

Bonneville: Old salts chase fast women >>

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The most bang for your buck in motorsports?

story by Paul Holdsworth

photos by Curt Lout and Paul Holdsworth

No doubt, the release of the movie *The World's Fastest Indian* sparked a lot of interest in Bonneville Salt Flats racing among bikers last year. But I can honestly say that my taste for salt ran much deeper well before then.

I trace it back to 1989 when I attended the SCTA's annual Bonneville Nationals. I was there to support Dave Matson's entry, a partially streamlined Vincent. Dave fell

off his bike that year due to a high-speed wobble caused by the long grooves that some of the more powerful cars are prone to create in the salt's surface from wheel spin. That's been the issue with Bonneville in the past: the bikes have had to share the same track with the cars. And as Dave will tell you—his spill put him in a slide that actually wore a flat spot on his chin, not to mention “modifying” his wrists—the bikes usually get the short end of the stick, and in more ways than one. Bikes are also slighted in terms

of track time because, regardless of what anybody will tell you, the SCTA (Southern California Timing Association) is a speed club geared for the car crowd. The bike racers are considered a sideshow.

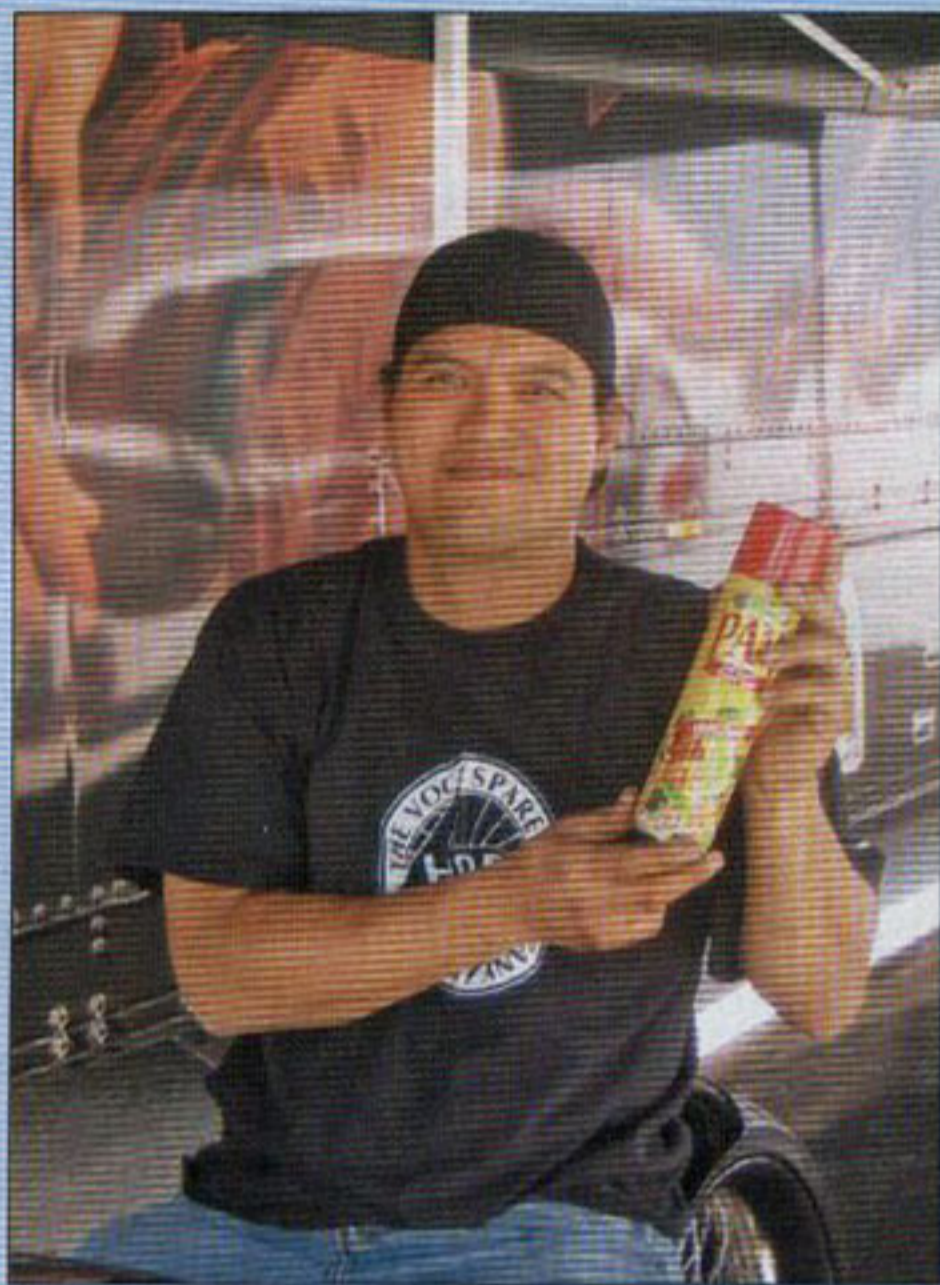
But long-time bike racer, Denis Manning, decided to do something about that, and in 2004 he instituted what has become known as the BUB International Motorcycle Speed Trials, an all-bike event held a couple weeks after the SCTA crowd vacates that vast white table of salt a few miles east of Wendover, Utah.

continued



Matt Loves Pam

A case of too many chefs in the kitchen? Hardly, even though Matt Hotch, who showed up with his Vincent-powered custom to run against Roger Goldammer's two-stroke special, was concerned about how corrosive the salt might be to his high-dollar custom. Trying to protect his \$300,000 investment from the salt, Hotch and his crew tried covering the bike in plastic wrap. I told him that Toots Ellard had sprayed "Pam" on the bottom of his bike to help protect it from the salt. According to Toots, the non-stick cooking spray prevents the salt from attaching itself to the bike's nether regions, thus minimizing its corrosive behavior. Even though Goldammer's ring-ding-powered special beat Hotch's bike in speed, Hotch left Utah with a new recipe for seasoning his customs. —PH



Matt Hotch found a new recipe for preserving his custom bike from the corrosive effects of the salt. Spray a little Pam on the bike, and the salt spray is less apt to stick to the bike's underside.



Roger Goldammer built this Rotax inline two-stroke to run against Matt Hotch's 1000cc Vincent custom that boasted electronic fuel injection. Goldammer's chassis is based on a modified Honda motocross frame.



Tom Anderson, aka Santa Claus

More than anyone I met last year at Bonneville, Tom Anderson typifies the motorcycle LSR racer. He races under the Buell Brothers Racing banner, and his speed on the track is only superseded by his enthusiasm off the track. He's also hospitable, as I found out less than 10 minutes after meeting him when he tossed me one of his team T-shirts as a souvenir. The man with the snowy white beard is just like Santa Claus, which explains why his crew nicknamed him after ol' Saint Nick.

Tom's enthusiasm and generous nature came out in spades during the awards banquet at week's end when he presented a check for \$1,000 to the team that personified the spirit of Bonneville racing. Max Lambke and his double-Vincent streamliner team had been plagued all week with mechanical gremlins, so they didn't leave Bonneville with a record. But they *did* leave with Tom's check. "That's the spirit of Bonneville," said Santa Tom. —PH

