

Valcourt, Que.
Canada
Tel.(514) 532-2211
Cable Bombarsnow
Telex 018-3120

CONTACT:
Michael A. Bailey
Polyservices (Canada) Ltd.
4001 Metropolitan Blvd. E.
Montreal, Quebec, H1Z 2L3
(514-374-2322) (or in USA --
404-766-8532)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE... GARY JONES: A DEDICATED PROFESSIONAL

VALCOURT, QUEBEC -- Ask any European star how he rates American riders at the bone-jarring international sport of motocross.

As sure as he is rugged, he'll tell you Gary Jones has what it takes to one day beat him at his own game.

Actually, the 22-year-old bachelor from Hacienda Heights, Calif. has already done just that, going on record as the first American rider ever to beat Europeans in an international series.

That milestone occurred in the 1972 Inter-AMA series when the Yamaha-riding youngster edged Torsten Hallman and Arne Kring, both of Sweden, to take the six-race series title. Rounding out a nearly-perfect '72 season, Jones won the AMA 250cc National Motocross Championship -- by more than 200 points over runner-up Jim Weinert -- and finished second to Brad Lackey in the National Open Class.

"Gary is a dedicated professional," observed Englishman Jeff Smith, twice world 500cc motocross champion and 9 times British national champ. "He has tremendous natural ability, coupled with an excellent technical understanding of his equipment," continued Smith, "He trains hard, and learns something new everyday. He lives and breathes motocross, and that's what it takes to become a consistent world-class rider."

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Polyservices (Canada) Ltd.
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Montreal, Quebec, H1Z 2L3
(514-374-2333)

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Smith should know better than anybody. As Manager of Competition and Testing for the Can-Am Division of Bombardier (Bom-bar-de-yay) Limited, he has worked many months with Gary in the development of the Can-Am GP250 prototype which debuted in the 1974 Winter-AMA series.

"We're really still shaking down this machine," continued Smith, "But you can't keep Gary down...he went right out in the third race of the series at Orlando and won both motos. Now that really impressed me!"

As quiet and modest as he is tall and lean (at 6'2 1/2" and 165 lbs.), Gary would prefer to hand most of the credit for his success to his father and chief mechanic Don -- and his 23-year-old brother DeWayne -- also a top-ranking motocrosser.

"Dad has coached me and prepared my bikes since I was 7-years-old," reminded Gary, "and I've always had DeWayne to race against. That's given me a super advantage over lots of guys," he added.

A former Harley-Davidson/BSA rider and dealer, father Don now operates Jones Motocross Products in Walnut, Calif., in addition to traveling the nation as chief mechanic for his Can-Am riding sons.

After winning the 250cc title for the second consecutive season last year, Gary encountered serious problems with his

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CONTACT:
Michael A. Brady
Polyservices (Canada) Ltd.
4001 Metropolitan Blvd. E,
Montreal, Quebec, H1Z 2L3
(514-374-2333)

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works-assigned Honda prototype and faired rather poorly in the Trans- and Inter-AMA series. This, coupled with the desire to "try something new," prompted the family to sign a long-term contract with the Can-Am Division of Bombardier Ltd., Canada's only manufacturer of motorcycles.

While the Jones' primary objective now is to develop the 250cc prototype, DeWayne is continuing to seek refinements to the already potent production version of the Can-Am 125MX-1. He'll contest the United States 125cc National Championship series, while Gary devotes his attention to the 250cc series. DeWayne will also enter the 125cc World Cup and the United States round of the 125cc Grand Prix.

Gary's ambition is nothing less than to become a world champion one day. And he firmly believes he can do it.

Recalling his first big AMA professional motocross -- the Evel Kneivel event at Twin Falls, Idaho in 1971 -- Gary said, "once I got going good, I knew I could win that race, though I'm sure nobody else did...and that's the way I feel about the world championship."

Lots of things have happened since Twin Falls, Idaho in 1971 -- and you won't find many folks today who can't get behind Gary Jones' belief in himself.

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