



1976 Women's Motocross Championship

June 27, 1976

Indian Dunes Raceway – Valencia, CA





Southern belle Pat Jacques was cookin' but not up to par.



(Above) Kathy Brobeck, 1976 Women's Intermediate Champion. (Below) The Champ, Sue Fish, takes a break in the action but didn't give anyone else one.



FISH

125-250 & Overall Ch teaches school at IWM

By Debbie Wilkins

VALENCIA, CAL., JUNE 27

Sue 'Flyin' Fish claimed the long overdue title as 1976 Grand National Women's Motocross Champion at the third annual

Women's National. The IWMA (International Womens MC Association; formerly PURR) event was held on the Shadow Glen track at Indian Dunes. Nearly 100 women from as far away as New York, Florida, and Washington state were on hand, all with their eyes set on earning the coveted Number One plate. Each year more new faces show up at the all women events throughout the country. They've worked hard to earn recognition for their ability to ride and are dedicated to the sport. This year the pits swarmed with press people. It was like a photography class field trip as all the shutters clicked around the pretty dust covered faces of women competitors. This was *the* race everyone had worked so hard all year long to be ready for.

The schedule of events got underway shortly after 10:00 a.m. and the temperature had already reached 85 degrees. The 125 Novices led the program off racing 20 minute motos. The ladies were required to ride qualifying heats due to the large entries in the Novice class. Following the Novices the 125 Intermediates got their 25 minute motos underway leading into the feature race of the day, the 125 Experts. To qualify for the overall victory, the Experts must ride the 125 and 250 class requiring top physical and mental condition. They rode 30 minute motos which is very demanding in high temperatures.

Nearly 25 Experts came roaring off the line and into the first turn. Sue Fish stalled her YZ monoshock and was dead last getting it going. She rode fast and smooth passing riders with style and poise. Before long she had worked her way to the front of the pack and obtained a 25 second lead, leaving the spectators in awe. In the meantime, a little further back Pat Jacques, from Columbia, South Carolina, making her debut on the Southern California track, worked up into second behind Sue. Could this mean the East (South at that) versus the West?

The 250 Novice, Granny and Intermediate classes followed the 125 Experts.

After a refreshing pause, the 250

minutes into the race the ladies were red flagged because of an accident and Kim LaVigne was transported via ambulance to the hospital. This posed a not so refreshing pause because we had to wait for the ambulance to return. Temperatures were soaring to the 100 degree mark as spectators and riders alike voiced complaints.

The 250 Experts were restarted and the Fish/Jacques duo again ran away with the show. Sue took a spill as Pat exhibited her excellent ability to manhandle her RM 250 Suzuki around the tight course. Pat held a 25 second lead but Sue was working hard to catch up. Johanna Stenerson, in third, was doing the same. It looked as though Pat had cinched it but she slid out in a turn allowing Sue the ease of making up valuable time. Sue did not pass Pat until further on around the course, allowing Pat to take second and Johanna third.

The halfway point of the day featured a sidehack race debuting the very first women's sidehack team, Cindy and Lisa Monohan from San Diego. They didn't beat the guys, but they sure added some spice to the race!

The schedule repeated itself with the excitement again falling in the Expert heats. The second heat of the 125 Experts was to be a different tune. Johanna Stenerson got the holeshot and held the lead for the entire 30 minute race. With much style again Sue played catch up, after throwing a chain, but didn't make it. It left her with only two out of three motos to her credit. Not too shabby. During the battle, there was still another race going on for third and fourth between Linda Barnes of Texas and Donna Hearn of Tennessee. The California heat was getting to Donna and her performance didn't seem to be up to par with her past performances in the Eastern women's races or her last year's national. Barbara Spellman, Joann Miley and Cherry Stockton finished consecutively behind Barnes. Cherry was recovering from ligament surgery in her thumb. The 'first lady of the mint' exhibited her determination by hanging in there.

The final moto of the day got underway. Linda Barnes' bright green Kawasaki was the first to pop out of the first turn. Sue Fish was battling it out,

mp National

and Carla Swing, from New York, experiencing their own battle. Sue flawlessly worked her way around Linda to clinch the lead while spectators cheered her on to victory. Pat lost her brakes, going down in the process, and was unable to make up lost time. Carla also lost her front brake and saw Joann Miley and Cherry Stockton work themselves into third and fourth positions.

A protest was filed by Pat Jacques on Sue Fish's 175 monoshock. This caused a small amount of controversy. Sue's Crown Cycle monoshock was impounded and torn apart. For an event as important as this to Sue, she wouldn't take a chance on running an illegal bike. And for Pat to drive 3,000 miles for a race, she too didn't want to take any chances. The bike was declared legal by Butch Lee, the District 38 Motocross Referee.

Pat explained, "It wasn't Sue I was protesting. I had to get everyone's attention to point out that the rules should not allow a 175 to compete with 250s on a tight course."

Debbie Evans, Southern California's wonder woman, exhibited her talents by performing her balancing routine, which consist of Debbie standing on her head (without the kickstand) on her trials bike.

The program concluded with the distribution of many contingency donations. The three major donators were U.S. Suzuki, Mikuni and Electro Helmets.

Kathy Brobeck was awarded the National Intermediate Champion title, receiving lots of glory, prizes and a TM 75 Suzuki, from the company of the same name.

Sue Fish was crowned Grand National Champ, receiving a kiss from Billy Gray, actor and speedway star, lots of money, lots of prizes, a RM 125 Suzuki and much glory.

It's hard to narrow it down. Each participant worked hard. Hopefully each girl should receive some special recognition. Sue Fish has earned the respect of her female riders and the self satisfaction of holding the Grand National Champion title.

Terry Kezar, the 1975 Grand National Champion, was not present to defend her title. She currently has a contract with a promoter in Arizona jumping cars. The contract forbids her to ride motocross. ●

Results
GRAND NATIONAL CHAMPION
OVERALL: 1. Sue Fish, 2. Johanna Stenerson, 3. Joann Miley, 4. Linda Barnes, 5. Donna Nearn, 6. Trudy Beck, 8. Lisa Howard, 9. Pat Jacques, 9. Cherry Stockton, 10. Kit Pratt.
INTERMEDIATE OVERALL: 1. Kathy Brobeck, 2. Charleen Higgins, 3. Carey Steiner, 4. Debbie Lutz.
 Rest of results to be announced on results

PHOTO BY DALE BROWN & DEBBIE WILKINS



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