



**2003 RIDER OF THE YEAR**

DECEMBER '03

# RACER

**GRAND PRIX MOTOCROSS**

**EVERTS WINS EVERYTHING**

**METAL MULISHA**

**INSIDE THE COMPOUND**

SEVEN-TIME  
WORLD CHAMPION  
STEFAN EVERTS

**AMA NATIONALS**

**A RIVER RAN THROUGH IT**

\$4.95US \$5.95CAN



VOLUME 6 Nº 12 \$ 4.95  
WWW.RACERXILL.COM



## THE BUYOUT

Not only did Mike Kidd Promotions have \$300,000 invested in a points fund and a TV package, but they also had to spend a lot of money to get Bryson on board. And although the investments paid off in media exposure, Kidd could see the writing on the wall. He and his family had made the National Arenacross Series as big as they could by themselves; in order to make it to the next level, he would need to either partner with a company, or sell the series and work for someone else. He opted for the latter.

"After we announced the point fund, the TV package, and our sponsorships were coming together, I got a call from Pace's Gary Becker, out of Houston," says Kidd. "He said, 'Mike, we need to talk. We'd like to get into Arenacross, but we don't want to compete.' And I knew that call would be coming. I could see that Mike Kidd Promotions might be getting bigger than Mike Kidd could handle, because I could see that we were going to keep growing. Once we closed the deal, it was like taking a nest egg, because when I retired, Mike Kidd Promotions was my retirement company."

Beginning with the 1997 National Arenacross Series, Mike Kidd Promotions would be no more. The series was now owned and operated by Pace Motorsports (soon to be bought out by SFX, then again by an even bigger fish, Clear Channel Entertainment). Kidd became a vice president of his company, and fortunately, it was a move that he would never regret.

"Where Arenacross is today – forty events yearly, including our regional series – there's no way that

(Below) Mike Jones cut his freestyle teeth in the AX jump-off contests.

(Bottom) Dennis Hawthorne gets a holeshot in '91, the year he lost his crown to Jason Langford.



## Farm Show AX

BY JEFF KOCAN

Each January, nearly 500,000 visitors descend upon Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, for the Pennsylvania Farm Show. Devoted to celebrating and promoting agriculture, it is the largest indoor agricultural event in America, taking place on 16 acres under one continuous roof. But in February, a different sort of crowd comes to town.

On February 21-22 of 2004, more than 30,000 people will visit the state capital for the 26th Annual Motorama Races and Shows, a weekend-long racing extravaganza that includes a flat-track race, go-karts, motorcycle and bicycle trials and RC car races. For many, however, the highlight of the weekend is the annual arenacross race, which actually pre-dates Mike Kidd's series by several years.

"This will be our 26th year," says event founder Armin Hostetter. "We originally started with just the flat track and the Arenacross in the large exhibition building. We expanded the program into more facilities as we grew, and as of last year, we consumed all the buildings in the Farm Show complex."

For Hostetter, though, the racing began even earlier than that – in 1972. "Initially, we had an outdoor arenacross at Trail-Way Speedway in Hanover, [PA]. I thought there was something we could organize that we could do over the winter. We did snowmobile events, but that was limited according to the weather, so I decided to try to make a motocross track and a flat track out of the dirt in the Farm Show Complex."

A lifelong farmer, Hostetter realized that the Complex had a year-round 12-inch base of dirt – a perfect spot for motorcycle racing. Along with his sons and a dedicated staff, he held the first Harrisburg Indoor Motorcycle Championship in 1979. The arenacross track was built from the 12 inches of existing soil, then leveled off for the following day's flat track event. And don't forget, these were the days before professional track-builders even existed. For the earliest races, Hostetter simply hired a local excavator and gave him instructions on what the track should look like. (These days, Armin's son Brad handles the course construction duties.) The event grew in popularity each successive year, and more events and venues were added. In 1987, the event was renamed "Motorama."

The 2003 event drew approximately 1,000 racers from all over the eastern half of the country, and with the large class structure, riders from ages four to sixty took part. Current pro racers Damien Plotts and then-amateur Broc Hepler were on hand for the premier class, with New Jersey legend Barry Carsten taking the Pro class win.

If you're free on the weekend of February 21-22, consider a trip Harrisburg. It's the heart of the Keystone State – and the heart of arenacross. ■