

The Journal for Off-Road Motorsports and Performance Enthusiasts

SCORE JOURNAL

INTERNATIONAL OFF-ROAD RACING

Volume 11 - Issue 6 | 2025

BFGoodrich
Tires

SCORE
BAJA 500
57th

**TWO-TIMING
MUD SLINGERS
TWO-IN-A-ROW
WINNERS**

10
SCORE JOURNAL
YEARS



**BFGOODRICH TIRES
2025 SCORE
BAJA 500
IN-DEPTH LOOK**

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CONGRATS TO THE WINNERS

BY DAN SANCHEZ, EDITOR

This year's BFGoodrich Tires 57th SCORE Baja 500 race was a spectacular show of consistency and determination. What was most amazing to see was that many of the winners in various classes had won at the SCORE San Felipe 250, making this their second win in a row this season. Other racers made it their second SCORE Baja 500 win, repeating their class wins from 2024.

No matter what the class, this was not an easy feat. The course was inundated with rain and many of the sections were wet and muddy, before and during the race. This caused some major DNF's this race, where many, especially in the four-wheel classes, couldn't finish the course.

But SCORE racers know that Baja isn't easy, and those that expect the worst and hope for the best come out on top. This issue has some amazing in-depth stories directly from the various racers in many of the classes. The SCORE Journal staff love talking to racers and hearing their enthusiasm and energy when they describe how their race went, and what the win means to them and their teams.

As the season progresses, we look forward to the next race, the 6th SCORE Baja 400, a prelude and testing race for the SCORE Baja 1000.



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Surviving Baja Season 2

The second season of Surviving Baja officially launches on TUBI August 1, 2025. After the enthusiastic response from off-road racing fans towards Season 1, the latest season of the show takes viewers through each of the four SCORE International races of the 2024 season with stunning cinematography and full-action racing footage. Watch it on tubitv.com.



SCORE's New Tech Director

SCORE-International announced Federico Montes Orozco as its new Tech Director. Orozco, is from Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico and brings 37 years of experience as an Off-Road racer and seven years as part of the Tech Inspectors staff at SCORE, under the guidance of Dan Cornwell.

"Federico is a person who loves this sport," says SCORE President and Race Director, Jose A. Grijalva. Federico is passionate about off-road, just

like Dan Cornwell, to whom I extend my thanks for his excellent work at SCORE. The new era of this company would not have been as successful without his vision and extensive experience within this sport."

An experienced racer, Montes has competed in SCORE International within Class 5-1600, Class 9, Class 1/2-1600, and Score Lites. He founded Montes Motors and Competition Transmissions in 1989, a company that remains active in his hometown, providing services to various race teams in Mexico and the United States.

Montes will be the first SCORE Tech Director with Latin roots, a position previously held by Bill Savage, Art Savedra, and Dan Cornwell, who contributed their knowledge and passion not only to SCORE and its racers but also to improving safety for motorcycles and vehicles participating in off-road events.

Along with Montes, the tech staff includes Daniel Gonzalez, who will specialize as a UTV inspector, as well as Juan Campos, Blanca Sarmiento, Marilyn Montes, Alba Cruz, Lucia Montes, Adan Olachea, Eduardo Toledo, and Martin Flores, all of whom have previous experience in this role within SCORE International.

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BY CLARIOS

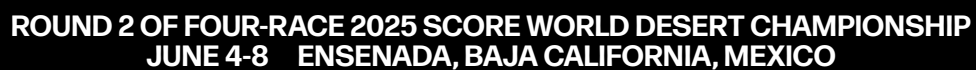


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OPTIMA[®]

The logo for the SCORE Baja 500 57th is a shield-shaped emblem. At the top, the word "SCORE" is written in red, blocky, sans-serif capital letters with a white outline. Below it, the words "BAJA 500" are prominently displayed in a large, stylized font. "BAJA" is in red with a white outline, and "500" is in white with a black outline. Both are slanted to the right. At the bottom of the shield, the text "57th" is written in a grey, sans-serif font. The entire logo is set against a black background with a red and white border.

2025 SCORE BAJA 500

Fast Facts And An In-Depth Look

BY DAN SANCHEZ



this second race of the 2025 SCORE World Desert Championship Season was not an easy one for the 208 teams who registered and began pre-running weeks before the start. The days leading up to the BFGoodrich Tires 57th SCORE Baja 500 came with rain, and made the course wet and muddy. By race day, however, the sun provided mild temperatures and most of the 461.03-mile course had dried enough for racers to challenge it.

Teams from all across the world have entered into this race, including Mexico, the United States, Argentina, Australia, Canada, India, and Puerto Rico.

FAST FACTS Entrants : **202** Finishers : **131**

OVERALL WINNERS



ALAN AMPUDIA

**Overall Winner
& SCORE Trophy
Truck Winner**



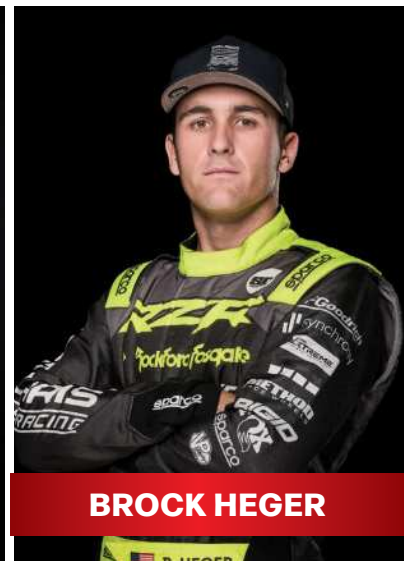
ELLIOT WATSON

**Overall Open Wheel
Winner - Class 10**



TYLER LYNN

**Overall Moto
Winner - Pro Moto
Unlimited**



BROCK HEGER

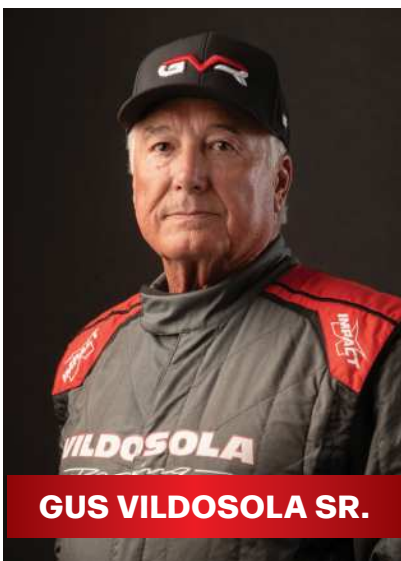
**Overall UTV Winner -
Pro UTV Open**

METHOD RACE WHEEL TOP QUALIFIERS



CHRISTOPHER POLVOORDE

**SCORE Trophy
Truck - (3:55:4)
No. 94**



GUS VILDOSOLA SR.

**SCORE Trophy
Truck Legends-
(4:22:7) No. 1L
w/Ricky Johnson**



ETHAN EBERT

**SCORE Trophy
Truck 2WD- (4:15:8)
No. 81T**



JASON MCNEIL

**SCORE Trophy
Truck Spec- (4:15:0)
No. 234**

SURVIVING BAJA

SEASON 2

Launches on TUBI on August 1st!

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CELEBRITY RACERS

Several notable personalities participated at this year's SCORE Baja 500, including Donald 'Cowboy' Cerrone, 42, Edgewood, New Mexico, a UFC Hall of Famer who has a strong passion for off-road racing and competed in the Pro UTV Stock Class (#3902 Can-Am). Cerrone secured 23 victories during his tenure in the UFC's lightweight and welterweight divisions, earning widespread admiration for his aggressive fighting style, numerous finishes, and signature cowboy attire upon entering the cage.

SCORE fan favorite, Robby Gordon, 56, Anaheim, Calif. Was back to compete in the SCORE Trophy Truck Class. Gordon is a former competitor in the IndyCar Series, NASCAR Series, and Dakar Rally, once again represented the RPM Off Road team from Bristol, Tennessee. Gordon's last SCORE Race was at the 38th King Shocks SCORE San Felipe 250, where he drove the No.5 Chevy Geiser V-16.



Juan Pablo Zurita, 29, Mexico City, is a Mexican actor and influencer making his debut in SCORE with the Honda Racing team in the Pro UTV NA class. Zurita boasts over 33 million followers across his official social media platforms. Zurita starred in the 2024 Mexican film *Una Pequeña Confusion* (A Small Confusion) and appeared in the Netflix series *Luis Miguel*, based on the life of the renowned Mexican singer. He is currently filming the second season of *Carpe DM Con Juanpa*, a program chronicling his unforgettable experiences and adventures across various countries worldwide.

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We've stepped up for our country during world wars,
a global pandemic, and too many economic upheavals to count.
Through those trials, our commitment to America has only gotten stronger.

So while nobody can say for certain what the future holds,
we can tell you exactly where we'll be.

Ford Motor Company.
From America. For America.



L I N C O L N

1. Based on S&P Global Mobility CY 2024 US Light Vehicle Production data. 2. Based on S&P Global Mobility CY 2024 Import Sourcing Module data.
3. Based on 2024 year-end hourly employment data. 4. Based on S&P Global Mobility CY 2024 US Light Vehicle Production data and CY 2024 US Light Vehicle Sales data.

CELEBRATING SPONSORS AND MORE

Before race day, SCORE International celebrated one evening with its participating sponsors. Then there was the birthday of legendary off-road icon, Ivan Stewart whose birthday falls on the weekend of the SCORE Baja 500. **SJ**



■ Celebrating Ivan Stewart's birthday.

■ Jennifer Ignacio, Jackson Motorsports group (Center) Nate Hunt BFGoodrich Tires Off-Road Motorsports Manager (L) and Mike Emerson of VP Racing (R)



BFGOODRICH TIRES 57TH SCORE BAJA 500



THE COURSE

Mountains, Good Twisties And Beach

BY DAN SANCHEZ

PHOTOS BY GET SOME PHOTO



the BFGoodrich Tires 57th SCORE Baja 500 race course extended 461.03-miles across the Baja Peninsula for all Pro Classes including Moto and Quads. The Sportsman classes had a 416.43-mile course. Nevertheless, the course meandered along the Eastern mountain ranges and up the Western coast, crossing Federal Highways and with several speed zones.

The ceremonial start was on the Boulevard Costero in the center of Ensenada, Mexico. This took racers onto Federal Highway 3, where they had to follow local and state traffic speeds, until they reached Rancho Nelson where the actual timing began. With the timed start, the course around Rancho Nelson had several jumps, and a safe place for spectators to watch with food, drinks and more. After rushing out onto the desert, the course left Rancho Nelson and continued towards the Piedras Gordas and out to Ojos Negros until it reached Tres Hermanos.



■ **Racers made their way to Rancho Nelson where their timed-start began. With huge jumps and tight turns, the area was filled with people, food vendors, and more to spectate**

Again, racers exited onto Federal Highway 3 until re-entering the dirt course near race-mile 80 that would take them to the Alamo Summit and Santa Catarina. The course took racers passing the Goat Trail on their way to Highway 3 at race-mile 120 to Valle de La Trinidad.

Continuing South towards Mike Sky Ranch and beyond, the course turns West near race-mile 180, at the Los Encino's Wash, where it continues to the Santo Domingo Wash. Here the Sportsman cut-off continues west for those racers, while the rest of the teams continue South West towards San Quintin at race-mile 240.

Several speed zones along the coast keep the racers moving North until reaching near San Antonio Del Mar at race-mile 300, then turning East near Punta Colonet and back North to Erendira and the Ejido Uruapan. At this point the course heads North East towards Ojos Negros before turning West back towards Ensenada and the finish line.

In all, the course passes along 11 washes and racers had 18-hours to make it to the finish line to complete the course. **SJ**



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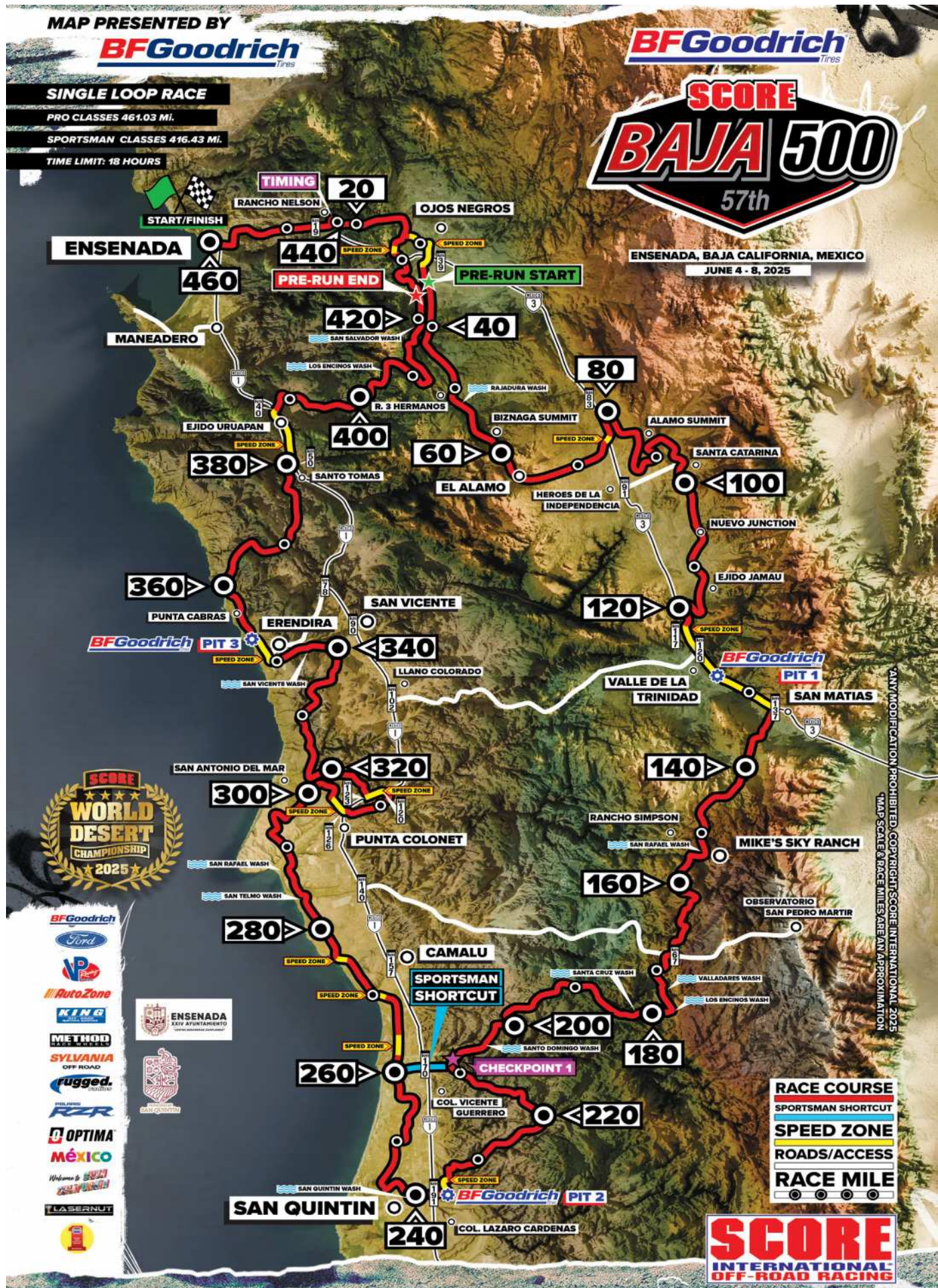
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BFGOODRICH TIRES 57TH SCORE BAJA 500





PERRY MCNEIL GRAND MARSHAL OF 57TH BFGOODRICH SCORE BAJA 500

BY DAN SANCHEZ



ongtime off-road racing legend Perry McNeil, owner of McNeil Racing, is the Grand Marshal of the 57th BFGoodrich Tires SCORE Baja 500. Perry and his son Mike have been long-time off-road vehicle builders and racers, competing in Class 7, 7SX, and Class 5 vehicles.

"It is a great honor to have my many years of racing recognized," said McNeil. "Being acknowledged by SCORE International is very important in my life. I have had many championships and victories in Baja, so many memories, so many friends. It is something that fills my family and me with pride."

Over his 40-years of racing in SCORE, Perry McNeil has accumulated numerous class wins in the SCORE San Felipe 250 (4), and the SCORE Baja 1000 (12), and has competed in 50 SCORE Baja 1000 races. He also competed at the SCORE Baja 2000 finishing second in his class. McNeil is still active in off-road racing, and his business, which has lasted more than 50-years, is in manufacturing high-quality fiberglass bodies and panels for off-road racers and enthusiasts. Perry's Accomplishments as a racer and as a major influencer contributing to SCORE International's growth and longevity, has embodied the Spirit and Passion of off-road racing and the importance it brings to the SCORE Baja Racing Community.



METHOD RACE WHEEL QUALIFYING

The Race To
Be First



BY DAN SANCHEZ, PAUL HANSON,
ISAAC FLORES, AND CINDY CLARK
PHOTOS BY GET SOME PHOTO

the start of the BFGoodrich Tires 57th SCORE Baja 500 began with qualifying for several classes to get the best starting positions for race day. The Method Race Wheel Qualifier was streamed live on SCORE's social media sites and was commentated by Austin Farner and Nick Isenhouer, who hosted the qualifying from the SCORE Studio in El Cajon, California.

The day began with the SCORE Trophy Truck Legend racers who were the first to take on the five-mile qualifying course located in Ojos Negros, North East of Ensenada, Mexico. After the racers took their observation laps, Ricky Johnson in the No. 1L truck, laid down the fastest time of 4:22:7. This gave Gus Vildosola (DOR), the pole position in the class, giving him an advantage to try and pull-off a record-breaking 14th consecutive class win.

"It was a great course," said Johnson. "There's places where you can make little mistakes, but a very, very safe course. I want to thank SCORE for laying it out, it was really good. I had a clean run. I'm going to say the Trophy Trucks will probably be about five to eight seconds faster than us for sure. Just because I wanted to make sure that I kept it on track and I didn't bend the truck or get flats or anything like that. So it was a good run. I have Javi here. He did a great job calling."



■ **Ricky Johnson drove the Vildosola 1L truck to the pole position in the SCORE TT Legends class**

■ **In his first SCORE Baja experience, Ethan Ebert showed what the Honda Ridgeline could do, taking the pole position in the SCORE TT 2WD class**



■ **Jason McNeil had the fastest time to start first in the SCORE TT Spec class**

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The Legends class was followed by the SCORE Trophy Truck Spec Class competitors of which Jason McNeil, in the No. 234 truck, had the fastest lap at 4:15:0 to start first in class. The SCORE Trophy Truck 2WD Class qualified next, with first timer Ethan Ebert in the No. 81T Honda Ridgeline. The Honda team was exuberant at both Ebert's performance as well as the V6 powered truck, which ran the fastest time in the class of 4:15:8.

After a short break, the SCORE Trophy Trucks took to the course, showcasing some of the most exciting qualifying action to date. Some of the top racers in the field began putting up times that were all within seconds of each other. Luke McMillin in the No. 83 truck put up a time of 4:01:9, followed by Tavo Vildosola in the No. 21 truck with a time of 4:04:1. Only eight-tenths of a second separated Vildosola and Toby Price in the No. 46 truck with a time of 4:04:9.



■ The Method Race Wheels Top Qualifier Award was presented by VP Marketing Jim Ryan to Chris Polvoorde

It wasn't until Chris Polvoorde got on the course in the No. 94 truck, however, that put him in the pole position with a blistering time of 3:55:4, that left McMillin starting second, Vildosola third, and Price starting fourth. Alan Ampudia in the No. 1 truck, who won at the SCORE San Felipe 250 this past April, started fifth in class. "I'm super happy to be back in Baja," said Polvoorde. "I think this Optima Battery Ford Raptor is pretty quick. I'm excited. The race course is fun, but tough. There's definitely some big mud puddles out there. We're going to be figuring out ways around and whatnot. But overall, the huge mud patches that we have to go through, they're getting better and better each day. So hopefully the sun comes out."



■ VIDEO: Chris Polvoorde's Qualifying Lap



METHOD RACE WHEEL SCORE BAJA 500 QUALIFYING



■ SCORE Trophy Truck Legends, TT 2WD and TT Spec Qualifying



■ SCORE Trophy Truck Qualifying



CONTINGENCY & TECH

Fans And Teams Meet In Downtown Ensenada

BY DAN SANCHEZ

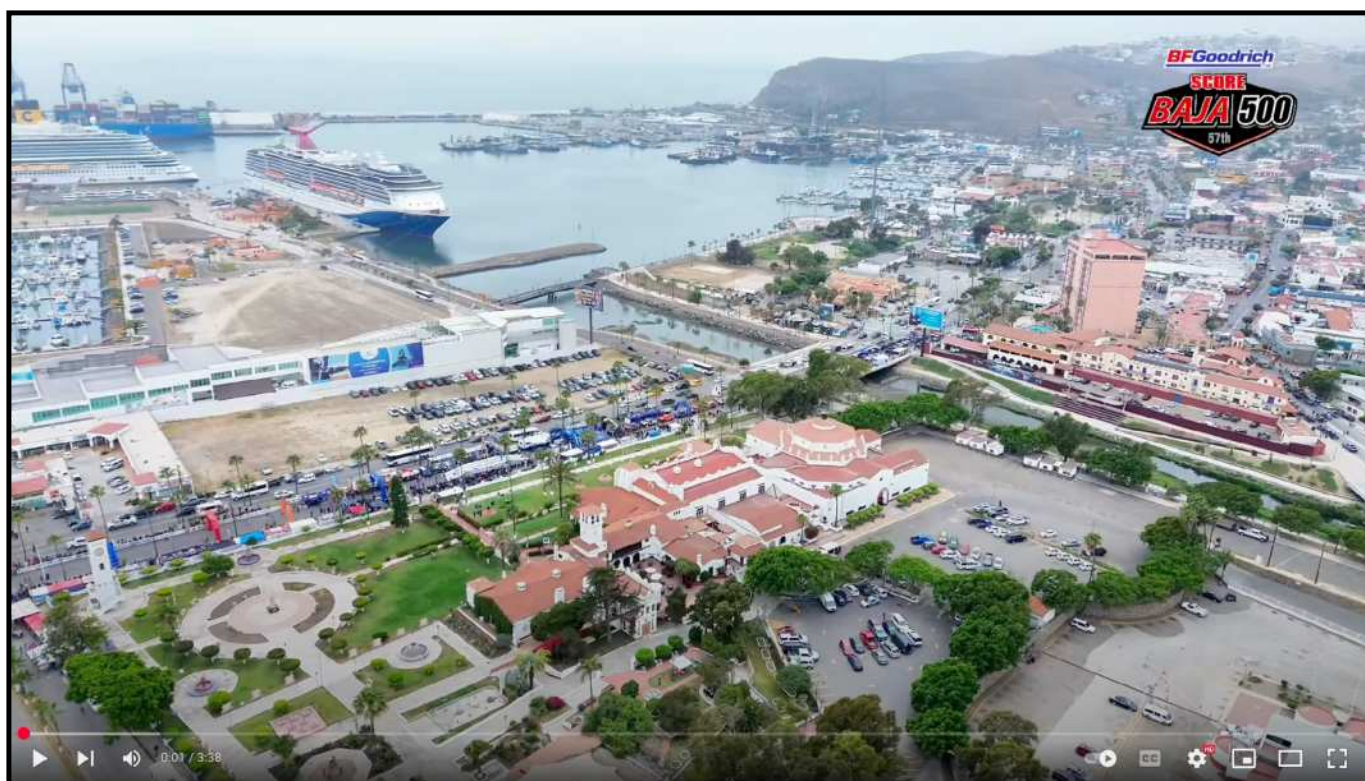
PHOTOS BY JACK WRIGHT NMEDIA3

Contingency and Tech was held on Friday June 6th, on the Boulevard Costero in downtown Ensenada. An estimated 50K people were there to see the race vehicles and meet with many of the racers and teams handing out autographs and swag.

SCORE livestreamed the event, with hosts Rat Sult and Kevin Johnson interviewing racers as they lined up along the streets to drive up to the podium to thank their sponsors and give their take on the course and team efforts.

SCORE VP of Marketing Jim Ryan, honored legendary racer Perry McNeil with a plaque for being the Grand Marshal of the BFGoodrich Tires 57th SCORE Baja 500. McNeil spoke, saying he was honored, and was emotional for being recognized for his nearly 40-years of racing and efforts. In addition, former SCORE Media Operations Director, Dominic Clark was also recognized as "SCORE Media Operations Director EMERITUS, for his 42 years with SCORE.

As more crowds gathered throughout the day, cheers erupted as their favorite racers made it up to the starting ramp. Racers and teams of all classes were represented, and SCORE Official Sponsors lined up the area for both fans and racers to get information on a variety of products. **SJ**



■ VIDEO: Take A Virtual Walk Through The Streets of Ensenada During The 2025 SCORE Baja 500 Contingency & Tech Day



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■ **Hosts Rat Sult and Kevin Johnson interviewed all of the teams and racers in attendance**



■ **Perry McNeil gave heart-warming words for being honored as Grand Marshal at this race**

■ **SCORE fans gathered along the Boulevard Costero to meet with their favorite teams and see the race vehicles up close**



- Honda Talon Factory racer Corbin Leaverton in the No. 1925 Red Bull UTV was handing out decals and autographs
- The 1x HERO racing team of Arturo Salas Jr., Shane Logan, and Ciaran Naran signed autographs in the Optima Batteries booth
- SCORE Historian Emeritus Dominic Clark was honored for his 42-years of work and contributions by Roger and Elise Norman and former SCORE owner Sal Fish





■ Video Contingency & Tech



- **SCORE TT Spec racer Justin Davis rolled through Contingency for his team and fans**
- **Everyone loved the Ford Bronco Ultra 4 vehicles of racers Loren Healy and Vaughn Gittin Jr. that ran in the SCORE Trophy Truck class**



CELEBRATORY START

PHOTOS BY JACK WRIGHT NMEDIA3

In the early morning hours of race day, all the moto and quad riders lined up on the Boulevard Costero to start the race for these classes. As riders headed out into the desert, the celebratory start of the race continued later in the morning where SCORE Trophy Truck racers and the remaining four-wheel classes of racers lined the streets.

Before the green flag was lifted, both SCORE and local Mexican government officials were introduced to the crowd and the national anthems were sung with the Mexican military band providing the music.

Behind the scenes, racers had last minute opportunities to talk among themselves and discuss the race and the course. SCORE's Grand Marshal Perry McNeil held the green flag and ushered out the first vehicles onto the street. Racers made their way to The Rancho Nelson where their timing on the course actually started.

- Moto and Quad racers started early, before dawn, on race day to have a lead time before the start of the SCORE Trophy Trucks
- SCORE racers would receive a bottle of the 57th SCORE Baja 500 Tequila and a finisher medal at the finish line
- SCORE race operations personnel directing racers to the start, had these gloves from Forced Dynamics to help direct them
- Grand Marshal Perry McNeil made his way to the starting line to send off the first SCORE Trophy Trucks onto the course



Trophy Trucks

- **Alan Ampudia Interview**
- **Trophy Truck Class Overview**
- **Gus Vildosola Sr. Interview**
- **Cameron Steele Interview**
- **Justin Davis Interview**



AMPUDIA BEATS BAJA AGAIN

**Two Wins In The
2025 Season**

STORY BY STUART BOURDON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GET SOME PHOTO

the reigning 2024 SCORE Trophy Truck World Desert Champion Alan Ampudia from Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico, is hot on the trail to another class championship. His impressive performance at the 2025 King Shocks 38th SCORE San Felipe 250 was followed by another dynamic victory at the 2025 BFGoodrich Tires 37th SCORE Baja 500. Ampudia had done some pre-running, and after qualifying in fifth for the Trophy Truck start, he told



TROPHY TRUCK CLASSES

us, "We just literally tried to keep the car clean. Not hit anything. Just making our marks. Kyle Craft (navigator) did a great job calling all the notes, and yeah, we were ready for the race.

But not everything went as planned. "We went off a cliff at one point because it was super muddy. It had just rained. I think we were probably the first ones through there, and we just went off of it. The car was fine, we were fine. At the end of the day, it's pre-running. That's when you can make mistakes and have a little fun."

The 2025 SCORE Baja 500 offered up a 461.03-mile racecourse that covered just about every terrain type the Baja peninsula has to offer, ranging from wide-open throttle desert to high-elevation pine-forested mountains and scenic beach runs along the Pacific Ocean. They crossed the finish line for a first in class and first overall in the No. 10 Ford Papas and Beer Trophy Truck with an official time of 8 hours, 39 minutes, and 34 seconds. Ampudia once again proved he and this team have got what it takes. After pulling off this helmet, Ampudia talked about his race day. "We were just trying to keep up with the bunch. At first, I just needed to get a little used to the car, you know, not driving it that often, so it took a couple of miles.



And then we lost front-wheel drive between Ojos and Valley T, so that sucked. Then my brakes weren't really that good; the pedal was going a little too deep. Just little things that happened along the way."

"At our first pit stop we didn't have pressure from behind, so we took a little time to fix the brakes. That worked for a little bit, but then they went out again. Then Tavo and Luke hit a big rock over by Vicente Guerrero, and I got by both of them. Then, I needed to get Toby. He was five minutes ahead. When we got to the coast, it was time to send it, and damn, we did."

During the trophy presentation, a smiling and obviously happy Ampudia said, "We've got two wins, and we look to do the same at the SCORE Baja 400. Thanks to all the SCORE officials, my family, my dad, and everyone!" This Baja 500 win placed Ampudia among a small group of racers who have won the SCORE Baja 1000, SCORE Baja 500, and SCORE San Felipe 250. Winning the SCORE Baja 400 would put him into winning the "Grand Slam" of SCORE, with a win in each of the four races, alongside Bryce Menzies. He is also one of three Mexican drivers (including Carlos Apdaly Lopez and Gustavo 'Tavo' Vildosola Jr.) to have won the overall title in the SCORE Baja 500. **SJ**

■ Video: Ampudia Post Race On His Win (In Spanish)



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RIISING TO THE TOP

Despite Lots Of Mud And Bad Luck, TT Racers Rose To A Second Season Win

BY DAN SANCHEZ, PAUL HANSEN, CINDY CLARK, ISAAC FLORES, AND ARIANA MEDRANO

despite torrential rains before the start of the BFGoodrich Tires 57th SCORE Baja 500, the mud it left behind didn't deter the class veterans in the four SCORE Trophy Truck classes from getting back on the podium for the second time this season. SCORE Trophy Truck class racers were saddened hearing that Bryce Menzies in the No. 7 Red Bull SCORE Trophy Truck would not be competing due to health issues. SCORE teams and fans were hoping he would recover and be back to challenge them again at the SCORE Baja 400 in August.

At the start of the race, Christopher Polvoorde was first off-the-line with a blistering qualifying run that left the rest of the field stunned and wondering how fast the pace of the race would be. His chance for a major win was cut short only a few minutes from the start after he veered slightly off of his line and got his right tire caught in a rut.

"We were about three corners into the course and there was a line we normally took during pre-running," said Polvoorde. On race day, a photographer was standing close to that line and caused Polvoorde to slightly change course. "We weren't even going super-fast and so we went around him, but our tire hit this rain rut, and it peeled the whole right front off the truck. It broke the portal, upper A-arm, it broke everything. It all flew off and it wasn't a hard kit. A lot of other drivers were squaring up to hit it so I just stood on top of the rut so they would miss it."

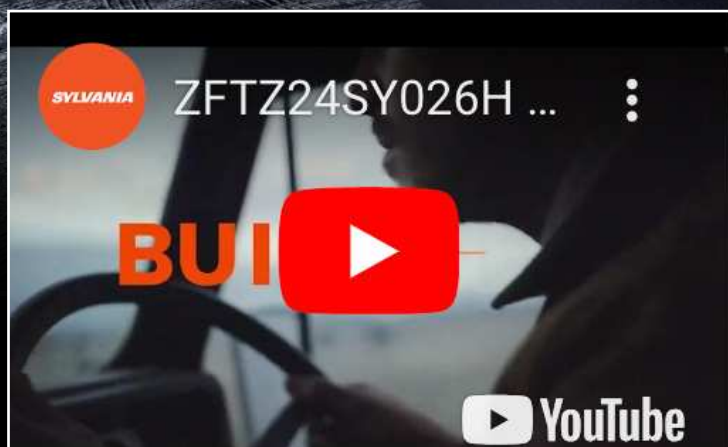


■ Video Interview With Chris Polvoorde About His Incident

This left the race wide open for second place starter Luke McMillin in the No. 83 truck, who maintained the lead until he was challenged by third place starter Tavo Vildosola in the No. 21 truck. Toby Price in the No. 46 truck right behind them as was Alan Ampudia in the No. 1 truck. Both McMillin and Vildosola hit a rock near Vincente Guerrero, near the half-way point on the course. They had to stop for repairs, leaving the challenge for the lead between Price and Ampudia.

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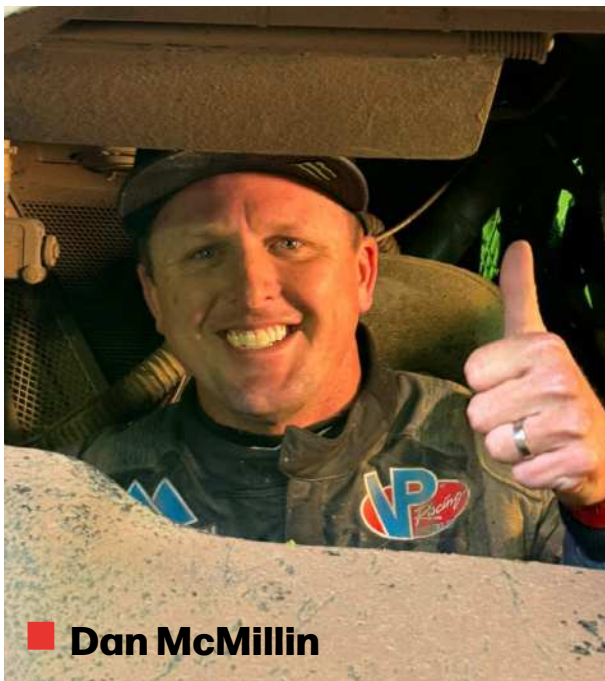
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"Toby was about five minutes ahead and when we got to the coast, it was time to send it," said Ampudia. He finished about a minute ahead of Price who had a small speed penalty applied to his time which may have cost him the win. Ampudia managed to gain his second win of the 2025 season adding this to the win in the SCORE San Felipe 250. ""We were just trying to keep up with the group," he said. "Our brakes weren't working well, and a lot of little things just happened along the way, but we're super excited."

Price and Paul Weel would finish in second place but earning a great position towards the 2025 Championship. "It was tough at the end, and we fell a little short," he said. "We had a really good run, and I got by everybody and started pushing out front and tried to open a bit of a gap for Paul to have a little bit of a buffer. We climbed out and unfortunately just wasn't quite enough. All in all, we're stoked we're here. Paul and the whole team's done a great job to be at the finish line, and that's a win any day of the week. We're happy with our efforts and a big thank you to all our team and all our crew."



With an excellent run in this race, Dan McMillin finished in third place, making his way up the pack in the No. 23 truck, after starting 14th. With a new engine in the truck and despite having multiple flat tires to contend with, McMillin pushed through to get onto the podium. "This truck was so good, and the new engine was really nice," he said. "It worked really good. We just had five flat tires today and I don't know how I got any of them, including a double flat at the top of Uruapan, two flats at the same time. But I'm here and so we had to go really slow from the top of Uruapan and all the way to Ojos and get tires."

Tavo Vildosola was disqualified after a situation where he drove the wrong way on the course, which cost him the race. Finishing in fourth was the Ford Bronco bodied Trophy Truck of Ultra 4 racing champion Loren Healey.

Another Repeat Win For Steele

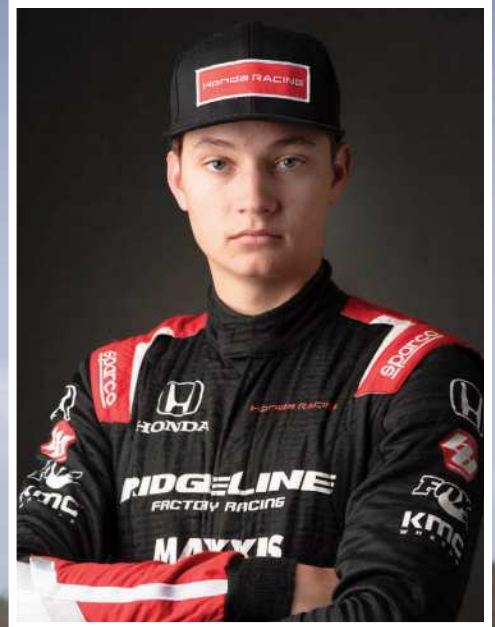
Cameron Steele in the No. 16T found himself with tougher competition at the SCORE Baja 500, than he did winning the SCORE TT 2WD class at the SCORE San Felipe 250 this season. In this race he faced an increasing number of veteran opponents including Roberto Romo Jr. in the No. 33T truck, Tim Herbst in the No. 19T truck, and Roger Norman who entered the No. 18T truck, an original Riviera Racing 2WD truck.



■ **Cameron Steele**
charging down the
Goat Trail

Steele won the race to have two class wins this season. "It was fun! What an awesome course," said Steele. "It was super tight, and we only averaged maybe 42 miles an hour in my section. So, it's tedious, time consuming, and technical. It's a lot of work. And then there is all the fun stuff on the beach. The truck is perfect. Every time, the guys at Allen Motorsports, Chris and Jake did a great job and the truck is just on rails all day. It wants to just go faster all the time, and we have to calm it down, so we can get to the finish. The Yokohama tires were on point. It's an honor to race for a company that really is excited about racing and it's an honor to win for them. They are amazing people."

- **Eberts finished second in class in his first time out in the TT 2WD class**



Steele also fended off Ethan Ebert driving the No. 81T Honda Ridgeline who finished seventh in this race last year and came back to grab the starting position in this class after qualifying. The unique Honda twin-turbo V6 powered truck was fast but Ebert admits he has more to learn about racing in this environment. "We started the day off really well and we maintained first for a while, then we had some issues up in Mike's," he said. "Then we were battling with all-wheel drive trucks and people we shouldn't have been battling with. I mean we picked and chose the wrong battles, but that's racing."

Finishing third in class was the No. 26T team of Dave Taylor. "We were having a heck of a run. And then at race mile 400 we broke a rear shock," said Taylor. Thanks to everybody, everyone on the team, Hoffman Motorsports. We really appreciate everything you guys do. And, of course, Mexico."



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Vildosola Sr Winning Streak Continues

The No. 1L team of Gus Vildosola Sr and Ricky Johnson continue their history-making winning streak with a 14th win in the SCORE Trophy Truck Legends class. The team had to deal with battles from the Honda TT 2WD team and with competitor and veteran Larry Roeseler driving the No. 61 L truck of David Payne. "We had a perfect day. Zero problems, zero punctures and we got our 14th win," said Vildosola. Payne and Roeseler finished second in class followed by the No. 74L team of Shane Lewis in third.

"I really have to congratulate Ethan Ebert in the two-wheel drive Honda who out qualified me in our all-wheel drive," said co-driver Ricky Johnson. "I chased him down, got close to him, made up 30 seconds going to Ojos, made up another 30 seconds right on Alamo Road and was able to pass him. I think he let me by right at the end. It looked like he checked up for me to go by because I was catching him with a lot more speed. So, I was able to get in front of him and then I had clear air and a great day."

"I had a 20-mile lead on Larry Roesler when I got out," continued Johnson. "But Larry stayed in a little longer. It was a good strategy. Larry stayed in and started catching Gus. Then we informed Gus, and he picked it up again. So, the old champion did his job and got to the finish. I don't think he got any flats. So, I'm really proud of him. The old champion did his job and got to the finish. Gus is 72 years old and doing great!"



Davis Dials It In For The TT Spec Win

After finishing second at the SCORE San Felipe 250 with a new No. 285 TSCO truck. Justin Davis, and the Green Army team had the truck dialed for a well-deserved win. "This truck was just on rails all day," said Davis. "We had one flat at the end, but that was it. Problem free."

After qualifying third, Davis drove hard and caught top class qualifier Jason McNeil in the No. 234 truck. "He was having some issues up in Mike's Sky Ranch and we got around him," said Davis. "Then we had pretty clean air. Our pits were on point, 45 seconds or less. We just stayed out front all day."

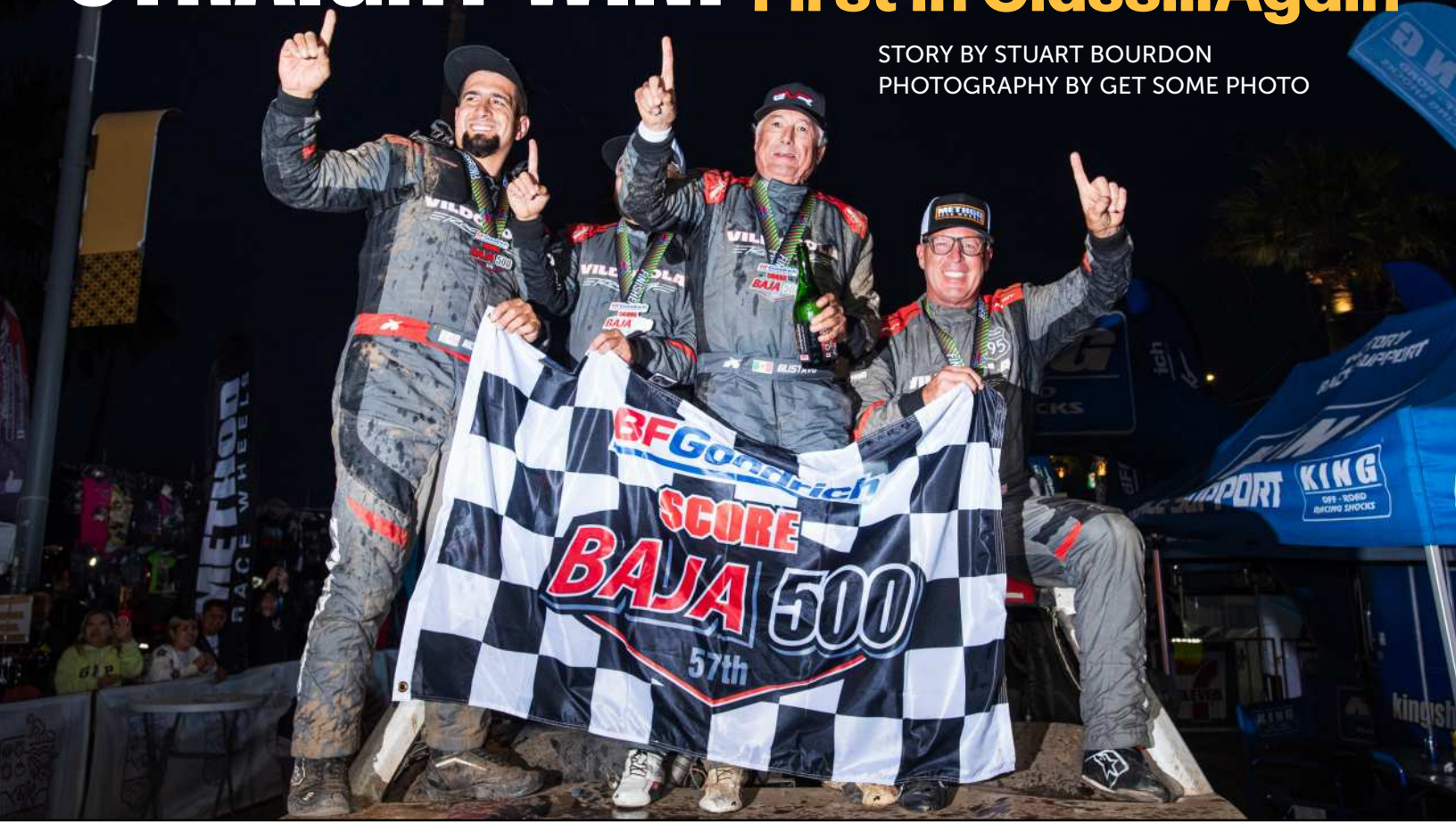
The Green Army team had Apdaly Lopez in the No. 273 truck of Jordan Brenthel. "Apdaly kept us honest most of the day. He was right back there about three or four minutes, but he had an issue coming in towards Santo Tomas, so we had a little bit of a gap, a little bit of a breather. It's nice coming into the finish without anybody breathing down your neck. The truck was perfect all day. Thanks to everyone. The whole team did a hell of a job today. We wouldn't be here without them."

Finishing second was the No. 227 truck of Jack Olliges, followed by Michael Marsal in the No. 236 truck. McNeil, along with 2025 SCORE San Felipe class winner Jorge Sampietro (No. 297) broke on the course and were not able to complete the race. **SJ**

VILDOSOLA'S 14TH STRAIGHT WIN!

The 1L Team Finishes First In Class...Again

STORY BY STUART BOURDON
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GET SOME PHOTO



gustavo Vildosola Sr. 72, Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico, and Ricky Johnson, 60, El Cajon, California, nailed their 14th consecutive victory in the 2025 SCORE Trophy Truck Legend class. Johnson took the green flag and then handed the wheel to 'Gus' Vildosola in the No. 1L Ford Raptor, completing the 461.03-mile race course in 9:19 minutes and 40 seconds, for a top three overall finish among four-wheeled vehicles in the SCORE Baja 500.

"Ricky started the truck and had a clean run," said Vildosola Sr. "Ethan Ebert in the TT 2wd Class had qualified ahead of us, and Ricky knew he would have to catch him. Ricky was right behind him from the beginning, and we don't know if Ebert was being a nice guy or just ran out of steam. We've got a four-wheel-drive V-8, and Ethan has a two-wheel-drive V-6, but he pulled off to the side of the course in a high-speed section so Ricky could get by him. Ricky knew he would get past him eventually, as our truck's power and traction advantage had to be fruitful at some time."

Then it was Vildosola Sr.'s time to be on the course. "I got in the truck at race mile 275, and the beach is always fun and fast to run," he said. "But near the end of the race, there was a very tight and technical section in the mountains. The course was narrow, with lots of turns and tight spots for a big SCORE Trophy Truck. It made us work very hard. That sort of course does not show off a Trophy Truck's best capabilities, let me put it that way. A smaller and nimbler vehicle would not have as difficult a time through that section, but we managed to get through there with no trouble."

Vildosola had issues with the weather that occurred during the race. "The rain did create some mud in places, and two giant water holes that we had to go through. That is always uncomfortable, not because of getting wet and dirty, but because electronics don't like water. Radios go out and sometimes engines will conk out, and you need to be careful in the water. Aside from the two 50-yard-long puddles that we couldn't go around, because they were fenced-in, the rain didn't give us any trouble. In fact, it helped keep the dust down in some sections of the course."

Vildosola is a legend in this sport and his experience has led him to always be calm and collective. "There's always concerns leading up to the start, but on race day you need to blank that out. Just eliminate it from your mind," he said. "If you've done your homework prepping the race truck and chase vehicles, pre-running the entire race course, the day of the race should be a matter of executing what you had planned. I visualize the race course before the race. I visualize myself at the finish line, not broken in the middle of the course. You need to have a positive mental attitude to win."

When asked about the team's winning streak and the races ahead of them this season, Vildosola said, "Why not? We've done 14, and we can certainly win more. We are always thoroughly prepared on all race matters. We work hard at this. We have our crew come to the shop and do practice pits, and we're pretty demanding on them. They are volunteers, but they also have the spirit and desire to win. And that I think is very motivating to everyone. They have been rewarded with a finishing rate of not just 14 consecutive wins, but top three a couple of times, top five many times, and always in the top 10." **SJ**



TOP OF THE CLASS

Cameron Steele Takes A Second Season Win In Trophy Truck 2WD

BY STUART BOURDON
PHOTOS BY GET SOME PHOTO



Cameron Steele of San Clemente, California won his class in the BFGoodrich Tires 57th Baja 500, racking up a second consecutive SCORE International race in the new SCORE Trophy Truck 2WD category. Teaming up with Dave Mason Jr. of Valley Center, California, the duo shared driving duties aboard the No. 16T Ford Desert Assassins truck, finishing with a time of 9 hours, 28 minutes, and 55 seconds, which also netted the team a fourth overall for four-wheeled vehicles.

During our conversation with Steele, we asked about the new 2WD Trophy Truck class. As always, he was honest, telling us, "I had been asked years ago about it, and thought it might be best to leave the classes together. However, it's brought some more racers out, and I think it's going to bring even more people into the SCORE Trophy Truck categories in the future. I think it might bring more two-wheel drives than there are all-wheel drive trucks."



"We have been on a quest to build an all-wheel drive and purchased a Dougans engine and some transmissions for one, but we're holding off right now because we're enjoying this two-wheel-drive racing," he said. "We were fourth overall at the SCORE Baja 500, and third overall at the SCORE San Felipe 250. We'd still like to win overall in our two-wheel drive truck. We had a pretty good run at the Baja 500, but we did have a little bit of a hiccup, and it just took us out of that overall spot."

Although Steele had a great finish, it wasn't an easy race for him and the team. "The mud got me. It wasn't bad, but it's always a little bit stressful when you're slipping and sliding, and that's actually how I got in trouble. I was being overly aggressive in a muddy section, about where Luke McMillin had his problem, and I slid into a giant rock. It was my fault. We had to race for 40 miles with no spare tires because of my mistake, and it slowed us down."

"I drove to mile 240. Dave Mason Jr. drove the last half. He did a great job. His splits looked really good on timing, and he had a clean run, no flats, no drama. I always judge it a clean run if you show up with all the body panels on the truck, and we did that. We saw Luke broken and were trying to figure out what was going on in front, and I had caused us some drama, so we were off that very front pace of Toby Price and Alan Ampudia. We were mostly worried about what Tavo Vildosola was doing, as we were racing him for third overall and didn't have any concerns about what was behind us. Always race forward is my philosophy."



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TROPHY TRUCK CLASSES

Getting through the mud and wet sections on the course was just the beginning for the Desert Assassins team. "Our biggest problem was some kind of crazy electrical gremlins. We had no communications with our pits, and we had no Stella, and no tracking. That's a very difficult thing to manage because you don't know where you are, and you don't know if there's safety issues ahead. In addition to that, our speed limiter wasn't working correctly, so we ended up getting some speed zone penalties. It's like trying to slow down a wild horse."

"The mud and the electrical issues are just a part of racing, and people always ask who was I worried about during the race? I'm not worried about racing against anybody but Baja, because I always say Baja is the deciding factor. The place is going to let you have a good day or it's not. One thing I would like to ask of fellow racers is that we don't go out and do a race lap before the race. I believe calm course reconnaissance is the way to do it. Take it easy out there in Baja. Everybody's got to do their part to take care of each other." **SJ**



BACK-TO-BACK VICTORY

**Justin Davis Takes
Another Baja 500 Win**

BY MICAH ANDERSON
PHOTOS BY GET SOME PHOTO

In a highly competitive SCORE Trophy Truck Spec Class, Justin Davis has beat the odds and repeated his 2024 SCORE Baja 500 class win this season. Davis is also back on the podium this season with a second-place finish at the SCORE San Felipe 250, and a new TSCO truck, Davis and the Green Army team are at the top of their game.





SCORE Journal: How much did your 2024 victory help set the tone or shape your preparation for this year's race?

Justin Davis: *Last year's win is a great memory, but you are only as good as your last race. We approach every race with the same thought process, prep to win and put ourselves in a position to push for the championship.*

SJ: How quickly were you able to make your way to the front, and what were those opening miles like in terms of traffic and terrain?

JD: *Qualifying 3rd behind Mike Marsal (No. 236) and Jason McNeil (No. 234) put us in a good spot to control the race. With the current starting position of the SCORE Trophy Truck Spec class, the plan was to just apply pressure from behind and not get caught up in the slower traffic ahead. We knew the dust would be bad and making no mistakes was going to be key due*

to how tight the course was the first half of the race. We got by Marsal about race mile 78 when he got a front flat and then followed closely behind McNeil until about race mile 155 when he had fuel pump issues. After that is all about maintaining the lead that we had while dealing with the water and mud.

SJ: What changes or prep went into the truck setup ahead of this race and how it responded to the new sections of the course?

JD: *Every race we base our setup on what we think the course terrain is going to be. This year's SCORE Baja 500, we knew it was going to be tight and technical. Later we adapted the truck the best we could to deal with the wet conditions.*

SJ: Did you feel pushed to maintain a more aggressive pace or were you just running your own race plan?

JD: *Once we got out front of the class, the focus was to get through the mud and water sections of the race. We knew we had more in the tank to give but decided to keep Apdaly Lopez (No. 273) to a 3-4 min split physically. He tried to apply pressure on the beach, and it ended up playing in our favor.*

SJ: How much of a difference does that kind of efficiency make over 500-miles of racing, especially when the top competitors are running so close?

JD: *Our pits continue to improve every race and give us a good advantage on most of the class. The guys work well under pressure.*



■ Video Justin Davis SCORE Baja 500 TT Spec Winner

SJ: Did anything catch you off guard during the course?

JD: A total of 15 plus years of racing in Mexico helps prepare for most that Baja throws our way. We prepared for the worse and dialed in our lines through the water and silt sections. The late flat was a surprise, but we knew what needed to be done even though our air jack decided to leave the truck just after Check 1.

SJ: What can you say about the team's performance and what this win means for the rest of the SCORE season?

JD: Green Army Motorsports performance has been good up to this point. We are continuing to take the 2025 season one race at a time and will be continuing to push for race wins.

SJ: What does it take to stay out front in a field this competitive?

JD: Consistency and minimal mistakes are the key to winning in Baja. When others make mistakes, we need to be in positions to take advantage and not miss the opportunity. **SJ**



WEAPONIZING THE GREEN ARMY

The Team's New TSCO TT Spec Truck Debuted With A Podium Finish

BY DAN SANCHEZ

PHOTOS COURTESY TITAN 7 WHEELS

Justin Davis and the Green Army team debuted their new TSCO-built SCORE Trophy Truck Spec at the SCORE San Felipe 250, taking second place in class, and backed that up with a first in class finish at the SCORE Baja 500. With that kind of performance right out of the box, the new truck deserved a closer look.

The No. 285 truck is new from the ground up, with TSCO's racing chromoly chassis outfitted with a front A-arm suspension with King coil-over and bypass shocks delivering 24-inches of travel. The rear is a four-link with a solid rear axle and King

coil-over and bypass shocks providing 30-inches of travel. TSCO has their own steering rack design that uses a Howe performance power steering pump and assembly unit.

This state-of-the-art TT Spec is light, fast and has proven itself in multiple off-road racing series, including SCORE. "The unique thing about the TSCO Spec Truck is that we do not just take our full-size Trophy Truck platform and throw a spec engine in it," says John Vance at TSCO Racing. "We set out to precisely design and build something ideally perfect for a spec truck setup. We shorten the wheelbase, narrow the track, and include a few other TSCO trade secrets. It is lighter and nimbler than the larger platforms. I believe the proof is in the results we've had over the last several years, with multiple SCORE Baja 1000 wins, multiple SCORE Baja 500 wins, and multiple SCORE San Felipe 250 wins."

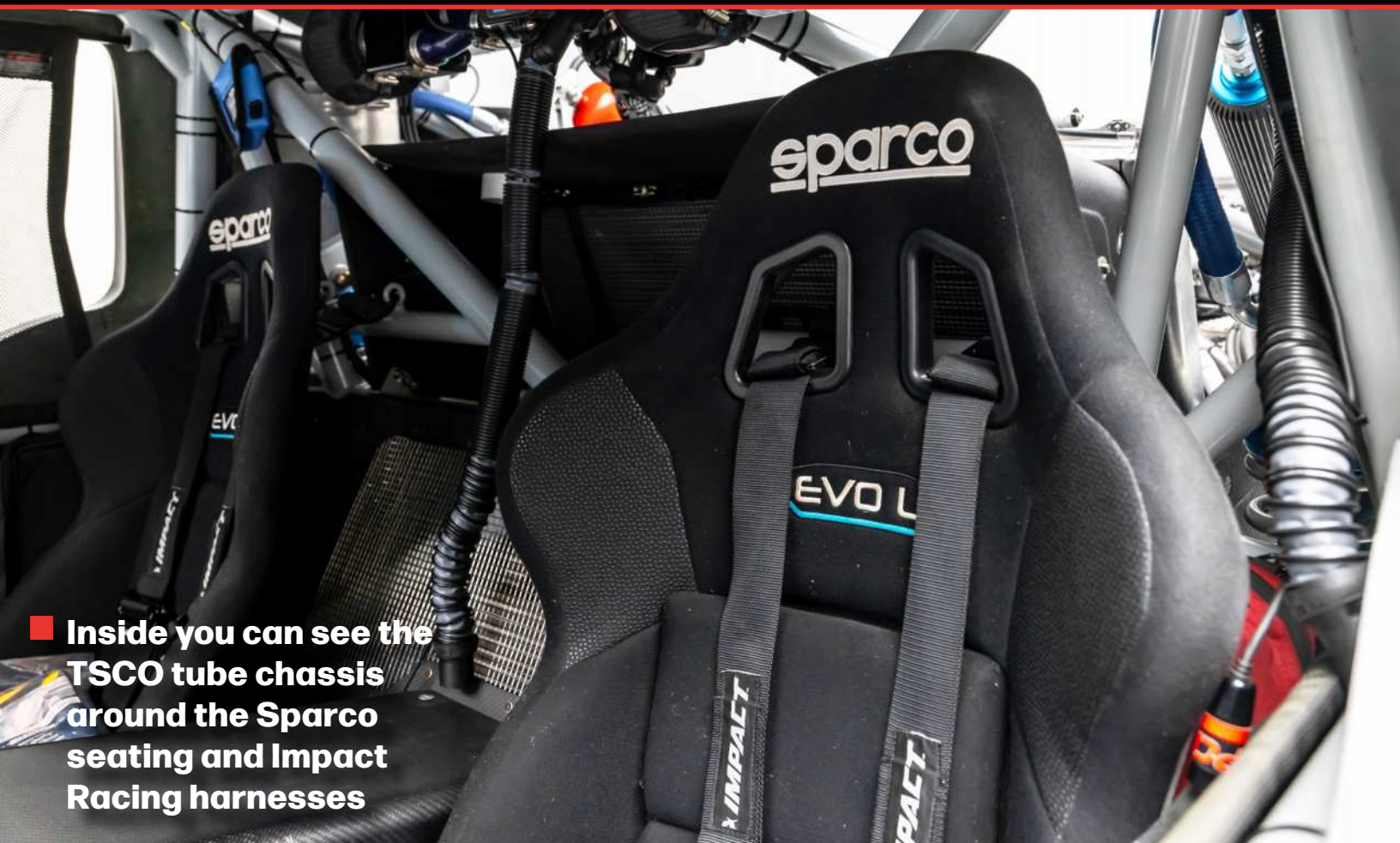
- **New Titan 7 race wheels are being tested out on this truck, outfitted with Toyo 40-inch tires and King Shocks to keep them firmly planted**



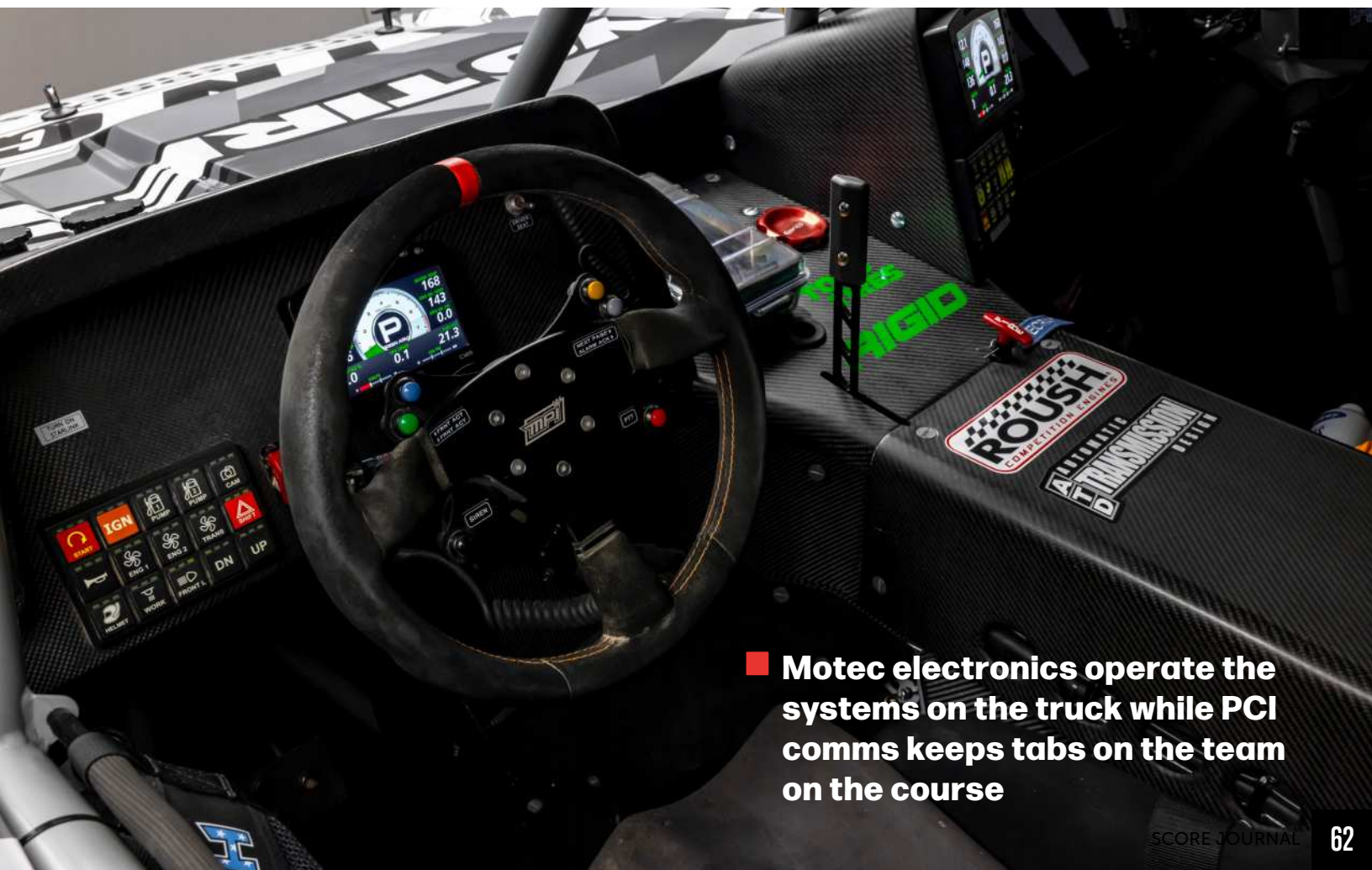


ALAN AMPUDIA WINS IT ALL

VICTORY ACHIEVED IN THE SCORE BAJA 500



- Inside you can see the TSCO tube chassis around the Sparco seating and Impact Racing harnesses



- Motec electronics operate the systems on the truck while PCI comms keeps tabs on the team on the course

The Green Army No. 285 truck uses a GM LS3 V8 powerplant and a TH400 automatic transmission with an underdrive unit that puts the estimated 525 horsepower to the ground. With the set-up, driver Justin Davis was able to qualify third in the SCORE TT Spec class for this SCORE Baja 500. Equipped with a new set of Titan 7 forged racing wheels, the truck has performed great in its first outings. Toyo 40-inch racing tires look great on the truck, but they will help it get through the Baja desert.

Inside, Sparco racing seats and Impact racing harnesses hold Davis and his navigator securely in place, while a Motec and James Lin Motorsports electronics keep the engine and information in check. PCI Race Communications keep the occupants in contact with the team and SCORE ops, while Lowrance GPS keeps them on course. A StarStream live streaming system provides real-time video from inside the cab, offering fans an amazing view of their race.



Outside, the truck looks great with its TSCO Designed/Fiberwerx body panels that give the truck its short and narrow appearance. Rigid lighting provides ample illumination in the dark, and Maxima Oils provides the lubrication to keep things running cool and smooth.

"The truck is working absolutely incredible," said Justin Davis during the SCORE Baja 500 Contingency. "We're going to try and do our best and get more wins." **SJ**

Buggy Classes



- Kyle Quinn Interview
- Class1 and Class 10 Overview

A HARD-EARNED VICTORY

Kyle Quinn Rallies Wilson Motorsports to A Class 1 Win

BY MICAH ANDERSON

PHOTOS BY GET SOME PHOTO



the BFGoodrich Tires 57th SCORE Baja 500 course was tight in some areas and fast in others. Class 1 teams had a difficult time on it, but Kyle Quinn in the No. 138 Wilson Jimco buggy made it through for the win. We spoke with Quinn about the race and his team's performance.

SCORE Journal: First off, congratulations on the win. Only two finishers in Class 1 this year—how tough was it out there, and what did this particular Baja 500 ask of your team?

Kyle Quinn: *Thank you! This Baja 500 was incredibly tough, especially with only two finishers in Class 1 this year, it shows just how challenging the course was. The first half of the race was brutal for us. When I took over around Race Mile 235, there were very few vehicles coming through, which showed how demanding the course had been on everyone.*

For our team, the race tested everything: endurance, strategy, and communication. We faced mechanical challenges and rough terrain that required us to stay patient and focused. The crew's ability to quickly adapt and support us was critical.

The second half of my stint was faster and felt a bit easier, but overall, the Baja 500 demanded resilience and teamwork from start to finish. It was a true test of survival and determination.

SJ: Greg DiStefano and Scott Conley had a strong start before the rollover early in the day. How did that incident affect your mindset when you got behind the wheel later on?

KQ: *It definitely messes with your head. The race started off just as planned, they managed to get out front around Race Mile 70. Shortly after the highway crossing, they clipped a rock, spun backwards on course, and rolled the car. With Starlink, communication is instant, which is a blessing and a curse. You're getting real-time updates, but it makes it even harder to keep your mind focused. I was reaching out to our mechanics, Ben and Mag, for any info, but they were obviously tied up trying to get to the car, flip it, and assess the damage. I eventually got some reassurance from team owner Randy Wilson, who let me know the car looked to be in good shape. Going from the high of leading, to the low of thinking you're out, then trying to reset and focus on just finishing—it's a rollercoaster. Mentally, that swing is tough to manage. I feel like I manage it fairly well and try to make the best of whatever situation Baja throws at us. I think I handle it pretty well, though. At the end of the day, I try to stay grounded and make the best of whatever curveball Baja throws our way.*

SJ: It takes a full team effort to recover from a setback like that and still take the win. How did the support crew respond, and how important was their quick action in keeping the day alive?

KQ: *I say it all the time, but especially in moments like this, we truly have the best team around. It's easy to let negativity creep in the second you hear there's a problem, but no one at our driver change pit went there. Everyone stayed calm, waiting patiently for direction from Ben, Mag, and Randy before we made any adjustments to the plan.*



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As soon as word came through that the car was moving again, after being down for nearly two hours, we instantly shifted into survival mode. When I got in the car, and at every pit stop after, the team kept me locked in with time splits and motivation. They made sure I knew we were making up ground and still had a real shot at the win.

Ben, Mag, and their crews didn't hesitate. We had them stationed near the area where the car rolled waiting for it to clear, so they were on course within minutes. We spend a lot of time and effort spreading our 40+ person crew across the course for situations exactly like this. You always hope you won't need them, but when you do, they're ready, every time.

SJ: You said you were about an hour down when you got in the car. What was your mental approach from that point forward—were you thinking about pacing or pushing?

KQ: *Correct—Greg and Scott had gained some ground on the RPI team No. 168, who were dealing with issues of their own. Just before we strapped in, my co-driver Scotty came up to me and said, "Hey, we're just pre-running from here." That's usually our way of saying, take it easy, don't make mistakes.*

When I feel like I'm driving slower, I'm usually going faster. Our main focus was to keep the car moving and avoid getting out at all costs. It was all about maintaining—pushing just enough to stay close without risking anything that could set us back even further.

SJ: Mechanical issues took out some of your closest competition. In a way, does that reinforce the old Baja lesson of survival first, speed second?

KQ: *Absolutely—100%. In Baja, speed means nothing if you don't survive. Of course, I want to go fast—but when Baja throws its weight around, speed takes a back seat. At that point, survival is the only thing that matters.*

SJ: Wilson Motorsports has had success across many major events this season, so how does this SCORE Baja 500 win stack up in terms of what it means to you and the team?

KQ: *The last time Brad and I shared a car was back in 2015. Our real standout season together was in 2013, when we had an incredible run in Class 10—winning both the championship and the SCORE Baja 1000, which was a first for the team at the time. We had both just moved up from Class 1600, so to perform at that level right out of the gate was something special.*

Kicking off this season with a win stateside was huge. We were running strong at the SCORE San Felipe 250 too, right up until a mechanical issue took us out just five miles from the finish. Brad didn't race the Baja 500 due to the birth of his newborn, so to take the win here for him was a big moment—and it put us right back in the hunt for the championship.

SJ: There were a number of new technical sections in this year's course. What was your impression of the route, and did anything stand out as particularly rewarding or punishing?

KQ: Like I said earlier, I feel like I had the easier section of the course compared to Greg. There were a few sections that I don't think I've personally ran, and they were fast, but challenging.

SJ: Off-road racing is always unpredictable, but what do you think made the difference this time for you to end up on top?

KQ: Having a never give up attitude made all the difference. Even when it felt impossible—being as far behind as we were—we stayed locked in. To turn it around and put ourselves ahead by over an hour, was the ultimate testament to that mindset.

SJ: Lastly, what's the morale like now in the Wilson camp after a comeback win like this?

KQ: Morale is through the roof after a race like this. It is a true payoff for our crew—the ones who wait, no matter what's happening or what time it is. We're all connected in different ways—family, family friends, long-time friends—and that bond makes race days even more meaningful. Wins like this are what make it all worth it. **SJ**



BUGGY BASH

Baja Was Brutal To Class 1 and Class 10 Competitors

BY DAN SANCHEZ

When most of your competition is taken out from the brutal course or vehicle breakdowns, one can say you're in a position to win. Of course, that's if the same doesn't happen to you. Fortunately for the Wilson Racing team, Kyle Quinn in the No. 138 car managed to be conservative, hold-on and got the Class 1 win.



"It wasn't the best day, but it ended very well," said Quinn at the finish. "Our team of Greg DiStefano and Scott Conley started the race, and they were doing very well. They were the first car at roughly race-mile 78. Not long after, however, the buggy rolled over on its side. They were down for about an hour getting it flipped back over. Our guy's Ben and Mag and their crews hauled butt out there and dealt with it. Fortunately, the buggy was in good shape so he just kind of kept picking away at it and I think we were about an hour or so down when I got in."

Quinn and the team were trying to catch up to the class leader on the course, Cody Reid in the No. 168 buggy. Reid and co-driver Adam Pfankuch worked their way passed some issues they had earlier but managed to fix them and get back on the course. "Adam got in the buggy and was making up for some time, overtaking the TT Spec trucks that passed us when we were down," said Reid. "It was then that our torque converter broke, and we had to pour in roughly 25-gallons of transmission oil and various other substances to get us to the finish. Kudos to the Wilson team for not giving up and getting the win." The RPI team finished in second place but were also happy for Quinn to get the class win."

Although the Wilson and RPI teams were able to somewhat overcome their troubles, it wasn't the same for the other competitors. Brendan Gaughan in the No. 162 buggy and Cody Parkhouse in the No. 127 buggy broke down on the course and did not finish the race.

"The other teams were having some issues so that obviously helped us," said Quinn. "But we just tried to lay down the best run we could and obviously it worked."

ELLIOT WATSON TAKES CLASS 10 WIN

The Class 10 racers didn't have it any easier getting through a technical and muddy course. Add the fact that a higher level of competition was at this year's race, and it's easy to see how the class got shaken up. Finishing first in the class was Elliot Watson in the No. 1033 buggy with a clean penalty-free race. "It was pretty wet down south," said Watson. "It was a long day from starting at the back of the Class 10 field."

Watson maintained his pace and slowly started picking their way through the mix of 12 competitors, including 2024 Class Champion Francisco Vera (No. 1000) and former Champion Bruce Yee (No. 1014) and



BUGGY CLASSES

veteran Matt Willert in the No. 1009 buggy. "There are some really fast guys in this class right now and we had some super good races," said Watson. "I would catch a couple of guys in the tight twisty stuff but then they would pass me back on the rocky stuff, but the tight and twisty course worked in our favor today."

"We picked off the competition one by one and went back and forth with the Willert car for a bit. The last 200 miles guys started falling off, making little mistakes here and there and we made our way through. We didn't get out of the car once all day, just gas and go. We had zero flat tires thanks to Yokohama Tires and thanks to all of our pit guys for the awesome stops. It's a huge thing for our family to come down here and win a race like this. we're super excited for it."

The No. 19075 car of Eliseo Garcia finished in second place, battling with class competitors on the course. "There was a little bit of everything," said Garcia. "A-lot of mud, water, and the competition was really tough. I think that from the beginning, we didn't separate. It was always all Class 10s in a row, until about half of the race, then we started to separate a little. But me, third and fourth place finishers were all close together running the same pace." The Willert team finished in third place to round off the top three podium finishes in the class. **SJ**



Moto & Quad

- Tyler Lynn 7x Interview
- Pro Moto & Quad Class Overview
- Shane Esposito Interview



A DOUBLE SLAM

Tyler Lynn And SLR Top The Moto Field In The Baja 500

BY MIKE VIEIRA

PHOTOS BY GET SOME PHOTO

Tyler Lynn and the 7X Slam Life Racing Honda team notched another Pro Moto Unlimited and Overall Motorcycle win in the BFGoodrich 57th SCORE Baja 500, just as they did in the San Felipe 250 earlier this year.

Lynn battled the fog for more than an hour early in the race, and despite a minor crash about 45 miles into the course, he managed to open a lead, and to keep stretching it out as the miles wore on. The fog made it a struggle to



keep his goggles clear, and as he quickly went through his tear-offs and had to wipe them with his gloves. He says the fog does make you work a little harder and to stay more focused, but that his pre-running provided him with a good comfort level for navigating through it without a problem. His mishap didn't result in any damage to the Honda CRF450X or to himself, and he handed the bike off to teammate Carter Klein at Mile 210.

Klein then had a clean ride to Mile 385 while maintaining about a ten-minute lead. Lynn credits him with doing a great job of keeping up a fast pace while dealing with tricky navigation through his section. Tyler then took over once again to bring it home for the win. "Our bike was perfect all day," said Lynn. "Bobby from San Diego Power House built an amazing bike that ran flawlessly and had us running 104 miles per hour a few times on the course, which was really cool and a little bit scary. It was super good all day."

The 7x team enjoyed the entire course from the pre-running through the race, and Lynn said his favorite portion was from around Mile 75 through Mile 110, with lots of whoops and flowing corners that he feels that he excels with. "I really love racing through that. I raced there in the SCORE Baja 500, 400, and 1000 last year, and I'm really comfortable with it. That's got to be some of my favorite stuff."

With their great success in the first two races of the season, the SLR team is certainly looking forward to the upcoming SCORE races as they continue the battle for the championship. **SJ**



PACK LEADERS

Moto & Quad Classes Battle For Top Finishes

BY DAN SANCHEZ, PAUL HANSEN, CINDY CLARK, ISAAC FLORES, AND ARIANA MEDRANO



the Moto and Quad racers had cool weather conditions during the BFGoodrich Tires 57th SCORE Baja 500 race. Starting early in the morning, riders stormed out into the Baja desert, trying to see through the dark, dense fog, and lots of dust.

The battle between the top Pro Moto Unlimited teams had the 7x team of Tyler Lynn, the 1x team of Arturo Salas Jr, and the 15x team of Eric Hold out battling for the lead unphased by the limited visibility on the course. Starting in the fog, which seemed to plague their visibility throughout the course, these riders didn't give up and maintained their positions throughout the race.

Lynn and his co-rider Carter Klein, rode almost flawlessly, keeping an average 10-minute gap between them and the 1x team. "It went really well, and we had a nearly perfect day," says Lynn. "I think the bike only hit the ground once, but other than that, we had a perfect day."

PRO MOTO & QUAD CLASSES

Klein rode on the coast and managed to keep their lead. We pulled ten minutes throughout the whole race. So, we're stoked. Me and Carter came here with a goal in mind. And we put in the work, and it showed today." This win gave the 7x team the lead in the chase towards the class championship, and their second-in-a-row win after the SCORE San Felipe 250.



Not far behind in second place was the 2024 Champions on the 1x bike with co-rider Shane Logan on the early morning start, Salas Jr. riding the mid-section, and Ciran Naran riding to the finish. "We always want to cross the finish line first, but we're one step closer than we were at the last race," said Naran. "It seemed like it was a close one. We lost a little bit in the morning because of the fog, dust and everything, it was brutal. Starting at 3am in the morning makes it tough. Shane rode incredible today, so did Arturo. I think the boys and I know where we each need to work, and we're going to go home and put in the homework that's for sure."

Holt and the 15x team were also not far behind to take third place in class. "We don't quit down here no matter what," said Hold. "We had some issues about race mile 130, where we had to change the rear brake caliper and the brake system in the rear of the bike and lost some time there. Then we had to just battle back throughout the day. Early on in the morning it was really tough. The moisture and the dust made conditions hard to see, but as the day went on, the course got faster.

Over on the coast side, the dirt was wet, so it helped really make a good race. We'll be back for sure for the SCORE Baja 400, hopefully with a better outcome. And thank you to SCORE and everyone that puts on this race. We know how much work it takes, and we appreciate it."

■ The Ramani 127x Pro Moto Limited team at the finish



Ramani Takes Another Win

Another two-timer at this SCORE Baja 500 is Bhaskar Ramani and his 127x Pro Moto Limited "international" team. Team members come from England, India, Mexico, and the U.S.A. making for a great display of camaraderie, coming together to create a winning team. "This is like an International project management exercise," said Ramani. "We come together, and we race and the work the team has put in is coming together."

During the race, one of the 116x team riders, of David Navarro Limon was down and Ramani provided aid. "When I got on the bike at race mile 385 the 116x team had a little bit of a lead on us. After about five to six miles on the course, I came around a turn and a 116x rider was laying down in a ditch. He got up and was standing so I got on his bike and pivoted it and turned it around and pulled it out of the ditch, then

got back on my bike and took off. So, you know it's good karma and that's what Baja is about. That's what I learned."

■ Video: Juan Tamayo Co-Rider For The 127x Team On Their Win



The aid was appreciated and Limon and the 116x team finished in third place behind the 112x team of Brayan Avalos. "The race was really good, and we kept it on two wheels pushing forward," said co-rider Dylan Avalos. "We made a couple of mistakes that brought us to second place, but we'll come back stronger for the SCORE Baja 400. With the fog, I couldn't see more than three feet ahead. We were just fighting with the fog and the dust. It was a hard one, but we managed to push through to the finish."

Shane Esposito Makes It Two

With several racers making repeat wins so far this season, Shane Esposito added his name to the list with another win in the Pro Moto 40 Class. The veteran rider on the 400x 2024 class championship team continued his dominance in this SCORE Baja 500 with other legendary racers including, Francisco Septien, and Jim O'Neal (his 43rd), along with Rene Magana, and Jason Miller.

"The race went well," said Esposito. "I got the bike into fourth physically, leading our class, and then I had a little crash. It was nothing big. But I know Eric had no issues and everyone rode solid to make it to the finish. I think because of my section with the fog, it was really slow compared to what we expected."

■ Video: Francisco Septien On The 400x Team Win



Alosi Wins Double In Pro Moto 30

Also gaining a second victory this season was Jason Alosi and the 308x team in the Pro Moto 30 class who triumphed over the 324x team of Edgar Najar who came in second place, and the 300x 2024 class champion team of Ethan Wheeler. "The day went really well," said Alosi. "Honestly, I was a little worried about the fog in the morning, but I did the best preparation I could and was able to manage it pretty well. We got out to an early lead and we just maintained it all day. There were no issues with the bike. Everyone's safe and this looks like the second win of the season for us. The goal is four and we want to have the championship at the end of the year."



■ **Video: Geoff Hill From Baja Bound Speaking For The 308 Team**



OFF-ROAD READY



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Two For The Ironman

Larry Serna on the 715x bike was another rider who won twice so far this season, taking the Pro Moto Ironman division over four other competitors racing in this class. It was a rough going for any of the Pro Moto class competitors, but the Ironman racers had to tough it out alone. "It was a very heavy morning because of the fog, and I couldn't see anything," said Serna. "The first 80 miles I couldn't see anything, I took off my goggles. It was something I shouldn't have done. When I put on new goggles, everything started to flow better. I started to gain confidence. That was when I had a pretty big accident."

Serna hit a rock speeding at 60-70 mph, yet he didn't quit and kept moving forward for the win. "I flew off and the radiator was broken, but other than that, nothing happened to me. It could have been much worse. My whole race consisted of stopping every 20 miles to put antifreeze in it. There were moments that seemed like war. I brought bottles and bottles of antifreeze and had to stop so that the motorcycle would not heat up. The bike stayed cool. I'm very thankful to Felipe Venegas, who prepared the bike for me. I think the SCORE Baja 400 will be easier after this. But now that I'm here, I've been thinking about the race for the SCORE Baja 1000. I don't know what to think, but we're going to give it a go."

Winning At Any Age

In the Pro Moto 50 Class, Gerardo Rojas and his 330x team took the win with the 2024 class champions, Mike Prunty and the 500x team finishing in second place. "We had a very fun day and enjoyed the whole course," said Rojas. "We are very happy to finish, and everything went well, no problems. The preparation of Diezpro, Poncho and the whole team, we had a very good day. Our sponsors are here. I hope to see everyone at the SCORE Baja 400 and the SCORE Baja 1000."



■ **Video:Gerardo Rojas On Winning Pro Moto 50**

PRO MOTO & QUAD CLASSES

Harold Harris and the 600x team gained a second victory this season, winning the Pro Moto 60 class. "This was my first start out of Ensenada," said Harris. "I've started out of San Felipe a bunch of times, but never out of Ensenada. I didn't like the fog that much. But I arrived in San Matias sooner than I thought. I was thinking I'd be there about 8:30am and I think I got there at 8:10. So I was happy with that. It took four hours to go 135 miles."



■ **Video:Harold Harris And The 600x Team**



Sportsman Classes Heat Up

While the Sportsman Classes had a shorter course than the rest of the Pro Moto and Quad classes, there was lots of competition that made it difficult to win. Filiberto Garcia and his team on the 211x bike won in Sportsman Moto , while Jorge Martinez (101a) won in Sportsman quad. **SJ**

■ **Video: The Filiberto Garcia Team Members Talk About Their Win**



■ **Video : Jorge Martinez On Team 101a Sportsman Quad Win**

MASTER CLASS

Shane Esposito And Veteran 400x Team Win Pro Moto 40

BY MIKE VIEIRA

PHOTOS BY GET SOME PHOTO

Shane Esposito of the 400X team rode their Honda CRF450X to a victory in the Pro Moto 40 class in the BFGoodrich 57th SCORE Baja 500. It was much like they did earlier in the season at the SCORE San Felipe 250. Esposito, who's been racing in Baja since 2007, started the race by passing a few other riders despite being slowed down in the early miles in the fog and mist, moving up to fourth overall moto. Like other riders, he had to deal



with removing and switching goggles to find enough visibility to get through the moisture and dust. He took a minor slow-speed spill in some ruts around Mile 80, but didn't suffer any damage, and did not get passed while he was down.

In Trinidad, at Mile 120, Jim O'Neal took over, and had a clean ride to around Mile 140, where Francisco Septien got on the bike for the ride to Checkpoint 1. Eric Magana then rode from the Checkpoint to Mile 240, where Jason Miller took over for the ride to Punto Colonet. At that point, Eric got back on to take the bike to around Mile 385 where he handed it off once again to Francisco. He took it to Ojos Negros, then it was Shane's turn once again, and he rode on to the finish, with a fourth overall motorcycle position.

The Honda ran well throughout the race for the team, with just one pit stop for a tire and filter change. Shane says, "The only problem we had was me crashing. It was honestly a pretty uneventful day for us." Of the course, he says, "Everyone always has me do the start, so I've got to ride the same thing all the time, but they're putting some new stuff in, which is good." He adds that the growing number of UTVs racing in SCORE does change things a bit for the motorcycles, but the fact that it's generating more attention and making the sport bigger is an overall plus.

For the remaining races this year as the team seeks the season championship, Jim O'Neal and Jason Miller will likely not ride in the Baja 400, but both then plan to return for the Baja 1000, hoping to continue their winning ways in the class. If each team member maintains their solid riding performance, the 400X Honda is certainly in a good position to clinch the Pro Moto 40 title at the end of the season. **SJ**



UTV Classes

- Brock Heger Interview
- UTV Classes Overview
- Kaden Wells Interview
- Corbin Leaverton Interview



THE MAN TO BEAT

Brock Heger Climbs Further Up The Ladder

BY LARRY SAAVEDRA

PHOTOS BY GET SOME PHOTO

Polaris factory racer Brock Heger is considered to be the man to beat in Baja, as some UTV competitors are saying. After winning his seventh consecutive SCORE UTV Overall title at the 57th BFGoodrich SCORE Baja 500, he's closer to locking up another Class Championship for Polaris.

With his first place class victory and Overall UTV win at the SCORE San Felipe 250, Heger was six points ahead of his closest competitor, Brandon Sims. Now with the same finishing results at the SCORE Baja 500 he just widened that lead considerably.



As a Polaris factory racer, Heger realizes he's part of the bigger picture. "We all strive to win, but as long as the team works together and tries to put Polaris on top, that's all that matters," he said. "Showing results is what it's about. It was cool to see Polaris with a top five overall and then a 1-2-3 podium finish, that was something we've been trying to do for a while. It's never been done. That was a huge team effort."

With all the accolades tossed his way, Heger in the No. 1896 RZR Pro R is still respectful, saying he just shows up and puts his best foot forward. "At the end of the day I just drive the Polaris RZR as fast as I can," he said. "I must be doing something right, but one rock can end an entire race. If all the pieces of the puzzle go together it usually turns out good."

Heger said he knew this SCORE Baja 500 was going to be "interesting" because of his starting position behind the SCORE Trophy Truck Spec trucks. "I started first in class and knew I was going to have my hands full behind the trucks," he said. "I battled with the trucks all day long. It was fun to fly past all of them. I don't think about the pressure of winning another race, I just go out there and drive."

Heger says, the problem with racing a UTV against a Trophy Truck is the size difference. "When we go to nerf a truck, sometimes they don't even feel it," he said. "Just getting by them is really hard. They also stir up a lot of dust, especially uphill. Thanks to my experience driving those vehicles in the past, I know what to expect."

"It was super tight," he said. "The coastal course was drenched from all the rain. It made for some really good racing. The RZR ran flawlessly all day. We never got out of the car, not even to change a tire."

Heger said he felt it was more like a SCORE Baja 400 course by not dropping into San Felipe and staying in the mountains and along the coast. "It made it more technical, which was fun." He was also glad to race on a technical course, it's something that he looks forward to in Baja.

With the UTVs now able to be in the top 10 finishers Overall, Heger believes the UTV class has really gotten competitive lately, and the equipment is being pushed for performance. "It's crazy," he said. "If we had cleaner air, who knows where we might be at the checkered flag." **SJ**



STORMY WEATHER

Polaris Takes A 1-2-3 Podium Finish And UTV Overall

BY LARRY SAAVEDRA
PHOTOS BY GET SOME PHOTO



not even a summer storm could dampen the excitement at the 57th running of the BFGoodrich SCORE Baja 500. The UTVs battled it out against mud, water and big ruts on their way to the checkered flag.

The 461-mile long course ran clockwise on the Baja Peninsula, taking racers through the mountainous terrain of Alamo Summit, to Mike's Sky Ranch then to the coast, until finally making it back to Rancho Nelson near the start/finish in Ensenada.

The SCORE Baja 500 is considered a technically demanding event by many, but the wet weather in the days leading up to the start of the event upped the ante.

According to racers, this year's course was more challenging and slower-going than previous years due to weather. There was practically no place to run full-throttle, except by the coast, they added.

The course was so tight with switchbacks and constant cornering, some racers got motion sickness, according to those interviewed by SCORE Journal.

But that didn't stop the Polaris RZR Factory Racing team from putting their own stamp on history, taking a historic 1-2-3 podium finish in SCORE Pro UTV Open and clinching the SCORE Overall.

Race fans also witnessed Brock Heger's eighth place finish among "all four wheel vehicles," some say, certainly to the fury of SCORE Trophy Trucks.

Can-Am also impressed, dominating their field in SCORE Pro UTV Forced Induction, while Honda took first and second in SCORE Pro Stock Normally Aspirated.

"Days like today feel completely surreal," said Alex Scheuerell, Director of Off-Road Motorsports, Polaris. "I'm constantly in awe of what this team and these drivers are capable of; continuously raising the bar for themselves and the competition. To not only come away with another dominant win, but to sweep the UTV Overall podium for the first time is just incredible. This finishing order is a powerful proof point of the RZR Pro R factory platform and its unmatched power, strength, and control. A huge thank you to the entire RZR engineering team and everyone at SCI, who work tirelessly to build these machines and make results like this possible."

SCORE Pro UTV Open

Factory racer Heger in the No. 1896 Polaris RZR Pro R proved he was the racer to beat, leading wire-to-wire on brutal Baja terrain. In doing so, Heger claimed his seventh consecutive UTV Overall victory.

Cayden MacCachren in the No. 1821 Polaris RZR Pro R was on a mission. He said he needed to redeem himself after a DNF at the SCORE San Felipe 250.

"After the DNF in San Felipe it put us in 12th on the starting grid," he said. "We knew it was going to be a battle because we had to get past the trucks to put us in position for a podium. We didn't get in over our heads though, but we did run into a mechanical issue about mile-marker 80. We made it to our chase truck for the fix and then we quickly made it back into the mix of Class 10 cars."

MacCachren said he was running 100 percent again from that point, and that passing was precarious because of the water crossings and rocks. He managed to fight the terrain though, while covered in mud, but got caught up to the UTV leaders in the last 60 miles of the race, and ultimately took second in class. "I always want to win, but it was a salvaged day and Polaris got 1-2-3 on the podium," he said.



■ **Justin Morgan finished third behind Cayden MacCachren for a 1-2-3 finish for Polaris**

Factory teammates Ethan Groom and Justin Morgan shared driving duties in the No. 1831 Polaris RZR Pro R and made an impressive dash to the front of the pack, even after starting in 14th position. By mile-marker 167 Groom moved into third position on the course.

Then Groom advanced to second position when he handed off the RZR to Morgan at the half-way point. Morgan physically crossed the finish line in second, but with post-race speed and VCP penalties it pushed the duo to third overall on corrected time.

"It was brutal," said fourth place finisher and Polaris racer Brandon Simms. "This is probably the roughest, and I've done a lot of SCORE Baja 500's. I mean the coast side was nice and smooth, but we battled with the factory teams all day. Obviously, Heger's been on the heater for a while now. I don't know what it's gonna take to beat him."

Out of 20 entries in class there were 12 finishers in class.

■ Kaden Wells takes first in Pro UTV FI



SCORE Pro UTV Forced Induction

It was definitely Can-Am's day in SCORE Pro UTV FI as Kaden Wells, Edgar Garcia and Jorge Cano took 1-2-3 on the podium.

Unfortunately, Can-Am's consistently solid Phil Blurton Jr. fell sick with pneumonia before the start, and was taken to the hospital, where he was recovering at press time.

Wells in the No. 2935 Can-Am Maverick R said the course was drier on the island side of the SCORE Baja 500 until they got into Mike's Sky Ranch, where water crossings and ruts became huge obstacles.

"I tried to stay out of the water as much as possible," he said. "By starting the race in the technical stuff it made a tougher, slower-paced race. The car was perfect with no flats or broken axles. But there were a lot of other racers getting sick from the twisties."

Wells and navigator Emma Cornwell were in the car all day and had no real issues. However, the Maverick did go into limp mode for a short time, and then mysteriously went back to normal. Fortunately, it didn't affect Wells' top-of-the-podium finish.

Edgar Garcia in the No. 2987 Can-Am Maverick R and Jorge Cano in the No. 2910 Can-Am Maverick R took second and third place respectively.

Out of 22 entries there were 11 finishers in class.



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SCORE Pro UTV Naturally Aspirated

HRC factory racer Corbin Leaverton nabbed first place in his inaugural Baja 500 in No. 1925 Honda Talon. "I've done a lot of desert racing including Dakar, but this was my first SCORE Baja race," said Leaverton.

"I will be racing the SCORE Baja 1000 this year, for sure. Red Bull will be joining my HRC effort. I'm extremely proud."

Leaverton battled with Ricardo Torres in the No. 1900 Honda Talon, until he had mechanical issues. Once back in the Talon, Leaverton eventually pushed to regain the lead at mile-marker 220.

"Torres was on my tail and so we did the whole cat and mouse thing for a while," he added.

Torres ultimately finished second in class with Eva Star Malabanan in the No. 1919 Polaris RZR Pro R crossing the finish in third.

Out of 6 entries there were 4 finishers in class.

SCORE Pro Stock UTV

Antonio Mendez in the No. 3959 Polari RZR Pro R took first in class. "It was a very, very difficult race," he said. "Lots of dust, and water crossings. But the truth is it was a lot of fun."

SCORE San Felipe 250 class winner, Francisco Beltran, in the No. 3921 Can-Am Maverick R, led much of the race, until he developed mechanical issues.

"By mile-marker 210 I had a 30 minute lead on Mendez," he said. "Then I felt vibrations at mile-marker 350 and pitted near the highway. The front upper A-arm was replaced, but I lost my big lead."

With a 30 minute lead shaved down to one minute, Beltran raced on, and had the finish nearly in sight. But a quarter-mile before the finish Mendez got by him.

"That's racing," he said. Still, Beltran took second place and has lots of good memories. He hopes to be at the SCORE Baja 400 to rack up more points toward the class championship. Yoshua Morquecho in the No. 3926 Polaris RZR took third place. **SJ**



■ **Video: Antonio Mendez On His Pro Stock UTV Class Win**

KADEN WELLS COMES ALIVE

The Can-Am Factory Racer Gets Back On Top

BY LARRY SAAVEDRA

PHOTOS BY GET SOME PHOTO

following a podium finish at the SCORE San Felipe 250, Can-Am factory racer Kaden Wells had his sights set on a big win at the BFGoodrich 57th SCORE Baja 500. He didn't disappoint. Wells and his navigator Emma Cornwell took top honors in the Pro UTV Forced Induction class. "Everything on the island side was dry, but the water crossings became more frequent near Mike's Sky Ranch," said Wells. "I tried to stay out of the water as much as possible. If the course was run in the other direction, it would have made for a different race. Starting the race in the technical terrain made it harder to pass. We had a minor glitch with the No. 2935 Can-Am Maverick R, but other than that it was perfect. Never got out of the car once."



Wells said the tighter sections were so lengthy that it led to motion sickness during pre-running. But he and Cornwell luckily avoided any downtime because of the twists and turns during the actual race.

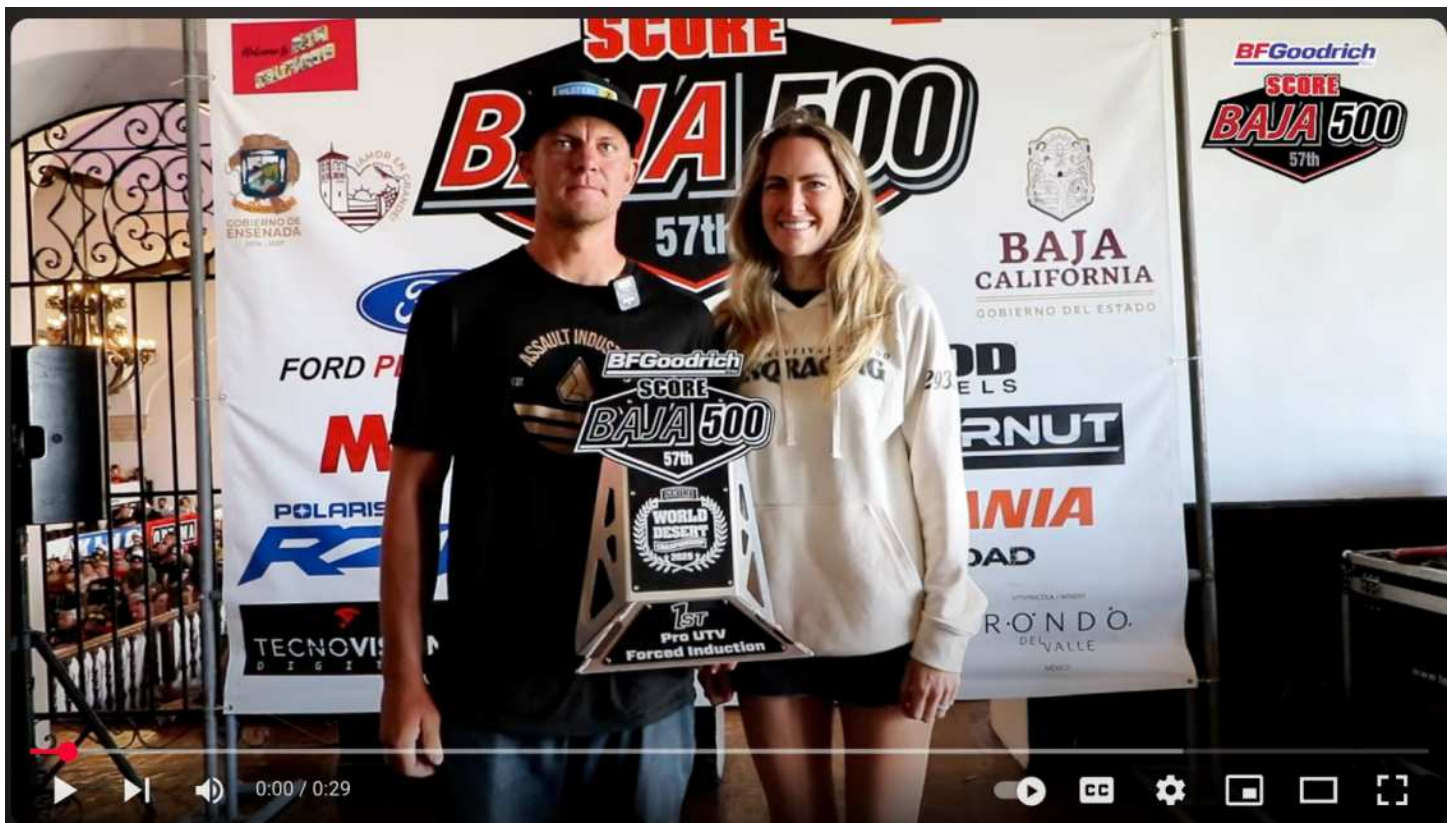
Wells started first off the grid in class after Can-Am teammate Phil Blurton Jr. pulled out of the race due to health reasons.

Wells battled it out with Can-Am driver Dustin Jones near mile-marker 200 and they went back and forth. Unfortunately, Jones pushed the limit of his Can-Am and pulled off course for repairs. "When Jones broke I thought I might be pushing my Can-Am too hard," said Wells. "So I backed off and just kept a steady pace from mile-marker 235 on."

Wells said the course was one of the roughest he's raced at SCORE and that it had a little bit of everything. He is aware that the closer he gets to the end of the season the more the pressure there is to win a class championship. As of the SCORE San Felipe 250 Wells was six points down to the leader Phil Blurton. The win at the SCORE Baja 500 puts him closer to the class championship.

"At the SCORE Baja 400 I will be making some strategic changes," he said. "I definitely realize what's at stake and the more cautious I become. But I'm still going to be pushing the Can-Am." **SJ**

■ Video: Kaden Wells on Winning The SCORE Pro UTV FI Class



CORBIN LEAVERTON ON THE PODIUM

The HRC Honda Factory Racer Makes His Debut

BY LARRY SAAVEDRA

PHOTOS BY JACK WRIGHT NMEDIA3

all eyes were fixed on Honda HRC's Corbin Leaverton in the No. 1925 Honda Talon after he took first in class at the 57th BFGoodrich SCORE Baja 500. It was his first time racing competitively in Baja.

Leaverton took the podium in the SCORE Pro UTV Normally Aspirated class but said had his work cut out for him. "I just signed with Honda HRC and so we came straight to the SCORE Baja 500," he said. "It was cool to get the win right out of the box. We plan to race the SCORE Baja 1000 next."

Leaverton drives for Honda HRC under the direction of Honda Team Principal Jeff Proctor. According to Leaverton, Red Bull will be stepping in to also sponsor his efforts in Baja.



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At the SCORE Baja 500 Leaverton started fourth off the grid, and pretty quickly caught up with the trucks. "We battled with Ricardo Torres in the other Honda Talon all day, and pitted near Valle De La Trinidad at mile-marker 135," he said. "We had lost some time there and went to work filling the gap of the leader."

With more than seven minutes to make up Leaverton kept his head down and pushed. "By mile-marker 168 I made up four minutes," he added. "Then by mile-marker 220 I passed Torres and kept him behind me."

Leaverton set the pace and played cat and mouse with Torres, until the checkered flag. "I kept him in the dust as much as possible," he said.

Knowing the weather was going to play havoc with the course during pre-running, he was prepared for the worst. "Even just the start of the course was super technical, and the rain and water crossings made it challenging," he said. "The Honda Talon is so nimble in that kind of terrain and that made it easier to navigate the obstacles. Even though it was my first SCORE Baja race I expected it was going to get technical, but this one was a little different."

Leaverton said there wasn't any one particular section that caused him that many problems but admitted that the route to Mike's Sky Ranch made him a little apprehensive.

"I like the challenge of it," he said. "The faster sections near the coast were also cool. The tires performed and I had almost no problems with the Talon besides a little electrical glitch." **SJ**



Four-Wheel Classes

■ Class Overview



ELIMINATION ROUND



Baja Takes Out Much Of The Four-Wheel Classes

BY DAN SANCHEZ

PHOTOS BY GET SOME PHOTO

most of the four-wheel class racers thought this year's SCORE Baja 500 course was one of the most brutal from the rain, dust, fog and technicality. It was those conditions that took out many of the four-wheel class competitors, leaving only a few veteran racers who knew how to manage their vehicles and the conditions to make it to the finish line.

In Class 7, the battle between Rhys Millen and his new Toyota V6 powered No. 711 truck challenged SCORE San Felipe 250 class winner Dan Chamlee in the No. 702 Ford Raptor. Millen finished 27 minutes ahead of Chamlee to take the class win, with Chamlee finishing second.

For Millen, this was a test for his latest vehicle which had some challenges, but in all, proved the concept. "We had lights coming off and we also drove it into a ditch," said Millen at the finish. "This was our debut with the car and the engine is the same one developed for the Dakar program and it won here in Baja now too. We had a mellow run to put more miles on this car and we got to the finish."



In Class 5 Unlimited, 2024 Class Champion Eli Yee in the No. 500 car won his first SCORE Baja 500 after competing in six over the past seasons. "We're very happy, and the course was great," he said at the finish. "We want to thank SCORE for putting on such a well-organized race. Thanks to Yokohama tires and King Shocks, our main sponsors and our family and team. It's great to finally win our first SCORE Baja 500 and hopefully we will win many more."

Likewise, 2024 Class Champion Dan Goodrich in the No. 1600 car survived the course and took the win in Class 1/2-1600 over Eric Pavolka in the No. 1625 car, who finished in second place. "It was a long day and a longer night," said Goodrich. "We had a great run. I haven't driven this car in a few years. And we bought a Class 10 to compete in this year. But we had the championship, so we had to defend it."

"SCORE puts on a great course and it gets beat up," continued Goodrich. "Some of the silt sections were worse than normal. We got stuck once and some locals helped to pull us out. We didn't have a flat all day on our BFGoodrich Tires. About 40-miles in we broke a torsion bar, had an alternator with a loose wire, but everyone on our team pitched in to bring the car to the finish."

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■ Video: Dan Goodrich On Winning In Class 1/2-1600

As the evening began to close with the 18-hour time limit to finish the race approaching, 2024 Class 11 Champion Oliver Flemate rolled up to the finish line with a time of 17:02:01 to get the class win. "For us this was the most demanding and brutal SCORE Baja 500 we ever drove," said an exhausted Flemate. "We made it again and now we have 10-wins in a row. It takes a lot of effort to finish this race in Class 11, but we're happy we won the Baja 500 again."

The race was not easy for Flemate and his team who suffered a roll-over and other problems along the course. "We thought we weren't going to finish," said Flemate. "We got stuck 10-times on the course. It was brutal but we finished and won another Baja 500!"

Also finishing just under the allotted time, was Cesar Quirate in the No. 1550 car to win the Sportsman Unlimited Buggy Class. Quirate came in with a time of 17:57:01 for an official finish and giving him his second class win of the 2025 season. **SJ**

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

In Baja California We Take Care Of The Environment

In Baja California, we welcome you to a state rich in biodiversity, where the sea and desert coexist in the same place. Home to the "Valley of the Giants," which features the largest and oldest cactus in all Mexico, and gateway to the Sea of Cortés, considered the largest aquarium in the world due to its countless marine species. Baja California offers beautiful landscapes thanks to its natural riches, including its beaches, bays, wetlands, valleys, vineyards, deserts, and mountains that enchant everyone. Baja California is home to more than 20 protected natural areas dedicated to the conservation of native flora and fauna that lives in these ecosystems.

We invite you to explore Baja California and become a responsible tourist by contributing to the conservation of one of the best destinations for nature lovers and outdoor activities, visiting places like Laguna Salada, Sierra de San Pedro Mártir, the National Astronomical Observatory SSPM, San Quintin Wetlands, and La Bufadora, to name a few of our destinations, while traveling over its seven municipalities: Tijuana, Playas de Rosarito, Ensenada, Tecate, Mexicali, San Felipe, and San Quintín.

The natural scenarios in Baja California have contributed to be considered as one of the most important tourist destinations in Mexico and in the world. That's why I would like to share some tips to become a responsible tourist, to enjoy the nature of our state, and to contribute to conservation:

1. Take care of the wildlife by respecting native animals and plants.
2. Be cautious with campfires.
3. Avoid littering.
4. Manage your waste responsibly.
5. Respect access pathways.
6. Protect natural and cultural heritage.
7. Know and respect indigenous communities.
8. Enjoy public facilities and areas.
9. Respect other visitors.
10. Plan your trip in advance.

Traveling with awareness is to bet on a more responsible and sustainable future for everyone. Welcome to Baja California, where we greet you with open arms and open hearts.

Mónica Julianna Vega Aguirre

Secretary of the Environment and Sustainable Development of Baja California





Discover and live
Ensenada

If you're into surfing, sea food and love to wander around the city, Ensenada is the best option for you!



Are you planning to visit our city soon?

If you love natural attractions, but you don't want to go too far from the city, you can head south of town to the famous blowhole spot **La Bufadora**, a natural geyser that shoots water up to 100 feet in the air. You can also enjoy the amazing view of the ocean and the rocks formation, and if you're lucky enough you can even spot some of the wildlife. Yet you can go to look around to the artisan crafts and food stands just some steps close to **La Bufadora**.

Shop for leather goods or Mexican artisan crafts at the stores along **Av. López Mateos/ First street**. Visit a craft brewery and discover the newly region's beer making scene.

Walk around the beautiful **Riviera del Pacífico** once a glamorous hotel and now a social, civic and cultural center. Enjoy a delicious margarita at Bar Andaluz, where this drink was created for first time.

The harbor of Ensenada welcomes multiple cruise ships a week and tourism, whether you're just stopping in for the day or you're planning a weekend getaway.



ENSENADA, A STAR-STUDDED GASTRONOMY



Baja California's gastronomy continues to gain international recognition, being included for the second consecutive year in the MICHELIN Guide Mexico 2025, the world's most influential culinary publication. With a total of 9 stars, the region reaffirms the quality and excellence that define its cuisine.

For those visiting Baja California, a stop in Ensenada is essential. Its culinary scene has achieved what few destinations in Mexico have: becoming an international benchmark thanks to chefs who turn local ingredients into unique experiences.



In the most recent edition of the MICHELIN Guide, five restaurants in the Valle de Guadalupe were awarded a Red Star for their outstanding cuisine:

- Olivea Farm to Table, by Eduardo Zaragoza
- Lunario, by Sheyla Alvarado
- Damiana, by Esteban Lluís
- Conchas de Piedra, by Drew Deckman
- Animalón, by Javier Plascencia & Oscar Torres

In addition, four of these restaurants also received the Green Star, which recognizes establishments committed to sustainable practices: Olivea Farm to Table, Lunario, Conchas de Piedra, and Deckman's en el Mogor. Ensenada also earned 7 Bib Gourmand distinctions and 18 recommendations in the Guide.

Visitors to Ensenada will discover not only breathtaking landscapes, world-class wine, and warm hospitality, but also a culinary scene that is setting trends. Every dish tells a story, conveys identity, and reflects a vision that is reshaping the way contemporary Mexican cuisine is understood.

Learn more about Ensenada and its gastronomy at ensenada.travel.



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38TH ANNUAL SCORE SAN FELIPE 250

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SEPTEMBER 10-14, 2025

6TH ANNUAL SCORE BAJA 400

ENSENADA, BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO

JUNE 4-8, 2025

57TH ANNUAL SCORE BAJA 500

ENSENADA, BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO

NOVEMBER 10-16, 2025

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BAJA 1000**

ENSENADA, BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO



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