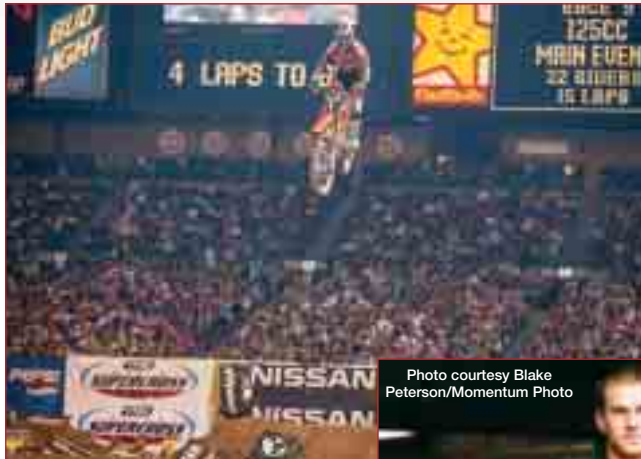


Team AMSOIL Soars, Takes Home Hardware in Supercross Opener

Golden Boy Picks Up Where He Left Off

LaRocco Shows Never-Quit Attitude

Photo courtesy Blake Peterson/Momentum Photo



Travis Preston proves that winning a national title in 2002 was no fluke.

Preston Proves 2002 No Fluke

Travis Preston is a tall, lanky guy with that California cool look. You might expect to see him on the beach. Instead, he rides the ebb and flow of motorcycle racing. Right now he's riding the crest of the wave and taking AMSOIL along with him. The Team AMSOIL rider is proving that last season's 125cc West Championship was no fluke. Preston has plenty of pressure to repeat, but it didn't show as he prepared for the AMA supercross series at Edison International Field in Anaheim, Calif. on January 4. Maybe the lofty expectations did affect him a bit as he fell in his preliminary heat. The budding star got up quickly, regained composure and went on to qualify for the final. Teammate Chris Gosselaar flew around the track for the win.

The main event was spectacular for AMSOIL/Chapparral/Honda Racing. Gosselaar grabbed his second holeshot of the night for an early lead. By lap four Preston had caught him and passed him using a great blocking move on the way to the front. It was all Preston from that point on. Gosselaar finished fourth, but all the talk was about Preston. He was never challenged on his way to his first victory of the season and took a giant first step toward retaining his number one plate.

Photo courtesy Blake Peterson/Momentum Photo



Travis Preston poses with his 2003 Anaheim supercross trophy. The number one rider uses the number one synthetic oils... AMSOIL.

Photo courtesy Blake Peterson/Momentum Photo



LaRocco flies high only to land hard in the 2003 supercross season opener.

Look for Supercross Superstar in Front at the End

They don't call Mike LaRocco "Iron Mike" for nothing. There is no quit in him. The track layout at Edison International Field for the 2003 supercross opener was challenging to say the least, even for the veterans.

LaRocco got one of the best starts in the final. The leader of Team AMSOIL came out of the gate third. Often "The Rock" is pushing ahead from the pack, but with this start fans knew something extraordinary was about to happen. By the middle of the first lap the reigning World Champion and 2002 US Open champion had his AMSOIL 250cc Honda in second place and flying. Behind him was Travis Pastrana and teammate Michael Byrne. Coming out of a corner entering a difficult whoops section, LaRocco got cockeyed and went down. Pastrana with nowhere to go smacked hard into the fallen icon. Like a train wreck, Byrne crashed into the two only to be followed by another rider. Ironically it was Pastrana that ended LaRocco's promising 2002 campaign by causing an injury. The pileup left Byrner's bike bent and his night was done. Pastrana pulled off soon after. LaRocco mustered the strength to go on and finished 17th. It's that kind of character that will have LaRocco and AMSOIL at the front of the pack when all is said and done.