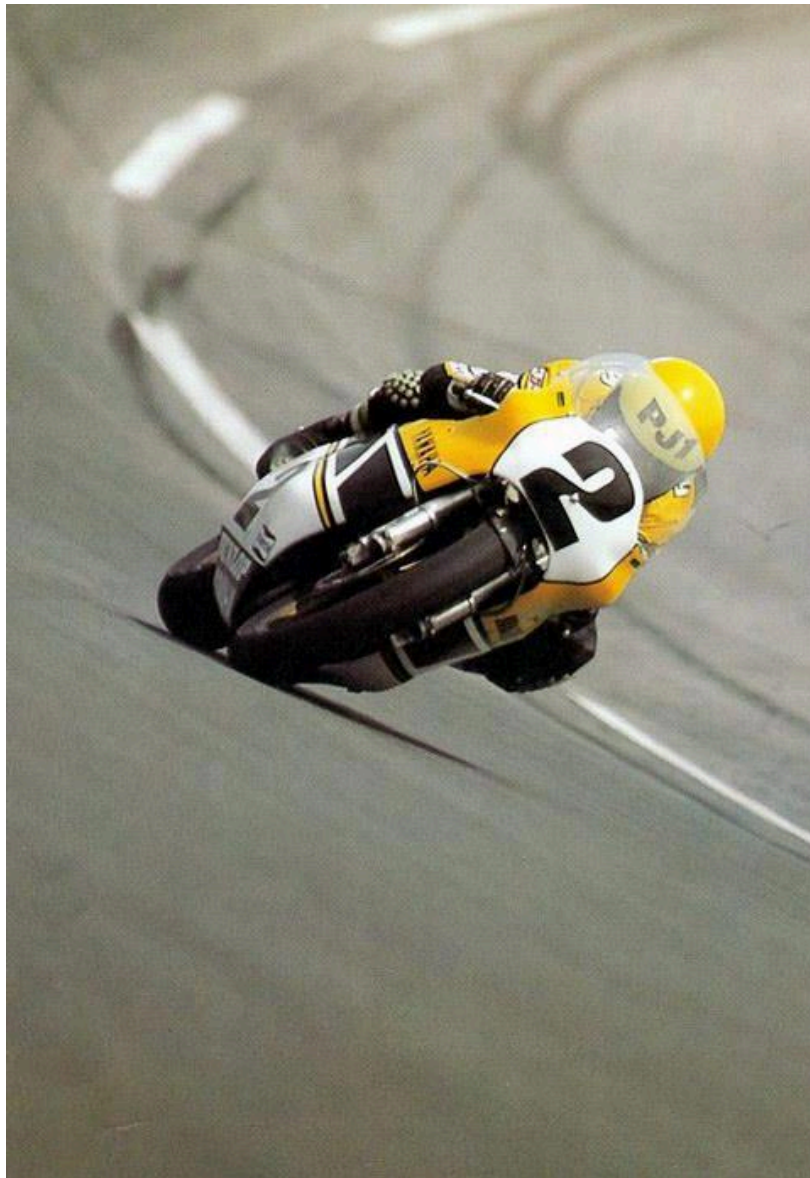


The Back Straight

By Larry Edwards



“King Kenny” exploring new frontiers of BIG SPEED on the high banks at Daytona.
When the great minds of motorcycle racing said “you can’t do that”,
Kenny Roberts said “Hummm, then you better stay outta my way.”

Well its official, the 2013 race season is underway! For the most part all of the major competition series in the United States kick off every year at Daytona. Even though in some ways, from a racing standpoint, Daytona really isn’t what it used to be but, one thing that hasn’t changed in all the years of the Bike Week events is THE TRACK! At least not to a significant extent. Now, right here I have to admit that I have never actually attended a Daytona Bike Week. During my roadracing years I wanted to go BADLY but, my racing rational was...”If I don’t have two engines, one in the bike and one spare in the box, fully built and ready to run...I have no business going.” That may not seem

reasonable to most people but, to a racer there are few things more disappointing than destroying an engine...especially at the first race of the year. Daytona is the garbage disposal of motorcycle racing. If you brake your engine at speed, it's gonna be expensive. Even worse, brake your engine AND crash at speed...it's gonna be REALLY EXPENSIVE and unless you're lucky, it's probably gonna hurt...A LOT!

So anyway, the Daytona AMA Supercross, Daytona Sportbike, Daytona Superbike and AMA Grand National Dirt Track races all provided good racing action. In fact, both of the superbike races this year were won by less than 1.0 second. Pretty tight stuff for sure.

Along with the racing season comes warmer and hopefully a little more predictable weather and we are getting into riding season. WOOO-HOOO!!! There is going to be an Antique Road Run April 13-14 in Jefferson, Texas put on by The Cherokee Chapter. They have invited the Diamond Chapter to be a part of the event. THEN...on the following weekend, as I mentioned in last month's column, Diamond Don's 11th Annual AHRMA Riverport National Vintage Motocross will be held April 18-21, 2013 at Jefferson. Former Factory Honda rocket man Jim Gibson will be Diamond Don's event legend this year. Last year Jim and Oklahoma's own motocross legend, Guy Cooper put on an incredible show during the Marty Tripes 100cc Revenge race...yeah, I mentioned it last month too...full grown men wringing the necks of 100cc motorcycles. It really does have to be seen to be believed. And if you are REALLY BRAVE, plan on staying for the now world famous Sunday night "Wine-down Party". I'll be loading up and rolling down to Jefferson on Thursday morning, April 18th. If you make it down stop by my pit, look for my two bikes with number 63E on them, along the main pit road just before the track crossing, near the Circle F tent. More than likely I'll be right there in the neighborhood. If you only see one bike in my pit, that means I'm out on the track on the other one.

Next up, we are going to have top class motorcycle dirt track racing right here in our backyard on Saturday, May 18th at I-30 Speedway in Bryant. During the brake between Daytona and the next Grand National Championship event, many of the pro dirt trackers are looking for places to go to keep their hotshoes warm. For several years Vintage National Dirt Track rider Paul Covert has been holding a ProAm event at his personal practice track right behind I-30 Speedway. Evidently the speedway folks know a good thing when they see it and now the event is going to be run on the big track. If you have never had the chance to see the pros of the "Rolling Thunder Review" do their stuff, you gotta make it a point to get to this event!

Despite an increasingly wacky political climate, fluctuating gas prices and ammunition shortages we still have Spring time motorcycle riding and racing and for me, it makes the rest the crap livable. As always, if you have questions, comments or subjects that you would like to see covered please drop me a line at my new email address hotshoe63@gmail.com . Hope to see you soon at the next club meeting or event.