

# MOTION TIRE



## 300 Race Report

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The rocky landscape of the Wagon Wheel OHV area located just East of Ridgecrest, California would set the stage for the SNORE/MORE Motion Tire 300, on April 12, 2014. Over 150 state-of-the-art vehicles would rumble to life early Saturday morning, as staging for the Motion Tire 300 began at 7:30. The “War on the Ridge” was about to get underway, as racers from two separate racing associations were about to embark on a 300 mile battle for off-road supremacy.

After more than 140 race vehicles left the starting line that morning, 7 vehicles remained. The stock bug's, Class 11, would leave the line having to navigate through three treacherous laps of what remained of the Motion Tire 300 course. Simply completing one 55 mile lap of the Ridgecrest course in a Class 11 bug would be a feat for most, but on this April day, one Class 11 driver would have a dominating performance. One worthy of the COLDCOCK Whiskey Most Dominant Driver Award.

Six other Class 11 competitors set out to conquer the California desert that morning, but pilot of the



#1127 VW Bug, Eric Gunn, would set a pace that left them racing for 2nd place. After 55 miles of racing, Eric had completed his first of three laps gapping the field by over 8 minutes. The course was quickly deteriorating, making the remaining 110 race miles that much more treacherous for the 5 remaining Class 11 competitors. But after 110 miles of the Motion Tire 300 were in the books, Eric had increased his lead to 12 minutes over second place, and setting another fast lap in class this time by over 2 minutes.

With only 55 miles to go, one might think that Eric would throttle back, cruise around the course safely to ensure victory, but not on this day. Eric put together one more dominant lap, setting another fast lap in class, this time by nearly 15 minutes! It would be over 27 minutes before the second place finisher would cross the finish line, earning Eric the class win and the COLDCOCK Whiskey Most Dominant Driver Award, taking home \$1000 cash and a custom trophy that held a fresh bottle of COLDCOCK American Herbal Whiskey!

Another competitor that had his sights on the Most Dominant Driver Award was Sammy Ehrenberg. Sammy started near the rear of the Class 10 field on Saturday morning, but by the end of lap 1, Sammy had brought car #1075 to the front. Running at such a fast pace on the challenging Ridgecrest course would come with no setbacks. Always in search of improvement, Sammy was running a new tire combination; this combination was no match for what the Motion Tire course had to offer. Sammy suffered downtime from three flat tires. While these flats kept him from taking home the COLDCOCK Most Dominant Driver Award, Sammy still took home the first place honors in, followed by Class 10 rookie Geoffrey Cooley.



The largest field of the day was Class 1400, with 27 trucks leaving the line. Sonnenberg, driver of #1487 [when asked how his race went] commented with "Pretty rough course, showed up Friday pre ran 1 lap and burned up a ring and pinion. Didn't find out until the middle of tech; and found a replacement but had to pick it up in Phelan. Our team got the new gears in about 1 am Saturday morning and started the race just to bust up an upper ballpoint 25 miles in which ended our day. Still



had a blast though, hope to see you guys in Lucerne" While Ryan's weekend didn't go as planned, pilot of the 1466 truck, Justin Oquendo couldn't complain. He crossed the Motion Tire 300 finish line over 30 minutes ahead of 2<sup>nd</sup> place finisher Allen Byma and 3<sup>rd</sup> place finisher Ryan Heryford. Adam Leonhardt brought home his Lucas Oil sponsored truck in 4<sup>th</sup> place, keeping him atop of the 2014 Engage Off Road Points Championship with a 10 point lead over Ryan Heryford.

The other sportsman truck class battling for the 2014 Engage Off Road Points Championship is Class 2000. Twelve leaf sprung trucks left the line on Saturday, with only 7 of them making it to the finish. The first across the Motion Tire 300 finish line was Trevor Messina, leading the rest of the field by 46 minutes. David Barr made it to the finish in 4<sup>th</sup> place, securing his spot atop the MORE Class 2000 points standings.

With 16 entries taking the starting line, the Class 9 race was sure to be a good one. The three driver effort of Johnny Burns, Greg Goltz, and Jeff Johnsen crossed the line just over 10 minutes behind Class 9 legend, Corey Torres. While this race wasn't easy for anyone, Johnny would have very positive words to say about their efforts to chase down the 1<sup>st</sup> place finisher Corey Torres. Johnny Burns started the first lap at position number 10. He drove it up to position number 3 and handed it off to Greg Goltz. "Greg ran two clean consistent laps, then came in and we put Jeff Johnsen in for the last lap. Jeff brought the car home and got 2nd place. Transaxle Engineering's transmission worked flawlessly, the Babe Jones Barn Burners engine had plenty of power, and the Yokohama tires were awesome-no flats on a super rough course." explained Johnny Burns. Taking home third place honors was Clint Braun #924.



When it comes to moving up in the classes Jonathan Libby has shown that he can run up front with the big dogs. The move up from 1450 to Unlimited Truck began in February at SNORE's Battle at Primm resulting in a 3<sup>rd</sup> place finish. The Motion Tire 300 would prove to be another great race for Libby as he powered his the Sway-A-Way suspended truck steadily through the hard proven 300 miles earning him one more step up the podium, finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in Unlimited Truck. For a terrific show of sportsmanship, Jonathan's team of Psychotic Fab was given a 10-minute time

correction for stopping to assist a fellow racer. The 1405 of Nich Isenhour had rolled over on course, and without hesitation, Libby stopped his race to assist his former class competitor.

Sportsmanship like this is the fundamental attitude of desert racing. Many might pass you by when you give them the thumbs, or safely out of your vehicle, but when you are bonded together as a team sometimes getting that trophy just isn't worth leaving a friend behind. With the assistance of Jonathan, Isenhour was able to cross the finish line in 8<sup>th</sup> place, class 1400.



Always a fan favorite, Class 1600 brought a field of 18 to take on the Motion Tire 300. The 1600 battle is often one of the tightest races of the day, but this would not be the case on this dusty Saturday. The Ridgecrest course would eat up 1/3 of the field after lap 1, leaving Fernie Padilla out front from beginning to end. After leaving first off the line Saturday morning, Fernie put together a pair of fast laps that would allow him to hold the lead all race long, even with some troubles on the last two laps. 1600 veterans Rick Boyer, and

Timothy Craig would complete the 1600 podium, keeping the Craig family atop the MORE 1600 Points Standings and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the MORE Overall Points Championship.

Class 12 had one of the largest turnouts in recent events, with 16 cars taking on 300 miles of the brutal California desert. The Motion Tire course took down many of the favorites, claiming early front-runners Daniel Folts, and Rick Poole after three laps, leaving back to back points champion Ralph Potts alone at the top of the podium, crossing the finish line 12 minutes ahead of Gregg Hawkes and Class 12 Rookie Matt Ferrato.

Clay Flippin, pilot of the #175 unlimited buggy would run one of the few trouble free races of the day. Clay would take the early lead Saturday morning and never look back. Title sponsor of the race, Motion Tire Motorports, would earn a 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish as Richard Boyle crossed the line 10 minutes behind Flippin, with Garrick Freitas completing the podium in third.



The Motion Tire 300 was definitely a great race for Jergensen Racing. First overall finisher, Kyle Jergensen, recently celebrating his birthday prior to this race, cut the celebrations short to get the #44 Trick Truck ready for battle. Kyle and his navigator, Robert Llewellyn, are a team that is proving to mesh well and showing that they are a top contender in the series. When asked how the teams race went Kyle explained, "Our hours and hours of practice is starting pay off. This might have been a SNORE/MORE, race but there was some good competition out

here and a brutal course. Coming into this race with a goal to test the new changes that Regie had made in this last prep. We pushed it at the same pace that I will at the Baja 500 to see how the truck holds up. So far 100% better and that's what's makes me feel so much better than I did a month ago. The win was cool too. Proud of my friends and family for their continued dedication, couldn't do it without you."

This course was unforgiving for many racers who underestimated its technical sections. Jagged rocks, tight spaces, strategic elevation changes, and let's not forget the fellow competitors. Many would enter this race with the expectations of being the "hard charger" in class, but the Motion Tire 300 course devoured over half the field leaving only 73 official finishers out of the 153 that left the starting line. Giant boulders, nasty silt beds, and lurking rain wash outs were much to blame for 53% casualty rate, but at the end of the day 73 vehicles were able to conquer the rugged course. After starting in the early morning hours, the race would be cut off in the mid afternoon with the last car to leave the poles at 3:28pm making its final lap. The last official finisher was Class 12 competitor Michael Benedict. Michael crossed the finish line with an official time of 8 hours, 34 minutes, and 40 seconds. Congratulations to Michael and all 73 official finishers of the SNORE/MORE Motion Tire 300.

The Motion Tire 300 marked a new beginning for the SNORE/MORE partnership. The crew of Dirty Lens Cap productions came out to produce a live feed, covering all aspects of event. They arrived at Tech and Contingency Friday afternoon and began interviewing racers coming through the inspection area and vendor row. Krista Lynn and Jeffery Musgrave would co-host the ustream.com internet broadcasting, produced by Mohawk Mike. Their coverage of the event would not end on Tech row, but would continue on Saturday providing live coverage from the race course for the Motion Tire 300's entirety. The members of the Dirty Lens crew then capped off the weekend with live coverage of the awards from Tommy Tee's Sport Bar in downtown Ridgecrest. If you were unable to make it to the race you can go to their social media page on Facebook and catch up on the race weekend events. <https://www.facebook.com/dirtylenscap> A big thanks to Engage Off Road, and the Dirty Lens Cap crew for making the live stream a reality!

This 2014 MORE season is off to a great start with contingency money from KarTek valuing over \$10,000, The Engage Off Road Championship Points Purse of \$7000, the \$5000 MORE Overall Points Fund and many others offering up great contingency prizes. We can't thank the companies that support our racers enough. We are looking to improve each race and need your feedback to do so. Please take a few minutes to visit our forums that are easily located under the main navigation system and post in the Race Talk forums.

All photos provided by Dezeret Wife Photography. Check out all their great shots from the SNORE/MORE Motion Tire 300 at: <http://dezertwifephotography.zenfolio.com>.

#### Additional Class Winners

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Limited Sportsman – Andrew Shapiro

Class 7 – Jon Lee

Unlimited Sportsman – John Morgan

Class 3000 – Anthony Killian

Class 1800 – Colton Gubler

Class 5 – John Willard

Class 3 – Bob Morton

Class 5/1600 – Raul Solano

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## Fast Lap Awards

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Unlimited Truck – Kevin Lyons

Class 1 – Clay Flippin

Class 10 – Sammy Ehrenberg

Class 12 – Rick Poole

Class 1600 – Curt Geer

Class 7 – Jon Lee

Class 5 – Wendell Mortensen

Class 5/1600 – Raul Solano

Class 9 – Corey Torres

Class 11 – Eric Gunn

Class 1400 – Sal Gomez

Class 2000 – Trevor Messina

Limited Sportsman – Andrew Shapiro

Unlimited Sportsman – John Morgan