

Supercross MTEG Bankruptcy Fraud Summary

1. It is widely acknowledged in the media that Michael Goodwin is the “Father of Supercross”. He founded it in 1972 at the Los Angeles Coliseum. He owned and nurtured the largest Supercross events for fifteen formative years (see the Genesis article attached).
2. In 1986, Goodwin filed bankruptcy, case numbers SA-86-06166-JR and SA-86-05280-JR.
3. Rights to Goodwin's Supercross events were illegally taken from his bankruptcy by the Mickey Thompson Entertainment Group, Inc. (MTEG) in 1988 (headed by Collene Campbell), with no notice or payment to the court. There were no abandonment or transfer procedures done as are required by bankruptcy law. This is criminal bankruptcy fraud. This alone leaves the ownership of Goodwin's ex-Supercross events in Goodwin's hands.
4. MTEG filed for bankruptcy seven years later and did not list the multi-million dollar Supercross contracts on their bankruptcy schedules. That is criminal bankruptcy fraud.
5. Goodwin's Supercross events were then sold under the table by MTEG principles to Pace Management. Pace Management later packaged those events and other assets with their Supercross events (which were considerably smaller) and sold them to SFX for \$130 million. SFX later sold them to Clear Channel who later sold them to Feld, the current owners.
6. Goodwin learned of the fraud and sued MTEG for the fraud of not listing the Supercross events on their bankruptcy schedules. He posted a \$45,000 good faith deposit, but because of recommendations by the trustee, who we believe was on the take from MTEG, the lower court ruled against Goodwin.
7. On April 9, 2003, the United States Bankruptcy Appellate Panel of the Ninth Circuit reversed the lower court order re: the Mickey Thompson Entertainment Group Chapter 7 bankruptcy case, 95-13628, and ruled for Goodwin (attached). The ruling is on pages three and seven.
8. This decision makes Michael Goodwin the legal owner of the majority of the Supercross events that are being promoted today. The estimated net earnings of Supercross events today is between \$6-10 million per year. Anaheim Stadium may net \$3-4 million.
9. Michael Goodwin was never notified of this court decision by his attorney and was in fact told that he had “lost” the case and that it had been “dismissed”.


10. Nonetheless, Goodwin notified the subsequent “owners” of Supercross in writing that the title to his ex-Supercross events was clouded. We have these letters.
11. In April, 2014, Michael Goodwin learned of the decision for him in a court document that was posted online at: <https://www.courtlistener.com/bap9/8Qc2/in-re-mickey-thompson-entertainment-group-inc>
12. There are many levels of felony bankruptcy fraud involved in this case committed by the bankruptcy trustee, his attorneys and the principles of MTEG. Evidence of these frauds is available.
13. Any statute of limitations should not be a problem because of the level of frauds committed by all parties (trustee and his attorneys).
14. Just compensatory damages to be awarded to Michael Goodwin should be \$25 million or more, based on the value of the ex-MTEG Supercross events per resale values.
15. We expect Michael Goodwin to be released from Donovan State Prison in San Diego, CA, in several months, based on the strength of his appeal in 16 issues, several of which denied due process (472 pages). He was wrongfully convicted in 2007 of conspiracy in the 1988 double murders of Mickey and Trudy Thompson (no evidence was ever presented in court linking him to the murders). His appeal brief can be found here: http://occopytech.com/images/B197574_AOB_Goodwin.pdf, the State's response can be found here: <http://occopytech.com/images/08-26-2013-GOODWINrespondentsBRIEF.pdf>, and his appeal attorney's response (323 pages) can be found here: http://occopytech.com/images/B197574_ARB_Goodwin.pdf
16. Information on the Goodwin case can be found online: <http://friendsofmichaelgoodwin.blogspot.com>
17. This Supercross fraud by MTEG is a small part of a greater pension and bankruptcy fraud case that we are presently summarizing.
18. More information on the case is available through John Bradley: 530-320-2590 (mobile) or email: John@JohnBradley.com.

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- [In Re Moore, 608 F.3d 253 \(5th Cir. 2010\)](#)
- [In Re Lahijani, 325 B.R. 282 \(9th Cir. BAP 2005\)](#)
- [In Re Rake, 363 B.R. 146 \(Bankr. D. Idaho 2007\)](#)
- [In Re Dennett, 449 B.R. 139 \(Bankr. D. Utah 2011\)](#)
- [Suter v. Goedert, 396 B.R. 535 \(D. Nev. 2008\)](#)

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Authorities (10)

This opinion cites:

- [In Re a & C Properties, Debtors. William W. Martin, ...](#)
- [In Re Guy F. Atkinson Co. of California, 242 B.R. ...](#)
- [In Re John C. Martin Sally A. Martin, Debtors. Jo ...](#)
- [In Re Menk, 241 B.R. 896 \(9th Cir. BAP 1999\)](#)
- [In Re MGS Marketing, 111 B.R. 264 \(9th Cir. BAP 1990\)](#)

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In Re Mickey Thompson Entertainment Group, Inc., 292

B.R. 415 (9th Cir. BAP 2003)

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United States Bankruptcy Appellate Panel for the Ninth Circuit

Date Filed: April 9th, 2003

Status: Precedential

Citations: 292 B.R. 415

Docket Number: BAP No. CC-02-1421-MoKMa. Bankruptcy No. SA 95-13628-JR

Judges: Montali, Klein and Marlar, Bankruptcy Judges

Fingerprint: 23eb540e0d346bf0d77109030abf7134e734b5f5

292 B.R. 415 (2003)

**In re MICKEY THOMPSON ENTERTAINMENT GROUP,
INC., Debtor.**

Michael Goodwin, Appellant,

v.

**Mickey Thompson Entertainment Group, Inc.; Thomas M.
Casey, Chapter 7 Trustee; United States Trustee; SFX
Motor Sports, Inc.; SFX Entertainment, Inc.; Clear Channel
Communications, Inc.; Madison Square Garden, Inc.; and
Danny Thompson, Appellees.**

BAP No. CC-02-1421-MoKMa. Bankruptcy No. SA 95-13628-JR.

United States Bankruptcy Appellate Panel of the Ninth Circuit.

Argued and Submitted February 21, 2003.

Filed April 9, 2003.

*416 *417 Robert P. Goe, Goe & Forsythe, LLP, Newport Beach, CA, for Michael Goodwin.

Reem J. Bello, Albert, Weiland & Golden, LLP, Costa Mesa, CA, for Thomas M. Casey, Ch. 7 Trustee.

Craig A. Barbarosh, Pillsbury Winthrop, LLP, Costa Mesa, CA, for SFX Motor Sports, Inc., SFX Entertainment, Inc., Clear Channel Communications.

Before MONTALI, KLEIN and MARLAR, Bankruptcy Judges.

OPINION

MONTALI, Bankruptcy Judge.

A Chapter 7^[1] trustee sought approval of a compromise between the bankruptcy estate and certain parties against whom the estate held potential fraudulent transfer claims. A creditor opposed the compromise and a third party offered to purchase the claims for an amount higher than the settlement offer. In response, the trustee changed his strategy, treating his intended action as it really was: a sale of an asset of the bankruptcy estate. At the hearing, however, he renounced that strategy and sought approval of what he once again maintained was a compromise of a controversy. The bankruptcy court agreed with the trustee and approved the compromise. The objecting parties appealed. We REVERSE.

***418 I. FACTS**

Mickey Thompson Entertainment Group, Inc. ("Debtor") filed its Chapter 7 bankruptcy case on April 10, 1995. Thomas H. Casey was appointed Chapter 7 trustee ("Trustee") on April 21, 1995. The case was closed as a "no-asset" case on February 13, 1998.

After Trustee was informed by creditor Michael Goodwin ("Appellant") that certain assets consisting of contract rights to conduct Motorcross Events^[2] may have been omitted from Debtor's schedules and may have been used by Debtor and other entities without remitting proceeds to the estate, he filed a motion to reopen the case in order to conduct discovery, to investigate the potential claims, and to pursue litigation if necessary. On February 1, 2002, the bankruptcy court reopened the case.

After conducting an investigation, Trustee concluded that the evidence gathered by him was "somewhat equivocal." The Trustee cited "suspicious circumstances" surrounding use of the estate's contract rights but stated that he believed that there would be risk and delay in commencing litigation.

In light of this risk and delay, Trustee negotiated a settlement with Danny Thompson, SFX Motor Sports, Inc. dba Clear Channel Entertainment Motor Sports (formerly PACE Motor Sports, Inc.), SFX Entertainment, Inc. dba Clear Channel Entertainment, Clear Channel Communications, Inc., and Madison Square Garden (collectively, the "Settling Parties"). Settling Parties and Trustee entered into a settlement agreement (the "Agreement") whereby the Settling Parties agreed to pay \$40,000 to settle all disputed claims. The Agreement recited the potential claims held by Trustee and the estate against Settling Parties, but did not recite any claims which the Settling Parties may have held against Trustee.^[3] The Agreement further provided that it was subject to Court approval and not binding upon or enforceable until an order approving the Agreement was entered.^[4]

On June 7, 2002, Trustee filed a motion for order approving the compromise (the "Motion")

between him and the Settling Parties. On June 28, 2002, Appellant filed an opposition to the Motion arguing, *inter alia*, that the settlement amount of \$40,000 was inadequate and that a third party was willing to make an overbid in the amount of \$45,000 to purchase the claims being settled.

In response to Appellant's opposition, Trustee filed a reply on July 2, 2002, which acknowledged that other prospective purchasers might want to purchase the claims. The Trustee asserted in his reply: "If any other parties do in fact seek to purchase the estate's Claims against the Settling *419 Parties for an amount greater than the \$40,000.00 proposed settlement amount, then the Trustee believes *it would be in the best interest of the creditors of the estate to sell the Claims* provided the amount of overbid is received in cash or certified funds in advance of the hearing on the Motion." *Trustee's Reply* at 2 (emphasis added). Trustee further stated that although he believed a compromise with the Settling Parties was appropriate, he was also interested in obtaining the greatest recovery possible.

Trustee then proposed an overbid procedure whereby the first overbid would be in the minimum amount of \$45,000 in certified funds and subsequent overbids would be not less than \$2,500 greater than the last highest aggregate overbid. He required that overbids be presented in the form of cash or cashier's check, made payable to him. In the conclusion of the reply, Trustee requested the court to "enter an order granting the Motion and authorizing the Trustee to enter into the settlement agreement with the Settling Parties. In the alternative, *if there [are] any prospective purchasers of the estate's Claims at the hearing on the Motion, the Trustee requests that the Court authorize the Trustee to conduct an overbid auction at the hearing . . .*" *Id.* at 4 (emphasis added).

The Settling Parties filed their own reply to Appellant's opposition. In it, they argued that the settlement was in the best interests of the estate, that an overbid procedure was inappropriate in the context of a motion to approve a settlement, and that Appellant had not submitted admissible evidence to support his overbid of \$45,000.

On July 9, 2002, the court held a hearing on the Motion. At the beginning of the hearing, Trustee's counsel acknowledged that he had received a cashier's check in the amount of \$45,000 for the claims against the Settling Parties. Nevertheless despite Trustee's position in his reply that he would welcome overbids he stated at the hearing that he still sought approval of the Motion because at the time he entered the Agreement, he believed it was in the estate's best interest.

Counsel for Appellant then stated that in addition to paying \$45,000 for the claims, the third party purchaser would pay the estate fifteen percent of any monies collected on those claims. He also noted that the settlement was essentially a sale of an asset: selling a claim for \$40,000, without the estate receiving anything else of value, such as a release of known and described claims *against* the estate.

After hearing the arguments of the various parties, the court approved the Motion. The court ruled that the proposed \$5,000 overbid was not substantial enough to affect the best interests of creditors and that the evidence of willingness to pursue an auction process with an initial overbid of \$5,000 was not sufficient to warrant substitution of the court's judgment for the business judgment of Trustee. The court did not attempt to evaluate the proposed overbidder's additional offer to pay the estate fifteen percent of any recovery from the Settling Parties.

The bankruptcy court entered its order granting the Motion on July 30, 2002. Appellant filed a timely notice of appeal on August 7, 2002.

II. ISSUE

Did the bankruptcy court abuse its discretion in approving Trustee's settlement with the Settling Parties pursuant to Rule 9019?

*420 III. STANDARD OF REVIEW

The bankruptcy court's decision to approve a compromise is reviewed for abuse of discretion. *Martin v. Kane (In re A & C Props.)*, 784 F.2d 1377, 1380 (9th Cir.), cert. denied, 479 U.S. 854, 107 S.Ct. 189, 93 L.Ed.2d 122 (1986); *CAM/RPC Elecs. v. Robertson (In re MGS Mktg.)*, 111 B.R. 264, 266-67 (9th Cir. BAP 1990).

Under the abuse of discretion standard, we cannot reverse the bankruptcy court's ruling unless we have a definite and firm conviction that the court committed a clear error of judgment in the conclusion it reached upon a weighing of the relevant factors. *Marx v. Loral Corp.*, 87 F.3d 1049, 1054 (9th Cir.1996).

IV. DISCUSSION

A. Trustee's Standing

We question sua sponte Trustee's standing because he does not appear to have been appointed formally as trustee upon the reopening of the case in 2002. As we have previously explained, the closing of a case terminates the services of the case trustee, and the reopening of the case will not lead to the appointment of a trustee unless the court determines that a trustee is necessary. *Menk v. LaPaglia (In re Menk)*, 241 B.R. 896, 913-14 (9th Cir. BAP 1999).

The controlling rule is Rule 5010, which provides that in a reopened chapter 7 case, a "trustee shall not be appointed by the United States trustee unless the court determines that a trustee is necessary to protect the interests of creditors and the debtor or to insure efficient administration of the case." Fed. R. Bankr.P. 5010. While there is no order reappointing Trustee, a trustee is necessary in the circumstances of this case. Moreover, the United States trustee, by virtue of supervising this reopened case for more than one year without raising the issue, has acquiesced in Trustee's service as trustee. We take this to constitute a de facto reappointment by the United States trustee.

Thus, although Trustee initially lacked standing to make the motion to reopen before his de facto reappointment, any standing issue has been waived by silence and by substantial participation by parties who did have standing to seek reopening.

B. Compromise of Controversy

"Although the bankruptcy court has 'great latitude' in authorizing a compromise, it may only approve a proposal that is 'fair and equitable'" to the creditors. *MGS Marketing*, 111 B.R. at

267, quoting *Woodson v. Fireman's Fund Ins. Co. (In re Woodson)*, 839 F.2d 610, 620 (9th Cir.1988). The settlement should be in the best interests of the estate (*MGS Marketing*, 111 B.R. at 266-67) and "reasonable, given the particular circumstances of the case." *A & C Properties*, 784 F.2d at 1381. And while a court generally gives deference to a trustee's business judgment in deciding whether to settle a matter, the trustee "has the burden of persuading the bankruptcy court that the compromise is fair and equitable and should be approved." *Id.*

In determining the "fairness, reasonableness and adequacy" of a proposed compromise (*id.*), a bankruptcy court must consider:

- (a) The probability of success in the litigation; (b) the difficulties, if any to be encountered in the matter of collection; (c) the complexity of the litigation involved, and the expense, inconvenience and delay necessarily attending it; [and] (d) the paramount interest of the creditors and a proper deference to their reasonable views in the premise.

Id.

On this record, Trustee has not met his burden of demonstrating that the compromise is fair and equitable. In particular, *421 he has not shown how the settlement is in "the paramount interest of creditors." Instead, Trustee's own admissions in his reply, coupled with the \$45,000 overbid, indicate that the interests of creditors would be better served by allowing interested parties to offer bids to purchase the estate's claims against the Settling Parties. Trustee's support of the settlement at the hearing was likewise ambivalent, as he noted that he believed the settlement was in the best interests of the estate *when he entered it*^[5] and that he was contractually bound by the Agreement.^[6]

In addition, this settlement is in essence a sale of potential claims to the Settling Parties. While the Agreement purports to act as a mutual release of claims, no party has identified any claims which the Settling Parties could assert against the estate or Trustee. The record does not contain any evidence that a release of claims by the Settling Parties has value.

Thus, the settlement is in reality a purchase by the Settling Parties of a chose in action of the estate and for which another entity has offered a higher price in circumstances that invite a competitive auction that could yield a considerably higher price. Settling Parties were free to bid against the third party overbidder.

We agree with the Third Circuit that the disposition by way of "compromise" of a claim that is an asset of the estate is the equivalent of a sale of the intangible property represented by the claim, which transaction simultaneously implicates the "sale" provisions under section 363 as implemented by Rule 6004 and the "compromise" procedure of Rule 9019(a). *Myers v. Martin (In re Martin)*, 91 F.3d 389, 394-95 (3rd Cir.1996); accord *In re Telesphere Communications, Inc.*, 179 B.R. 544, 552 n. 7 (Bankr.N.D.Ill.1994); Reynaldo Anaya Valencia, *The Sanctity of Settlements and the Significance of Court Approval: Discerning Clarity from Bankruptcy Rule 9019*, 78 OR. L. REV. 425, 480-85 (1999).

We likewise agree with the Third Circuit that a trustee's fiduciary duty to maximize the assets of the estate trumps any contractual obligation that a trustee arguably may incur in the course of making an agreement that is not enforceable unless it is approved by the court.

Martin, 91 F.3d at 395. Everyone who deals with a bankruptcy trustee in a transaction that is not in the ordinary course of business is charged with knowledge that the law may require court approval and that a trustee has an obligation to present all relevant facts to the court, including whether there is a more attractive solution than that which the trustee has negotiated. *Id.*

In short, on this record we specifically reject the argument advanced by Settling Parties and Trustee that the procedures normally contemplated by section 363 motions do not apply in the context of the review of settlements under Rule 9019(a) where the result of the transaction would be to dispose of property of the estate. Rather, section 363 and Rules 6004 and 9019(a) may overlap when property of the estate would be disposed of by way of a settlement.

When confronted with a motion to approve a settlement under Rule 9019(a), a *422 bankruptcy court is obliged to consider, as part of the "fair and equitable" analysis, whether any property of the estate that would be disposed of in connection with the settlement might draw a higher price through a competitive process and be the proper subject of a section 363 sale. Whether to impose formal sale procedures is ultimately a matter of discretion that depends upon the dynamics of the particular situation.^[7]

It follows that the consideration that would flow to the estate from the \$40,000 "compromise" of the cause of action based on Debtor's unscheduled contract rights also functions as a "price" in a sale. The possibility that someone else may be willing to pay a higher price triggers the prospect of an auction that could yield an even higher price.

Although the bankruptcy court treated the proposed \$5,000 overbid as not material, we note that not only was it a 12.5 percent increase in price, but it also included an offer to pay the estate fifteen percent of any proceeds to be recovered in litigation against Settling Parties.^[8] Moreover, entertaining overbids often triggers a bidding sequence that may lead to a much higher price. In short, the court's findings do not support its conclusion.

Here, in light of the post-settlement developments and Trustee's own admission in his reply that an overbid procedure would be in the best interests of creditors, we have the definite and firm conviction that the bankruptcy court committed a clear error of judgment in concluding that the settlement was in the best interests of the estate, particularly where the party opposing the settlement was merely complying with rules for overbids that Trustee set forth in his reply.

V. CONCLUSION

Because Trustee was unable to demonstrate that the Agreement was in the best interests of the estate, we REVERSE.

NOTES

[1] Unless otherwise indicated, all chapter, section and rule references are to the Bankruptcy Code, 11 U.S.C. §§ 101-1330 and the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure, Rules XXXX-XXXX.

[2] In particular, Appellant alleged that Debtor owned (but failed to schedule) certain contract rights to conduct American Motorcyclist Association ("AMA") sanctioned Motorcross Events at Anaheim Stadium for at least the 1995 and 1996 seasons. Appellant estimated that the exclusive rights to produce these sanctioned events could be worth up to ten million dollars. Appellant further informed Trustee that principals of Debtor had secretly utilized this estate asset to produce events with another company without remitting any proceeds to the estate.

[3] At oral argument on appeal, counsel for Settling Parties was unable to describe any claims that his clients had against the estate that were to be released.

[4] The Agreement defined its effective date as "the date on which the order approving [the settlement] is final" and additionally provided that the order "will become final after disposition" of any appeal. *Agreement* at page 2. In light of this provision of the Agreement, the appeal is not moot.

[5] While the settlement might have met the standards of *A & C Properties* when it was agreed upon and when the Motion was filed, we must reverse because Trustee changed the rules by setting forth an overbid procedure in his reply and Appellant played by those changed rules. Trustee then reneged and, without explanation, departed from those procedures at the hearing.

[6] Trustee did not explain how he was contractually bound by the Agreement when the terms of the Agreement specifically provided that it was subject to court approval and not binding on the parties absent a court order approving the settlement.

[7] We are not suggesting that every compromise of a bona fide controversy presented to a bankruptcy court under Rule 9019 must pass muster as a sale under section 363. We are sensitive to the different considerations that come into play. But the inescapable fact in this case is that the label "compromise" does not accurately characterize the transaction. Functionally, there was no compromise at all. Trustee simply attempted to sell to prospective defendants for \$40,000 his cause of action against them.

[8] The record does not contain sufficient evidence of the probable value of that offer, although we note that rights of action under the trustee's bankruptcy avoiding powers may be transferred for a consideration that may include a guaranteed minimum recovery for the estate (a "price") and that may provide for sharing of additional proceeds of the litigation. *Duckor Spradling & Metzger v. Baum Trust (In re P.R.T.C., Inc.)*, 177 F.3d 774, 780-82 (9th Cir.1999); *Briggs v. Kent (In re Prof'l Inv. Props.)*, 955 F.2d 623, 625-26 (9th Cir.1992); *cf.*, *Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. v. Guy F. Atkinson Co. (In re Guy F. Atkinson Co.)*, 242 B.R. 497, 501-02 (9th Cir. BAP 1999).

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HISTORY

1972 SUPERBOWL
OF MOTOCROSS



**Nearly 30 years ago American
supercross racing was born.**

by Davey Coombs Photos by Steve French



CHECK OUT THE EARLY SEVENTIES FASHION STYLE OF TIM HART (ABOVE) AND THE RIDING STYLE OF FOUR-TIME WORLD MX CHAMPION TORSTEN HALLMAN (OPPOSITE PAGE).

The Witnesses (in order of appearance)

Michael Goodwin came up with the idea for the "Superbowl of Motocross" and was the promoter of countless more stadium races through the mid-1980s... before he became embroiled in a legal battle with fellow promoter Mickey Thompson that left him bankrupt in the 1980s. When Thompson and his wife Trudy were murdered in 1988, Goodwin was considered a prime suspect. The case has never been solved, though Goodwin was recently called before a grand jury in Orange County. Goodwin is now working in the medical supply business.

Jim Weinert became the first American to beat the Europeans in the Trans-AMA event in 1973. He won two 500cc National MX Championships and the 1976 Supercross Championship. "The Jammer" lives in Middleton, New York.

Ron Crandall went to the first race as a spectator. He later became the national supercross referee. He is now retired and living in California.

Geoff Fox founded Moto-X Fox in 1974 with his brother Bob. Today Fox Racing is one of the biggest and most familiar companies in the apparel industry.

Torsten Hallman was a four-time FIM World Motocross Champion from Sweden who also started Torsten Hallman Racing, which is

now called THOR. He is now a businessman in Sweden.

Marty Tripes not only won the first Superbowl of Motocross in 1972, he won the next year as well. Tripes remains the youngest rider ever to win an AMA race at 16 years, 10 days of age. He lives and works in Jamul, California.

Mark Blackwell was considered the first 500cc National champion in 1971 and has spent his life working in the motorcycle and snowmobile industries. He's currently the general manager of Victory Motorcycles in Minnesota.

Dick Miller was the long-time editor of *Motocross Action* magazine before retiring in the early 1980s.

Gunnar Lindstrom was a Husqvarna factory rider who emigrated from Sweden to California, where he works at American Honda.

Bryar Holcomb won the 500 National Support race at the Coliseum. He now runs Factory Effex in California.

Shav Glick is the longtime motorsports reporter for the *Los Angeles Times*. He covered the first Superbowl of Motocross as well as all three of the Anaheim Supercross races last January.

Genes

YAMAHA



“On the evening of July 8th, 1972, moto-cross racing invaded downtown Los Angeles. It was inevitable that the sport, which has captured the imagination of the new breed of motorcyclists, would find it's way to the urban area. Why suffer the discomfort of a crowded, dusty and hot hillside if you can enjoy the spectacle from a grandstand seat, see all the action and have all the refreshments brought to you?” *Motorcyclist/October 1972*

AMONG THE 250 CLASS ENTRIES ON THE STARTING GATE THE FIRST NIGHT WERE JOHN DESOTO (4), BILLY CLEMENTS (91), THE LATE JIM WEST (60X), TORLEIF HANSEN (19), REX STATEN (63X), ARNIE LINDFORS (11), JIM WEINERT (66X), HAKAN ANDERSSON (2), GARY JONES (DIRECTLY BEHIND ANDERSSON) AND TORSTEN HALLMAN (8).



Mike Goodwin: There was a motorcycle magazine that wrote up Don Briher's success in selling out Madison Square Garden for short track racing, which I think is about as exciting as watching paint dry. I saw that he sold it out! I thought to myself, "This new sport, motocross, would be really exciting in a stadium." So I talked to my wife about it and said, "Let's see if I can package this." I put together a pro-

posal, sent it to Olympia Beer, and they amazingly said "Yes!" But then I had to figure out how to do it.

So I met with Mr. Nicholson, manager of the Los Angeles Coliseum at that time. I was scared to death because I knew he was going to say no. Luckily, his kid rode motocross. We went across the street to a restaurant bar called Julie's, and we drew a sketch of the track on a cocktail napkin.

and I wish I'd have kept that cocktail napkin! I imagine it's ground up and made into a paper cup now.

Jim Weinert: It's been thirty years? Oh my gosh, that's a long time ago — we were just youngsters! The whole idea was that people could come with their families and sit in the stadium and be comfortable, stay clean, no dirt, get a hot dog, watch the

Genesis



CHARTER MEMBERS OF THE FLAGMAN
HALL OF FAME FOR SUPERCROSS.

show and go home.' But we were all motocrossers, so we didn't know how it was going to turn out.

Ron Crandall: I went as a guest of Yamaha Motor Corporation. Mel Calloway was the head of the racing department at that time. I was a school teacher and his son was a student of mine. He invited me to the race, and seeing it was what got me excited about getting involved in motocross as a referee.

Geoff Fox: I went as a spectator and I thought it was a very exciting idea. Holding it in the LA Coliseum definitely was giving the sport of motocross a "legitimacy" that obscure tracks out in the hinterland just didn't offer. It was a very big deal. My whole family - wife, kids, brother - drove down from San Jose, which was about an eight-hour trip then. It was rare to drive that far to spectate at a race. Spending money on a hotel for overnight, etc., was a considerable expense. I wouldn't have done it if everyone wasn't so excited about it!

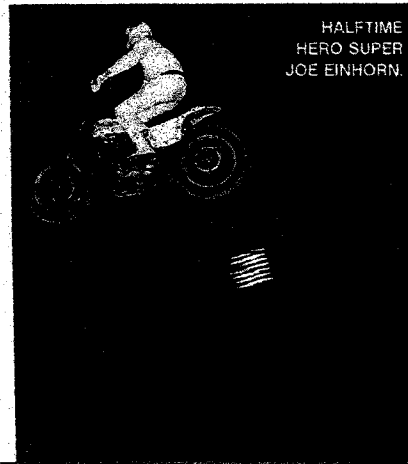
"First impression: TWO DOLLARS TO PARK? Inflation is really going to work in this department" *Cycle News*/July 18, 1972



AN INTERNATIONAL
CLASS WAS HELD
FOR 250CC RIDERS
WHILE THE 500cc
CLASS WAS
A NATIONAL
SUPPORT RACE.

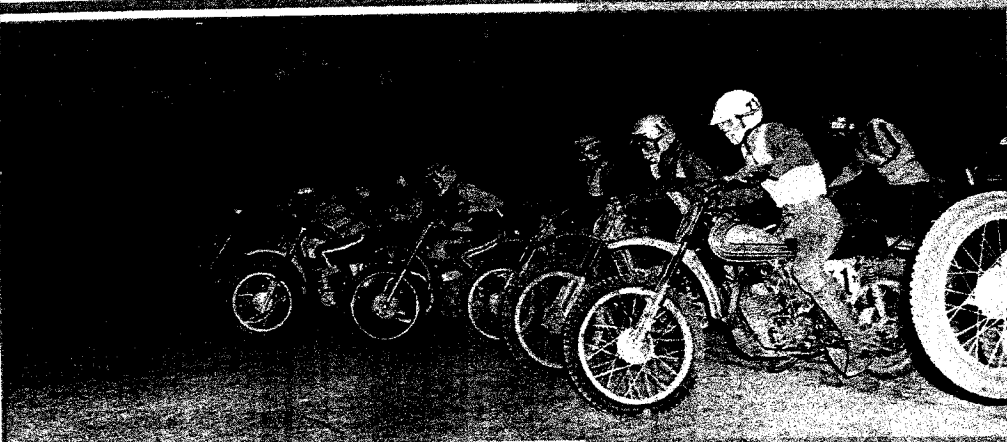


A PRE-SUPERCROSS SUPERCROSSER.



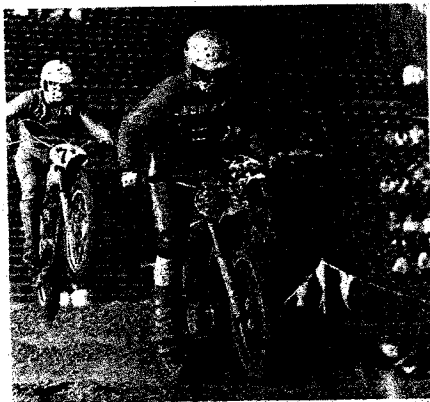
HALFTIME
HERO SUPER
JOE EINHORN.

THE 500cc SUPPORT RACE WAS
WON BY BRYAR HOLCOMB.



Who came
up with
the name
"Supercross,"
anyway?

SWEDISH IMPORT GUNNAR LINDSTROM.



Torsten Hallman: At that time I was working for the Yamaha Factory as a R & D rider and advisor regarding the motocross project. Before the 1972 season, Yamaha had asked me about my opinion on who they should pick for their U.S. team; they wanted two promising up-coming riders. My letter to Yamaha with suggestions who to pick for the future included at least ten good riders. My choice in the end was Gary Jones and Marty Tripes.

Marty Tripes: All of the riders thought it was really great to be in a stadium and really cool that people could see everything. And walking the track with John DeSoto and Torsten Hallman and everyone, that was crazy for a kid my age.

Mark Blackwell: I wasn't there, I was in Europe racing the full grand prix tour. To be honest, at that time, I was kind of a purist. I had been riding for Husky and CZ, and I thought for the American scene to develop, a bunch of us needed to go to Europe and bring their know-how back to the U.S. I was a little bit cynical of the L.A. race, because it wasn't "pure" motocross.

Dick Miller: For the record, the first stadium motocross I know about was at Ascot Stadium in L.A. and was promoted by Edison Dye. I was working for him at the time as the first Husky rep in the country,

History tells us that the first big stadium motocross race was the Great Victory Race in Strahov Stadium in Prague, Czechoslovakia in the 1950s (*Racer X*, May/June '98). We also know that the first stadium race in America took place in Miami's Orange Bowl in 1961 (August/September '99). And Daytona held its first sanctioned AMA motocross inside the Speedway in 1971. Still, the Los Angeles Coliseum event of 1972 must be considered the prelude to what became modern supercross. But it wasn't actually called a "supercross," because the name had not been made up yet. Instead, it was dubbed "the Superbowl of Motocross."

An ongoing bench-war argument that to mention a legal one between the AMA and SPX (Clear Channel Motor Sports) concerns the origin of the word "supercross." In fact, SPX boss sent then SPX PR Manager Pat Schulte out to the PR agency offices in Valencia to research the topic. Schulte spent two days in the PR office looking through archived issues of *Dirt Bike* and *Motocross Action* because he was going to help push the "supercross" name. He left without a concrete answer, but he came up with a hint: "Turns out Schulte was wrong," the answer according to *Motocross Action* editor Ray Boudreau, the editor who built *Motocross Action* into the 1970s and into the 1980s, along with Pete Szilagyi and Dick Miller. Boudreau, who Boudreau remembers it as being the (sort of) "supercross" name, "I may be assuming what I'm doing and my memory is a little fuzzy," he says. "The first real stadium race after the

one in 1961 was which was in the Florida Winterbowl Series was the one at the Coliseum. The promoter, that Goodwin, looked at the name 'Superbowl of Motocross' for the event. Goodwin was a smart guy and kept in mind that the foot ball Super Bowl was only 14 years old at the time, and the very first Super Bowl was played in the Coliseum. So Goodwin and whoever his lawyer was managed to side with all the legal issues by making the two words into one and using a small 'i'.

"I thought Superbowl of Motocross was kind of a mouthful, myself. And I thought it was about typing it. Those were the days we put out a magazine on manual typewriters using those little one-ounce wheels with the brush to correct mis-typing. You made the letters big and kept the typing to a minimum. We were using a lot of words, like 'supercross' back then, so I right away shortened it to 'supercross.' I meant it made sense to me. Besides, we had to maintain our image as a magazine and rider."

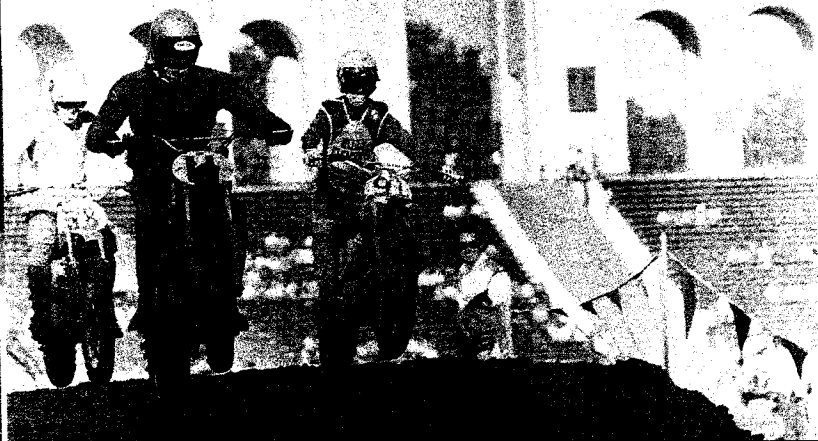
"In the early years," Goodwin told me explicitly that it was to be called the "Superbowl of Motocross," said, "1968 year. The second year Larry Huffman, the promoter, called me to the booth to do a live interview. Ray Boudreau of *Motocross Action* magazine, the world's foremost authority on motocross racing, was there. He was a guy, I don't know if you suppose there were in those days? So I was like, 'Boudreau and on. Boudreau-blah Superbowl, blah-blah Superbowl, blah-blah Superbowl. They told me you could see the steam coming out Goodwin's ears!'"

"I might've sold my soul to the devil or the NFL to get their Superbowl name. I was in the stadium at the Houston Astrodome and combined it with the name of the race, got sponsorship from Yamaha and called it the 'Supercross' name. I don't know if it was 'supercross' in the minds and hearts of the fans. After the AMA sanctioned the races and it became officially 'supercross' the name was official."

"I saw in *Dirt Bike* magazine's coverage of the Houston Supercross a photo of a rider jumping that appeared with the word 'Supercross' in the headline. I believe that was the first time the word appeared in print."

The Time
Genesis

THE FIRST RACE TRACK DID NOT INCLUDE A RUN UP THE PERISTYLE (BACKGROUND).



THE RIDERS PITTED IN THE BOWELS OF THE STADIUM.



THE FIRST SUPERBOWL WAS A THREE-MOTO FORMAT.



and we had most of the European riders on a tour. I remember it was the first time these guys had ridden at night and the only goggles they had used yellow or gray lenses. Torsten Hallman was Dye's partner and he told me they couldn't see with them at night, so I had to go find some clear lenses with only about an hour before the races. This was, I believe, in 1969.

Gunnar Lindstrom: I don't think any of us had ever raced in a stadium before. It wasn't even in our vocabulary. Goodwin's crazy idea was lightning from a clear sky. We did not take this serious; we thought it was a funny, ha-ha thing. Then we later heard that companies like Can-Am and Honda were beginning to build bikes just for this race. We were nearsighted and didn't see where it would benefit anything.

Hallman: In 1962 the Helsinki Club in Finland put on a motocross in the very same arena where all the events for horses were held when they hosted the Olympics in '52. The track was laid out like a supercross of today, except that on one side there was no grandstand, and the track went up a small hill. During the Olympics it was used for spectators, but for the motocross track it was perfect for several up- and downhills! The race was very late in the season, beginning of October, but still the grandstands were packed with people. The year after motorcycles were not allowed into the arena anymore.

Bryar Holcomb: Goodwin and his company (Leisuretech Corporation) had some events leading up to the Coliseum. They did something called the Cal-Expo and it was pretty big, with big money for the time, but it was kind of off the map. All of the top riders, including the Europeans, were supposed to come. We were used to local races like the CMC, which were run really well, but not nearly as big as this. I mean, this was like a grand prix in Europe to us!

Crandall: I had been to several Southern California motocross races and I had an idea of what I was going to see, but I couldn't figure out how it was going to work in a stadium. When I first walked into the stadium it was incredible. Nothing like this had ever been done before, and the hoo-de-la and aura and everything about it was awesome. I mean, it was a motorcycle race in the Los Angeles Coliseum where they held the Olympics! The Los Angeles Rams played there and USC and even UCLA at the time.

Holcomb: Goodwin came out of the rock concert world, so he knew how to promote, and he was a real personable guy, too. We all just thought he was God, and he was going to take us to the very top of professional sports. When he said, "I'm taking you guys to the Coliseum, we were all like, "Alright! Let's go!" No hesitation whatsoever. When the ads started breaking, everyone in California started getting really excited.

Marty Tripes: Actually, credit where credit is due, and Mike Goodwin did a hell of a job. He got a sports writer from the *L.A. Times*, Shav Glick, to listen to his pitch. He took him to lunch and everything. He really promoted the hell out of the event. Goodwin promoted in style, for sure.

Shav Glick: I covered the event for the *L.A. Times*. There was a buzz within the industry, but it was mostly

skepticism. I don't quite remember what I wrote that night, but the general opinion [leading into the race] was that Goodwin's idea was nuts. Carlsbad and Saddleback were the big deals back then, and this just seemed too revolutionary.

Goodwin: I bought more radio and TV than any other motocross promoter, because I believed in it. It was such a novelty event, meaning, "What are these crazy people doing to the L.A. Coliseum?!" The stadium was the sacred ground for college football, the Olympics, whatever, and it was easy to get publicity. Of course, a lot of it was off-color, smirking remarks and people taking shots at us. But, as some great people in publicity have said, "Just put my name in, I don't even care if you spell it right."

Holcomb: It was time for sign-up and Goodwin held it at this nice hotel over by the stadium. We were like, "Wow, this is cool!" We were used to going to a little shack right there at the race track. Now we had to load our bikes, go down to this hotel for tech inspection in the parking lot, then go back to the regular pits – it was big time! Then to the pits down in the tunnel of the stadium. It was a little damp and murky and dark, but at the same time it was so cool to be down in there instead of being out by our trucks. It was a big, big deal for all of us. We were all just gaga.

Blackwell: I believe Mike Goodwin is the father of modern supercross. He was arguably ahead of his time, and he had the vision. He had this idea that made some people think he was crazy, but he created this sport that appealed to lots of people besides hard-core enthusiasts.

Goodwin: We got a lot more action sport enthusiasts – football fans and such – than we thought we'd get. More people came that were non-motorcyclists than we thought would come. And that showed next year as we grew from 27,000 the first night to 37,808 the next time there. The count included a lot of comps that first year, because we did a thing called "People in the House" and gave away a lot of tickets because we wanted it to look good.

"Confronting the riders is a starting apron at the tunnel mouth just wide enough for 20 machines, so the 40 men line up at the gate in two tightly packed rows, the front wheels of their machines nudging the calves of the riders ahead. Somehow the horde will survive a 4-foot hump which interrupts the drag race from the line. Past that, the bikes quickly funnel into a sharp left-and-right hander wide enough for 10 on the way in and six on the way out. From there it's a nightmare of 17 more turns interspersed with ruts, sand and mud, a devastating double jump (where the bike lands directly on the crest of the second jump, unless the rider clears it completely and thus lands harder), numerous mean whoop-de-dos, a short backstretch leading to a 6-foot cliff and finally a narrow high-or-low route entrance to a sandy corkscrew bringing the course back to the front straight and the original 4-foot bozo." *Cycle Magazine/October 1972*

Weinert: The jumps were atrocious because there was no landing or landing ramps on the back side. When you jumped something, you had to jump way out past it and land on the flat. And if you landed on the next jump, it



MARTY TRIPES
WAS 16 YEARS
16 DAYS OLD
WHEN HE WON.



JOHN DESOTO AFTER A BIG CRASH.



MAICO PILOT
JOHN FRANKLIN.

The Times

Genesis

usually resulted in a pretty good spill. The track was all confined, so there was no room for error. You went down one part of the track, turned around and came back, and it was right alongside the part you just came down. So the other riders were coming right at you.

Lindstrom: It required more technical and rider style changes than we wanted to admit. We were also loyal to Trelleborg tires, probably the worst tire of all for this hard-packed stuff. Snappy engine power, close gear ratios and a quick shifting gearbox, quick turn steering – none of this we had or knew how to get! A non-slippery foot peg? What a concept! Riding with finesse was something that few of us Husky guys knew. We attacked and hung on. I mean, look at the width of the bars. As a result of all this, riding supercross was difficult. We were not equipped to do it.

Tripes: Walking around and seeing the narrow turns and jumps and all was just incredible. I couldn't wait to get out there. I always rode in the hills around where I grew up in Santee, right next to El Cajon, and did the tricky stuff. The track at the Coliseum was perfect for me.

Hallman: To me this was not the type of motocross I liked. I guess I had the old-fashion thinking that motocross should be raced on a big, wide outdoor track! This was a very short start, very hectic type of racing, and difficult to pass someone because they brought in soft material so it was only one line around the track.

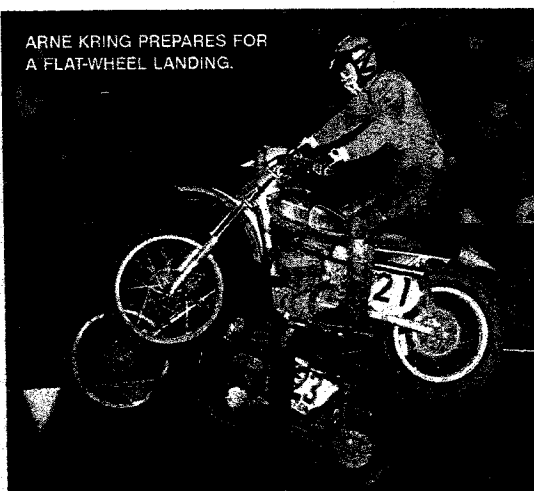
Weinert: The mud pit was a little wacky. We were like, "Gosh, if he wants this to be so clean and different, why is he trying to turn it right back into a motocross track? What the hell is he doing making it like an outdoor?" I asked Goodwin, "Do you get nightmares in the middle of the night and dream up these obstacles to put in your next event?" He had the water pit, the mud pit and a sand pit he had brought in. You would go all the way around fine and clean, and then there was a mud pit! It was kind of asinine! But we went with it. What else were we going to do?

Lindstrom: Somebody thought we did three motos in Europe, so they ran three motos that night! Another misconception was that there had to be a water hole. They had a hose running through it, but we all hated it because it ruined everything.

Weinert: The Europeans thought, "Oh, this is stupid. This is not motocross. Motocross, you go outside, up the hill, through the mud. This is not motocross!" They weren't real happy with Goodwin.

Lindstrom: The idea of stadium motocross? At the time we Husky guys were an arrogant, winning (and scoring) bunch. We failed to see the value of this new type of racing. As a matter of fact, many of us saw this more as a spectacle, especially if you consider the water hole they put in the track. In today's terms, it was akin to WWF stuff. I mean, there were always real races to go to. This had to be a one-time event, right? Who would allow their stadiums to be torn up, anyway?

"Heavy leather boots and pants made them sway as they tramped from the Coliseum locker room through the tunnel to the center of the great bowl's field. Hundreds of athletes – football players, soccer men, track stars, baseball players – had suffered the same butterfly-filled march before, but none on so personal a mission as the motocross racer, alone with his machine on a one-man team. They were to be formally introduced to the crowd. It was



ARNE KRINGS PREPARES FOR A FLAT-WHEEL LANDING.

the last postponement before they faced the drop-down steel starting gate for the biggest motocross in U.S. history." *Cycle Magazine/October 1972*

Weinert: For me the race was a little bit of a struggle. I did the best I could, but you had to get good starts, and I wasn't starting too well back then. It was also tight, so you couldn't pass like you could outdoors. You couldn't make mistakes, either. It was very close racing. Too close!

Hallman: I remember noticing Rex Staten, a totally unknown rider to me. He was going unbelievably fast during practice, especially in the whoops. He was not on my list of the best ten up-and-coming U.S. riders! I could see that he had a great future in motocross.

"Who was this young hero of the Coliseum? Marty Tripes arrived at the

L.A. sports bowl as a relative unknown more because of his age than anything else. Until 10 days prior to the race he was too young to ride legally in the big national and international events. Last year he rode the Denver Inter-Am illegally as a 15-year-old and placed fourth overall after winning one moto outright. But the secret of his age was exposed and the AMA made him return all of the prize money and banned him from further AMA events until he was 16. Tripes was probably the best motocrosser in America several years before he was allowed to prove it." *Cycle Magazine/October 1972*

Weinert: The "Wonder Kid" Marty Tripes just stole the whole show. He was very talented, and he had that patented style of standing on the pegs almost the whole time. He was talented, and this kind of racing was something that he really liked.

Hallman: Marty was hitting the berms in every corner with his awkward positioned foot pegs!!! How could I explain to the factory that some riders choose to ride with the foot pegs about 6-7 inches behind the normal position like Marty was doing?

Tripes: What stands out was that I set a record for myself that nobody in the world will ever break. I won the first one, which was very special. I accomplished this just as I turned 16 years old. I don't think that will ever happen again, that a rider wins that young, so it's still close to my heart. I look at the kids today, and I don't see the desire and heart we had back then. Now there's too much money being paid for second, third, fourth and fifth. When I

wanted to win, damn it, I wanted to win. We all duked it out. Today nobody wants to race. They're paid so much they're happy to sit in third and second.

"A stopwatch told an interesting tale about Bryar Holcomb. It seems that some of his times were faster than the 250 big names. Sure, he was on a 400, but it was not a horsepower track." *Cycle News/July 18, 1972*

Holcomb: I rode the 500 Support class, and I knew if I won that I could get a full factory ride from Suzuki. They let me borrow John DeSoto's old race bike for the race, and I got terrible starts, but I was just a man on a mission. I figured that this was my one chance to really show everyone that I was ready for a factory ride. Plus I was just stoked to be riding in the Los Angeles Coliseum. I ended up finishing second in the first heat and then

winning the next two. It was just a wonderful night for me and turned out better than I could have ever dreamed.

"Maybe we'll be lucky enough to see another one of the 'Superbowls' next year." *Cycle News/July 18, 1972*

Blackwell: I remember calling back from Europe the next day. I heard that Marty Tripes had won, and there was a huge crowd. Immediately my cynicism started to fade. I was excited about it for the sport and for the U.S. A little while after, I realized it was just a new form of motocross that would help American riders on an accelerated basis. Those early supercross races were kind of like sprint races, and they got the American pace up to the point where they could ride with the Europeans. Pretty soon, the Americans were riding at the front of the pack.

Lindstrom: I never in my wildest dreams thought (hoped) it would come to this. I quickly changed my mind in a year or two of course, especially since it didn't intrude on the 'real' outdoor motocross.

Goodwin: I took a lot of flack from the motocross aficionados, like Rick Seiman (of *Dirt Bike* magazine). He was a tremendous opponent. My press agent mistakenly spelled "motorcross" on a press release and a picture of that was in their article, and he called it the "Salad Bowl of Motocross." The *Dirt Bike* publisher was Bill Golden at the time and he had the philosophy that confrontation and conflict sold books. But in some ways I think Rick gave me a fair shot.

Fox: I don't think anyone could have envisioned how huge it is today. But I always thought it was the most exciting sport and deserved more attention from the media and general public. The first Superbowl of MX helped the sport attract more attention.

Crandall: I had visions of motocross racing becoming a televised thing, and I knew this was a good chance for it to happen. I was sitting there thinking about just what kind of future this thing had - I think that way most of the time because that's the school teacher in me - and I honestly didn't believe it would ever get as big as it is now. The hype, the semi trucks, the whole aura about the sport now is truly incredible.

Hallman: I could see early that the normal outdoor motocross was a perfect sport for the Americans. That's why Edison Dye and myself started the International

Motocross Inc., to promote the first races held in the U.S. in the late 1960s. But a Supercross Series, with 16 races, 750,000 spectators and big sponsors? No way!

Glick: One thing that really sticks out in my mind was the enthusiasm of all the people involved, the fans and especially the industry people. I even remember seeing Mike Goodwin down on the track, running hay bales around when riders would run into them and knock 'em off the track. He [Goodwin] was a one man gang down there. And walking back to my car that night I ran into some desert racers, guys from Carlsbad and Saddleback and I think Bruce Penhall, and everybody was excited, saying the biggest crowd for a race like this before was at Ascot.

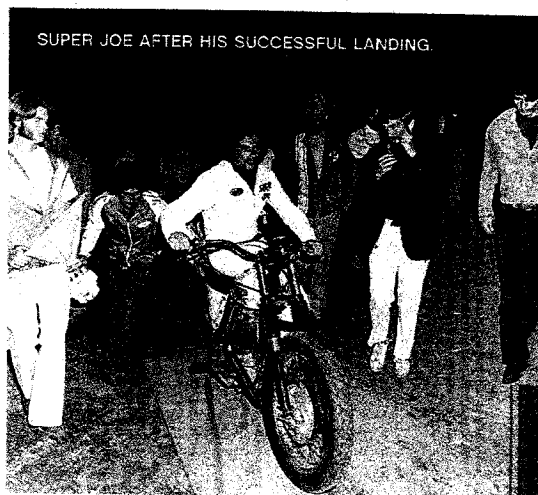
Weinert: We were all going, "I guess this is the stuff we're going to have to race now." Goodwin and his people kept saying that, that this kind of racing is the future. We just went along with it and waited to see how it

Goodwin: It was a tremendously gratifying success for me. I think I may have even made a little money, or at least we thought we could the next year. Not many people know this, but I had a partner in that first race by the name of Ed Lawrence, but he didn't want to come back the next year, because it was growing too much as far as money demand went. He was an ad guy at KTLA. When I went into talk to him, he liked the idea so much that they (KTLA) became what I called a presenting sponsor, and this guy (Lawrence) said, "I want to invest in this and make it successful."

Tripes: We never knew what we had just started would turn into such an awesome sport. Now I see how big it is, and I just can't believe it. I'm glad I was a part of the first race.

Goodwin: I made a lot of mistakes, wasted a lot of money - particularly at the first Superbowl of Motocross. We were ridiculed for a lot of things that we legitimately did wrong. We were ridiculed for some other things we probably didn't do wrong, too. But it was a wonderful learning experience. Of all my career stuff, the most gratifying is the supercross days.

"It was a huge success, both to the spectators and the promoters, and as we predicted earlier - only the beginning. If it can work in the Coliseum, what about Yankee Stadium?"
Motorcyclist/October 1972 X



SUPER JOE AFTER HIS SUCCESSFUL LANDING.

would all turn out. Did we really know this thing was going to get like this? No. No way. No one did except Goodwin. But he had a vision, and look at what it's become.

Holcomb: If the sport of motocross were IBM, Mike Goodwin was the Bill Gates of the industry. Everything was in place already, but there was no operating system to really take advantage of it. Just as Gates figured out a way to make it all work with computers, Goodwin figured out a way to capitalize on a sport that was already up and running. He just took everything to a whole new level.

Glick: I ran into Mickey Thompson in the elevator, and we talked about how the event had just revolutionized motorsports. Thompson looked at me and said, "I can put cars in this stadium."

Final Results