

Hayes Faces Tough Challenge from Cardenas at Road America

There were no 'what ifs' following the second half of the Subway SuperBike Doubleheader that closed out the GEICO Motorcycle AMA Pro Road Racing weekend at Road America.

In contrast to Saturday's opening-lap clash for the lead, the championship's three major players -- reigning National Guard SuperBike champ, Josh Hayes, pre-event title leader Josh Herrin, and the current points leader, Martin Cardenas

-- all got away relatively cleanly for the 12-lap contest and settled in for a straight fight to determine the day's victor.

And in the end, Hayes once again proved his supremacy. However, unlike the script that played out so frequently during the 2012 season -- including twice here at Road America -- the win did not come easily.

The Monster Energy/Graves/Yamaha superstar worked past Herrin on the open-

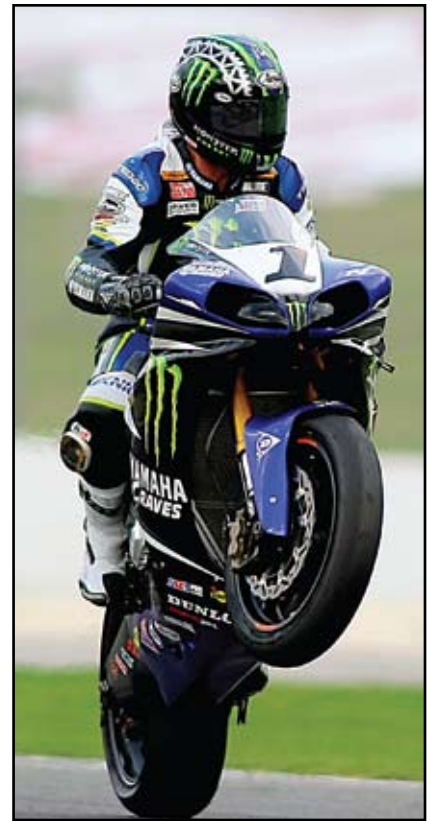
ing lap and then hounded Cardenas until he finally found a way into the lead on lap 3. But, once in front, it proved no easy task to shake his determined challengers, and when he finally did -- unlike his numerous '12 blowouts -- the race was still not completely decided.

Hayes pushed the gap up to 2.428 seconds by lap 7, however. Cardenas responded by finding his groove aboard the #36 Yoshimura Suzuki Factory Racing GSX-R1000. The Mississippian's advantage decreased lap by lap from there on out until he finally took the checkered flag with the charging Colombian just 0.818 seconds behind and within a sniff of his #1 R1's draft.

The victory marks Hayes' fifth National Guard SuperBike win in a row at Road America -- the most of any rider. It also marked his second consecutive season of not only maximizing his points haul in Wisconsin but doing so while topping every single practice, qualifying session, and race.

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Photos: MSA Archive



Jason DiSalvo

2 INCHES FROM THE GROUND.

3 INCHES FROM EACH OTHER.



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