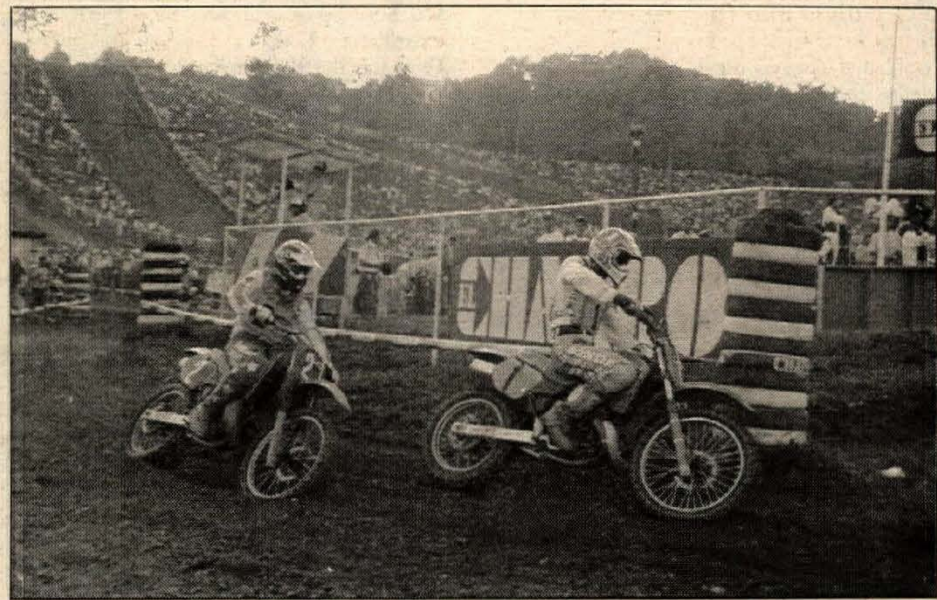




David Bailey negotiates a turn on the rough Italian track while 30,000 spectators crowd the hills around him.



Ricky Johnson, Johnny O'Mara and David Bailey listen to the national anthem after totally dominating the Motocross des Nations.



Bailey leads Johnson into the final corner in the day's last moto; moments later the two made contact and Johnson crashed.

## USA rules the world in Motocross des Nations

By Tom Mueller

MAGGIORA, ITALY, SEPT. 21

Team USA left no doubt that it is the superior force in world class motocross competition by claiming the top spots in every moto at this year's Motocross des Nations, held near scenic Lake Maggiore in northern Italy.

The American contingent, comprised of Honda teammates Rick Johnson, David Bailey and Johnny O'Mara, was untouchable in each of the three 30-minute motos

run on the mountainous 1.2-mile course. Two riders from each country rode in each moto and the final tally read Johnson, O'Mara 1-2 in moto one; Bailey, O'Mara 1-2 in moto two; and Bailey, Johnson 1-2 in moto three.

Bailey on a 500cc bike and 250cc-

mounted Johnson rode admirably, but everyone in the American camp admitted that it was Johnny O' who put on a real show. O'Mara rode his production 125 to the limits, and in moto two diced up through the pack and then passed 500cc World Champion David Thorpe, who rode a works 500cc Honda to third.

This win marks the sixth consecutive year that the USA team has won the event, but never before has the team as a whole performed so flawlessly. Great Britain, Italy, Finland and Holland claimed second through fifth, respectively, in the final standings.

A crowd estimated at 30,000 jammed onto the Maggiora course to watch the prestigious World Championship event. Though partial to their own Italian riders, it was the Americans who most came to see. Thousands of fans thronged around the USA camp, and Johnson, Bailey and O'Mara spent hours each day signing

autographs. It was easy to see why — all three riders used their Supercross skills to thrill the crowd. In Saturday's practice session, O'Mara grabbed some air at the top of a huge uphill, and then threw a thumbs-up at his fans. The crowd roared as the announcer exclaimed, "American Johnny O'Show — magnificent!"

"Sure, I can't climb those hills like the bigger bikes, but I can come down the other side at three times the speed," O'Mara said after finishing practice. "I can whip it into the corners really hard using all that momentum and intimidate the other guys."

"If I get good starts I can win," Johnson said after posting a two-minute, 26-second lap for the day's fastest time. "The hills aren't just horsepower, you have to use technique. This is really different from the states; it's tougher than Unadilla. They could never run intermediates here - they'd get killed."