race and went to RM220. Of course, when I got out I was leading on time (snicker). Amy Thomas got in and drove to RM330 with clutch problems; the transmission was leaking onto the clutch, causing it to slip. They decided to change the trans; it took them over three hours. Sue Mead drove into the silt section and got stuck, as did all the Baja Challenge cars.

From there I don't know because I was with Adam, however, I heard that Kelly Steinberger broke a front spindle and was driving without a front tire for a while. We finished seventh and it took thirty-two hours.

Adam is doing great. He was in BJ Baldwin Trophy-Truck #97 going over Zoo Road when a Mexican spectator threw a rock in the front window and clobbered Adam in the chin/neck area. The impact pushed his jawbone into the ear canal, causing his ear to fill with blood. We did not know this and that is what scared us so. His chin was cut open from side to side, thirty stitches inside, one continuous outside, and a few under his bottom lip.

We have gone to all the specialists and had a Cat scan done and he is okay. The oral surgeon does not want to wire his mouth shut; however, there may be some bleeding under the tissue so he is going to keep an eye on Adam. We are lucky, he is fine, but very sore. I'm glad to be home! I'll be in Laughlin racing ... something; I'll see you there!”

If Mr. Rod Millen is such a seasoned and experienced veteran of 30+ years of driving in many more styles of automobiles and racing, then why did Bekki pass his ass! Rod was so bent that he got worked by a chick that he had the Centrex team hold Bekki when they came in for gas so he could go out in front of her.

EL CHISMOSO

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### LAST BLAST FROM THE PASSED

153th OA, #561, Ruben Gutierrez Jr. was the final entry into the ballpark after 31:53:44 = 25.332 mph. They are ALWAYS the last, roger that?

### HOOLIGANISM

Ronny Wilson had a gallon of gas thrown at him. (Hell, that's worth \$2.50 at the Valley T vendor by the beer store! -- Ed.) It hit him so hard in the face that it broke his visor and he was covered in fuel. Ronny said that it was the first time he has seen people in the crowds holding signs that said "No more Baja 1000".

Tom Willis @ The Finish Line: "We removed fifty feet of barbed wire from the Wilson '1' car early Saturday morning. Apparently it was thrown on them near the finish."

### CANARY

Ryan Arciero (#81) has invited to race in the Centrix ROC America Challenge Race of Champions in the Canary Islands, off the coast of Spain. (The Canary Islands were named after the large dogs that were found there – Canine = Dog). The top WRC drivers are invited; Robbie Gordon, Jeff Gordon, and Jimmie Johnson have done this before. This year the US sends including Casey Mears, Boris Said, and sometimes-motocrosser Travis Pastrana.

Arciero will be racing a single-seat car, powered by a 170 hp, 1100 cc, Honda CBR motorcycle engine. "We were impressed with Ryan's performance at the '1000' this year," said Centrix Financial CEO, Robert E. Sutton. Note: Sutton won the Wide Open Baja Challenge class at 72<sup>nd</sup> OA (including the bikes and quads).

### AC CAPERS

The Hunters crashed their plane Tuesday afternoon on the way back from prerunning the lower section of the course. Corey Kausch was seriously injured, happily with repairable back injuries. They were coming in to Ensenada to land. The plane ran out of gas and they just barely cleared a mountain ridge by feet and crashed in a carrot field. The field had been watered heavily and they ended up sliding to a stop, which probably saved their life. The impact cleaned off the 172's landing gear. The local papers front-page-photo-ed it, terming it "milagroso", miraculous.

### SHORT COURSE COMMENT

Mark "BCG1" Naugle:

"Our 'Locos Mocos' loncheria/pit location at RM365 was right where the course turned south (left) at the beach at Punta Canoas (Canoe Point!); that's a 90-degree turn that, two hundred yards later, dropped racers into an 'interesting' silt bed. From the back of the pit, we could look over the entire area and see racers trying to find their way through the

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silt. Big fun. ‘Gadget’ made a dozen trips out there pulling four every time out with the Gadget-Jones Bronco. Notable tow-ees included Robby Gordon, #31, (He was tagged with a ‘Locos Mocos’ sticker. Our guys, in a 2WD Toyota, pulled Robby out after he got stuck in the silt and a ditch on the outside of a corner that he overshot at speed. I got it on film, of course.), John Marking (#114), Joe Heger (#502), Jeff Dickerson (#223), the Nikal #553, and James Golden (#1619).

As we sat in the pit more than a half-dozen racers decided to cut this turn by several hundred yards just to shorten the course a little. These folks probably did some prerunning and said ‘Hey, I can shave a few seconds by cutting this corner’. They probably said this during daylight hours and did a sample run to get a GPS track of the short cut.

What they didn't figger on was that Mag 7 would set up a pit two hundred yards east of us and right where the GPS told them to turn for the short cut. They also didn't figger it was going to be dark and the return to the ‘approved’ race course would be in a brand-new silt bed.

So here we have these folks basically lost in a twenty-acre basin and they are trying to find the right way to go and they see the lights of several other racers turned mostly the wrong way trying to extract themselves from the silt. And with the GPS showing the direction they were going one second ago, that wasn't much help either.

None of the ‘corner cutters’ saved any time at all, including Curt LeDuc and Bruce Chernoff (BC7). Most lost time compared to following the marked route. Later, LeDuc's T-T met with a large rock.

### QUIT INSECTING ME

*The Black Rain Beetle (Pleocomma puncticollis – a Scarab) may be found in coastal sage scrub and chaparral areas, south into Baja California, Mexico.*

There was an infestation of these things, of Biblical proportions, at the Puertocitos pit area. Apocalypse Now! The ground was covered with them, as were your legs, shoulders, and hair! At least they did not sting nor bite – they just wanted to breed. I found one in my fire suit – back in the hotel room.

*After a slow soaking rain — one or more inches — male Rain Beetles make a sudden and **abundant** appearance. At dusk, in the early morning, or on cloudy, drizzly days, the males fly in slow sweeping arcs through the foothills and mountainous areas, keeping low to the ground, searching for flightless females.*

LOCOS MOCOS 2003 BAJA 1000 MENU



**2003 TECATE SCORE INTERNATIONAL BAJA 1000**

- Thursday: Happy Hour - Chips and salsa with guacamole and please bring your favorite finger foods to share. Charcoal, cooking or heating facilities will be available for hot appetizers. BYOB
- Thursday Dinner: Marinated USDA Choice tri-tip roast al carbon, served Mexican style with rice, beans, & salad. There will be a possible surf n turf option with local lobster based on availability (extra charge for actual cost of lobster).
- Race Day Breakfast: Grilled pork chops with eggs made to order and Extreme Specked Taters.
- Race Day Lunch: Smokey Jones' made-to-order giant deli sandwiches, with all the trimmings. No one goes hungry!
- Race Day Dinner: Mixed sausage grill served in tortillas with grilled veggies and your choice of mustards and side dishes.
- Saturday Breakfast: Desert Mush - all the leftovers in scrambled eggs.
- Saturday Lunch: For those still there or to go
- Saturday Dinner: Rancho Santa Inez, based on attendance.
- The meal ticket includes bottled water and ice cubes -- bring your own drinks.
- Cost will be \$40.00 per person.

**BFG PITS**

BFG Pit #1 - Jamau Outbound	RM103
BFG Pit #2 - Santo Domingo	RM204
BFG Pit #3 - Guayaquil	RM324
BFG Pit #4 - Catavina	RM441
BFG Pit #5 - Puertocitos	RM578
BFG Pit #6 - Jamau Inbound	RM707

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