

Irwindale 1970

By Cary Cotterman

I'm really stunned to hear about the death of Steve Bast. It's a very sad loss of one of my boyhood heroes. I didn't really know him, but as a fourteen and fifteen year old helping other riders in the pits, I got to see him up-close quite a bit. I remember him being quiet, unassuming, and having a subtle sense of humor. On the track, he was smooth as silk, good on the white line or out by the fence, and a fast gater who could also beat anyone from the back. I never saw him pull an unfair move on any opponent. His fans were disappointed after his short stay at Wembley, because we knew he had the ability to compete with the World's best if he had just stuck with it. But he was one of the greats here and won't be forgotten.

These pictures were taken at Irwindale in October 1970. Located about 15 miles northeast of Los Angeles, the original Irwindale Speedway ran meetings on Sunday afternoons during 1970. Promoted by former rider Johnny Gibson, a member of the American test side that toured the U.K. in 1951, the track did not prosper and closed after one season.

I was taking photos of riders, but the backgrounds in this selection give a good view of what the venue looked like. The JAP-mounted rider with yellow leathers and an orange helmet is Scott Autrey, before anyone outside of southern California had heard of him.

A second, more successful Irwindale track opened later a few miles up the road and operated profitably through most of the 1970s.



Steve Bast



Steve Bast



Steve and Mike Bast



Konle and Steve Bast



Sonny Nutter



Mike Bast, Cody, Shaw and Morley



Steve Bast and Cody



Scott Autrey

We always welcome and value any feedback from our visitors. If you'd like to comment on this article then please fill in our feedback form at <http://www.speedwayplus.com/Irwindale.shtml#feedback>