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Photo: Michael P. Hays



Photo by Tommaso Debi

Southerners way down south, Gary Lee White's team from Tennessee and their Honda 400EX lead the 2000 for most of the race's second half against large, faster machines. Impressive.



Da Winnah. After more than 1700 miles of racing and numerous lead changes, the mostly-stock Alba Sports/CT Racing Bombardier 650 was the first ATV to cross the finish line at Cabo San Lucas.



The 2000 started off with a blazingly fast pace because of moist, dust-free conditions. Here, Carmen Cafro's 400EX finds some traction in the Baja soil.

course. We had dropped back to sixth because of the delay, so Eric continued past the end of his section and rode another entire section. After nearly 300 miles, he contacted us by satellite phone and explained that he was physically exhausted, delirious and couldn't go on. He wasn't sure where he was. When we determined he was about 15 miles away, he rode the machine into Ciudad Insurgentes.

I took the quad for the next section. Eric Dunlavey's iron man marathon ride put us back up to fourth. I rode about 90 miles and ran out of gas. I found some locals who were kind enough to siphon some gas into a wash pan and transfer it to my tank.

With about 1200 miles of the course completed, Jimmy Stephensen took the bike for 120 miles and had a flawless ride. During his section he saw



John Gregory's team's Raptor was battling for the lead in the race's final miles when transmission trouble stopped the machine.

some Mexicans directing riders and thought it might be a booby trap. It turned out they were guiding riders around a big washout on the course that probably would have killed him.

Further south, just outside of La Paz, the course crosses Highway 1, makes a 125-mile loop out toward the eastern coast of Baja, then crosses the highway again about a mile down the road. At the first crossing, the first three machines, Doug Roll's Raptor, Gary White's Honda 400EX and our Bombardier, were within 15 minutes of each other, so you can imagine how nerve-wrenching it was at the second crossing. When the quads came through, the Honda was leading, we were second, only three minutes behind the Honda, and the Yamaha was third. We heard Roll's machine had a broken steering stem, which would take them some time to repair.

NIGHT NUMBER TWO

Roll's Raptor was going again, but 170 miles from the finish its transmission locked. From that point, it was us



Shortly after Wes Miller's Yamaha Raptor left the start in Ensenada, it left the rest of the ATV's for the first 500 miles of the race. Frame breakage ruined the team's chance for the win.

and the Honda. Dean Sundahl had the last section and caught the 400EX about 75 miles from the finish. After the race, their rider said our lights and the sound of the Bombardier made him think there was a race truck behind him, so he pulled over. The 650's speed and Sundahl's riding put us almost 15 minutes ahead of the Honda at the finish. □

BAJA 2000 RESULTS

1. Greg RowBombardier DS650
2. Gary Lee WhiteHonda 400EX
3. John GregoryYamaha Raptor
4. Gilberto SantanaHonda 400EX
5. Carmen CafroHonda 400EX
6. Wes MillerYamaha Raptor
7. Francisco MoralesYamaha Raptor

Nothing ages a machine like racing, and punishing cross-country events rack up hours of abuse faster than any other kind of competition. The Baja 500 can be a bike breaker. Just finishing the 1000 is something to be proud of. Every machine that went a foot beyond the starting line at the Baja 2000 practically had a foot in the grave, considering what the machines were expected to endure.

Most of the quads raced in Baja are thoroughly proven, because a breakdown on the desolate peninsula can mean loss of life, not just losing the race.

When Greg Row and his team chose to run the 2000 on a Bombardier DS650, a newcomer to Baja that had only been on the market for a matter of months, Baja racing veterans called them risk takers. At the

end of the grueling race the team and the DS were known as winners.

How did the Baja-winning quad hold up to 1754 miles and more than 41 hours of abuse on some of the toughest terrain imaginable? We took a close look at the machine to find out. Then we put a few hours on it ourselves so we could tell you what it's like to ride the fastest quad from Ensenada to Cabo.

To show the DS's quick steering, adjustable Timmy Rog A arms with 7 degrees of positive caster were used. YES nitrogen shocks with externally adjustable compression and rebound damping let the team tune the quad and led to Baja's conditions.



BAJA-WINNING BOMBARDIER

How the DS650 held up in the long run

INSIDE THE BAJA BOMBARDIER DS650

ENGINE

Bore	Stock
Stroke	Stock
Piston	Stock
Rod	Stock
Valves	Stock
Cam	Stock
Crank	Stock
Carburetor	Stock
Ignition/timing	stock/stock
Head porting	Stock
Airbox/filter/oil	Stock/Uni/Uni
Pipe	CT

DRIVE SYSTEM

Clutch basket	Stock
Clutch plates	Stock
Clutch springs	Stock
Sprockets	Stock
Chain	Stock
Gearing	17/44

FRONT END

A-arms	Timmy Boy
Spindles	Stock
Front shocks/wheel travel	TCS/12"
Steering stem	Stock
Steering stabilizer	none

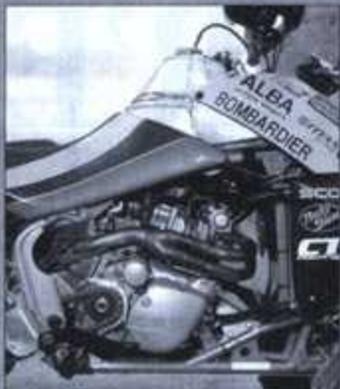
REAR END

Swingarm/length	Stock/stock
Rear axle/width/carryer	Stock
Width	Stock
Carrier	Stock
Rear shock/wheel travel	PEP valved stock/11.5"

TIRES/WHEELS/HUBS

Tires 1/1	Titan Pure Sports Bandit/ Titan Pure Sports Bandit
Tire Sizes 1/1	23x7x10/22x10x9
Tire pressure 1/1	10 psi/10 psi
Wheels 1/1	AC ringed stock/ AC ringed stock
Hubs	stock

Sponsors: Alba Action Sports, CT Racing, Timmy Boy, TCS, HD Lights, Uni Filter, Fox, El Canyon Cycle, Titan, AC Racing, Outrigger, Red Line Oil.



You won't find any one-off snake trickery in the engine. A CT pipe and a Uni air filter with an Underwater near made the 650 fast enough for the win.



CT's Sonic pipe widened the DS's power spread, which helped the DS in the 2000's rocky climb and the wide-open lake beds.

The Baja 2000-winning Bombardier DS650 is a mostly-stock machine, not a factory snake bike. It was just one of the new quads in Alba Action Sports' showroom before it hit the big time. ▼



Timmy Boy fabricated a special large-capacity aluminum fuel tank to stretch the 650's range. In Baja, where deep sand and wide-open running are the norm, the extra fuel is important. For quick removal, the tank breaks to the frame with vacuum cleaner belts. The tank was cut altered, so it stock tank could be used if needed.



A stock swingarm and axle is controlled by a stock shock with TCS-valving. The DS's built 530 chain only needed to be adjusted twice in the entire 2000! Titan Pure Sport Bandit tires proved ideal for Baja's varied conditions and long haulage. The only flats were from other team problems.

The Baja DS650 is faster and more relaxed at speed than a cheater. Surprisingly, the machine runs tight and ready for more riding after all those five miles. ➤



