

Race Wrap-up

Record 234 Official Finishers at 39th Tecate SCORE Baja 1000

LA PAZ, MEXICO -- As the final checkered flag dropped early Saturday morning for the last of an all-time SCORE record 234 official finishers in the 39th Annual Tecate SCORE Baja 1000, it was obvious that another incredible and colorful chapter had been added to the legacy of this popular desert race down the majestic Baja California, Mexico, peninsula.

In an impressive display of power and poise, American Honda motorcycle teammates Steve Hengeveld, Mike Childress and Quinn Cody, along with the Andy McMillin/Robby Gordon duo, posted the overall motorcycle and 4-wheel victories early Friday to lead the field. The finish line on the outskirts of La Paz closed quietly at 8:03 a.m. Saturday, just after the Honda Ridgeline driven by Gavin Skilton (42 hours, 51, minutes, 25 seconds) became the last of the SCORE record finishers, ending the 43-hour time limit each starter had to complete the journey.

The granddaddy of all desert races, the flagship event of the world's foremost desert racing series was a rugged peninsula odyssey of 1,047.81 miles from Ensenada in Baja California to La Paz, in Baja California Sur. It was the 32nd time the race started in Ensenada, and 17th time it finished in La Paz.

The race-record 431 starters from 38 U.S. States and 12 countries, represented the largest field in the history of the desert classic. They competed in 28 Pro and 6 Sportsman classes for cars, trucks, motorcycles and ATVs. The race was the season finale of the six-race 2006 SCORE Desert Series, the world's foremost desert racing series.

Mexico tourism officials estimated record crowds of over 300,000 spread out along the course from Ensenada down both sides of the Baja California peninsula to La Paz.

This year's Tecate SCORE Baja 1000 desert race will be televised on a delayed basis as a one-hour NBC Sports special for the third consecutive year, airing at 2:30 p.m. (EST) on Sunday, Dec. 10 on the NBC Television Network. It will also air on a delayed basis outside of the U.S. on ESPN International.

One of the many highlights of the second and third day of the grueling race was the record-setting motorcycle run by Ana Cody, 38, of Camarillo, Calif., Cody became the first female rider to the event's history to ride solo to the finish line, covering the course on her Honda XR650R in 33 hours, 35 minutes and 40 seconds, receiving the traditional finishline handshake from SCORE President Sal Fish and a rousing round of applause of several thousand spectators on hand at the time. She was actually one of 16 successful solo riders out of 37 that started the race to earn the Sal Fish SCORE IronRider Awards.

First to cross the finish line was the Honda XR650R of Hengeveld/Childress/Cody, who methodically marched down the grueling course to an overall winning time of 18 hours, 17 minutes and 50 seconds. Childress took the green flag in Ensenada Thursday morning

to ride the first third, Cody rode the middle section for and Hengeveld captured the checkered flag, after riding for 347 miles. The team average speed over the tougher-than-usual course was 57.27 miles per hour.

While the American Honda teammates rode the fastest vehicle in the demanding race, Andy McMillin in their Red Bull Chevy CK1500 won the featured SCORE Trophy-Truck division, leading all four-wheel vehicles to the finish line by covering the extremely demanding course in 19:15:27, with an average speed of 54.41mph.

Winning the unlimited Class 1 for an amazing third straight year, but just missing their third consecutive overall crown, Las Vegas' Troy Herbst and Larry Roeseler, Hesperia, Calif., were the second overall 4-wheel finishers with a class-winning time of 19:56:22 in the Terrible Herbst Motorsports Ford-powered Smithbuilt desert race car. In earning a SCORE record 21st race win since 1997, Herbst also clinched a SCORE record seventh Class 1 season point championship and a record fourth SCORE Overall point championship.

Roeseler's 15th class win in the Tecate SCORE Baja 1000 moved him up to a tie for second on the all-time class win list in this race.

Giving Honda its 10th consecutive victory in this desert racing classic, Hengeveld/Childress/Cody reached the finish line in La Paz at 12:55 a.m. Friday. Hengeveld, of Oak Hills, Calif., earned his seventh class win including six Overall motorcycle titles and extended his winning streak to five, Childress, Wrightwood, Calif., won his second straight and Cody, Santa Barbara, Calif., won his first overall in help provide a race-record 17th overall motorcycle win for Honda in the history of the event.

Finishing as the fastest overall 4-wheel vehicle was the blended racing team of two the legendary families of the sports as driver of record Andy McMillin, Poway, Calif. and team owner Robby Gordon, Charlotte, N.C. pulled off a SCORE Trophy-Truck winning run of 19:15:27 in the Red Bull Chevy CK1500.

"We didn't come here to get second, we came here to win and that's what we did tonight, said the soft-spoken Hengeveld, who lets his driving speak volumes. I didn't have any problems I just kept riding and I don't think they had any problems either. The new sections were really hard but that's what Baja is about. It's not supposed to be easy, it's supposed to be technical and that's what we had here today. We all had our tough sections and it's just a really good, tough course. This is my fifth SCORE Baja 1000 in a row and we made history tonight so I want to thank my other two riders Quinn Cody and Mike Childress. It takes a team to do this and we did it tonight."

"All the Mexican people, thanks for cheering us on, letting us race here, and really supporting us. We look forward to seeing you out on the track. This is the best race in the world! We have a good team, we worked really hard. We made history tonight to win the first SCORE Baja 1000 for the Honda CRF450x and for breaking Johnny Campbell's win-streak and continuing mine with five in a row. I got on the bike at mile 700 and the

bike still ran flawlessly, like it's brand new to the finish line.

Finishing third overall among 4-wheel vehicles and second in the featured SCORE Trophy-Truck division was Las Vegas' B.J. Baldwin, who clinched his first SCORE season point championship in his Chevy Silverado. With brief driving relief from Las Vegas' Tommy Bradley Jr., Baldwin covered the course in 20:01:25.

Ron Whitton, Maricopa, Ariz., drove his Ford F-150 to a surprising fourth overall and third in SCORE Trophy-Truck with a time of 20:39:49.

Brothers Gary and Mark Weyhrich of Troutdale, Ore., and B.J. Richardson of Las Vegas battled to second in Class 1 and fifth overall in 20:44:56 while sixth overall and fourth in SCORE Trophy-Truck was the team of Las Vegas' Brian Collins and Larry Ragland, Cave Creek, Ariz., with a time of 21:07:51 in the Collins Motorsports Chevy Silverado.

In the manufacturer's battle of 'beat the Baja' research and development, a Chevy-powered vehicle for the 10th time, Toyo tires captured its first overall 4-wheel vehicle triumph while ending the 20-year winning streak of BFGoodrich Tires.

"Oh my Gosh! No problems all day – not a single mishap all day. No flat tires, nothing. It was a perfect day. Robby gave me the lead first, physically and I just had to drive it," said Andy McMillin, a third generation desert racer whose family now has 13 class wins and six overalls in this race. "Mark Post was behind us and he was only four minutes behind us and I guess he got stuck in that section up before Loreto, so we had like 15 or 20 minutes on them by the time we hit the highway at mile 850. So we just had to cruise it in. "

"I definitely think that's what won the race for us is the fact that...I knew Robby could drive the whole 1000 miles, so as far as he could go and how fresh he could be the whole way through, that was going to be key. So when the course started to get rough, that's where I would get in and that's where I would be a fresh driver and just do my thing. And I think it paid off in the long run, definitely. We finished a lot faster than I thought we would. I thought it would be about 22, 23 hours, definitely. No, I was not expecting to finish in sunlight."

"I would much rather win this race than all the others combined. This is the granddaddy of all races - the SCORE Baja 1000 to La Paz! How many people get the chance to witness this...since I was a baby, I've been coming down for pre-runs and stuff! I've been coming to La Paz all my life. I went out on the '95 1000 pre-run, '98 1000 pre-run, SCORE Baja 2000 pre-run, I rode with my dad in '02, then I drove in '04, now here I am in 2006 in the winner's circle! It feels great! Seriously, I was starting to weep when I turned onto the pavement when I saw my dad with his hand out the window..."

The Gordon family now eight class wins and six overalls.

"That was a brutal race," said Roeseler, who drove the final 747 miles. "Do I look tired. I

could go without some dust for a while! Troy did a good job but he broke his Achilles tendon about 4 months ago, and I know he had a hard time driving. I got in at Coco's Corner. I don't know what we were then, maybe 20th on the road. With the dust, traffic and water, it was seriously one of the toughest SCORE Baja 1000s I've ever done. I'm not exaggerating. It was brutal! This was really, really tough."

The race-record 431 starters broke the nearly 30-year old previous mark of 346 starters set back in 1977. The SCORE record of 234 finishers broke the all-time SCORE record of 198 set in this race last year.

Hard-charging Darren Hardesty's VW-powered AlumiCraft open-wheel desert race car winning Class 10 in 21:34:28, good enough for a surprising ninth overall in the race. For Hardesty, Ramona, Calif., it was his fourth SCORE Class 10 win of the year, having won his class previously at the SCORE Laughlin Desert Challenge in January, June's Tecate SCORE Baja 500 and September's SCORE Las Vegas Primm 300. Helping Hardesty to the victory was his teammate Mark Randazzo, Poway, Calif., who drove nearly half of the race..

In the SCORE Lite class, Tim Noe, Tom Watson and Gary Arnold of El Cajon, Calif., won for the third time this season in their Jimco-VW.

Las Vegas' Sammy Ehrenberg and teammate L.J. Kennedy, Orange, Calif. pulled off a stunning win in Class 1-2/1600 in a Jimco-VW and finished an impressive 16th overall among 4-wheel vehicles.

Arizona brothers Nick, Larry and Michael Vanderwey won Class 8 in their GMC Sierra for the fourth time this season as well as picking up their second career Tecate SCORE Baja 1000 win.

Completing a perfect season in Class 3 with their fifth-straight victory, and winning the this race for the fifth straight time were brothers Donald Moss, Sacramento, Calif., and Ken Moss, Marysville, Calif., in their sturdy Ford Bronco.

In Class 7SX, Rich Severson, Mesa, Ariz., the 2005 SCORE season point champion, won in this race for the first time in a Ford Ranger.

Josh Hall, Reno, Nev., defending his Stock Full class title, winning for the third time in a Hummer H2.

Winning the Protruck class in a Ford F-150 for the second time in this race was Rick L. Johnson, Oak Hills, Calif., with help from his teammates Dane Cardone, Huntington Beach, Calif., and Jimmy Nuckles, Brawley, Calif.

Mexico's Eric Solorzano claimed his ninth career Class 11 in his stock VW sedan in the history of the popular race.

Mexico's Eric Fisher, of Ensenada, powered his Garibay-VW to victory in this race for a fifth time.

In the Stock Mini Class, veteran Dan Fresh, San Juan Capistrano, Calif., pulled off a strong class win in the maiden race of a Mitsubishi Raider, edging Rod Millen's Toyota FJ Cruiser but a mere 43 seconds.

In winning Class 30 for motorcycle riders over 30 years old, Mexico's Sergio Vega was the highest finisher out of the Mexican entries, finishing fourth overall among motorcycles on his Honda XR650R.

Veteran motorcycle racer Jim O'Neal, Chatsworth, Calif., pulled off an incredible triple victory in the event, winning three age group classes. O'Neal won Class 40 with one team, Class 50 with another, and Class 60 he was co-rider on the team led by Donald Lewis, Marlborough, Ct. All three wins were on Honda XR650R motorcycles.

Other class winners included Chris Bowman, Upland, Calif. (Class 5, VW Baja Bug), Mexico's Marco Nunez (Class 5/1600, VW Baja Bug), Dan Chamlee, Summerland, Calif. (Class 7, Ford Ranger), Aaron Dodson, Mission Viego, Calif., (Class 7S, Ford Ranger) and Tom Grisham, Chula Vista, Calif. (Class 21, Honda CRF450X).

The special Micron Technology Baja Challenge class for identically-equipped Subaru-powered Baja touring cars that helps introduce crossover racers and celebrities to SCORE desert racing and had an all-time high 20 starters, was won by a team led by Micron Chairman, CEO and President Steve Appleton, who was competing for the first time in a SCORE race.

The popular Sal Fish SCORE IronRider Award offered to any motorcycle and ATV racer who finished the race will riding entirely solo drew a SCORE record 37 starters and another SCORE all-time record of 16 finishers. Besides Cody, other Sal Fish SCORE IronRider award winners were: Richie Brown, Dahlonga, Georgia, Honda TRX450R, 39 hours, 22 minutes, 45 seconds (Only solo rider on an ATV to finish); PRO MOTORCYCLE riders:

Class 22 – Anna Cody , Honda XR650R, 33:35:40, James Sones, Honda XR650R, 26:06:4 (Fastest Solo Finisher), Robert Laughlin, Honda XR650R, 29:10:50, Class— Sportsman Motorcycle Over 250cc-Collie Potter, Honda XR650R, 31:58:30, Michael Stein, Chandler, Ariz., Honda XR650R, 32:05:34m Alastair Hilson, Honda XR650R, 32:53:06, Daniel Law, Yamaha WR450F, 33:11:02, Don Robbins, Phoenix, Husqvarna TC510, 33:22:17, Scott Sibbald, Honda CRF450X, 33:26:12, Eugene Lane, Honda XR650R, 36:02:38, T. Morgan Spradling, Honda XR650R, 36:02:59, Thierry Mas, Honda XR650R, 37:22:19, Jeff Matthews, Honda XR650R, 38:06:45, Rome Haloftis, KTM 450EXC, 41:14:32, Alex Melero, 42:23:24

Winners of the special \$10,000 AEM/DIRTSports/UPR.com bonus purse were Mike Belk-\$3,000; B.J. Baldwin-\$2,000; and \$1,000 each by Ron Whitton, Gary Weyhrich,

Brian Collins, Chad Ragland, and Nick Vanderwey. At the finish line, the winners immediately donated \$5,300 of the purse back to the El Oasis Orphanage near Valle de Trinidad in Baja California.

The 2006 SCORE Desert Series includes chase for the \$50,000 Kartek Off-Road contingency bonus to be awarded to several qualified 2006 SCORE Class point champions.

The 2006 SCORE Desert Series also involves the hunt for the annual Toyota Milestone and \$12,000 Toyota True Grit Awards. The prestigious Toyota Milestone Awards are presented to every racer who completes every required mile of every race in the 2006 SCORE Desert Series. The \$12,000 Toyota True Grit purse is split among the SCORE season point champions who are also Toyota Milestone award winners in several non-factory-backed classes.

SCORE official 2006 sponsors are: BFGoodrich Tires-official tire, Sunoco Race Fuels/Bryant Petroleum-official fuel supplier, Bilstein-official shock, Instant Mexico Auto Insurance-official Mexican auto insurance, American Racing-official wheel, Airstar America-official space lighting provider. Associate sponsors are: Tecate Beer, Coca-Cola of Mexico, Las Vegas Events, Terrible Herbst Inc., Kartek Off-Road, Centrix Financial, Fram, Autolite, Prestone, Bendix, American Suzuki, SignPros, P.C.I. Race Radios, McKenzie's Performance Products and Advanced Color Graphics.

Additional associate sponsors, for the 2006 Tecate SCORE Baja 1000 are Micron Technology, Red Bull North America, Cotuco de Ensenada, Fideicomiso Publico para la Promocion Turistica de Ensenada, the government of Baja California Sur, the State Tourism Department of Baja California Sur and the city tourism fund of Loreto.

For more information on the Tecate SCORE Baja 1000, contact SCORE at its Los Angeles headquarters 818.225.8402 or visit the official website of the 2006 SCORE Desert Series at www.score-international.com.

RESULTS

Tecate SCORE Baja 1000 Overall Champions (1967 through 2006)

YEAR DRIVERS/RIDERS VEHICLE TIME

1967 J.N. Roberts/Malcolm Smith Husqvarna 20:48

Vic Wilson/Ted Mangels Meyers Manx VW 27:38

1968 Larry Berquist/Gary Preston Honda 20:38:28

Lary Minor/Jack Bayer Ford Bronco 21:11:32

1969 Larry Minor/Rod Hall Ford Bronco 20:48:10

Gunnar Nilsson/J.N. Roberts Husqvarna 21:35:52

1970 Drino Miller/Vic Wilson Miller VW 16:07

Mike Patrick/Bill Bowers Yamaha 18:31

1971 Parnelli Jones/Bill Stroppe Ford Bronco 14:59

Malcolm Smith/Gunnar Nilsson Husqvarna 16:51
1972 Parnelli Jones/Bill Stroppe Ford Bronco 16:47
Gunnar Nilsson/Rolf Tibblin Husqvarna 19:19
1973 Bobby Ferro/Johnny Johnson Funco VW 16:50
Mitch Mayes/A.C. Bakken Husqvarna 18:42:51
1974 NO RACE
1975 Al Baker/ Gene Cannady Honda 18:22:55
Malcolm Smith/Dr. Bud Feldkamp Hi-Jumper VW 18:55:49
1976 Larry Roeseler/Mitch Mayes Husqvarna 11:30:47
Ivan Stewart Chenowth VW 12:17:28
1977 Brent Wallingsford/Scot Harden Husqvarna 14:37:07
Malcolm Smith/Dr. Bud Feldkamp Funco VW 1510:42
1978 Larry Roeseler/Jack Johnson Husqvarna 14:37:07
Mark Stahl Chenowth VW 12:55:42
1979 Larry Roeseler/Jack Johnson Husqvarna 19:48:04
Walker Evans/Bruce Florio Dodge pickup 20:48:27
1980 Larry Roesler/Jack Johnson Yamaha 12:45:13
Mark Stahl Chenowth VW 13:33:55
1981 Scot Harden/Brent Wallingsford Husqvarna 17:14:05
Mark McMillin/Thomas Hoke Chenowth VW 20:29:14
1982 Al Baker/Jack Johnson Honda 17:25:27
Mickey Thompson/Terry Smith Raceco VW 19:40:23
1983 Dan Smith/Dan Ashcraft Husqvarna 14:48:10
Mark McMillin/Ralph Paxton Chenowth VW 20:29:14
1984 Chuck Miller/Randy Morales Honda 14:34:34
Mark McMillin/Ralph Paxton Chenowth VW 16:27:09
1985 Randy Morales/Derrick Paiement Honda 17:44:42
Steve Sourapas/Dave Richardson Raceco VW 17:54:55
1986 Bruce Ogilvie/Chuck Miller Honda 18:05:52
Mark McMillin/Ralph Paxton Chenowth Porsche 18:26:28
1987 Dan Ashcraft/Bruce Ogilvie Honda 12:02:14
Bob Gordon/Malcolm Smith Chenowth Porsche 13:15:04
1988 Paul Krause/Larry Roeseler/Danny LaPorte Kawasaki 17:53:16
Mark McMillin Chenowth Porsche 18:07:09
1989 Larry Roeseler/Danny LaPorte/Ted Hunnicutt Jr. Kawasaki 17:53:16
Robby Gordon Ford Pickup 18:04:07
1990 Larry Roeseler/Ted Hunnicutt Jr./Danny LaPorte Kawasaki 11:11:45
Bob Gordon/Robyn Gordon/Robby Gordon Chenowth Chevy 12:30:45
1991 Larry Roeseler/Ted Hunnicutt Jr./Marty Smith Kawasaki 13:35:25
Larry Ragland Chevrolet pickup 16:37:35
1992 Danny Hamel/Garth Sweetland/Paul Ostbo Kawasaki 16:50:12
Paul & Dave Simon Ford Ranger 16:53:02
1993 Ivan Stewart Toyota SR5 13:29:11
Danny Hamel/Larry Roeseler/Ty Davis Kawasaki 13:57:23
1994 Danny Hamel/Larry Roeseler/Ty Davis Kawasaki 10:20:47
Jim Smith (Trophy-Truck) Ford 10:28:56

Dave Ashley/Dan Smith Ford F-150 10:43:43
 1995 Paul Krause/Ty Davis/Ted Hunnicutt Jr. Kawasaki 19:31:19
 Larry Ragland (Trophy-Truck) Chevrolet 20:14:12
 Dale White Chevy Truck 21:57:03
 1996 Paul Krause/Ty Davis/Greg Zitterkopf Kawasaki 14:11:02
 Larry Ragland (Trophy-Truck) Chevrolet 14:38:59
 Ryan Thomas Chenowth 15:53:56
 1997 Johnny Campbell/Tim Staab/Greg Bringle Honda 13:19:59
 Larry Ragland (Trophy-Truck) Chevrolet 13:53:46
 Doug Fortin Chenowth 14:31:02
 1998 Johnny Campbell/Jimmy Lewis Honda 18:58:48
 Ivan Stewart Toyota 19:08:20
 1999 Johnny Campbell/Tim Staab Honda 14:15:42
 Larry Ragland Chevy 14:26:36
 2000 Johnny Campbell/Tim Staab/ Craig Smith, Steve Hengeveld Honda 30:54:12
 Dan Smith/Dave Ashley Ford 32:15:39
 2001 Johnny Campbell/Tim Staab Honda 13:51:40
 Doug Fortin/Charlie Townsley Jimco Chevy 14:35:42
 2002 Steve Hengeveld/Johnny Campbell/Andy Grider Honda 16:17:28
 Dan Smith/DaveAshley Ford 16:19:03
 2003 Steve Hengeveld/Johnny Campbell Honda 15:39:52
 Doug Fortin/Charlie Townsley Jimco Chevy 16:24:02
 2004 Steve Hengeveld/Johnny Campbell/Kendall Norman, Honda 15:57:37
 Troy Herbst/Larry Roeseler, Smithbuilt-Ford 16:18:14
 2005 Steve Hengeveld/Johnny Campbell/Mike Childress, Honda 14:20:30
 Larry Roeseler/Troy Herbst, Smithbuilt-Ford 15:06:19
 2006 Steve Hengeveld/ Mike Childress/Quinn Cody, Honda 18:17:50
 Andy McMillin/Robby Gordon 19:15:17
 Tecate SCORE Baja 1000 Overall Victory Breakdown
 Overall 4-Wheel Vehicle
 Chevrolet Truck..... 6
 Chenowth VW.....5
 Ford Truck.....5
 Ford Bronco.....4
 Chenowth Porsche.....3
 Chenowth Chevrolet... 2
 Funco VW..... 2
 Jimco Chevy.....2
 Raceco VW..... 2
 Smithbuilt-Ford 2
 Toyota Truck..... 2
 Miller VW..... 1
 Hi-Jumper VW..... 1
 Dodge pickup.....1
 Meyers Manx VW.....1
 Overall 2-Wheel Vehicle

Honda.....	17
Husqvarna.....	11
Kawasaki.....	9
Yamaha.....	2

-credit: score