

The Long and Winding Road...

**VINTAGE ROADRACING.....
.....LIVING A DREAM.**
By Heather Francis

Combine motorcycles, heart and desire for racing, an adrenaline rush, closed-track road courses, a need for speed at any age, and what do you get? The Western Eastern Racing Association (WERA) Vintage motorcycle road racing series! Since there are currently fourteen WERA Vintage race classes, that covers just about any bike that you would want to race, from a Harley-Davidson Sportster to a Suzuki GSXR-1100 to a full blown, factory-built, GP two-stroke race bike like a Yamaha TZ500.

Not only does Vintage motorcycle road racing cover a wide range of bikes, but a wide range of racers. Vintage does not mean OLD!! There are young and "more mature" racers in Vintage racing, but no OLD racers. It is never too late to fulfill your dreams in racing!

Case in point, Royce Eaton is 70 years young and races both a 1973 Honda CB350 and a 1985 Ducati 750. He finished 2nd place in the 2005 WERA Vintage national points championship in the Vintage V1 class and finished 3rd place in the Vintage V4 class! Royce is a retired U.S. Navy Commander-Naval aviator and a retired Captain from U.S. Airways. He actually began road racing in the mid-1960's and even road raced while on active duty with the Navy, much

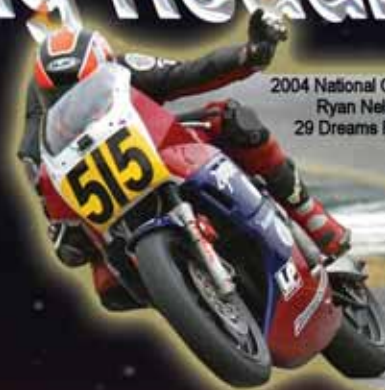
to their chagrin!

Royce is also a Christian and a very active member of the Gideons, helping to distribute Bibles around the world. Royce accepted Jesus into his life at the age of 15 and could spend pages praising God, writing about how God brought him out of such very humble beginnings, born in a two-room farm house with no indoor plumbing, electricity, or heat except a wood stove. Royce is proof that with God nothing is impossible and that He will help you go after your dreams.

Aaron Brown, 38, is a fabricator for Dale Earnhardt Inc. during the week, but come the weekend, he's a WERA Vintage road racer, racing both a 1995 Ducati 955 SPS and 1995 Ducati 748. Vintage racing is a family sport, and since Aaron brings his family to the races with him, now his two sons have joined Aaron in his love of racing motorcycles. Aaron himself started racing with a Honda TL250 at age nine. Aaron thanks his loving wife and parents for supporting him and their sons in their pursuit of racing and passion for motorcycles.

Since purchasing a bike to race in the vintage series is less expensive compared to a more modern race bike, it is very attractive to both newcomers in racing who are just starting out and to returning racers. For instance, after riding a track day on his street bike, Ryan Nelson found himself hooked for life and started road-racing soon afterwards with a 1989 Yamaha FZR400 in WERA's Vintage V6 class.

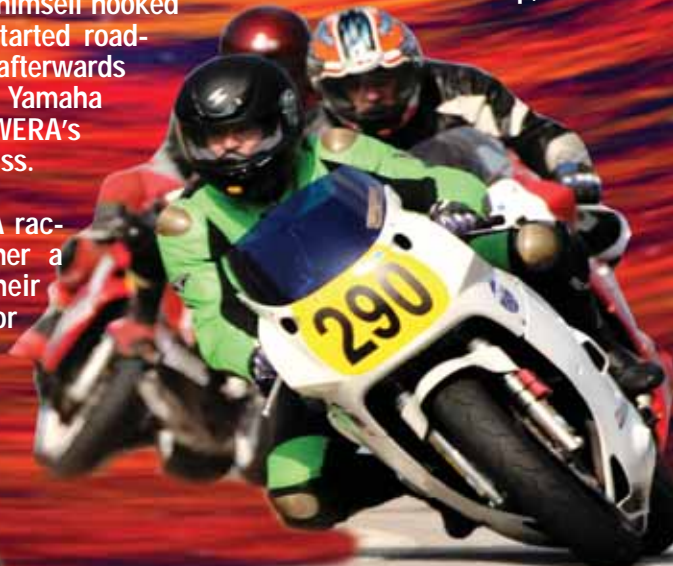
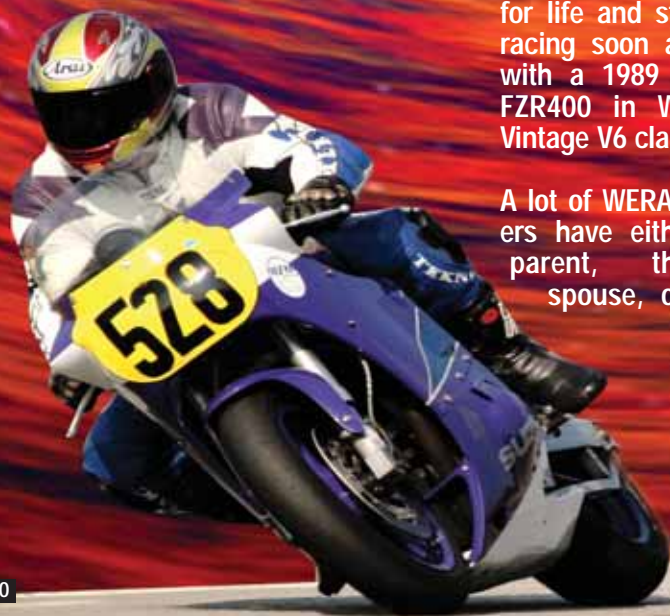
A lot of WERA racers have either a parent, their spouse, or



2004 National Champion
Ryan Nelson
29 Dreams Racing

a friend as their pit crew. Pit crews are not always in the spotlight like the racer, but none the less, they are just as important. For instance, after vintage racer Wayne Shelton had broken his collar bone in a race in late August, Wayne's wife, Teresa, wrenched on his 1981 Yamaha Seca 550 race bike to get it ready for the grand national finals in October so that he could win the 2005 WERA Vintage national points championship in the V4 class!

WERA is one of the leading racing organizations in the U.S. Many professional racers have gotten their start racing in WERA. Wes Francis of Covenant Racing has been racing a 1986 Suzuki GSXR-1100 in WERA's Vintage V6 and V7 classes. Vintage racing has given him a good training ground to now be ready to move up to race in WERA's modern-year race classes with a 2004 Suzuki GSXR-750 for the 2006 race season. It has always been dream of Wes' to road race, and with God's help, it has now come to pass.



Because race events are held on the weekends, WERA has made available chapel services on Sunday. Ken and Laura Gresham of Acworth, GA, have started a children's ministry for the children of racers at the track. It is like Sunday school for the kids right there on the premises! They enjoy doing craft projects and hearing Bible stories from Ken and Laura. For the 2005 race season, Ken and Laura held Sunday school for the kids at sixteen WERA race events in the southeast. Praise God! In 2006, not only are they planning to continue the children's ministry in the southeast, but they are planning to add a women's ministry for the mothers, wives, and girlfriends of racers that are there at the track on race day.

So... what's your dream in racing? There is a place for you, whether it be in racing cars or bikes. There is definitely a place in WERA Vintage motorcycle roadracing for you, your wife, and your kids. You can start at any age. Don't give up on your dream!!! Take delight in the Lord, and He will give you your heart's desires (Psalm 37:4). Start where you are as these vintage racers have done.

Looking forward to seeing you on the track!



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