

Ground Zero (World's First-Ever Snowbike Race) Blows Everyone Away

By Ron Dillon

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The world's first-ever snowbike race, the 2Moto™ Ground Zero, brought together a combination of famous motorcycle pros, a screaming crowd, and a number of trophy riders to show the world what snowbikes can do. The event was hosted by 2Moto™ Snowbikes, (although it was open to any brand of motorcycle-based snowbike including Explorer™ and Snoxcycle™). Sponsors, eager to jump in on a new motorcycle competition segment, included: Project Filter, MotoTech, 208 Clothing, Scott USA, Charmac, Sprint, Nationwide Insurance, Hinson's Powersports, Frost Mortgage, and Maverik Country Stores who brought in a film crew for their KickStart TV Program. Further event sponsorship and synergy was added when it was announced that Maverik would partner with 2Moto™, Boondockers, Rekluse, Pro Moto Billet, Fastway Performance, Fly Racing and Let's Ride Suzuki, to hold a random drawing for a \$14,000 value package that included a nitrous-equipped and totally blinged-out RMZ 450 Suzuki, and a full set of riding gear.

Anticipation for the event was huge. Snowbikes have been around for a couple of years, and their riders, scattered across Canada, Europe and the United States, have started getting really fast on the snow. But, as skills have improved, the inevitable questions of "*Who is the fastest?*" and "*Which brand is the best?*" had been percolating for months, and 2Moto™ decided that it was time to find out. With only eight weeks to create the event, and a sour economy, the promoter had to hustle, but sponsors eagerly came on board, riders started tuning bikes, and a number of famous motorcyclists, including John Dowd, Mike Metzger, Steve Hatch, Robie and Bret Peterson, Derek Mahoney, and Malcolm Smith's son Alexander, eagerly agreed to give it a shot, despite the fact that none had ever ridden a snowbike before. Since the entire affair really was the first of its kind, it was dubbed *Ground Zero*.

It would be an understatement to say that the riders were fired up. Metzger just couldn't wait to get on a snowbike, and since he was in the middle of relocating from Southern California to Northern Idaho, he swung in a week before the event for some early training. After it proved almost impossible to pry him off the

machine, Metzger's ravings and gestures, convinced the 2Moto™ staff that he was excited about snowbiking. When Dowd, the Petersons, Hatch, Smith and the others acted in a similar fashion, the day before the race, the event organizers knew that they had created a whole new group of snowbike fanatics. The only questions remaining were trophy rider and crowd attendance, and of course everyone wondered just how fast the riders, especially the pros, would go in an actual race.

On race day, perfect sunny weather greeted a crowd of over 1,200, and 18 eager trophy riders showed up from as far away as Canada to take a shot at racing history. The ¾ mile, Supercross style track, laid out on the McCall Public Golf Course, featured some rolling jumps and banked turns and during practice, Dowd and local rider, Richie Reynolds, just railed, from lap one, nearly dragging their handlebars in the bermed turns, and running lap times right at one minute, with the other Pro Legends showing nearly equal speed and style. Clearly there was going to be some close racing, and Todd Seaver, *The Voice* of Utah's famous Miller Motorsports Park, was on hand to further stir the crowd.

Saturday's competition consisted of three classes: Pro Legends, Trophy A Main and Trophy B Main. Former pro motocrosser Shane Donaca, bought a 2Moto™ unit one day before the event, and drove over from Portland. At age 41, he immediately showed fire, and he ran his Honda away with the B Main event win. Local rider, Reynolds, also showed similar domination in the A Main, turning incredible lap times in the 58-second range as he stormed to victory. Behind the fastest of the fast, other Ground Zero stories were being written. KickStart TV host, Ron Duncombe fought his way through qualifying to make the A Main where he finished sixth, and Channel 2 weatherman Brian Carrington just missed making the B Main. Kickstart TV contestant John Lamm, (who had never even seen a snowbike before, also improved markedly during the day and just missed making the B Main). Clearly, everyone from pros to green beginners, were getting the hang of racing their dirt bikes on the snow.

The event ended with the Pro Legends Main. Based on their speed, both of the Trophy Main event riders, Donaca and Reynolds, were allowed to line up with the big boys in the Pro Legends Final, and they didn't disappoint, with Donaca storming to yet another holeshot. Dowd is however, still one of the fastest riders in the world, and he quickly dispatched Donaca and proceeded to check out, turning some breath-taking lap times and blowing the crowd away with his cornering speed. Reynolds quickly moved up from a mid-pack start to take control of second, with Metzger, Donaca, Mahoney and Hatch staging a ten-lap war for third through sixth, often dicing just inches apart. The remaining Pro Legends

entertained the crowd with their hooting, hollering and roosting, and some impressive laps as well, and at event's end, the pros took a well-deserved victory lap, waving and smiling at the screaming crowd, and then spending plenty of time signing autographs.

With no dust or flying debris, and the extreme lean angles, many commented that the racing was some of the best that they'd ever seen, and although a few crashes looked impressive, injuries were zero. Before the machines had even cooled off, talk was in the air of adding snowbiking to such famous events as the Winter X-Games and at venues such as Mammoth, and riders, including the pros, were asking when and where the next race would be held. Clearly history was made, a new kind of motorcycle competition was born, and Dowd further established himself as one, amazingly versatile rider.

For more information on snowbiking and snowbike racing visit: www.2moto.com.

Results

Pro Legends: 1. John Dowd (2Moto SUZ); 2. Richie Reynolds (2Moto SUZ); 3. Derek Mahoney (2Moto HON); 4. Mike Metzger (2Moto SUZ); 5. Shane Donaca (2Moto HON); 6. Steve Hatch (2Moto KAW); 7. Robie Peterson (2Moto KAW), 8 Bret Peterson (2Moto GAS); 9. Alexander Smith (2Moto KTM); 10. Dave Olcott (2Moto KTM). **Trophy A Main:** 1. Richie Reynolds (2Moto SUZ); 2. Brian Allen (2Moto HON); 3. Russell Warren (2Moto HON); 4. Michael Fowler (2Moto KTM); 5. Darryl Vannieuwenhuise (2Moto KTM); 6 Ron Duncombe (2Moto SUZ). **Trophy B Main:** 1. Shane Donaca (2Moto HON); 2. Joe Sheridan (2Moto HUSA); 3. Lynn Hodges (2Moto HON); 4. Nick Schacht (2Moto KAW); 5. Ben Grant (2Moto YAM); 6. Cailen McCurdy (Explorer KAW).