

EXCLUSIVE FIRST TEST! 250 HUSKY 6-SPEED

DIRT BIKE®

94355 JULY 1973 75¢



**125 ENDURO
SHOOTOUT**

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IN FLORIDA**

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FIREROAD ROULETTE**

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DIRT BIKE

JULY 1973

NUMBER SEVEN

VOLUME THREE



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EXCLUSIVE FIRST TEST! 250 HUSKY 6-SPEED

DIRT BIKE



ON THE COVER: Tom Scales does some snappy profiling 26 miles from the nearest rabbit during the 1973 Mint 400. Peek at page 72 and thereabouts for the full Mint skinny.

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Hodaka has what it takes to be what's most fun. And we think our no-compromise attitude in building you a Hodaka will result in a no-compromise attitude on your part in making it your choice. For the address of your nearest Hodaka dealer, Canadian readers should write to Gemini Ind., Ltd., 2525 Stephens St., Vancouver, B.C. Australian inquiries can be set to Minilya Pty., Ltd., P.O. Box 209, S. Melbourne, Australia 3205.



HODAKA 125 WOMBAT



Get "The Hodaka Story" and the address of your nearest dealer. Send 25¢ to HODAKA MOTORCYCLES, Suite E, 773 Sherman Road, Athena, Ore. 97813.

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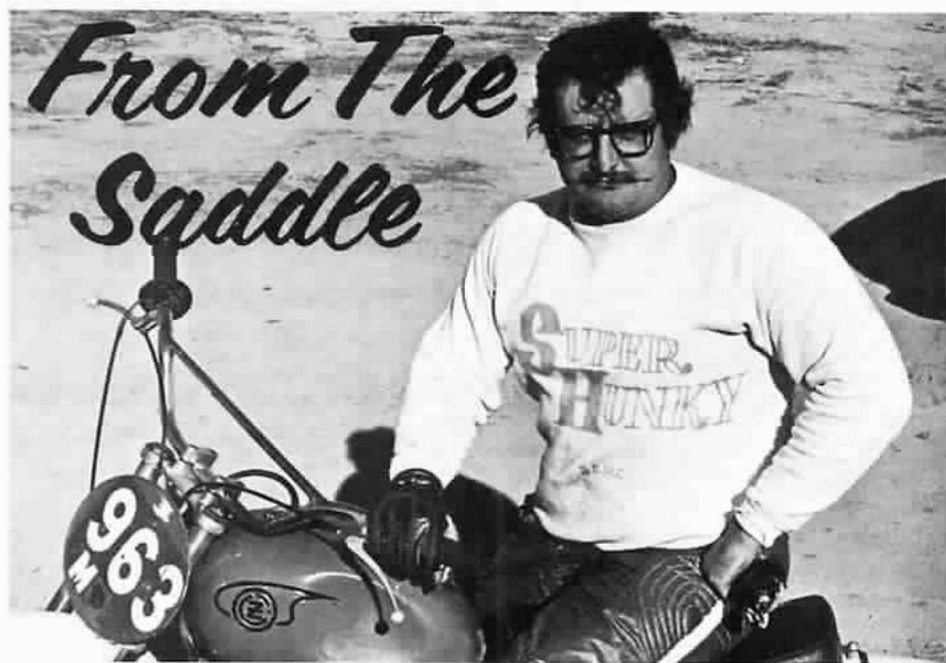
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the sign
that means
business!





By RICK SIEMAN

THE HANDY SURVIVAL GUIDE TO GETTING A BIKE WHEN YOU'RE TOO YOUNG TO HAVE ONE.

Dear Dirt Bike,

I am 14 years old have a big problem. I really want to have my own dirt bike and ride it, but my parents won't let me. I have ridden some of my friends' bikes (they're the same age as I am) and freaked out completely. My folks say motorcycles are too dangerous and too expensive and I can't have one until I am 32 years old. Help.

signed,

Desperate in Duluth

The above letter is quite typical of those sent in by many of our younger readers. Here they are—14, 15 or whatever—and the dirt riding bug has bitten them hard; and there seems to be no possible way to get ownership of a machine.

First off, let's get a few things straight. Dirt riding is dangerous (sort of) and expensive (sort of). But that doesn't make it any less desirable. It can be just as dangerous or expensive as you make it. Like anything else.

Now that you understand that you are probably going to skin some elbows and get more than your share of bruises, let's get to the nitty-gritty.

How do you get your grubby little hands on a bike?

A number of ways come immediately to mind, and most of those ways have usually already been tried and have failed. Let's get down to the sneaky stuff that works, eh?

1. Determine if your parents can or cannot afford a bike. If they cannot, it is then up to you to get the money. If you really want to ride badly enough, this should be no problem. Don't expect them to support your habit. There are plenty of lawns waiting to be cut and cars to be washed.

2. Let's say you already have the money saved, and they still refuse to let you get a bike. Try any of the following ploys:

a. Tell them you either want to race bikes for a living, or you will become a missionary in a leper colony. Nothing else will do. Leave a few old *National Geographics* lying around the house opened to horrible full-color shots of lepers. Right next to these gruesome mags, leave a copy of *DIRT BIKE* opened to a page of Brad Lackey getting a giant check for winning the Trans-AMA, surrounded by smiling girls and back-slapping dignitaries.

b. Show a great deal of interest in a sport that is much more dangerous than dirt riding. A red cape discreetly left on your bed next to a Hemingway book should put some fear into their hearts.

Talk a lot about skydiving and how only 10 out of 14 skydivers died

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last year. If you can't find any statistics, then make them up. The worse the better.

Write fan letters to the Flying Wallendas and leave the letters lying around for all to see—by accident of course. In the letter, you say that since you can't become a biker, then the only alternative is to run away from home and learn the high trapeze business.

c. Take up a particularly offensive hobby, like collecting dead frogs, or armadillos. Insist that you be given a space somewhere in the house to keep the large, smelly jars of formaldehyde. Insist that it's either bikes or carcasses. Tell them that to become a scientist, one must keep this sort of thing around.

Other offensive hobbies include chemistry, which, creatively used, can drive people out of the home. Mix two wrong (right?) things together, and the results can do anything from smell, to smoke, to both at the same time. Not to mention eating holes in floors and the like.

Leech collecting, spider breeding, maggot farming and eel husbandry are only a few of the more objectionable. You are only limited by

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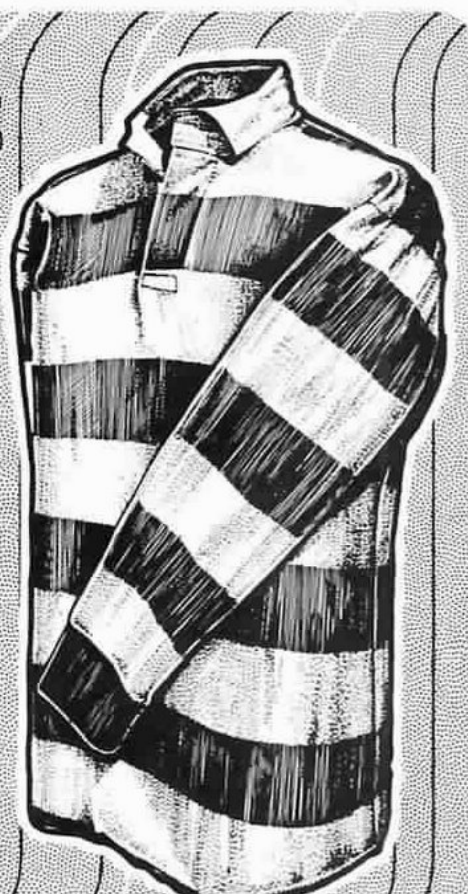
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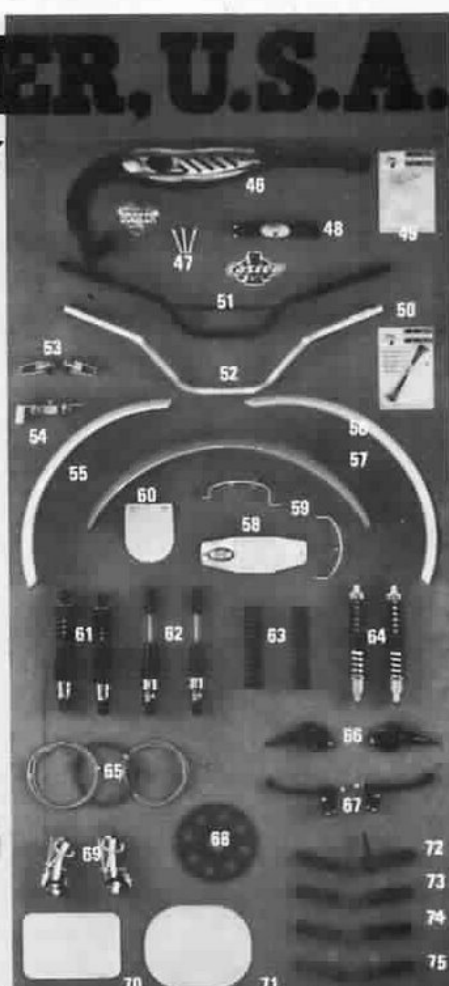




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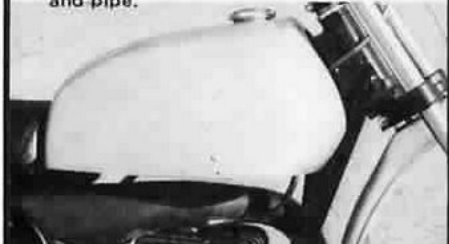
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your imagination. If they go nutty over one, try another, and another, until they are ready to give up. Then spring the bike idea. It will seem positively blissful after the aforementioned.

d. Start walking funny and wearing your sister's perfume. When they notice the, ah . . . quirks, tell them that dirt riding is the only thing that can jiggle your hormones back into line. And that all dirt riders are rugged, masculine types and that if you can't be a dirt rider, that you want to sign up for Francine's School of Hair Dressing and Cuteness. Insist that this is a critical time in your life and they'll be responsible if you end up in the cast of "Boys in the Band."

e. Tell them that you are merely thinking of their welfare for the not-too-distant-future, and that successful motocross riders will make more than Chico Castinet, the famous Cuban baseball player. Appeal to their laziness . . . "Say, Dad, it sure will be nice when you retire in three or four years after I've signed a contract for 2 million with the Bridgestone Factory Racing Team. Yep I'll buy you a big house and a car, five boats and all the beer you can drink.

And then you can quit your job at the candle factory and settle down to a life of utter luxury . . . however?" He should be in tears by this time.

f. Corner your mother and tell her that your Dad really wants you to be the racer he never was, and that's why he drinks (smokes, etc.) so much. Also tell her that if Dad was around to help work on your bike, he wouldn't be eyeballing that foxy check-out girl at the supermarket all the time.

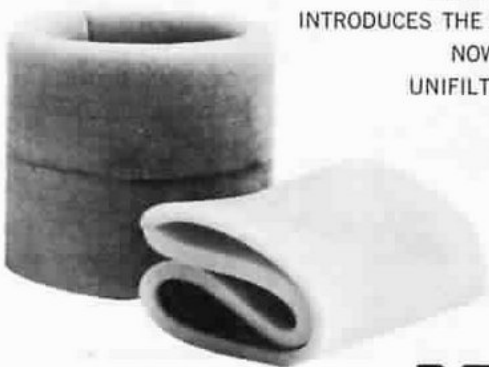
The family that does tuneups together, stays together.

g. Corner your father and tell him that your mother really wants you to ride bikes, but she thinks that it is beyond his mechanical ability to assist in working on your machine. Naturally, all men think they are great mechanics, and he will bristle up and demand that you get the bike immediately so he can perform a tuneup. The conversation should go something like this . . . "Say Dad, ya know, Mom really wants me to have a bike, but she said that you are such a clod with tools and you're such a fumble-fingered mechanic, that you couldn't keep a tricycle running—let alone a motorcycle."

Cont'd. on page 10

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"Oh yeh?" he should snap back, "Well you just take this here credit card and go get yourself a bike and bring it right home. And make it quick." If your Dad gets this attitude, don't hesitate to purchase a 450 Husky, or something in that price range.

f. Start saving money for the bike, even though they say you can't have one. Get odd jobs and ask your parents to put the money in a bank account for you. When they insist that it won't do any good, just look wistfully off into space and reply, "Well, Mom, I can dream, can't I? Some day, maybe in the distant future, all of my fantasies just might come true. Even if it takes 20 years, I want to start now." She should be in tears at this point.

g. When you come home from your jobs, show a great deal of fatigue. Flop down wearily on the floor and breath heavily. A heavy sigh and a groan or two add to the realism. Some dark shadows under your eyes can be obtained by smearing some ashes carefully. They'll think you're working yourself to near exhaustion and might relent.

h. Tell your parents stories about guys who have been saved from a life of crime by getting involved in dirt riding. If you don't know any stories, make a few up. Examples? "Say, Dad. Didja hear about Danny down the street? Seems he was arrested for selling dope and beating up grandmothers last year, but since he started riding he's been getting straight 'A's' in school and is now President of the Jaycees and got a blue ribbon from the Future Farmers of America for an essay on Americanism. Yup, and he swears it was his involvement with bikes that changed his whole attitude." The sternest parent should crumble at this kind of a story.

i. Point out that soon bikes will be the only form of transportation allowed in this country and the price of bikes will more than likely triple in the next year. Buy now and beat the rush, etc. . .

j. Hold your breath until you turn blue and pass out. This should only be considered as a last resort.

If none of the above ploys work, then we can only offer you sympathy and a copy of DIRT BIKE each and every month to help you while away the time. Good luck. You'll need it.



By PETE SZILAGYI

This is my last Checkpoint column. Just as I inherited this space, someone else, I don't know who, will be here next month. Writing this column has been a very satisfying experience for me, because it's neat to see your ideas in print; a good ego massager, and you all seem to enjoy them. All writers cringe when their stories have gone through the production department and finally appear in the magazine. No matter how diligently you go through your work, editing and changing this or that, the final product somehow could have been better. The measure of success is how much a writer cringes when he reads his work. I've only been ashamed of about three-quarters of my Checkpoints, which indicates a moderate amount of success.

The mechanics of writing a column are quick and dirty. Click away at the typewriter late into the night, hit the rack and toss and turn in nervous anticipation of your story's rejection, and hand the Schlitz-stained pages to the editor in the morning. After reading it, his reaction will be one of three: 1. "Arrggh!" 2. "Hmmm . . .," or 3. "Not bad, not bad at all for a carrot-headed, mottle-shanked CZ rider."

Response #1 means that the column stinks and it will never see print, no matter how much editing and rewriting is done. I've written a couple of Checkpoints that you'll never see. Yes, they were that bad. In fact, the editor's "Arrggh!" shook the walls like an angry San Andreas Fault. But I don't feel bad about such things, because even Charley Pride or the Rolling Stones come out with a bad record every now and then. Even the Bible has some dull chapters.

Response #2 means the editor likes the column, but the subject

isn't handled quite the same way that he would have treated it. In my case, this usually involves certain ugly references in a column to a German motorcycle that's usually painted red, yellow, or orange . . . combined with too-friendly comments about a certain Czechoslovakian motorcycle that's usually painted yellow, or lately, red. In all fairness to the portly man in the Maico shirt who has been my editor, I must admit that none of my copy was ever changed to suit anyone else's whims. However, I was subjected to punishment far more cruel and unusual. For about two weeks afterward I would have to listen to endless jabbering about Jikov carburetors or PAL spark plugs or Trial shocks. Such arguments are subject to final determination at the racetrack, but it always seemed that one bike or the other "wasn't jetted right."

The third possible response to the initial reading of my column is the best one, one that I have to savor because it doesn't come often. While the Chief is saying, "Not bad, etc." he is actually thinking, "Damn, I wish I woulda wrote that!" *Touché.*

Though I haven't been able to answer all the nice letters you've sent commenting about Checkpoint, I appreciate your thoughts. And to finally answer the most asked question: No, I won't tell you how to pronounce my last name. It's too much fun listening to the mess you make of it. And to answer the second most asked question: "The San Clemente Scrambler" was 100-percent fiction, and I'm ashamed that you even had to ask. Thanks also to all the folks who sent me T-shirts after reading a Checkpoint entitled "Confessions of a T-shirt Addict," written with the express intent of revitalizing the author's wardrobe at no expense to himself. I received so many shirts that, just to be fair to the senders, I wore three or four at a time for a while. Saved on baths, though; just take off the bottom one and you're set for another week.

No, I haven't quit Checkpoint because the rigors of life in the Ant Farm have finally got to me. I quit for loftier reasons, and reasons that I hope you will come to appreciate. I'm taking over a shiny new magazine that will be called MOTO-CROSS ACTION, and will be published by the same people who bring

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As you may have ciphered, MOTOCROSS ACTION will be 100-percent motocross. No trail riding, enduros, desert riding; no siree, just pure blood and guts motocross racing. We take the mail we get from our DIRT BIKE readers very seriously when planning future issues of the magazine. You all shouted motocross . . . more motocross. If we were to put all the motocross articles in DIRT BIKE that you want, our magazine would have to be 1,000 pages thick each month,

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and we still couldn't do justice to all the other facets of dirt riding.

MOTOCROSS ACTION will, we hope, be the spokesman and historian for the entire motocross scene. The sport is growing, and I think there is a good chance that it will gain the same national prominence as some of the more established spectator/participant sports. We all know that motocross is approximately 2,674-percent more exciting than any combination of football, baseball, basketball, tennis, hockey, rugby, golf, skiing, water polo, volleyball, skydiving, wrestling, boxing, gymnastics, billiards, cribbage, poker, bridge, canasta, horse racing, jai alai, cockfighting, ballooning, kite-flying, scuba diving, swimming, roller derby, and "All in the Family."

I personally can get behind motocross. Why, I'd much rather go to a good motocross than, say, put a transmission in a '49 Buick during a snowstorm. That's true devotion, folks. And that's why I'm doing the new magazine. There are certain individuals on the staff of DIRT BIKE who really dig riding full bore down a fire road for 30 or 40 miles at a whack, and they always beat me at stuff like that because I would rather be building berms and going around corners or complicated things like that. So when I enter a 50-mile desert race, everyone else rides 50 miles and I ride 70 miles, just because I make corners where there aren't any. They say Larry Pfutzenreuter and I say Brad Lackey. What they call road crossings I call jumps. They talk about dead engine starts but I instinctively put my hand on my helmet. They say loops, I say motos. They mention a water crossing, and I think of a mudhole. They say "I finished!", and I say, "But there's still two more motos. . ."

MOTOCROSS ACTION is going to cover the motocross scene all over the world, which means that I'll get a chance to travel around the country and meet many of you. In fact, I know that at the very moment you are reading this, I'll be lurking somewhere in the midwest, probably trying to enter the 250 Beginner class at Punkin Center. So next time you're poking around in the magazine rack looking for your copy of DB, the guy standing next to you might be me. And I'll be disappointed if you don't shuck the 75¢ for MX ACTION. It's there now. ●

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bits and pieces



By DAVID SWIFT

Harmless facts! Interesting joshing! Moribund to read!

Have you ever seen the bumper sticker "Desert Riders (or Enduro Riders or Motocross Riders) Make Better Lovers"?

Of course, this is just a fun thing, something to raise the ire of non-desert riders. I mean, just because a person rides a motorcycle doesn't mean that. . . .

. . . Unless you care to listen to one Dr. Sol Roy Rosenthal, a top medical authority and retired professor of Preventive Medicine from the University of Illinois. Dr. Sol Roy seems to think that one's participation in various "risk sports"—horse racing, skiing, polo, motor racing, and so on, is essential to a person's well being. Dr. Rosenthal is a horseman, himself.

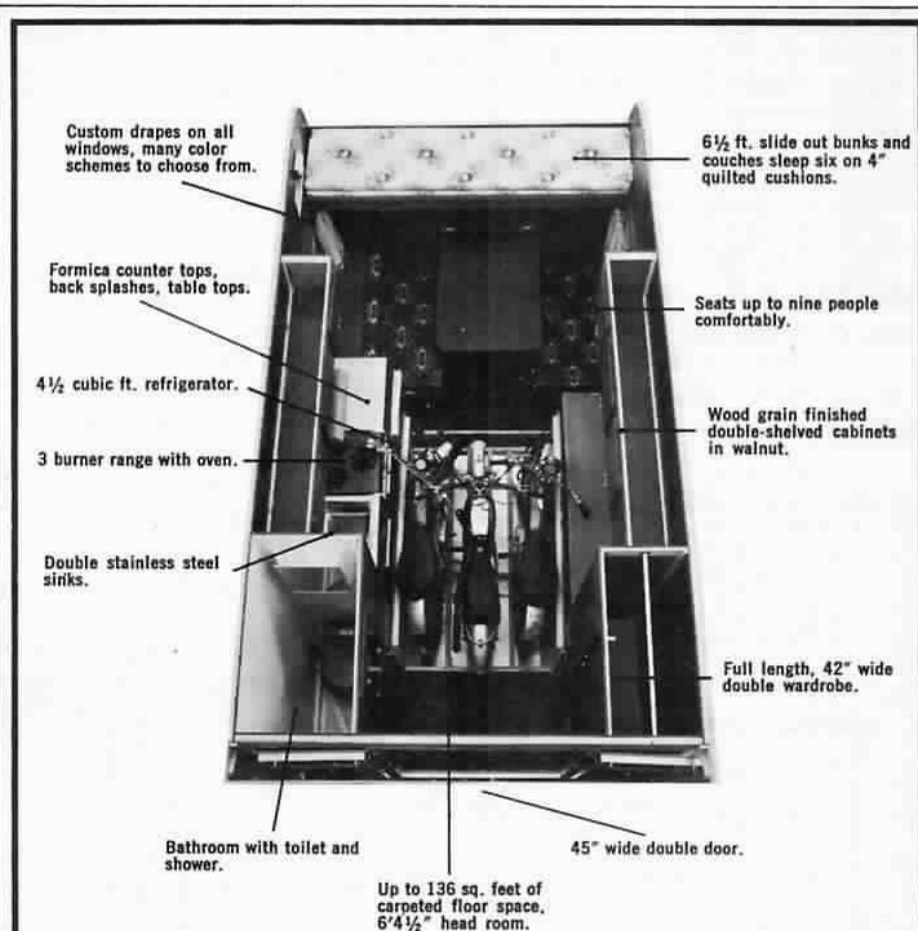
In an article from the Sports page in the *L.A. Times*, Dr. Rosenthal indicated that time-honored he-man

sports from slaying dragons all the way up to present-day equivalents are necessary to one's juices to become a better-adjusted personality. The secret is in exhilaration, not exhaustion. And, says the Doc, as a side effect, risk sportsmen indeed become better lovers.

I dare a motorcycle company to have Dr. Rosenthal endorse their product. Picture this: "Hi, friends. We've been doing some testing here in my lab and have found conclusively that Macho Motorcycles are 28 percent more *exhilarating* than the next five leading brands. . . ."

On TV, Certs' 10-second spot shows some exciting motocross footage, so the good publicity is appreciated. However, I personally resent the implication that motocross causes bad breath.

LET'S TRADE RECIPES! No, I don't mean recipes like Churl Bean Ice Cream Pie—I mean recipes for starting motorcycles. Every bike has its own special drill and it takes a rider weeks, maybe months, to discover it. My old Yamaha took layer after layer of calf from me before I discovered the cold-weather secret:



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We didn't let the three test bikes from the May issue go home right away. We held on to them to get better acquainted. The findings:

Austin-Graydon sent us a flywheel for the Yamaha MX 250. It made the Yammie a much better play-bike and

made for quicker acceleration on hard-packed surfaces. Just as we figured. The Yamacrosser was a favorite with us until it developed some gearbox probs. Turns out that the factory let loose some less-than-perfect shifting locator pins and is making good on them. The MX 250 threw a chain out in the middle of the desert, too, wiping out part of the countershaft sprocket cover.

But those funny looking shocks performed elegantly the whole time. Like we suggested in the test, the bike required no maintenance of any consequence. We waited and waited for something to loosen, but nope, weekend after weekend without so much as a plug change. We put a new ring in it and gave it back.

As for the DT-3, we added good bars, knobbies, decent grips, good pegs (temporarily ripped from our Project Yamaha), and installed a P. Petty Muder in the front. The object was to take the DT-3 to Tennessee to cover an enduro on the thing. For reasons too bizarre to mention here, the trip was aborted in Arkansas. The point is, for about a \$100 investment, the DT-3 was twice as dirt-worthy. Yamaha could recreate the whole

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As for the Suzuki Savage, Jim Connolly requested the bike to take around the Mint course before the race. After 200 miles Jim decided that the Savage was the hot setup for the race. No kidding. Of course, some of the weight would have to go, but the Savage was cut out for the Mint: high gearing, plush ride at speed, good handling, good gas mileage, and the reliability of sunset.

Coloradians! (Coloradites?) People who Live In Colorado! Your soul brother Paul Garrigan has spent the last 14 months and 9,000 miles on his Yamaha DT-1 working with friends mapping trails in the Rampart Range area. Paul will now sell you a map of the 150-square-mile area with complete legends, names for every trail (some of which are unprintable), and advice regarding rider ability for each trail. This map costs a dollar, a paltry fee Garrigan hopes will eventually pay for the printing. Paul Garrigan lives at 388 S. Queens Cir., Lakewood, Colorado 80226. Ask for the SEWAG map—and he might tell you what "SEWAG" means.

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Ask the expert



PRESTON PETTY

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HONDA \$PEED \$ECRET\$

I've been racing a Honda SL100 with a Cycle Products West megaphone. If I install a Powerroll cam with a higher lift and put another rear sprocket on with about four more teeth would this have an adverse effect on performance?

When I'm racing I have a hard time with those quick two-strokes coming out of tight corners. I win every once in awhile, but I think I would do better if I could liven up my engine a little.

Warren Johnston
Dallas, Texas

A bigger rear sprocket is certainly not going to have an adverse affect on performance unless you run out of speed going down the straightaways. The quickness of the two-strokes coming out of tight corners is the reason they exist and also the reason Honda is now building two-strokes. There is simply no way to get a four-stroke to accelerate as quickly as an

equal displacement two-stroke. Four-stroke engines have a lot more parts to accelerate than a two-stroke does. In addition to the cam you can port it, put a slightly bigger carburetor in, and you may try raising the compression ratio. Discuss this with your local Honda dealer. I know there have been some competitive SL100s and 125s on the West Coast, but not very often. When a guy can get the right formula it's a pretty good machine. If you can't get it to work right, Honda will sell you one of their new two-strokes for motocross.

CLIMB IT

What is the proper way to go up a tall, steep hill? What do you do with the bikes after you test them?

Brian Jones
Pittsburg, Kansas

Hit the bottom of the hill just as fast as you can, keep your feet on the pegs and your weight forward, and back shift or use the clutch as necessary to keep the engine speed up. Don't ever stop forward motion.

We have to give the bikes back to the importer or distributor. We would love to sell them, but we can't. Plus, from time to time, we test some that are very difficult to sell, like the Moto Garbanzo 1½-speed, 50cc MX-er with 8-inch wheels and a \$1,500 price tag.

BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL

Is it true that a black engine runs cooler? My friend has a Kawasaki and painted his engine black, and he says it will run cooler. I have a Suzuki, and was wondering if this is true. Suzuki's 125, 250 and 400 MX-ers are anodized black. Is this better than just spray painting? Why?

Doug Stinson
Ypsilanti, Michigan

A black painted engine will look pretty groovy, particularly if the tips of the fins are polished. But generally, the increase in heat transfer due to the black is more than offset by the black paint pigment that's coated over the engine; it offers a barrier to the heat flow. Anodized black is the only way to go. You'll get the full advantage of black's ability to absorb heat (or the lack thereof). One problem: Anodizing doesn't like steel, so if you stick your cylinder in an anodizing tank you will receive it back



The new bike group would call Bill Inglis a traditionalist. That's because he rides an AJS/Matchless "Thumper" for the pure fun of it.

In fact, he's rather on the conservative side.

Bill doesn't compete, except against himself. On weekends he'll set up his own off-road competition course for the "Thumper". Or maybe wait around the mountains on a Bultaco TSS-200 road bike. His choice of helmets — a Bell Super Magnum.

Bill has to be conservative, since he works with millions of dollars a year for one of the largest real estate companies in the world.

As a leasing agent, dealing with large office buildings, Bill is exposed to the most professional people and equipment in the world. When he makes a deci-

sion, it's got to be right.

It's no wonder you'll find him wearing a Bell Helmet.

Shouldn't You?



Insist on this mark on every helmet you buy



When you are a leasing agent for a giant company you can't afford a wrong decision. You can't, if you are a bike rider, either.



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Dealer inquiries invited.

with no liner, because the liner will
have been eaten up by all of the lit-
tle amoebas in the anodizing tank.

TORQUEPOWER

Could you explain the relationship
between horsepower and torque?

Also, as a general rule, does lower-
ing the transfer ports and raising the
exhaust port increase performance?
If so, how does it accomplish this?

In your opinion, is it advisable to
use Castrol "R" in an oil injection
system?

Tim Bess

Shawnee, Oklahoma

A simple analogy to horsepower
and torque is illustrated when pedal-
ing a bicycle. Torque is how hard
you push on the pedal, and horse-
power is how much energy the bike
produces. So the straight horsepow-
er figure, without identifying the rpm
at which it occurs, can be mislead-
ing. For instance, a motorcycle that
has 30 hp at 5,000 rpm will, in all
probability, be quite a bit quicker in
motocross than another motorcycle
with 30 hp at 7,500 rpm.

Lowering the transfer ports and
raising the exhaust may help on some
motorcycles, but as a general rule, I
would not say that it would increase
performance. The transfer ports are
open for such a very short period of
time, as it is now, that it makes the
ports the limiting factor in high en-
gine rpm, say, above 10,000. Raising
the exhaust port has to be very care-
fully matched with the expansion
chamber because it affects the reson-
ant timing and the volume of the re-
turn (or reflected) charge. Raising
the exhaust port does lower the effec-
tive compression ratio, which is al-
ready pretty low in most two-strokes.
If you start milling the head too
much you may run into some com-
bustion chamber squish problems
where you don't have enough room
to burn the gas properly.

I don't think that it would be a
good idea to use a castor-based oil in
an oil injection system. Castor-based
oils go through a larger viscosity
change with respect to temperature
change. In other words, it's very
thick at low temperatures, and oil in-
jection systems won't operate prop-
erly with too thick of an oil.

SPARE SPARK

A few weeks ago I was riding in

the hilly area above the river at In-
dian Dunes. As I was about to cross
the river, a guy on a 90 MX asked
to borrow my spark plug wrench. As
he was using it, I looked over his
shoulder and noticed that he had two
spark plugs. I asked him why he
had two. He answered that he didn't
know why, he just saw other people
with them.

Furthermore, in your test of the
Cooper 250 on page 51 of the Febru-
ary, 1973 issue, on the bottom right
side, there was a picture of the en-
gine and surrounding area. It clearly
showed two spark plugs, with the
wire on the plug closest to the carb.
Could you tell me what it does, and
if it makes a difference which plug it
is on? Also, if the plug with the
wire gets fouled, does the extra one
also get fouled?

I found your article on two-stroke
oils very informative and interesting,
although I have a question. Are
these oils used with a pre-mix also
usable with the Autolube system?

Al Rosenberg

Canoga Park, California

The spare-spark-plug approach,
where you only fire one, has its main
value as a back-up for a fouled plug.
Also, some riders install a second
hotter plug to warm up the bike, or
a colder plug to use when riding a
long sand wash or something equally
demanding.

There are two types of fouling:
Oil fouling or cold fouling occurs
when the engine is not warmed up
enough or has been run too slowly
to burn off oil. The other type of
fouling is when the spark plug is
simply not cold enough. If it runs
too hot, it won't dissipate the heat
that will occur with a lot of wide-
open, high-rpm running. These two
extremes in riding are very difficult
for one plug to handle, so the two-
plug approach may pull you out of
the weeds when you need it.

Usually.

GO KNOBBY

I own a Yamaha 100 LT2 Enduro
and wondered if replacing my 3.00x-
18 trials tire with a 3.50x18 knobby
will reduce power? Should I get a
larger rear end sprocket?

Mark Walter

Washington, Pennsylvania

Generally speaking, a knobby tire

will absorb more power than a trials will. This is because it takes more pressure, force, and ultimately horsepower to stuff a heavier knob down into the ground and then pull it back out. However, when it does that there is the advantage of increased traction. So if your type of riding requires more traction, you need a knobby. If you're riding on harder gravel roads and trails, where a knobby won't sink into the surface, stick with the trials tire.

Your rear wheel sprocket will probably be just about right for most trail riding. If you find you have to slip the clutch too much when in low gear (to get over logs and through rocks), you might try a larger rear sprocket.

TWO PLUGS BETTER THAN ONE?

I wanted to know why CZ bikes have double ignition wires and two spark plugs. If this is for better performance, can it be done to a bike without a big hassle with the points and timing? If so, how is it done?

Chris Lytle

Upland, California

Outside of a small increase in reliability (you have to foul two spark plugs instead of one), it also increases performance slightly. "Ignition advance" in any motorcycle engine is simply the length of time it takes for the gas in the combustion chamber to burn from the spark plug all the way to the edges. When it's 100-percent burned, the piston should be at top dead center, ready to start its trip down. By having two spark plugs firing, this distance and time will be cut in half (approximately), and you can then reduce the ignition advance by one-half—not in linear length but in crankshaft degrees. The less advance you have to ensure complete burning at top dead center, the more usable power you have.

Dual firing plugs can be installed to most motorcycles. Put in an extra plug hole in the opposite side of the combustion chamber (or at 90 degrees to your existing plug), and get one of the older Honda coils off the CB 92—they have two spark plug wires and a third wire going to your existing points and condenser. It will work; we've done it. Just don't plan on a 40 to 50 horsepower increase. Half a horse is closer to it.



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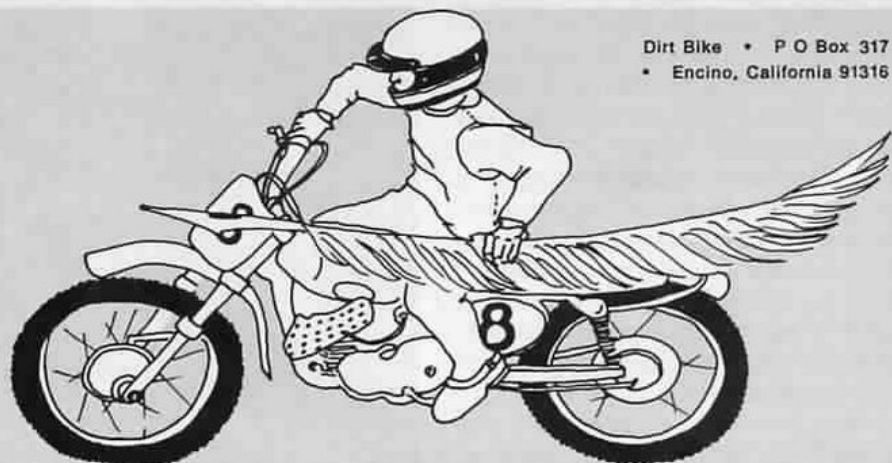
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RIDERS WRITE

Address all correspondence to Riders Write, DIRT BIKE Magazine, Box 317, Encino, California 91316. We get five gallons of mail every day so please don't be hurt if we don't send a personal reply.

Letters appearing in this column are subject to editing for reasons of excess length, shocking language, references to lascivious behavior, and boredom.

DIRTY BIKE MAGAZINE

Today I received my very first copy of DIRT BIKE Magazine via the subscription route. I was a bit amazed that it came in a plain brown wrapper.

I'm afraid you have a rather backward view of Minnesota. We are, for the most part, rather adult in our reading habits. This is due in part to the state's inability to close down a multitude of dirty book stores.

So, you can mail your magazine to this state in a manner showing what type of magazine it is.

I even let my 14-year-old son read the magazine—after removing the X-rated pages like "From The Saddle" and "Checkpoint."

"Father" Werner, the world's oldest living non-trophying motocross rider
Minneapolis, Minnesota

And you no doubt paste "Saddle" and "Checkpoint" on the walls over your workbench, eh, Werner?

TICKET TO RIDE

Today I saw a Honda Elsinore for the first time. On the tank was a decal that said in California it can only be ridden on a contained and licensed race course. I guess that I don't know too much about these bikes because I thought all you did was throw them on the truck and head for the mountains.

My question is this: How does a person learn to ride on this licensed race course if he can't go out into the woods to practice? Maybe they should change the name of the state to the People's Republic of California.

Steve Englen
Edmonds, Washington

IT'S THE LAW

AMA District 35 Rules for Amateur Competition, Supplement Rule Book: "In events where speed is a determining factor, all machines MUST (emphasis theirs) be equipped with folding, rubber-covered foot-pegs folding backwards at a 45 degree angle . . ." (pp. 10-11, Article VI, Section 7).

This rule is enforced in District 35 100-percent. Rubber may not be the best, but it's the rule.

PS: Szilagyi didn't go far to get to Punkin Center, California—about 120 miles.

Joe King
Bakersfield, California

If rubber pegs aren't the best, why do you so complacently accept the rule? Tell you what: On a nice, muddy, gooshy day, put one of your rulebook-writers on a "legal" motorcycle and have him do a lap. Be sure to have some splints handy. Szilagyi sez you're thinking of Pumpkin Center. Punkin Center is in Texas, near Lubbock.

WHO'S GOT THE HANDLES?

In your May '73 issue you said the Suzuki 250 didn't have low-end grunt. If you would turn your right wrist you would find how much torque it has. I own a Suzuki and two of my friends own Yamahas and I have ridden both and that Suzuki

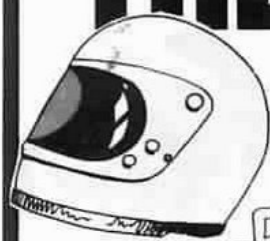
MUSCLE

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has as much down low as the Yam-mies.

You said the Suzuki handled better. In my opinion neither one handles. In the future be more fair to Suzukis.

Mark Luiso
San Jose, California

We would venture to guess that your friends' Yamahas could stand a tuneup. Also, neither bike handles as well as a Bultaco, but the Suzook is far superior to the Yamaha. So there.

SPOILSPORT

Even though your magazine is the best on the newsstand, it could be 100-percent better if you would eliminate junk fill space articles such as (April '73) "Testing the GYDBT," "Hard Sand - Soft Steel," "The Cheeseburger's Revenge," and "Sunday Morning Ride-1984." If I want to laugh I'll buy a joke book, go look at a full-dressed Harley 74, or think about a BMW with knobbies. If I want to read about science fiction or a wild adventure I'll buy a novel. Please do more about nuts and bolts

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George F. Freiermuth
Huntsville, Alabama

ONE-OFF JERSEY

In the past few issues I have seen Ake Jonsson at Saddleback Park and a staff member riding a 250 Suzuki, both wearing a wild DIRT BIKE long-sleeve shirt. This yellow shirt with black trim is on my "must" list for summer riding.

If your staff intends to open up the shirt to the public, let me know. I need one.

James M. Leeds
Baltimore, Maryland

We have received numerous requests for Ake Jonsson Saddleback Park Replica DIRT BIKE Jerseys. Only two exist in the world. Ake has one, the other resides in the DIRT BIKE garage, making occasional appearances on test riders. There are no plans to manufacture production versions of these prototypes at this time.

Cont'd. on page 26

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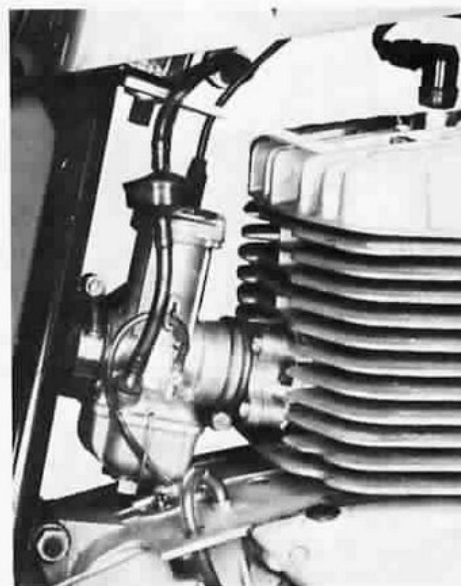
For prompt, courteous, efficient, personal, downright pleasant attention, tell them that you saw it in DIRT BIKE Magazine—even if you didn't.



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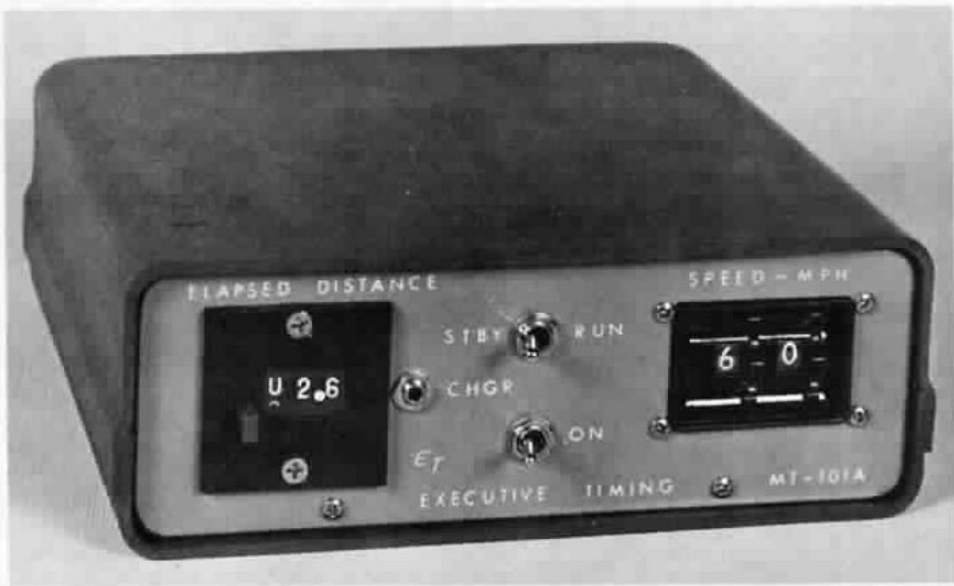
A friend of ours tells us this stuff really & truly works. ArmorAll, he says, was developed by a chemist who wanted something to protect the tires and trim on his fancy-dan European sports car from the ravage of big-city air pollution. By applying ArmorAll to boots, seats, tires, leathers, you-name-it, you more than give the surface a protective coat;

the goo actually meshes with the molecules to create a tougher, more lustrous coat. While-U-Wait. If our friend is right happiness is yours by sending \$3.50 to Target Products, Box One, Eagle Rock Station, Los Angeles, California 90041. Or buy the 8-ounce bottle from your dealer for \$2.98. Or send Target Products, Dept. DBM, two bits for the trial size.



MAICO E-Z-REED

According to a couple of the supertuners we know, installing a reed valve on a Maico involves lots of machining. Not anymore, sez G.E.M. Products. For \$29.95 they will sell you a reed cage with adapter manifold, reeds, all necessary hardware, and complete installation instructions. And it bolts right on. For more information on the V-6 reed induction kit, write G.E.M. Products, Inc., Dept. DBM, 496 E. St. Charles Rd., Carol Stream, Illinois 60187.



LET A TRANSISTOR DO THE THINKING

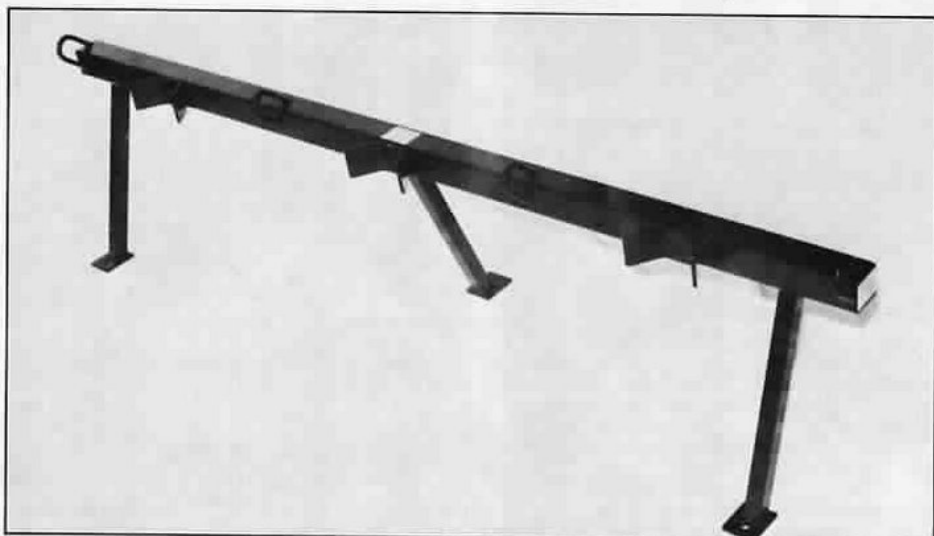
We don't believe it. Now there are two. Executive Timing of Sedgwick, Kansas, has a cute li'l computer for figuring time schedules for enduro riding. Numbers: The manufacturer claims 0.1-percent accuracy; distance readout in .1 miles to 99.9 miles; speeds set from 1 to 99 mph; it is 2 inches high, 6 inches wide, and 6 inches deep; it costs \$134.95. The timer, dubbed the MT-101A, has a built-in battery and comes with a charger.

Now: This is the second enduro computer we have seen, and, although we appreciate the potential value enduro computers may have, we can't help but wonder how they are working out. Would anyone who uses a computer for enduros please drop us a line and tell us how well the contraptions work? In the meantime, write Executive Timing, 515 Commercial, Sedgwick, Kansas 67135. Tell them you saw it in DIRT BIKE, natch.

RACK-O-RAMA!

No less than three different racks for motorcycle transport have graced

our mail slot. Take that back; not the racks themselves, but photos and information thereof; to wit:



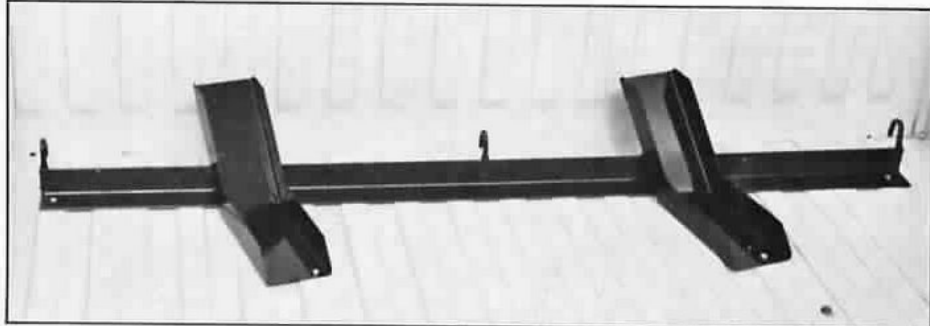
1.



2.

1. Van Rak is for late-model American vans and costs \$42.95. After the initial installation the rack can be removed quickly with little hassle. Van Rak is designed to hold three bikes, two forward and one backwards. (Total cost of Van Rak comes to about \$14.32 per bike, so maybe you and your buddies can go thirties on one.) Van Rak is manufactured by Gannoss Engineering, 2221 'b' W. Second St., Santa Ana, California 92703.

3.



2. Next, the Tico Cycle Rack is designed to be used in vans, pickups, trailers, or semis. The Tico rack mounts with a single bolt and has an adjustable front brace to secure any size front tire. Cost is \$19.95, delivered anywhere in the States. Manufacturer: Tico Division, Williamstown Irrigation, Inc., Dept. DBM, Williamstown, New York 13493.

3. Finally, we have the Scooter-Chute, sort of a compromise of the previous two racks. It is a brief, one-piece unit and comes in single or two-bike models, which has each trough cleverly angled so handlebars won't tangle into each other. Single model costs \$11.95; dual costs \$21.95. Order from Boulder Specialties, Dept. 35, 4154 Pleasant Ridge Rd., Boulder, Colorado 80301.



HOW MUCH GAS YA GOT?

Happily, dirt bikes don't have a bunch of gauges and idiot lights like cars—and even some street bikes we've seen lately. But one gauge everyone could use is a gas gauge. Those chrome-cacophony \$2,000 motorcycles don't have one, but for \$3.95 even the lowliest mountain-bouncer can have Fuel Strip from KG Engineering. No more removing gas caps and sloshing around. One glance is all it takes. Installs to most bikes in a jiffy, they say. Write to KG Engineering, Suite DB, 229 Lowland St., Holliston, Massachusetts 01746.



BUCKLE DOWN

Full Bore boots have detailed this year's model line to feature more sano-looking and easier-operating buckles. Only problem is, now the straps won't stick straight out the way everybody likes. Available in the waffle-stomping ISDT version or the no-traction Motocross model. At your Full Bore dealer.

Cont'd. on page 66



John Penton has nothing to worry about for another year.

SUZUKI VS.

125 ENDURO SHOOTOUT!

By the Staff of DIRT BIKE

YAMAHA VS.

PRESENTING! THE TRAIL OF WHOLESOME RECREATION AND NEVER-ENDING BLISS: You've seen the Trail of Wholesome Recreation and Never-Ending Bliss at one time or another in magazine ads, or caught an occasional glimpse on television. The Trail is, oh, 25 to 100 feet wide. There is no dust. The red-brown loam offers perfect traction yet never clogs tires. No ruts, bumps, jumps, or sharp turns.

Because of the staggering view — richly-hued canyons and mountains that smell better than all the Pine-Sol in the world—there is never a need to go more than 25 miles per hour. Just bo-de-oh, all day long.

Would you like to ride it? Sorry, no one will tell you where it is. But we will. The Trail of Wholesome Etc. is in the collective mind of the committees that design Japanese dual-purpose motorcycles.

Let it be said that the three bikes at hand do not represent the best of all possible worlds. But rather than throwing punches at them like a reeling drunk, why don't we first find out just what—who—these bikes are for?

Obviously, the beginner, student, and wifey. For \$550-600, you get a solid, well-built, trouble-free little motor. You don't have to mix gas. You get a mediocre frame. Faultless (if not superfluous) electrics. In short, a motorcycle that promises to be adequate under most conditions.

For another \$500 you can get an excellent-handling bike with a much stronger motor that will call for much more maintenance and will cost much more to keep running. Not to mention the fact that you have to mix gas.

Is it fair to judge these three bikes in the same courtroom as we would judge, say, a 125 Penton?

Yup. Because if we judged these

bikes for what they unrealistically are "intended," i.e., riding on The Trail, they would come out in a tie.

More importantly, we will judge these bikes to an ideal (our ideal, that is) because that is the way we test all bikes, and because these bikes could be a whole helluva lot better than they are, at the same price. For example, the Suzuki proves that a cheap bike can be a decent handler. The Yamaha proves that a cheap bike can have a good powerband. And the Kawasaki proves that—well, that a change in their 125 is long overdue. Before plunging into the Wonderful World of Three More Foo-Foo Bikes, let us make another point: All this stuff about "compromise bikes" is ill-conceived and absurd. A good street bike makes a horrible dirt bike. A good dirt bike makes an adequate street bike, meaning that the whole

KAWASAKI VS.

idea for licensing one is a convenience matter.

Dirt bikes have a special set of necessities with a narrow latitude for variance. No trials tires. No rubber pegs. No low fenders. No cumbersome doodads and gadgets. Take that, Japan.

Determining which of these bikes is superior is like choosing a bowling ball: There are more similarities than there are differences, so you must sort of heft them around for a while, try them on for size until the vagaries make themselves known. There won't be a winner of this shootout. There will be a loser, though.

HANDLING

The Suzuki is undoubtedly the best handler of the three, no sweat. Suzuki has won the world motocross championship five times but their experience has yet to find its way to their production motorcrossers. Ironically, all the dirt-bikes-with-lights



we've tested so far this year display a considerable improvement in the handling department. Maybe the motocrossers will, too.

We expected a worse performance from the Zook after viewing the spindly fork legs, but lo! the front works admirably well. Not for just a wafer-thin kid, either; giant economy-size riders can thrash the Suzuki with none-too-shabby results. The Duster is the lightest of the three and lends itself to flicking about. Deep rut? Pick up the front and let the shocks suck up the jolt. Go as fast as the motor can carry you—which, sadly, could be faster. Still, the Suzook goes straight in the mound-to-mound pummeling.

In all, the Duster out-handles its two comrades here by a considerable margin, and we're sure it would be more if the Suzuki had a decent powerband. For instance, if you want to turn the Suzuki, don't waste time putting a foot out and gassing it. You'll just get into trouble. Not enough power for a slide, and besides, its Bridgestone tires are the worst of the lot. Squirrely traction.

But the important package was there: decent forks, good shocks, sensible geometry. There is hope, Bernie.

Next comes the Yamaha. Like Suzuki, they have improved their suspensions over last year, but not as much. Odd, considering the Yamaha

units look somewhat beefier than the Suzook's. What hurts the Yamaha is that antique frame they're still stuck with, which conspires with the thoughtless seating position and handlebar arrangement to make for a genuinely clumsy ride. The Yamaha still swaps ends like a drug-crazed metronome in rough ground while the rider, standing with his knees banging the handlebars, suddenly gets religion.

The Yamaha also exhibits the most tendency to crab on jumps, a trait blamed mostly on the tachometers, speedometers, headlights, turn signals, cigarette lighters, short-wave radios, and whatever else they're putting on Japanese motorcycles these days.

Were it not for the outstanding wonderfulness of the AT-3's powerband, the Yamaha would be by far the worst handler here. But any time, any place, in any gear, the Yammie never seems to run out of power, so there is always a handy spurt to pull the bike out when it gets into trouble—which is often.

Finally, the Kawasaki. It wasn't that much worse than the Yamaha. Certainly the frame itself is better, but an accumulation of items—the poorest suspension, 18-inch front wheel, and a lack of power where the Yamaha lacked not—was the proverbial straw that broke the cow's back.



Fork legs on Suzuki looked spindly, but worked best.



Rotary-valve hump on Kawasaki is easy to trip over.



Magic electric-start button made Yamaha most hassle-free to start.



Suzuki's slim motor gives rider the most dancing room.



Eighteen-inch front wheels are not the hot setup. They transform ruts into ditches and bumps into jolts. In sand, they dig like anteaters snuffling for food; even in loose dirt the bars will waggle and hunt, threatening to take control away from you. And if you drop off the powerband, a very likely proposition (although not as likely as with the Suzuki), you will fall off the motorcycle.

The Yamaha and Suzuki both have 19-inchers in the front. This doesn't

seem to be a significant difference from the 18. Don't kid yourself. All the time we were fighting the Kawasaki, we had happier visions of a Hodaka Wombat with a full-grown 21-inch front wheel dancing through our heads. It makes a difference.

POWER

Experience told us that the Yamaha was going to get dropped more than the other two bikes, since it would probably be the worst-han-

dling of the bunch. That was before the test. By the time it was all over, the Yamaha had been twice the miles as the Suzuki and Kawasaki put together, and looked as if it had merely been to the corner store every now and then.

By comparison, the Suzuki had been ridden the least (it was delivered last), but looked as if it had been working overtime on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The Kawasaki looked slightly beaten, with just dull



paint and a bent rear turn signal mount as its badges of honor.

The point is, power characteristics profoundly affect handling; when it comes time for a crucial maneuver, you need some grunt to pull you through. The Yammie had it, so the rider wouldn't crash. The Suzuki didn't; the rider would always crash. The Kawasaki sometimes did; the rider sometimes crashed.

How Yamaha has figured out how to make a spot-on powerband while Suzuki and Kawasaki are still tinkering with gas tank paint combinations

is beyond us. The AT-3 also sports perfect all-around gearing for a range of thrust that won't quit. It will go anywhere there's traction. First gear allows you to bonk along at idle and a blip of the throttle lets the bike lurch forward like it's spring-loaded. Powering up a hill is a cinch. Just let the Yammie scream bloody murder and shift your weight for a wheelspin or traction. Like we said, it's clumsy on your part but the Yamaha will go places the Kawasaki and Suzuki will have to be air-dropped.

And if you think the Yammie's powerband is a trade-off for top end, uh-uh. We drag-raced all three bikes on a dry lake, with the wind, against the wind, numerous rider swaps, the whole bit. Result: The Kawasaki was slightly quicker at the top end—a length up to 55 mph. (The rotary valve is a more efficient and powerful motor, theoretically.) The Suzuki was very lazy off the line, mostly due to too-high gearing. It ran about four lengths behind the other two.

Although the Kawasaki is the



Suzuki's mammoth taillight makes for clumsy leg-throwing.



Brake pedals were good, footpegs were poor on all three bikes.



Kaw's Honda-type kill switch will play tricks in heavy brush.

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KAWASAKI 125 P6**PRICE:** Suggested retail, approx. \$560**ENGINE TYPE:**

Single cylinder, rotary disc valve, two-stroke

DISPLACEMENT: 124cc**BORE & STROKE:** 2.05 inches x 2.32 inches**COMPRESSION RATIO:** 7.2:1**CARBURETOR:** 24mm Mikuni**HP @ RPM:** (claimed) 14.3 @ 7,000**CLUTCH:** Wet plate, multi-disc**PRIMARY DRIVE:** Gear**FINAL DRIVE:** Chain EK 428**GEAR RATIOS:** 1. 2.667:1

2. 1.750:1

3. 1.200:1

4. 0.913:1

5. 0.720:1

AIR FILTRATION: Foam element**ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:** 6-volt, AC Magneto**LUBRICATION:** Superlube**RECOMMENDED FUEL:** Premium**RECOMMENDED OIL:** Kawasaki K2**FUEL CAPACITY:** 2.5 gallons**FRAME:** Double cradle, tubular steel**SUSPENSION:**

(Front) Telescopic fork

(Rear) Swingarm w/coil springs and shocks

TIRES: Front: 3.00x18 4-ply trials

Rear: 3.25x18 4-ply trials

WHEELS: Front: Steel

Rear: Steel

DIMENSIONS:

Wheelbase: 51.5 inches

Ground Clearance: 9.5 inches

Weight: (claimed) 231 pounds

(actual) 256 pounds

w/full tank

On front wheel: 44 percent

On rear wheel: 56 percent

BRAKES:

Front: Single leading shoe drum

Rear: Single leading shoe drum

INSTRUMENTS:

Speedometer w/odometer and trip meter, tachometer

SILENCER: Yes**PRIMARY KICK:** Yes**PARTS PRICES**

(Items subject to frequent replacement through wear or breakage)

Suggested Retail:**PISTON:** \$6.72**RINGS:** \$4.50**CLUTCH CABLE:** \$4.20**THROTTLE CABLE:** \$7.00**POINTS:** \$3.30**CONDENSER:** \$1.80**BRAKE SHOES:** \$2.46 each**CYLINDER:** \$27.72**CYLINDER LINER:** N/A**SHIFT LEVER:** \$6.00**REAR BRAKE PEDAL:** \$6.00**FRONT BRAKE LEVER:** \$1.66**CLUTCH LEVER:** \$1.66**SUZUKI TS-125 DUSTER****PRICE:** Suggested retail, approx. \$609**ENGINE TYPE:**

Piston port, single cylinder, two-stroke

DISPLACEMENT: 123cc**BORE & STROKE:** 2.20 inches x 1.97 inches**COMPRESSION RATIO:** 6.7:1**CARBURETOR:** 24mm Mikuni**HP @ RPM:** (claimed) 13.0 @ 7,000**CLUTCH:** Wet plate, multi-disc**PRIMARY DRIVE:** Gear**FINAL DRIVE:** 428 chain**GEAR RATIOS:** 1. 2.75:1

2. 1.81:1

3. 1.25:1

4. 1.00:1

5. 0.80:1

AIR FILTRATION: Foam element**ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:** 6-volt, AC Magneto**LUBRICATION:** CCI**RECOMMENDED FUEL:** Regular**RECOMMENDED OIL:** Suzuki CCI engine oil**FUEL CAPACITY:** 1.8 gallons**FRAME:** Single loop tubular steel**SUSPENSION:**

(Front) Telescopic fork

(Rear) Swingarm w/coil springs and shocks

TIRES: Front: 2.75x19 4-ply semi-knobby

Rear: 3.25x18 4-ply semi-knobby

WHEELS: Front: Steel

Rear: Steel

DIMENSIONS:

Wheelbase: 51.6 inches

Ground Clearance: 9.3 inches

Weight: (claimed) 198 pounds dry

(actual) 231 pounds

w/full tank

On front wheel: 44.3 percent

On rear wheel: 55.7 percent

BRAKES:

Front: single leading shoe drum

Rear: single leading shoe drum

INSTRUMENTS:

Speedometer w/odometer and trip meter, tachometer

SILENCER: Yes**PRIMARY KICK:** Yes**PARTS PRICES**

(Items subject to frequent replacement through wear or breakage)

Suggested Retail:**PISTON:** \$5.39**RINGS:** \$3.16**CLUTCH CABLE:** \$2.48**THROTTLE CABLE:** \$3.00**POINTS:** \$2.24**CONDENSER:** \$1.22**BRAKE SHOES:** Front: \$2.52

Rear: \$2.88

CYLINDER: \$26.27**CYLINDER LINER:** N/A**SHIFT LEVER:** \$2.93**REAR BRAKE PEDAL:** \$3.76**FRONT BRAKE LEVER:** \$2.08**CLUTCH LEVER:** \$3.74**YAMAHA 125 AT-3 ENDURO****PRICE:** Suggested retail, approx. \$589**ENGINE TYPE:**

Piston port, single cylinder, two-stroke w/reed valve induction

DISPLACEMENT: 123cc**BORE & STROKE:** 2.20 inches x 1.96 inches**COMPRESSION RATIO:** 7.1:1**CARBURETOR:** 24mm Mikuni**HP @ RPM:** (claimed) 13 @ 7,000**CLUTCH:** Wet plate multi-disc**PRIMARY DRIVE:** Gear**FINAL DRIVE:** 428 chain**GEAR RATIOS:** 1. 3.181:1

2. 2.000:1

3. 1.368:1

4. 1.000:1

5. 0.800:1

AIR FILTRATION: Foam element**ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:** 12-volt, AC Magneto**LUBRICATION:** Autolube**RECOMMENDED FUEL:** Leaded regular**RECOMMENDED OIL:** Yamalube**FUEL CAPACITY:** 1.8 gallons**FRAME:** Double cradle, tubular steel**SUSPENSION:**

(Front) Telescopic fork

(Rear) Swingarm w/coil springs and shocks

TIRES: Front: 3.00x18 4-ply semi-knobby

Rear: 3.25x18 4-ply semi-knobby

WHEELS: Front: Steel

Rear: Steel

DIMENSIONS:

Wheelbase: 50.6 inches

Ground Clearance: 8.9 inches

Weight: (claimed) 221 pounds

(actual) 240 pounds

w/full tank

On front wheel: 44.1 percent

On rear wheel: 55.9 percent

BRAKES:

Front: Single leading shoe drum

Rear: Single leading shoe drum

INSTRUMENTS:

Speedometer w/odometer and trip meter, tachometer

SILENCER: Yes**PRIMARY KICK:** Yes**PARTS PRICES**

(Items subject to frequent replacement through wear or breakage)

Suggested Retail:**PISTON:** \$7.70**RINGS:** \$4.00**CLUTCH CABLE:** \$2.40**THROTTLE CABLE:** \$6.64**POINTS:** \$2.60**CONDENSER:** \$1.60**BRAKE SHOES:** Front: \$1.40 ea.

Rear: \$2.40 ea.

CYLINDER: \$52.74**CYLINDER LINER:** N/A**SHIFT LEVER:** \$3.90**REAR BRAKE PEDAL:** \$4.82**FRONT BRAKE LEVER:** \$2.90**CLUTCH LEVER:** \$2.90

Kawasaki lacked grunt at the very bottom for low-speed picking.



quickest of the three, and can easily be made even quicker, drag-racing doesn't count here. We also dragged the bikes uphill and the Yamaha ran away from them—again because of the better powerband and gearing. The Yammie would pull second where the Kawasaki would pull first. The poor Duster wouldn't pull at all.

What we have here are three examples of how the various two-stroke engines work: The reed-valved Yamaha has the broadest powerband with additional low end; the rotary valve Kawasaki develops a wide range with the most actual power, albeit useless at times; the Suzuki is a conventional piston-port with the most mundane performance.

Still, both the Kaw and the Suzook could be designed with different power characteristics for the dirt, but the simple fact is they have street bands.

GENERALIZATIONS

Footpegs on all three bikes were for street bikes, and senseless for dirt use.

Handgrips on all three were pure scrap.

Transmissions on all three were flawless, except for the elusive Suzuki neutral. No big deal: primary starting (in gear, clutch in) was a common feature.

Brakes on all three bikes were fine and dandy, with a bit of rear wheel chatter.

All three bikes started easily, hot or cold, once the drill was learned. The Kawasaki fouled one plug.

Oil use on all three was minimal.

Gas mileage was better than oil

company stockholders care to think about. Just splash some in the tank every now and then.

All three bikes had 24mm trouble-free Mikunis.

They are all reasonably quiet.

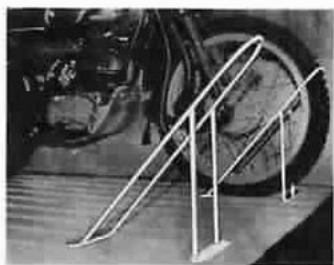
Not one of them leaked, dripped, or in any other way made itself unacceptable to keep in the living room. Except for when the Kawasaki ruptured its oil tank. More on that later.

BITS AND PIECES

The Kawasaki had the dubious honor of being the only bike in the test to suffer a failure of any significance. First day out the bottom oil tank mounting tab snapped because of improper welding and ruptured the tank itself. Oil oozed out a sloppy warning so the failure was noticed just before lunch time. We had to draw straws to see who got to mess with the machine for future testing, since it would now hold a teensy bit of oil. It was a perverse thrill to have one of the bikes break something, though. Rarely happens, you know.

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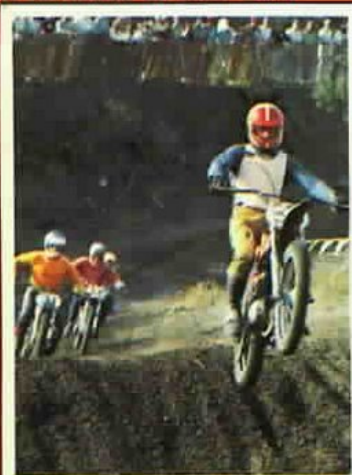
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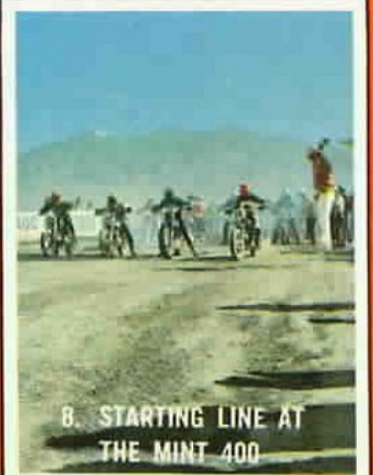
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was 11 times better than the Yamaha—with the Kaw in the middle. The Duster has wide, flat bars, a narrow seat, tank, and engine, and a low pipe.

The Kawasaki has a lump on the right side to accommodate a rotary valve and carburetor; the Yamaha has a lump on the left for the fly-wheel magneto. The Kawasaki feels OK with good handlebars and control layout. The Yamaha feels silly, no matter.

Kawasaki has a restyled seat this year, supposedly to make it better

for dirt riding or something. It was comfortable, but not any more than the others'.

Turn Signal Mini-Shootout: The Suzuki wins because it doesn't have any. Next comes the Kaw with its rear-upswept spiff-o-jet styling. Yamaha loses because the lenses shatter like Christmas tree bulbs.

The Yammie has an electric starter. Once we remembered it was there, the AT-3 became the favorite bike to ride. So much for the hard-asses at DIRT BIKE. If you stall the Yammie, you can snap in the

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clutch and press the magic button well before you put a foot down.

Clutches on the Suzuki and Yamaha were outstanding. The Kaw's would lose adjustment when it got hot so we'd have to reel in some cable at the lever adjustment. When it cooled, we'd have to reel it out. Big "K" should improve this.

Kawasaki did everyone one better by having rubber accordion boots on the control levers. All enduro riders should hit their Kawasaki or Honda dealer for a set of these.

Low-mounted fender on the Yamaha was a sore point with us. We had to bulldog the runt out of a muddy gully when it packed with icky sticky goo. The Kaw's is high-mounted metal, which is fine, while the Suzuki's is high-mounted plastic, which is best.

Only the Kawasaki had a kill switch, and after having dealt with the bugger for a while we'd rather not have it there. They chose to mount the three-way switch just like Honda, and a trip through heavy brush would turn the bike off. Bad part is, you don't discover the problem until you've pulled the plug, checked for spark, sloshed the gas tank, pulled the carb, blown through the main jet, pulled apart the petcock, dismantled the coil, traced the wiring, and called a tow truck.

The Taillight Most Likely To Make Ralph Nader Give A Sigh Of Relief Award goes to Suzuki. We suspect that one reason why the front end of the Duster feels so light is because of the weight of this dual-bulbed baby. The Yammie's and Kaw's are almost as overstated, though.

Throttle feel and response was best from the Kawasaki, except down low where the Yammie's reed valve could work more effectively. The AT-3's throttle felt too heavy.

Suzuki had the best gas cap of the bunch, what with a flip-up locking version that's extremely easy to open but won't pop open unexpectedly. We're not kidding: This is a boss gas cap. The Yamaha's was virtually impossible to open with gloves. The Kaw's was average.

Tank badges on the Suzuki fell off immediately, plunk-plunk.

SUMMARY

We should say the Yamaha was the best, since it was everyone's first

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Alas, the poor Kawasaki. Better than the Yamaha here, better than the Suzuki there, but overall lacking a single outstanding feature to separate it from the other two. While the engineers at Kawasaki have been building the ultimate road bikes and helping Brad Lackey become the best American motocrosser, they have only found time to get the F6 a new seat.

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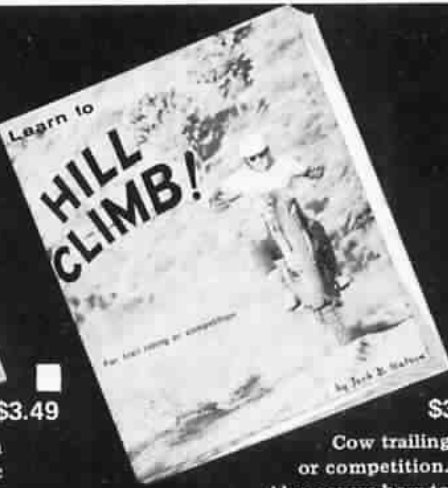
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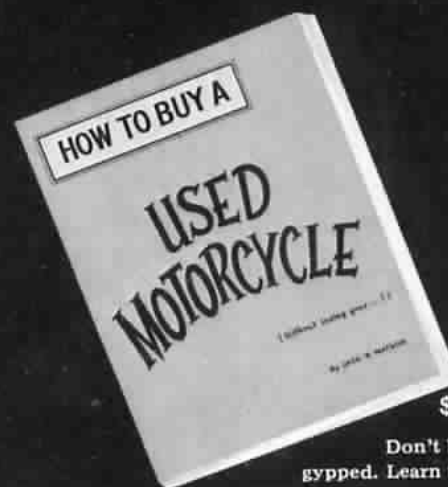
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MUD,

MONEY, GROWING PAINS, THE FLYING

The scene was the birthplace of Stuckeys Pecan Pies and a whole buncha oranges for a buck—Florida.

And the reason everyone showed up in Florida was to win a piece of the fame and fortune to be had in the 1973 Winter-AMA Motocross Series. All of the factories primed their big guns and moved tons of hardware for the racing.

DUTCHMAN, INSECTS,

AND THE AMERICAN

MOTORCYCLE ASSOCIATION

It happened in Florida

By RICK SIEMAN

Last year, the series drew a reasonable amount of spectator interest, especially the last race at Daytona. Everyone started to realize the importance of having a decent knock-down-drag-out brawl located in the eastern half of the U.S. California sure the hell isn't the complete answer to stimulating bike sales in Macon, Georgia, or Sarasota, Florida. Manufacturers finally started realizing that there is something east of the Big River besides bowling tournaments.

Besides, the timing was perfect. The entire country had just recovered emotionally from the Trans-AMA tour and wanted some more motocross action without waiting another year.

Promoters were standing in the wings with largish grins on their collective faces, just a-waitin' for the turnstiles to wear out.

Only trouble was, anybody with a

steady job as a check-out boy at the A&P could have afforded to back one of the events. Here they were, hoping for Big Time Bucks and going at it with all the flair of a sock sorting contest.

Naturally, the big final race at Daytona would have the usual supply of TV, radio and newspaper hype, but the other events received the bare minimum. You might be tempted to dismiss this with a casual shrug, and say, "What the hell?"—but one teensy little fact rears its ugly head. At this period of time (from January 28 to March 10, 1973), these were the *only* sanctioned AMA money motocross races in the entire U.S. of A. No kidding.

No AMA money runs in California, Connecticut or the Carolinas. The boys in Ohio decided that the series was so important that no one else could or should compete with the series.

Fine.

Except for one thing.

The series was run with all the professionalism of a wandering knife sharpener.

You have to ask yourself why. Why do the gentlemen from the AMA treat motocross like the bastard offspring of an unwanted love affair?

You'll have to take a fairly close

look at the powers-that-be. Most of the people who call the shots are old-liners; good old drinking buddies from the days of the 750 flathead Harleys. Even further. Hell, they sit around and talk about Ed Kretz slamming his Indian around the old beach course. Their eyes get all misty about way-back-when, and they pour each other another drink and the old bikes get wonderfuller and wonderfuller. Sometimes till three or four in the morning.

Then the next day they wake up and go out to face the snotty-nosed kids who have embraced the sport of motocross. And they face them with a certain amount of non-understanding mixed with scorn.

"Why inna hell ain't these punks riding the circuit (excuse me, I mean Circuit, with a capital letter, sir)? Why don't they want to do a little half-mile flattracking where you kin throw that sucker right down on its side and shoot up some ree-eel dirt, by gawd?"

That's where their heads are at, and that's why they make no attempt to further the motocross game. They will only do what they must. The AMA does not innovate. They must be after the fact and dragged along. Motocross is the hottest thing in the country and they're still dreaming



WINTER-AMA
WRAP UP





Brad Lackey makes a mid-air correction at Tallahassee.



St. Pete was pure slop and mire.

about poker runs and board tracks.

It's true that all the blame for mismanagement cannot be placed on the AMA; however, they are directly responsible for saying who is (or isn't) going to run an event. How well do they pick the race promoters? Sit down for this one. Remember the Trans-AMA event that was held at Flowery Branch, Georgia last fall? Nobody bothered to show up with any guarantee money, so the spectators and racers had to sit around with their fingers in their nose till well into the afternoon until the racing finally began. At last report, this same

group will be awarded another Trans-AMA *this fall!* Based on past performances, no doubt.

Anyway, if you had \$2,400 and happened to be in Florida at the time, chances are you could have had your very own race. Whoopee.

Here's how the prize money and the series was scheduled:

Jan. 28	Orlando	\$2,400
Feb. 3, 4	Jacksonville	\$2,400
Feb. 10, 11	Tallahassee	\$2,400
Feb. 17, 18	St. Petersburg	\$2,400
Feb. 24, 25	Hialeah	\$2,400
Mar. 3, 4	Ft. Pierce	\$2,400
Mar. 10	Daytona	\$10,000

WINTER-AMA WRAP UP

A closer look at the breakdown shows that the experts were to receive two-thirds of the prize money, leaving about \$800 to the novices.

So far, so good.

Now the plot thickens. Experts had to ride only in the 500 class, and novices in the 250 class. Until Day-

Thorwaldson's Suzuki staves off Pierre—momentarily—at Hialeah.

tona, that is. At Daytona, everyone and their mother could ride in the 250 class. Take a deep breath. The top 250 novices in the winter series (point-wise) automatically qualified for the giant race and the big money. This left about 15 spots open to be filled by qualifying races.

Fifteen spots that were damn well going to be filled by the most ferocious riders you ever saw in your life.

Trips manhandles his 250-plus-pound CZ at Hialeah.

Like we said, anyone who planked his money down on the counter could qualify for the biggy. This meant that in the actual racing motos, you were going to have about 25 fear-crazed novices against 15 cold-blooded experts. More on that later.

ORLANDO — MOTHER NATURE THROWS UP

Marty Trips has always liked two things about CZs: They don't break easily and they have a dynamite still air box. Marty knew ahead of time

Honda of Piqua rider John Franklin won the 250 class overall.



First turn at Tallahassee. Lackey on the inside and Karsmakers on the outside. Everybody else in the middle.



Photos by CHARLES MOREY

that his bike wouldn't quit, and it was waterproofed well enough to ride around the bottom of Marineland to feed the fish. Which made him one of the few riders in the race who was truly prepared.

Pierre Karsmakers ought to be arrested for practicing psychiatry without a license. He brought everything necessary for the profession with him to Florida, except maybe the black leather couch. Yup. All the Good Old Boys were talking in their sleep and Doctor Pierre played games with their minds.

A lot of people looked good in practice—very good. Pierre Karsmakers was quick and controlled. When everyone else was putting both feet down to keep the bike upright, Pierre would just gas it and ride around them like it was old home week. The scant crowd of a few hundred nodded sagely at each other and agreed, "The Flying Dutchman is gonna get 'em."

But the bad plumbing did even his Yammie in. Duct tape and silicone seal was not enough to keep the bad plumbing out. Curses filled the air

as one bike after another gulped in some of Florida's finest liquid instead of the more normal gas/oil mixture.

Only two riders seemed to ignore the slop: Tripes and Rich Thorwaldson. Tripes rode like, well, like Tripes. No flamboyance, not too much slippee-slidee. Thor was all over the place with the radically different powerband of his Suzook. Marty went boom-boom-boom and plugged on through the mud and Rich shrieked and screamed from one side of the track to the other. Even though the ultra-light Suzuki was sideways more than straight, he dogged Marty to the point of near distraction. First moto was won by Mike Hartwig, with Tripes holding on cleanly for a decent placing. The next two motos saw Tripes stretch it out and pull everyone for two solid wins, despite Thor's efforts.

At the end of the day's racing, Tripes looked fresh and Thor looked like he had just finished necking with King Kong.

All of the other big names did small-name stuff. Brad? Never really in contention. He was riding the series because he *had* to. A crash around Christmas time wiped out one of his expensive shoulders and he hadn't yet fully recovered. Kawasaki expected him to don the garish green and ride anyway. Brad took a close look at his bulging checking account and said, "Onward through the fog." He's a pro now, and does what is expected of a pro. No more

Weinert awkwardly leaps up the monster hill at Tallahassee.

Spanish Moss, neat track and a good crowd made Tallahassee one of the best. Karsmakers again.



WINTER-AMA WRAP UP

temper tantrums and doves on the bars. He's one of the new money riders and proved it with a fifth place in the second moto despite a throbbing shoulder pain that would have killed a momma buffalo. Who knows how he would have done had he been 100 percent, but then he wasn't, was he?

The rest of the cast? DeSoto was in much the same boat as Brad Lackey, except that John had a paddle and Brad had a motor. DeSoto had been given the word: Do good in the winter series or look for a new ride. And John had a knee that looked like a cypress root. Not really bad, but nowhere near healed yet. He rode with pain but tried hard until the water made a visit to his cylinder. John looked at Marty Tripes' CZ still air box with pure lust on his face.

Weinert was frothing at the mouth to do good, even in front of limited spectators. Jimmy is savvy, and knows that people are watching each and every series through the publications, if nowhere else. Jimmy will some day own a nice big car and a house and maybe a couple of chrome moly safes full of money. Jimmy's engine was also frothing at the mouth. The mouth of his carb to be exact, with some of the soggy real estate. Del Webb, it wasn't.

Only 14 of the big guns were left running when the final flag soggly sagged to the ground. About half of those entered.

500 RESULTS — ORLANDO

OPEN EX

1. Marty Tripes CZ
2. Richard Thorwaldson Suz
3. Gary Semics Hus
4. Brad Lackey Kaw
5. Mike Runyard CZ
6. Barry Higgins CZ
7. Mike Hartwig Hus
8. Bob Grossi Hus
9. Jerry Hastings Hus
10. George Cunna —

Compared to the Novices, however, it was a peachy-keen cruise up the Ganges. One hundred and twenty-five of the 250 riders innocently placed their front wheels on the starting line. Twelve of them placed

that very same wheel on the finish line after the full three motos. Which should at least tell you something about machine preparation among the novices. It was like turning a praying mantis loose in a mason jar full of sleeping fruit flies.

Even the qualifying motos claimed bikes like they were all running straight gas. One rider after another looked up at the murky skies, then down at his dead mount, and bitterly moaned his fate. They shouldn't have moaned—they simply were not ready to ride. Much of the machinery entered should not have been entered in the first place. Riders who had no business being there at all did a lap or two, then expired. Quietly.

Everyone, except maybe Tripes, prayed for better weather at Jacksonville. Marty prayed for 40 days and 40 nights of more rain.

250 RESULTS — ORLANDO

250 NOV

1. John Joyner Suz
2. Jerry Williams Hus
3. Chris Douthitt CZ
4. Gregory McGovern Suz
5. Stephen Johnson Mai
6. Greg Thornton Bul
7. Douglas Raines Suz
8. Fred Little Suz
9. John Kotowski Bul
10. Daniel Farley Suz

JACKSONVILLE — MOIST SAND AND DRY AIR

Oh, Pierre, what big knobbies you have, cried the little sheep. The better to blow your doors off with, my



Jimmy Weinert attempts to "reason" with an AMA official before the Orlando race.

dear, said the Flying Dutchman.

And so he did.

It didn't seem to matter to Karsmakers what kind of a start he got. If he was back a tad, he just waited until everything got strung out, then proceeded to pick off one rider after another.

During practice, he looked almost insolently fast. As he passed riders seemingly at will, he would look off to one side rather detached and then motor off into the distance, like he was going for sandwiches.

But even before the race, he started to mess people's minds up. The night before the race, Pierre wandered over to the Kawasaki camp to jabber a bit with Weinert and Lackey. Had a few beers with him, too. Big beers. Quart bottles.

Everyone sat around and drank a few cool ones. Jimmy, Bradley. Only Pierre nursed a half a beer all evening and kept on opening fresh frosties for the boys in green. You all know how it is. One beer seems to make the next one sliiiiide on down. A good time was had by all. Especially Pierre. Who hardly even tasted his suds.

The next morning a bird chirped and Lackey tried to strangle the sparrow for making too much noise. Weinert walked around like his head had been used as an auction table the night before; a bike got fired up and a howl of anguish lit up the Kawasaki camp. Eyes looked like road maps and tongues felt like doormats. But not old Pierre's. Nossirree. He walked by a-whistlin' and a-hummin' to beat the band. The Kawasaki



Light Brown Lancione needed this stick to beat off detractors at Daytona. He's the national MX referee.

band, to be exact.

Lackey, bad shoulder or no bad shoulder, decided to go stark raving nuts in the first moto. He pulled an almost instant lead and blasted through the sandy terrain like a man who really meant it. But the mind can only push an aching body so long before something gives.

Something gave.

Brad sailed into a four-foot berm like it was a 12-foot berm. And down he went, taking a few other notables down with him—including Weinert and Karsmakers. Shaken, everyone got up again to pursue a somewhat startled Tripes. No one but Pierre seemed to have the desire to push hard after the crash, and it was only a matter of a few laps before he stormed by Tripes. Cleanly.

Tripes, still smarting from the ease with which Karsmakers had passed him, rode furiously and played tag with Tim Hart. In a serious study of frustration, Tripes went completely over his head and rocketed off into the nearby swamps. Emerging from the goo with a banged-up ankle put him completely out of the chase. Pierre Karsmakers didn't let all of this foolishness bother him in the least, as he quickly made up for a bland start and motored his way through the pack for yet another win.

Two starts, two wins. Not bad.

Moto three was a near instant replay of the second. Karsmakers doesn't seem to care a great deal about trying to be first in the start



Grossi pushed his Husky to an overall win at Daytona.

turn; he knows that too often a rider's hopes are destroyed by an early crash. He also knows that most of the other riders in the race have about the same quantity and quality horsepower that he has. Face it. If Tim Hart really wants that first turn, nobody in the known world will be there before him.

So Pierre just hangs in there and lets everyone else beat lumps on each other. Then, when sanity is restored, he merely starts traveling at a considerably higher rate of speed and passes them sooner or later. Lackey, Hart and Grossi held him off for a while, but the Dutchman got stronger while they got weaker. There was never really any question. The Amer-

icans started to look scared.

Weinert and Lackey in particular seemed most affected. They mumbled among themselves, "Well, he's a sand specialist. He even beats Joel and Roger in the sand. Boy, if we only had him on the coast in the hard stuff, we'd show him a thing or three."

Sure.

RESULTS — OPEN EXPERT JACKSONVILLE

1. Pierre Karsmakers Yamaha
2. Bob Grossi Husqvarna
3. Brad Lackey Kawasaki
4. Tim Hart Yamaha
5. Jim Weinert Kawasaki
6. R. Thorwaldson Suzuki



Gary Bailey pleased the crowd with wheelies during practice . . .



. . . then again after he took the lead in his heat race.



Sharp, jutting jumps at Daytona had many riders floundering.

WINTER-AMA WRAP UP

7. Mike Runyard CZ
8. Gary Semics Husqvarna
9. Sonny DeFeo Maico
10. Barry Higgins CZ

"Jeezus," said Jimmy Weinert, "I'll bet there's a jillion 250 novices gonna be here today."

Not quite a jillion, but there were enough to demand an almost endless string of qualifying races. The good weather and a chance to ride The Big Time brought them out of the woodwork. More truly *bad* bikes were seen at Jax than at any other stop on the series. Five-year-old CZs and Sprints and God knows what else were in painful and plentiful evidence. At the end of a very, very long day, Steve Stackable ended up as winner on a fresh CZ, through sheer consistency. If the motos had been longer, Steve would have probably won every moto, but he overcame mediocre starts to wade through interminable numbers of floundering bodies. Watch the kid—he's good.

RESULTS — 250 NERVOUS CLASS JACKSONVILLE

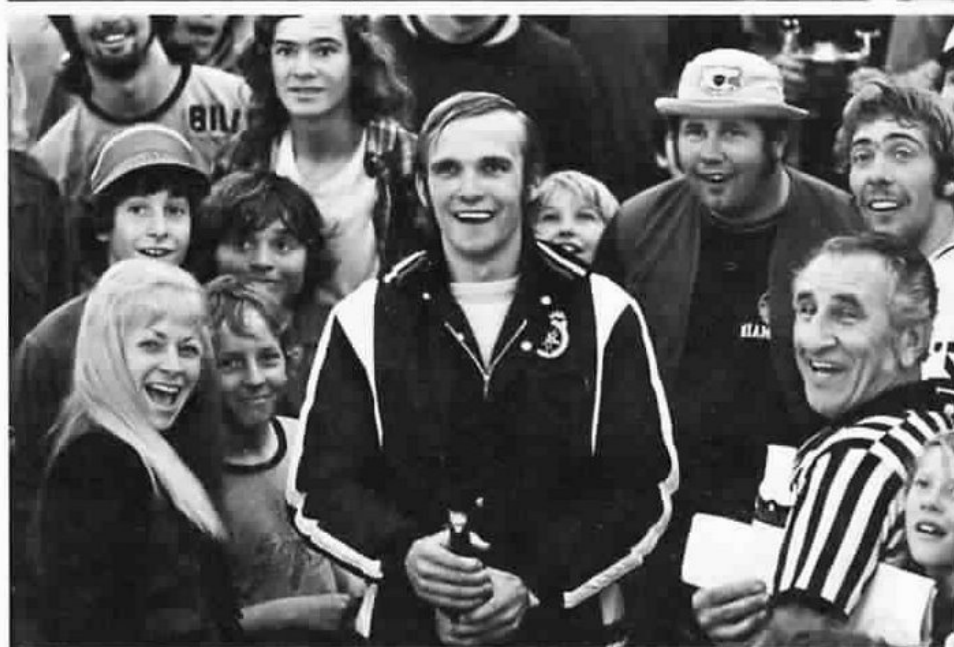
1. Steve Stackable CZ
2. Joel Nicholson Suzuki
3. Jerry Williams Husqvarna
4. Dwayne Lyons Maico
5. Ron Huffman CZ
6. Don Goss Bombardier
7. Neil McCormack CZ
8. John Joyner Suzuki
9. Bruce Dengler Yamaha
10. William Shoey Yamaha

TALLAHASSEE — JUST LIKE BACK HOME, SAYS KARSMAKERS

Yup. After all the flat stuff, the riders were treated to a real European-style course. The moment Pierre saw the track, a big grit-eatin' grin spread over his face. "Not bad. Not bad at all," said Pierre. "Just the kind of course we have in Europe. I think I like this one." And he said it plenty loud, so all the other riders could hear him. Weinert moaned. Tripes shivered. Grossi blanched. Lackey got mad.

And the rage was enough to give Brad the edge to win the first moto. He rode wild and hard, making few mistakes. Quite the opposite was

Karsmakers works out on a bottle of victory juice, much to the delight of the crowd.



Grossi—he rode scared. No wonder. That Husky was all over the place, hopping from one side of the track to the other. On one corner, Grossi took at least three different lines—all at the same time. He was sideways more than he was straight. One time the Husky got so far out of shape that it banged him in a strategic spot and made him a soprano for several laps. Jimmy Weinert rode a strong, conservative second to stay in front of Pierre Karsmakers.

That rage that fired Brad up dissipated completely—anger can only carry you so far. The rest of the day

was Karsmakers'—no argument. He wasn't guided by anything but skill. And skill and energy conservation were needed on this rough course. Other than a wheel-to-wheel battle in the final moto, Lackey seemed content to stay behind Karsmakers. The edge was gone, but so was Pierre.

RESULTS — OPEN CLASS TALLAHASSEE

1. Pierre Karsmakers Yam
2. Brad Lackey Kaw
3. Tim Hart Yam
4. Rich Thorwaldson Suz

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| 7. Gary Semics | Hus |
| 8. Sonny DeFeo | Mai |
| 9. Doug Sanger | Hus |
| 10. Bob Grossi | Hus |

Fun time was over for the local boys, as some of the California hot shoes showed up for this one. Imagine, if you will, Tom Rapp and John Franklin riding as novices. Ludicrous? Sure. To everyone but Franklin and Rapp, that is.

They won going away, lapping

many riders early in the race. People started shaking heads wondering what was going to happen at Daytona, when the track would be filled with "novices" against "novices."

RESULTS — 250 NOVICE CLASS TALLAHASSEE

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| 1. John Franklin | Mai |
| 2. Tom Rapp | Bul |
| 3. David Clemence | Bul |
| 4. Robert Newberry | Yam |
| 5. Wayne Welzien | Bul |
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Nobody showed up but the riders and the rain. Spectators, what few there were, sat in their cars, or huddled under shelter. The discouraged promoter, Bill West, was heard to say that the riders didn't even have to bother to race. Why didn't they just cut cards for the money and go home clean?

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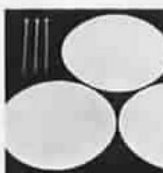
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other drink and passed water through the less-than-perfect air box setup. He swore some awesome oaths in Dutch and dropped his bike in the mud, trudging away in pure disgust.

Even though he DNFed in the first, the mechanics got the bike shaped in time for the next two races. Duct tape, sheets of plastic, and more duct tape allowed the machine to function, and Pierre already knew how to function. Bang, bang. Two more wins. No arguments, no disputes. Karsmakers was clearly the fastest rider on the course, but Tripes won overall.

A pattern was starting to shape up.

If Karsmakers had no mechanical difficulty, he won. Come to think of it, that ain't a bad pattern at all.

The same old crowd fought over the remaining places like scraps: Lackey and Weinert. The only new faces to show in the top rankings were Sonny DeFeo and Barry Higgins, who both learned to ride in the mud. Most of the riders seemed to be resigned to the fact that Karsmakers was unbeatable, and the mood hung with them for the balance of the series.

RESULTS — OPEN CLASS AT ST. PETE

1. Marty Tripes CZ

2. Jim Weinert Kaw
3. Sal DeFeo Mai
4. Barry Higgins CZ
5. Bob Grossi Hus
6. Rich Thorwaldson Suz
7. Tom Rapp Bul
8. Pierre Karsmakers Yam
9. Tom McGill CZ
10. Gary Semics Hus

Unlike the previous week, St. Pete had a small turnout of Novices, probably due to the lousy weather. Only about 90 riders showed up, but they seemed like a much more prepared group than the last batch of rain-runners.

Local Florida rider Jerry Williams put it to John Dallaire for an overall win, mostly through consistency. Dallaire was obviously faster, but had his problems.

RESULTS — 250 NOVICE CLASS ST. PETE

1. Jerry Williams Hus
2. John Dallaire Mai
3. Don Goss Can-Am
4. Greg Thornton Bul
5. Neil McCormick CZ
6. John Joyner Suz
7. William O'Brian Bul

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HIALEAH — GOOD SPECTATORS, BAD LUCK AND PIERRE ONCE MORE

The big crowd must have made the riders nervous, as a claimed 10,000 people came to see the circus. By now, all the American riders were fully psyched. Maybe, they thought, if we can just go fast *very early* in the race, Pierre will get a bad start and not have enough time to catch us.

Yup.

Only one thing with going fast. You tend to fall down a lot if you're riding over your head. And that's what they did. They tottered like tenpins, especially the strong, hot-blooded front runners. And if they didn't fall, their machines failed. There are two ways to go fast: through skill or through brute force. The latter will break bikes. Ask any one of the following:

John DeSoto—smashed his shocks beyond belief and fell, too.

Weinert—fouled a plug, and broke some gears.

Lackey—broken brake cable, fall down—go boom.

Grossi—laid it down and bent a brake pedal backwards.

Hartwig—huge endo that would have killed a polar bear.

Tim Hart—busted gearbox.

Karsmakers went on to win all three motos with maddening ease. The psych was on—could he be beat at all?

One very nice thing about Hialeah—the organization seemed to be the best to date. While the track rated no more than average, the spectators could see much of the action and they were treated like human beings. Many of the riders stated they liked

the atmosphere of Hialeah and would like to come back. Good vibes all the way around. Quite a contrast to the third-rate organizational meanderings at Tallahassee.

RESULTS — OPEN CLASS AT HIALEAH

1. Pierre Karsmakers Yam
2. Marty Tripes CZ
3. Bob Grossi Hus
4. Mike Hartwig Hus
5. Rich Thorwaldson Suz
6. Brad Lackey Kaw
7. Mike Runyard CZ
8. Tim Hart Yam

Cont'd. on page 60

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CZ SWINGARM EXTENSION

By the Staff of DIRT BIKE

One way to reduce
that fabled CZ
rear-end hop



CZs are the most misunderstood motorcycles in the world. You can't get a decent shop manual to work on the things. The factory doesn't understand anything but the Communist way of doing things and can't relate to their American customers. Every little CZ shop has its own "expert," most of whom do more hocus-pocus than thoughtful tuning. And there are so many trick accessories on the market for CZs that owners tend to think anything different must be better.

Take the famous CZ hop for example. Most CZ owners learn to live with the busy rear end, because it has always been assumed that some busyness is natural when the CZ is going through the rough. Some rear end hop is normal, but we've seen CZs bouncing from side to side like 400 Suzukis. This is *not* normal. Cycle Products West has a solution, but first inspect the bike for the following abnormalities:

There are three factors that influence the degree of the CZ's bouncing. First, the swingarm bushings must be in good shape and lubricated. But few riders know that the CZ swingarm pivot bolt is an oil reservoir that feeds oil to the bearings, like an Autolube, to keep the swingarm moving up and down freely.

The shock absorbers must have the same spring rate, and the damping must be identical. When you put new Konis on your CZ four months ago, they were probably the same, but one of the shocks may be wearing out quicker than the other, or one of the springs may be beginning to sag.

Also, the swingarm might be bent. Just a minor misalignment might cause a major handling problem. If you land from jumps all crossed up and never check the swingarm for tweaks, there's a good chance it is bent.

If you're sure that the swingarm is moving freely on well-lubed bushings, and both shocks are identical, and the swingarm is straight . . . and still your CZ hops too much, here's a partial cure. Extend the swingarm . . . almost too simple to be true.

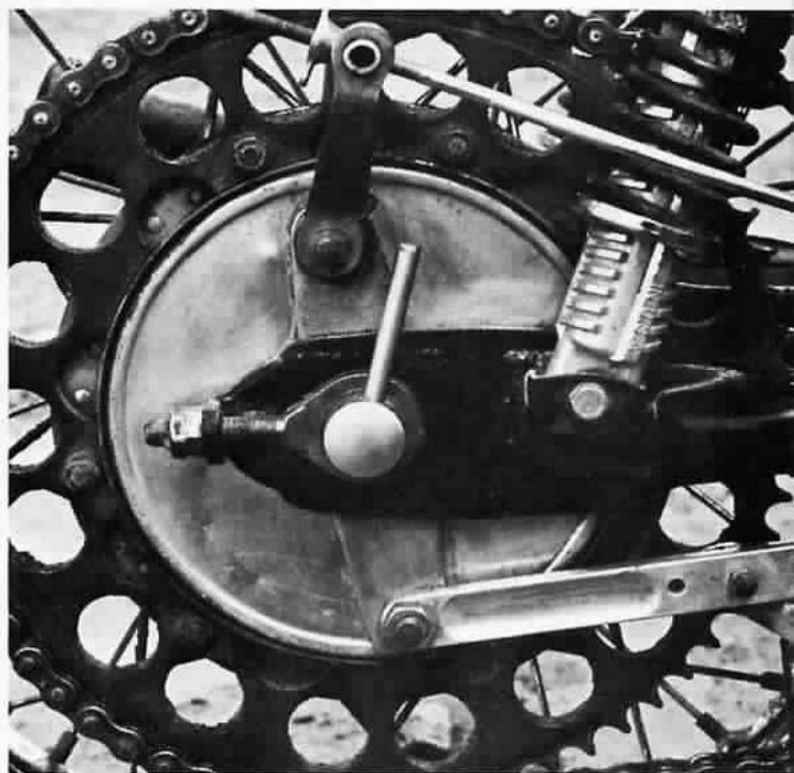
Cycle Products West's swingarm extension kit is one of the few motocross accessories you can buy that actually changes the nature of the CZ. Purchased separately, the kit consists of two I-shaped plates that you take to your local welder and ask him to weld in place between the shock mounts and chain adjustment-axle slots. The do-it-yourself price (plates only) is \$11.95 for the pair. If you give CPW your cleaned-off swingarm, they'll inert-gas weld the plates in place and repaint the swingarm black for \$35. One of the nicest features of the kit is that you can trust it, presuming that the welder knew what he was doing. Its shape not only butts on the cut, but the top and bottom of the "I" extend fore and aft of the cut and are welded to the

flat rear section. What we're saying is that it ain't gonna break.

Because the kit only adds one inch to the CZ's wheelbase, it doesn't radically alter the bike's handling characteristics. Rear-end hop is noticeably reduced, but some is left for old times' sake. Handling in the corners is slowed slightly, but not enough to impede the CZ's famous corner-taking manners.

Several riders tested out the CZ that we had the CPW kit installed on, and more than one commented that it was "the best handling CZ I've ever ridden."

CPW's swingarm kit fits so nicely that you have to study the swingarm before you can see where the plate is welded in. Can you find it?



The big question is why no one has ever done this before. Here we are waxing enthusiastically over a modification that's not all that trick, in fact it's a technique used through the years to slow quick-handling bikes down. There are several swingarm kits for Yamas and Huskys, but now the first one for CZ, possibly the most natural recipient of all. Oh well, as our pappies used to say, "Learn something new every day, boy."

Cycle Products West will mail you the kit parcel post collect, or you can buy it at their shop and mail-order facility at 11900 W. Pico, Los Angeles, Calif. 90064.

WHAT IS COURSE OF THE MONTH?

Probably not what you think. DIRT BIKE's "Course of the Month," where we take readers on monthly jaunts to faraway, exotic places such as Budd's Creek, Elephant Butte, and Memphis, is not the result of sleuthing staff work.

We don't lurk behind bushes at Punkin Center with cameras and note pads.

We don't collect information from an underground network of spies to be fed into a giant computer.

We don't spend time winging all over the country to locate tree-top motocross circuits.

HOW A COURSE OF THE MONTH IS CHOSEN

Easy. We ask one of our correspondents in various parts of the country to find a popular course and write a candid, honest appraisal of it.

Or we occasionally discover one from an enterprising freelancer in our mail.

Either way, here's how it's done: the article should be no more than three double-spaced typewritten pages with plenty of room in all the margins for editors' chicken-scratches. Keep the history of the track brief and concentrate on unusual features, description of location, indigenous color, and a riders-point-of-view lap around the course. You also might mention the local shoes who clean up regularly there.

Photos should be 8x10 glossy black and white, and of good professional quality. There are plenty of good cameras running around capable of very action photos; snowfences are lined with them. When submitting prints, it's always a good idea to include the negatives just in case. They will be returned.

In the February '73 DB, we printed a Course Rating

sheet. If possible, get hold of a copy and include it in the package.

The DIRT BIKE Course Rating Sheet is not mandatory, though; we have received thousands of them from all over the country, so right now we have a dossier on virtually every course in the country. It gives us a better idea of the course's quality, and tells us if a Course of the Month submission is fair and accurate.

WHY IS COURSE OF THE MONTH SUCH A POPULAR FEATURE?

First, it gives us a chance to get down to the grass-roots of the sport, a chance to take a closer look at the foundations of this entire industry. What happens at Charlie Brown Raceway eventually affects all of us.

Secondly, it gives vacationing riders a chance to spot some handlebar-clanging establishments in parts of the country he is otherwise unfamiliar with. If you were going to Albuquerque, where would you race? Find out in DIRT BIKE.

It also gives track promoters a chance to watch what his peers are doing all over the country, maybe giving him some ideas on how to improve his track inexpensively.

If you would like to see your stomping grounds appear in DIRT BIKE, it won't happen magically. Conspire with your writer and photographer buddies and send us a package. All contributors will be paid our usual contributor rates.

Address all submissions to DIRT BIKE Course of the Month, Box 317, Encino, CA 91316. Be fair, candid, and honest, because that's what it's all about.



COURSE OF THE MONTH

Potomac Raceway, Maryland

By CHET HEYBERGER

Get caught in The Funnel and you're up Budd's Creek

250 rider, Bob Bitting, leaves the jump section of the Slide-For-Life.



Using the famed DIRT BIKE MAGAZINE MX COURSE RATING SHEET, (D.B.M.M.C.R.S.) we find that Potomac Raceway is a well run, fairly interesting course, that could use some additional facilities.

They require silencers and have decent parking, but have no drinking water or phones. Rest rooms are supplied (instead of the traditional tree) and they are generally clean. One sore spot is dust control, as they don't have access to a water truck.

Races are held on time and as advertised, and few complaints are registered about the scoring.

The course itself receives high marks for width and changing elevation turns, but has very few really tight turns.

Pit racers are not tolerated, but spectators do wander around on the track now and then. For shame. They have an ambulance at the races, but no doctor. The flagman situation is poor and should be improved, especially when one considers that there is no PA system.

All things considered, it seems like a good course that will be a great one, if more time and money are expended.

You know, a good man with a bulldozer can turn the sod and turn a dollar at the same time.

Potomac Raceway, back there in Budd's Creek, Maryland, is an example of the new trend in motocross courses. Here is a privately owned dirt racing complex that leases out its facilities to local motorcycle clubs that come up with an AMA sanction to promote races.

Potomac Raceway features an oval for car racing and a scrambles track for the bikers. But the thing that drags the people out of the bushes is the motocross layout.

This motocross course runs up and down the sides of a wooded hollow, giving you the opportunity to test your mettle on such white-knucklers as the Funnel, The Great Mud Hill and the Slide-For-Life.

The Funnel, as you might have guessed, starts out in a wide spot, with all 20 or 30 riders in your heat side by side. As it rapidly narrows down, the handlebars

begin to overlap going into that first left-hand sweeper.

All this funneling and sweeping is complicated by the long series of downhill whoopdies that make you grateful that this crowded starting ramp isn't repeated every lap.

Once down on the track you have an instant or two to unfrazzle your nerves on the level valley floor before you head uphill into the woods. But before you even reach the top you gotta turn around and shoot back down a rocky chute to the corner that begins The Great Mud Hill.

Now, the valley floor is usually dusty, and the top of the hill is dry, but kindly ol' Mother Nature saw fit to install some internal plumbing on The Great Mud Hill, and that spring keeps the face of the G.M.H. bathed in glop—good old-fashioned, power robbing, boot sucking glop. But strong 125s can make it to the top.

Once you're on top, you can pick up some speed, skitter around the carousel and tip over the top to go back down the old Great Mud Hill. This way it's easier anyway. Oops! Gotta get set up for the jump halfway down. Now there's an ess and a muddy right with a berm and then it's off to the woods again.

Just when you think you're ready to burst back into the sunlight, you find you're still not out of the woods. This time it's an off-camber that exits onto the steep approach, leading to the spectating plateau and the finish line. See if you can carry the front wheel all the way up and across the finish line. Maybe that chickiepie in the Levi's cutoffs is watching.

But don't start stylin' yet. You haven't even finished one lap. Down you go, off the plateau on a smaller, steeper version of the Funnel and then into an oxbow that spits you out into the Slide-For-Life.

Slide-For-Life? Well, it's a fast and nasty right-hand slider, and just when you're really shoeing it through there the turn ends in a drop-away jump. Yea-hooooo!

If you make it you've completed the course—but wait! Don't rest yet. That's only one lap and you've gotta make a lot more before they unfurl the checkers. Gas it.

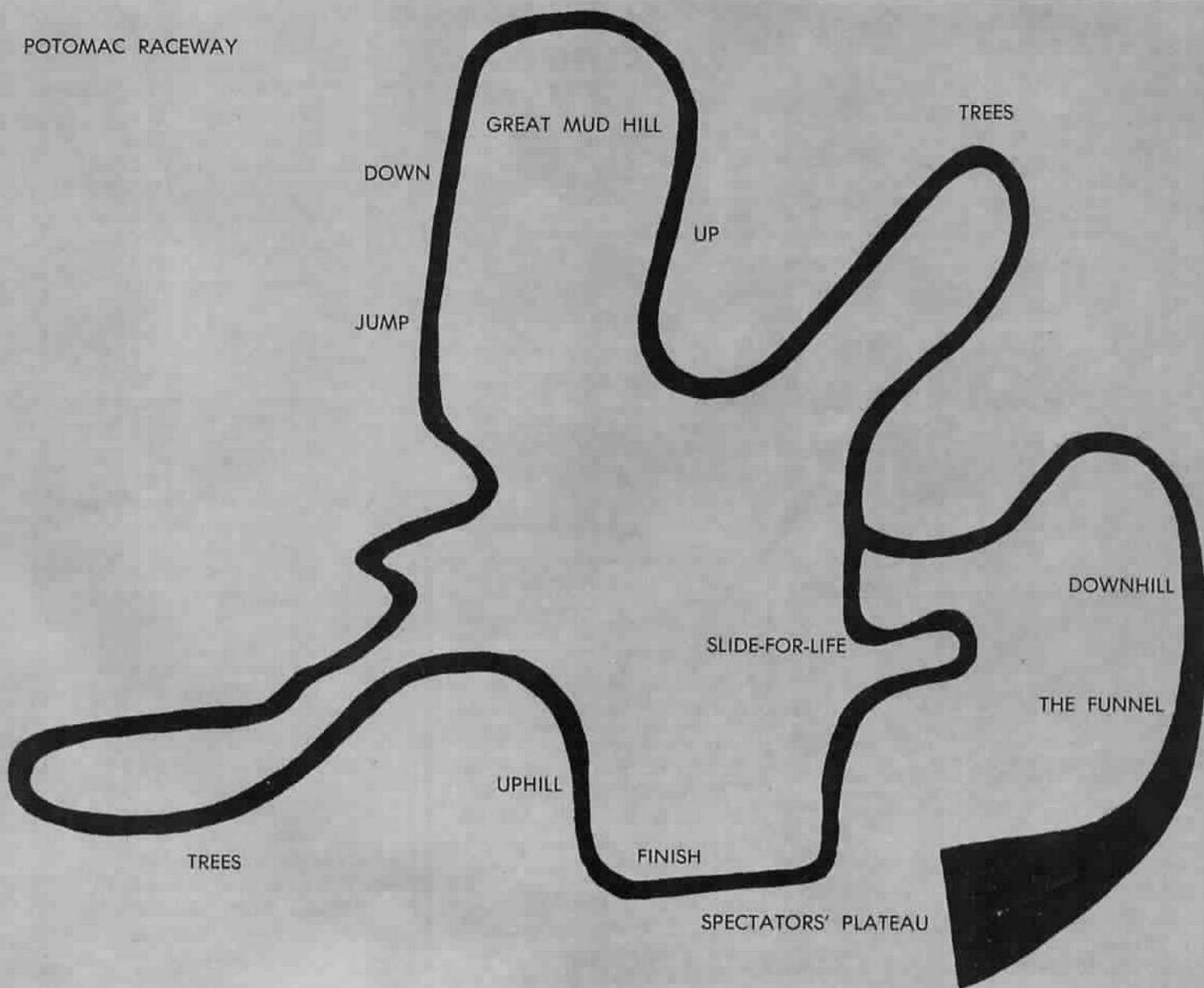


One lap to go as the riders hit the finish line.



Mike Hubbard turns his Husky in the loamy soil.

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FLORIDA AMA *Cont'd. from page 53*

9. Sonny DeFeo Mai
10. Wyman Priddy CZ

Novices had a decent turnout and most of them seemed better prepared than in past races. The word must have gotten around: Better be serious about it if you want to race in the winter series. Bruce Dengler and John Franklin swapped wins, with Dengler coming out on top overall. Franklin had a mediocre start and couldn't cope well with traffic.

RESULTS — 250 NOVICE CLASS HIALEAH

1. Bruce Dengler Yam
2. John Franklin Mai
3. Frank Stacy CZ
4. DeWayne Lyons Mai
5. John Joyner Suz
6. Fred Little Mai
7. Wayne Welzien Bul
8. Dave Clemence Bul
9. Greg McGovern Suz
10. Richard Lundy Yam

FORT PIERCE — SAND, SUNSHINE AND A TINY TRACK

"The goddamn thing's only a quarter of a block long, if it's an inch," said one disgruntled top-liner about the track at Fort Pierce. Lap times of a minute and 15 seconds tended to back up that statement solidly.

"They coulda put the whole stinking course in a bowling alley," said another.

Yes, it was short, and that meant that faster riders would soon be lapping slower riders, which usually mean lots of crashes. But not that many get-off were seen. Perhaps it was the axle-deep sand that kept bikes upright.

Everyone was keyed up—this was the last *small* race of the series. Next stop was Daytona, and that meant the big time. They all wanted to do good, maybe that's why they all tried so hard. False start after false start was the order of the day. Clutches smoked and tempers flared. Except for Karsmakers. He just relaxed and got his ordinary upper-third-of-the-pack start, then proceeded to ride faster than everybody else. Simple. Zip-bam-boom. Three wins. Even Brad Lackey, who dived with Pierre for a while, seemed to lose heart and let him by after reasonably good leads. Lackey, Weinert, Grossi, Hartwig and Hart all rode their

Cont'd. on page 97

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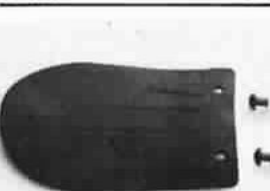
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PART 4

PROJECT YAMAHA

More grunt for the runt

By the Staff of DIRT BIKE

Before we get down into the innards of the engine, it's only fair that we mount a front fender on the Yamaha. This presents a slight problem, as Yamaha designers insist on keeping a steering damper nestled right in the way. Removing this can be a real bear, so why not just leave it on? Those slide rule types at Yamaha knew that the bike needed some help anyway, and the damper actually *does* slow the steering down somewhat.

Your best bet is to use the pinch bolts on the bottom triple clamp for a mounting section. The lower bolt on each leg will do the job nicely, but if you're a crasher, then you might want to use *both* bolts on each leg. We used a piece of heavy aluminum strap that cost us a grand total of 48 cents at the local hardware store. Get a thick piece (at least 1/4-inch, preferably 5/16-inch) and bend it to the shape shown. You'll need a vice and some sweat, but aluminum is malleable and works well. One advantage to this kind of a bracket is that it can be bent back into shape in the event of a spill. At least a few times.

OK. We've kept you in suspense long enough—let's get to the horsepower department.

Naturally, you must take apart what you have, for starters. Remove the head, exhaust, carb and barrel. Set these aside in a nice place. Now, sit down and think for a moment, because you're going to have to make a decision.

You're either going to buy a Yamaha MX barrel (new or used) or port your Enduro barrel to MX specs. Here are the ballpark figures.

A new Yammie MX barrel will set you back about 50 bucks or so. However, a little looking around will get you one for 20 to 30 bucks. A lot of guys weren't happy with their MX powerbands, and traded off for Enduro barrels. There are a lot around. Look.

The going price to port a standard Enduro barrel to MX specs varies from area to area. Around L.A., it's 25 to 35 bucks. Shop around. One hint: If you opt for modifying the Enduro barrel, do not touch the transfer ports. *Make everything else like the MX barrel but the transfers.* This will actually give you a superior powerband compared to the all-out MX barrel. However, the MX barrel will offer a few more revs on the very top of the power range. The penalty is a slight loss down low.

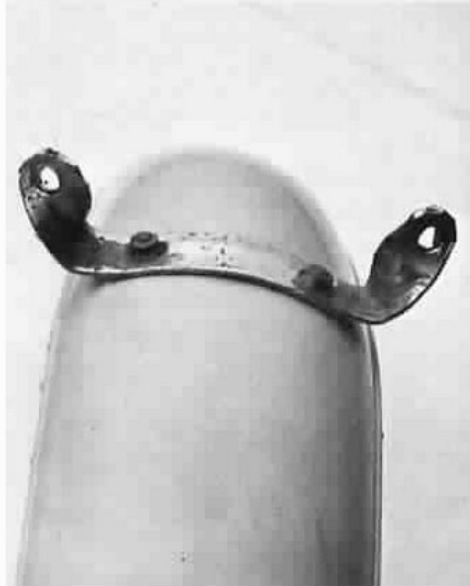
We are shooting for a tractable bike, however, and are using the Enduro barrel with modified porting.

Now, here's where the secret part comes in. You discard the standard Yamaha piston and install one from Suzuki Savage.

The other part of the secret is the installation of a spacer plate. We got ours from Gail Engineering (105 Grove, Sierra Madre, California 91024), and the tab was \$3.95 including shipping. This plate is .200 thick, which is close to 3/16-inch.

After you get the plate (or make your own, if you're industrious), run on down to your Yamaha dealer and pick up four or five base gaskets. They're very cheap, so get a few extra while you're at it.

After the Suzuki piston is installed and the barrel is slipped in place, check the edge of the piston skirt and make sure that it's clearing the flywheels completely. We have found as much as 25 thou variation between Suzuki pistons. If the skirt is



Fender bracket can be made from scrap metal...

... and attached to lower clamp bolts.



making contact, remove the piston and file gently on the area. Repeat until everything fits. If you do have to file, it should be no more than a few 10-thousandths—not enough to change port timing.

Once everything is set to clear, place two of the gaskets on the engine, then the spacer, then two more of the gaskets. Now slip the barrel over and settle it down. Run the pis-

ton up and down a few strokes and listen for any metal to metal contact of the skirt on the flywheels. Now is the time to catch this—not later on.

Slip the head in place—very easy with the four-bolt Yamaha pattern—and run the piston through gently. There should be no contact. By the way, use the stock Enduro head. If

Spacer and several gaskets will be needed for engine modification.



MX cylinder (or ported Enduro cylinder) and Enduro head will do the trick. Use a 32mm carb.



any contact is heard (piston crown against the head), take the barrel off and install another base gasket. If you have to add more than two (to the four already there) then the head should be relieved. This should not occur unless quality control on your engine was gruesome, but we have heard of one instance where it took a total of seven base gaskets to get the proper clearance.

Run through it again. Two base gaskets, spacer, two more gaskets, barrel and then the head. Hokay. You have the assembly together, then you bolt on the breathing parts.

A 32mm carb will be about right, and you should be able to get one used for around 20 to 30 bucks. While you're at it, sell your carb for 15 to 20 bucks. You won't want it again.

So far, we have played with a Basani pipe (upswept), but are experimenting with a few others. We'll keep you posted.

Even though jetting will vary depending on your section of the country, here's what we used for jetting on our scooter. It should put you in the ballpark at least.

240 main.

25 to 30 pilot.

6F5 needle.

No. 1.5 slide.

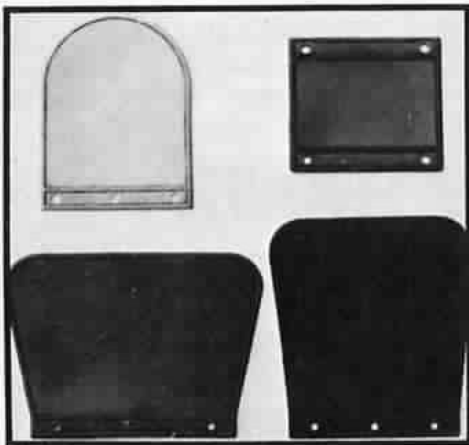
If the carb is the bottom main jet type, use an 0-6 No. 159 hex jet. For the Mikuni carbs with the side main jet, try an 0-6 No. 188 jet. We prefer the bottom main jet for greater efficiency, even though the side main jet types are easier to work on.

What about actual results from these modifications? A standard Yamaha Dit One will pull from 15½ to 17 hp at the rear wheel, depending on condition, year and state of tune. Ours pulled nearly 16 before the engine modifications, about average for a stocker.

After the modifications, we got nearly 26 hp at the rear wheel and more importantly, *lost nothing down low*. The engine would easily wind an additional 1,000 to 1,200 rpm and the increase in mid-range was outstanding.

So we have what we were after. Lots of beans down low and ten more ponies on top. The engine still starts like a normal Yamaha and idles easily.

Spit is dribbling down the corners of our mouths. Can the end be near? Next month? Who knows? ●



A TIP FROM RAHM ENGINEERING

You say you bolted on those springy light fenders but you are still spattering your goggles with goo? Is that what's troublin' you bunky? Well, here's a tip from Rahm Engineering, Dept. DB, 640 E. 219th Street, Carson, California 90745 — bolt on a snazzy mud flap and keep all that muck down there out of sight. Want to keep your color scheme intact? The Rahm flaps come in yellow, red, blue, white, green, orange, silver and your basic black, so unless you're riding a rainbow you can find something to match. California residents should also check out the "Stickie Holder," designed to keep your ORV registration stickie in one piece even after a couple of endos.



MORE THAN JUST A T-SHIRT

It might not make *Gentleman's Quarterly* but Bell's new Super T-shirt will be the height of style this season for riders meetings and bench racing sessions.

For five and a half bucks your local Bell Helmet dealer can outfit you in this chic number in sanguine red with a bold white stripe and of course that well-known Bell logo.

This 100-percent cotton lovely comes in small, medium, large and extra large. Like they say, it is more than just a T-shirt. After you've worn it to a few trophy presentations and victory banquets you can retire it to the toolbox where it can serve as a fine grease rag.



HI-POINT CLOGS

If you've admired the style of European motocross stars right down to their very toes, you'll want to slip your tootsies into these Hi-Point clogs which are just like the footwear worn by your favorite hero-rider and his European fans.

The sole and heel are carved out of wood while the upper is 100-percent leather or suede. They come in sizes for men and women and in a variety of colors and styles. Clogs are said to strengthen the leg muscles, but more importantly, they are easy to kick off so you don't track mud all over the house. Hi-Point clogs are available from your Penton/Hi-Point dealer but not in waffle pattern for woods riders.



RIDERS WHO WEAR GLASSES OFTEN MAKE PASSES

If your old rubber and plastic goggles make you feel like a scuba diver on an overtime shift, try on these Hi-Point ISDT glasses the next time you head for the swamp. Your Hi-Point/Penton dealer has 'em and he says they offer complete eye protection and that they are comfortable to wear. After all, what's good enough for the U.S. Trophy Team is probably good enough for the rest of us. If you want to go Hollywood you can have tinted lenses too. ●

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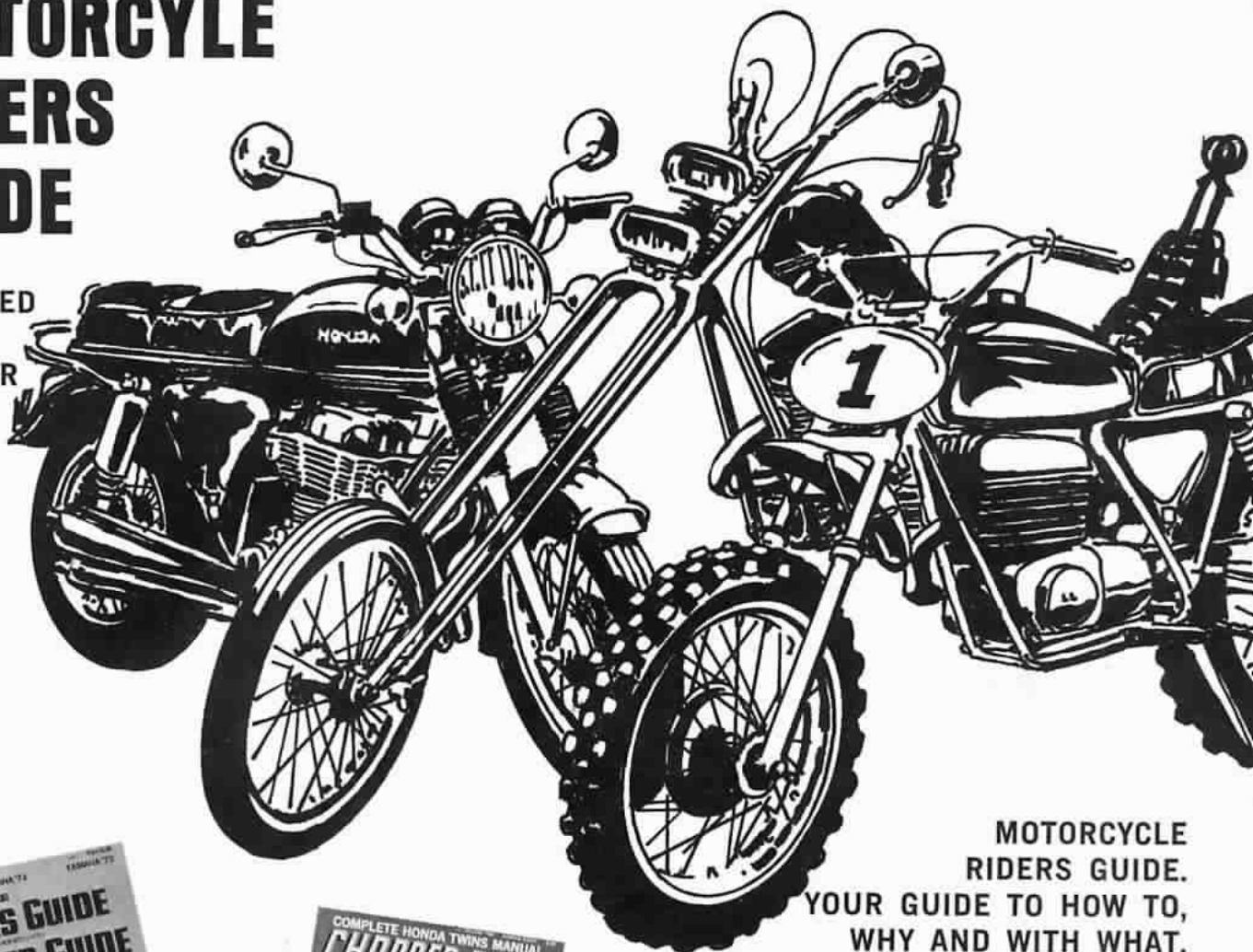
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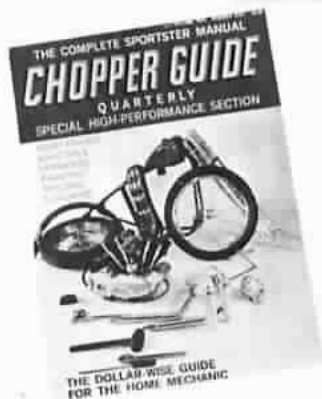
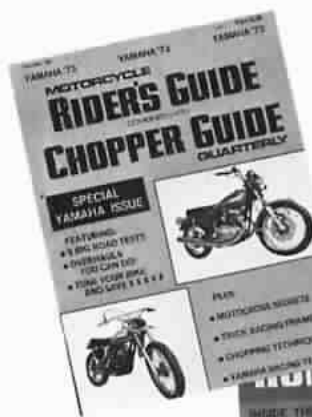
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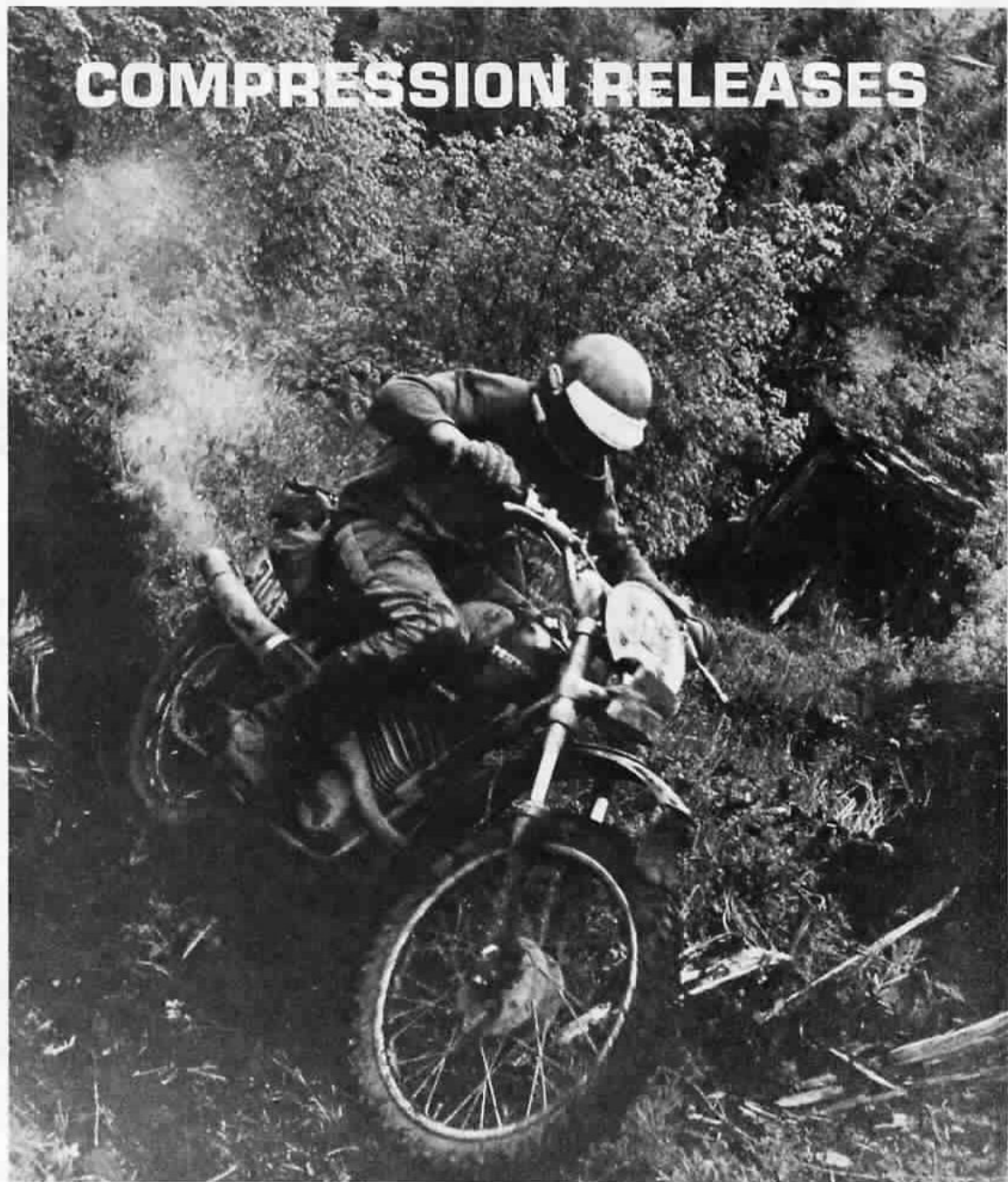
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AN INCOMPLETE GUIDE TO THE HISTORY AND ROMANCE OF

COMPRESSION RELEASES



Uses and abuses

By TERRY PRATT

FFT-FFT-FFT-Fft-fft-fft-fftftftftftftftftftttt. A dirt bike rider with a new compression release is just like a kid with a penny whistle. He's fascinated by the sound and he never misses a chance to pull that handlebar trigger and play a song.

If Spike Jones and his City Slickers had had an old Yamaha DT-1 back in the 1950s they might have recorded "Concerto in A minor for compression release and orchestra."

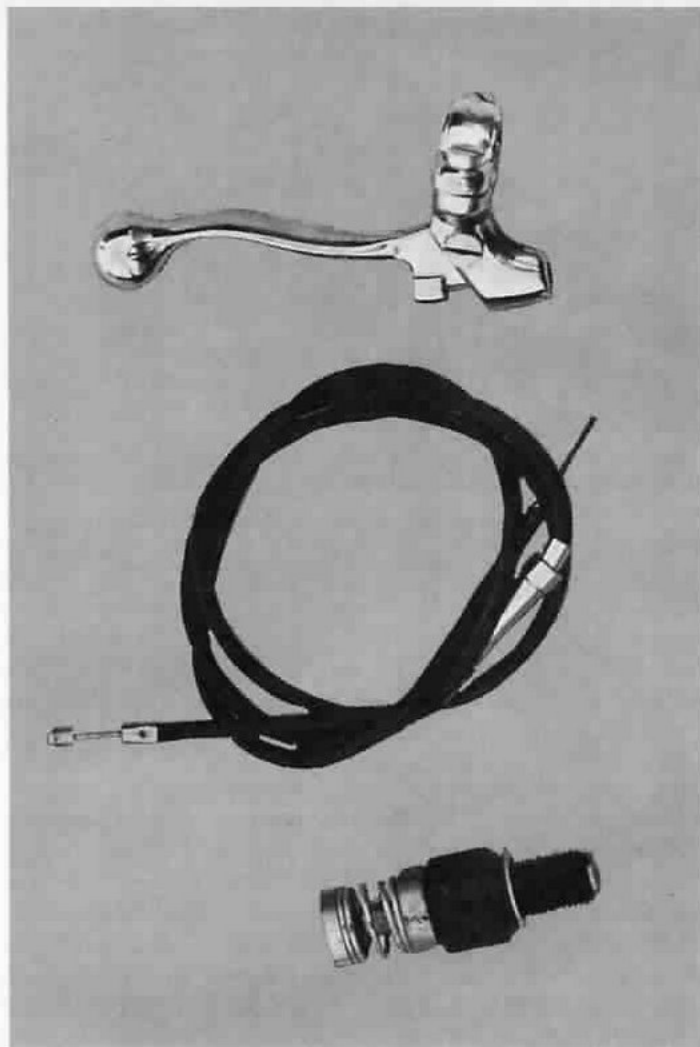
But that flutter-chuffing noise is only a part of the compression release mystique. Just a couple of years ago the compression release was one of those "must

have" accessories that every two-stroke owner from the novice trail rider to the Ascot half-mile veteran screwed into his cylinder head.

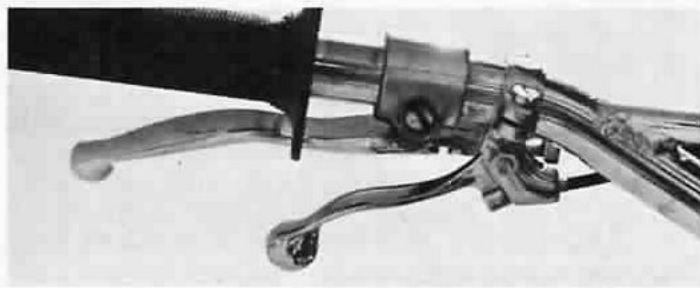
At scrambles tracks anywhere in the country a pack of lightweights would scream off the starting grid and jam up to the first turn where they all yanked open those releases until it sounded like "Tiger Rag."

Scrambles and short track riders loved those compression releases because they slowed the bike and set up a boss slide without the danger of locking the rear wheel.

That gentle braking effect also appealed to desert



What every compression release buff needs: a control lever, a cable, and the release itself.



Position the lever so it's easy to get to, but difficult to accidentally bump.



Most modern two-strokes come with an extra compression release/spark plug hole.

racers and enduro riders who were often faced with gawdawful downhill where too much brake pedal action could cause one of those lockup, sideways, crash, bang, boom situations.

That noisy little trigger proved to be a handy gadget to hold back a runaway scooter and still keep the engine running and the rear wheel turning.

Trail riders picked up on the fad and bought compression releases. Then motocross racers began using them to slow down before diving into the turns, and at the peak of the craze the kids put compression releases on their street-legal trailbikes and pulled them open at every intersection—even on clean, dry pavement.

The demand for compression releases skyrocketed. Big distributing companies sold them by the thousands. Little machine shoppes in every corner of the country developed a pet compression release design, and motorcycle dealers from Azusa to Zanesville kept their glass-topped counters full of them.

But then the pendulum slowly began to swing back again. After a while the novelty wore off and some riders became disenchanted with their compression releases.

First, the street riders got tired of blowing oil all over their engines (and their white peggers). Then desert racers and trail riders discovered that a release could suck in dirt and/or water. By now "one-way" compression releases with a little poppet valve were available, but most of them depended on little springs and moving parts that could wear out or get gummed up, and so sometimes they worked and sometimes they didn't. When they didn't work people were fouling plugs and needlessly wearing out their engines.

But the final blow to the compression release as a *de rigueur* piece of equipment was the fact that the European stars on the Inter-Am tour didn't use 'em.

Starry-eyed kids from coast to coast watched their heroes with the funny accents come bounding down the hills with the gas on and going deep into the turns by using both brakes.

The World Champ didn't use a compression release!

Compression releases fell out of vogue.

Now a hapless newbie would be laughed off the track if he showed up at a motocross with a compression release. Instead, serious motocrossers started practicing with the front brake and the kids traded in their compression releases for Sylvain Geboers helmet visors.

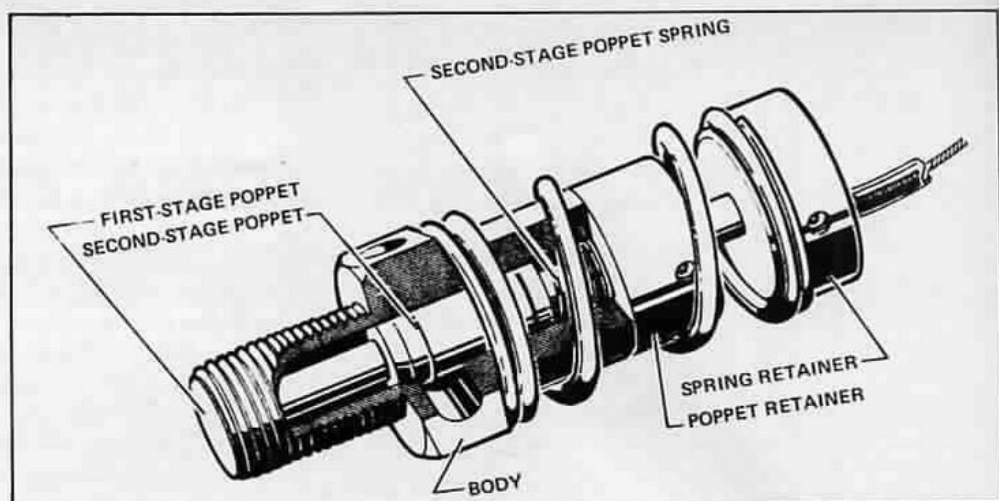
Now that compression releases were no longer glamorous, only those riders who really had a use for them bothered with them, and that's where we are today.

A compression release is a valid device for many riders, and lots of grizzled old-timers swear they wouldn't go anywhere without one.

TT scrambles racers, desert racers, enduro riders and trail riders still use compression releases, but they use them more intelligently now and not just because they're "in."

The most common use for a compression release is to slow the bike down when the surface traction is bad and the rear brake would lock the wheel. But the brakes, especially the front brake, will stop your bike faster under most conditions, and that's why motocross coaches spend a lot of time teaching new riders to use their brakes skillfully. Many times a rider who depends on his compression release will be outbraked and passed

Diagram of a typical one-way compression release.
Courtesy of Flanders Accessories.



up by a rider who has learned to use his brakes.

But there are other handy uses for compression releases. When your engine becomes loaded up with too much gas in the cylinder and it won't start, simply pull the trigger and kick it over a few times to clear it out. A compression release is even better than an ignition cut-out for a kill switch because a hot engine with the throttle stuck will sometimes still run without a spark.

Some large two-stroke engines use a special type of compression release tapped into the cylinder wall to make kick-starting easier. Don't confuse this type with the one you can buy to screw into the cylinder head. A compression release for starting merely kills the compression in the bottom half of the cylinder so the engine is easier to kick over. The engine will run slowly with the starting release open and it offers little or no braking effect.

It takes about five minutes to install a compression release in any two-stroke engine that has a spare spark plug hole. Most off-road bikes today come with two plug holes, or at least a blank spot where an additional hole can be drilled and tapped.

If you decide that a compression release is just the thing for you and your riding style, shop around a little and buy one that suits your needs. First of all, be sure that it fits. Some manufacturers build one size for bikes up to 250cc and a larger model for bikes over 250cc. Generally speaking, spark plugs come in two sizes: short reach and long reach — that's a measurement of the threaded part that screws into the hole. Don't screw a long reach compression release into a short reach hole—it might have a fight with the piston the first time it comes up. Conversely, don't use a short release in a long hole because carbon will build up on the exposed threads and make it difficult to replace the spark plug.

Next, decide if you want a one-way compression release or a two-way. When a two-way valve is open the air rushes out of the cylinder as the piston comes up, and then air rushes back inside the engine as the piston goes down. A two-way valve is a better brake and it will instantly snuff a high revving engine when it is used as a kill switch. For indoor short track or TT racing on a well watered track it looks like the way to go—but there is a catch.

When air is sucked into the engine it can take dust, sand and low-flying birds right along with it. After putting all that money and preparation into your carburetor air cleaner, it doesn't make sense to open up the guts of your engine on a dust-choked hillside.

Enter the one-way valve. To keep all that *chinga-durra* from entering the inner sanctum of your spotless engine, compression release designers came up with a little poppet valve that let air out but slammed shut to keep air (and therefore dirt) from coming in.

Now, that little valve has to work back and forth about 50 times a second—even when you're just noodling along a trail, and it has to contend with super-hot exhaust gases. So you can see that it has to be well-designed and manufactured to critical tolerances. Therefore, out of the dozens of one-way compression releases on the market, there are good ones and there are bad ones.

Rocky Distributing of Santa Clara, California, markets a one-way compression release. Compression releases are also available from Webco Inc. of Venice, California; Flanders Co. of Pasadena, California; Cycle Battery Supply of Santa Fe Springs, California; MX Precision of Carson City, Nevada; A and A Manufacturing of Redwood City, California, and many others across the country.

Interestingly, a one-way compression release that is reputed to be one of the best is manufactured by AK Engineering in Renton, Washington. It uses ball check valves to stop air from entering the cylinder during the downward stroke of the piston. The AK release is distributed by Wheelsport in the Pacific Northwest.

But whatever compression release you decide to buy, remember that it has some hard-working moving parts and that it will require some attention to keep it working right. The heart of any compression release is the seat of the main valve that holds in the compression until you pull the trigger and release it. In many engines that valve is working with a 10:1 compression ratio and at high temperatures. If it begins to wear out or become fouled up with carbon it will leak and reduce the engine's power.

The hot tip is to periodically pull the whole works apart and lap the valve against its seat with a little dab of valve grinding compound. At the same time scrape all the carbon and grunge out of the works, see that the springs still have some sponging left, and douche everything in WD-40. Keep the cable adjusted so the valve will open fully to prevent carbon buildup.

For the competition rider or the casual trail rider, a compression release can be a valuable asset or it can be a crutch. When you decide to put one on your dirt bike be sure you know why you want to use it, how to use it, and what it is doing to your engine. "Ft!"

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MINT 400:

Who needs another Baja 500?

By DAVID SWIFT

Ah, Las Vegas. Visitors blow into town with a grisly butterfly collection on their windshields and are greeted with a flurry of coupons for free breakfasts, free long-distance telephone calls and (by *all* means), free gambling lessons.

For the past five years, the Mint 400 has been the only big-time professional race where Joe Lunchbox could stand a chance to win lotsa loot. It takes an outlay of two weeks' pay, another rider who can ride 50 miles at a whack, a reliable motorcycle, and a host of warm bodies to do the dirty work—the latter of which isn't too hard to come by, since everyone loves to shove quarters into Las Vegas' slot machines.

On this particular weekend, Vegas was full of dentists and bowlers and chiropractors, some trying to get away from their wives, and others searching for them, but most searching for a room. Hotels don't juggle their prices so when they get full, the overspill starts oozing into the myriad motels that huddle on their side of the Strip. Broom closets that normally go for \$14.50 were up to \$30 by Saturday, and if word got around things were *really* tight, tourists would be slapped with the highest legal rents. The Mint was tougher this year for Joe Lunchbox.

And that's not the best part. The course was moved from the Mint Gun Club to an area 30 miles south of Vegas. The 50-mile loops were gone, replaced by a sprawling 200-mile two-lapper that touched two states and four counties—"to alleviate



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DITCH-TO-DITCH DRAG RACE



Tom Scales gets some attention from the Penton crew.

the strain on the environment," according to one press release. This meant that everyone was going to have to finance three extra gas/support crews, have three extra sets of spares, and have two riders capable of maybe 200 miles at one whack.

Add to that the further complications of learning a 200-mile course instead of a 50. The factories can afford planes. Joe Lunchbox can't.

In other words, the 1973 Del Webb Desert Rallye was out of reach of the privateer's limited funds. Like NORRA's Baja races, the Mint 400 now appeared to be of use only to the big manufacturers and distributors who aren't above investing *beaucoup* bucks in a single event just so they can place a full-page ad in a weekly paper headlining "WE WON A BIGGIE!"

So it seemed. As it turned out, there are some things, notably luck, that money just can't buy. By the time the Mint was completed, misfortune the factories suffered was directly proportional to the amount of money they spent to win, except for one.

Conversely, a couple of teams that could barely afford to cross their fingers went back home with tales of newly-found riches. Las Vegas!

The course itself was of the get-off variety, a killer course. "It's a ditch-to-ditch drag race," said one competitor right before the race. "It sucks you right in." Sucks you in to what? Oh, gulleys, washouts, embankments. All at 80 or 90 miles per.

You see, car entries (running the next day) outnumber the bikes five to one, so the car fellers get to determine pretty much what the course will be like; mostly, it's like a freeway just before the concrete is laid down.

A "desert rallye?" Nope. Not when true desert consists of sandwashes and rock gulley drop-offs and loose uphill and spooky-neat downhill—the terrain that demands the utmost in rider skill and bike preparation. Instead, we are given a course that primarily depends on the rider's ability to keep the throttle safety-wired

The Adventures of Jim and Danny

Naturally, DIRT BIKE isn't going to venture into the wilds of Las Vegas to cover the Mint 400 without getting a first-hand look at the action. We paid our \$350 entry fee and had Jim Connolly and Danny Hockie prepare a new Ossa SDR for the fun.

There was only enough time to pre-run the course once and things looked tough ahead. Connolly had given his foot a serious whack with a rock while practicing. Rock-versus-foot injuries were the most popular

other reason than kindness. Sheesh, Ron Lambert wanted to win this thing more than anybody—but not too much where he wasn't willing to give a hand.

While Jim Connolly rode from Check 3 to 9, his wife Diane drove a resting Hockie from 3 to 9, using a somewhat shorter route, natch. Connolly took advantage of his scrambles experience on the high-speed roads to ace several competitors with the fine-sliding Ossa and pick up some places. At check 9 things were looking up. It was too early to tell how our elapsed time compared to the others, but we might be in the top five. And only 250 miles to go!

open and hope-to-God you can remember when the next washout will appear. A lot of riders forgot, and would get stoned on the full-bore high and disallow the time/space factor when danger appeared. The Mint claimed more bones than all the archaeologists in the Western Hemisphere.

In all fairness to the Mint people, parts of the course were once virgin terrain, but by the time countless jeeps and bikes and dune buggies trampled the thing with pre-runs even months before the event, Yvon DuHamel could have finished in the top ten on a road racer.

Historically, the Mint has been a running game of Find The Guy Who Knows What's Happening. Invariably, the Guy Who Knows has retreated to a friend's house to catch some much needed sleep. Very few workers, but lots of Las Vegas types running around in blue Mint 400 windbreakers with fresh square folds from the plastic bag. And judging from the patches on this windbreaker this-here fellow should know what's going on. You ask, and get the inevitable answer: "You'll have to talk to the Guy Who Knows, but he's probably hidden somewhere getting some sleep. You can page him at the desk."

But Sunday will be the most exhausting day of all—the day of Sign-Up and Tech Inspection. At noon in the Mint Hotel lobby downtown, there is a long line jammed from the front door to the roulette tables. Some people have been standing there for two hours, helplessly jostling elbows with noonday drunks working between the slots and the bar. Guards are fretting about all the kids spilling into the casino, and some youngsters manage to play a couple of nickels in the slots when no one's looking. When the four-five hours of sign-up is completed, the whole ordeal is repeated in the tech inspection line across the street—minus the casino and its human tide, thank heaven.

By this time Sunday is completed, everyone is shot, pooped, exhausted. Pre-running the course was tiresome, but this sort of thing, man, just *flatens* you.

Before the final letting-loose of the motorcycles on Monday morning, there was but one more formality: the riders' meeting. Riders, mechanics, and attendant personnel gathered at 7:30 a.m. at that rasty, lovable



Danny Hockie leaves Jean for Team DIRT BIKE . . .



. . . only to get off at 70 per, then lose spark.

with the pre-runners. Gene Cannady broke two toes on Saturday before the race.

After the quick application of JT Hand Handler on the starting line, Danny Hockie boogied out of Jean, Nevada, heading for Check 3, where Jim would change. His ride was uneventful, other than the fact he was well established in the top 20, and moving up.

At this point we became greatly indebted to Yamaha of Fontana, who gassed our Ossa, wiped our goggles, and slapped us on the back, for no

Hockie was unofficially clocked as the second fastest rider on the fire roads between 9 and Jean. But he never made it to Jean. Using the outside bank of a graded road for a berm, he found a rock and went over the edge at 70, bending the Ossa just a little bit, but in many places. He restarted, but lost spark a few miles later. DIRT BIKE became a member of the vast majority of Mint entrants who didn't finish—but will be back next year. This year the purse was \$70,000, but next year they promise \$100,000. Gotta get some of that.

truck stop known as Jean, Nevada, for the final briefing. Riders shifted from one leg to the other to warm up, wondered how much hotter the fresh sun was going to get, and looked at the heavy competition all around—

Honda pulled the A-1 psych job this year. Don Jones motored around Vegas and Jean in his motor home (all references to Yamaha carefully sanded off) stashed with Honda Elsinore after Honda Elsinore. Rows and rows of 'em—which is shameful, since at that same instant lots of kids were pounding on dealers' doors with fists full of dollars trying to get one

Rey Frank of Yuma, Arizona, had to battle darkness, didn't win.



of the new rare 250s. Don said his sons DeWayne and Gary had been pre-running the course off and on for the last several months, and there was no doubt they were going to win. No one cared to argue the point.

The Elsinores are surefire cross-country bikes on paper: long wheelbase, plenty of rake. The only changes to the bike were the addition of Don Vesco's circumcized-watermelon desert tanks (one of the single most popular items at the Mint this year), and the ignition from the upcoming Honda two-stroke enduro bike, adding much needed weight to the flywheel and much needed electricity for the lights.

Honda's other team was Billy Sil-

verthorn and Gene Fetty. Silverthorn was more ambitious about the race than anyone, running around telling everybody how the *worst* part of the course, a second-gear up-and-down-and-crash section between checks 3 and 4, was actually the *best* part.

The program also listed Gene Canady and Max Switzer as number 36 for Honda—and number 57 for Kawasaki. Max and Gene the Cop used No. 57. They were originally scheduled to ride for Honda but changed their minds.

Erick Jensen and Steve Hurd were signed for the other 450. Kawasaki also had a couple of 250s entered, one F-11 with a Boyd & Stelling chassis and an F9 with a 250 barrel—

also with a Boyd & Stelling chassis.

Finally, there was Husqvarna. Deep down inside, everyone knew Rolf Tibblin and his six-speed 400 Husky would win if he didn't break. No two ways about it. Tibblin is a legendary rider, being the only person to ever win both the 250 and 500 World Motocross Championships, and nearing 40, he's on the verge of making some new legends. He moved to San Diego last year to help Husqvarna Motorcorp West train riders. Tibblin fell in love with desert racing, quickly became savvy, and can now run with hard core District 37 Experts. The Ironman, indeed.

Tibblin's choice of an 18-year-old

kid for a teammate might have baffled some people. No sweat. Mitch Mayes is a long-time desert racer, a graduate of the Harley School for Fast Desert Kids. Up until last year Mayes was one of those youngsters who regularly blew off 400 Huskys in typical teen-age non-fear fashion. Mayes is not another throttle-happy adolescent, though; he is a thoughtful, shy, long-haired archetypal California kid. Except he can go very fast for a long period of time.

Rolf knew Mitch could do the job. He was mainly concerned with *Mitch* knowing that Mitch could do the job. Two days before the race, at Mitch's request, Rolf bolted on a set of Curnutt shocks and gave them a



At check 9, Yamaha of Fontana waits for ill-fated Jim Fishback.

quick test while the sun went down. Mitch said all the desert guys love 'em, so Rolf took his word for it. This, of course, made Mitch feel a part of the team — if there was ever any doubt in his mind before. "Rolf had him pretty well under control," understated one Husky mechanic.

—not to mention the hopeful collection of less glittering talent: Shotgun Sam's Pizza Palace was back again this year; Jack Johnson and David Laca, Vegas locals, were on a painfully stock Yamaha 250; a Ducati 450 R/T was entered with a semi-partial-sort-of sponsorship by Good-year; a couple of good old boys from

Rolf Tibblin steadily rolls on to his second Mint victory. \$!



Thrill of victory, etc.: Jack Johnson after his second-place finish . . .



. . . and Ron Lambert with his "\$10,000 nail."



RESULTS DEL WEBB DESERT RALLYE (MINT 400) APRIL 19, 1973

Rolf Tibblin Escondido, Calif.	Mitch Mayes Palmdale, Calif.	Husqvarna 400	8:09.030	\$6,600
Jack Johnson Las Vegas, Nev.	David Laca Las Vegas, Nev.	Yamaha MX250	8:21.370	3,200
Tom Smith Bakersfield, Calif.	Jerome Ruzicka Mission Hills, Calif.	Yamaha MX360	8:23.060	1,100
Tom Brooks Torrance, Calif.	Cordis Brooks Torrance, Calif.	DKW 125	8:26.250	1,300
Charles Curnutt Torrance, Calif.	Bruce Lewellyn Garden Grove, Calif.	Husqvarna 400	8:47.190	600
Gene Durham Albuquerque, N.M.	Michael Ahern Albuquerque, N.M.	Yamaha MX250	8:50.480	850
Richard Mark La Puente, Calif.	A. C. Bakken Costa Mesa, Calif.	Husqvarna 400	8:50.530	400
Mike Patrick Corona, Calif.	Larry Pfutzenreuter Corona, Calif.	Yamaha MX250	8:52.240	300
Gary Jones Hacienda Heights, Calif.	DeWayne Jones Hacienda Heights, Calif.	Honda CR250M	8:52.650	200
Mike Harper Escondido, Calif.	James Jasper Escondido, Calif.	Yamaha SC500	8:57.020	100
Dick Vick San Clemente, Calif.	Niles Ussery San Diego, Calif.	Husqvarna 400	9:00.980	
Walter Kuhn Lakeside, Calif.	Bill Thornburg Holtville, Calif.	Honda CR250M	9:01.800	
Casey Folks Las Vegas, Nev.	Tom Scales Las Vegas, Nev.	Penton 175	9:03.210	
Sam Dempsey Ventura, Calif.	Gene Dempsey Reseda, Calif.	Triumph TR7 750	9:17.660	
Monte Brown Las Vegas, Nev.	John Harber Las Vegas, Nev.	Husqvarna 450	9:21.270	
Johnny McDaniel	Richard Lee Hemet, Calif.	Yamaha MX 250	9:30.800	
Randy Hodges El Cajon, Calif.	Billy Fetty La Mesa, Calif.	Husqvarna 400	9:31.100	
Jack Froelich Pasadena, Calif.	Scott Haslip Barstow, Calif.	Monark 125	9:38.780	
Dave Kersting Redondo Beach, Calif.	Lanny Lehigh Saugus, Calif.	Husqvarna 400	9:48.120	
Carl Berggren Costa Mesa, Calif.	Ron Stacy El Cajon, Calif.	Monark 125	9:51.210	
Larry Bergquist Duarte, Calif.	Gary Griffin Monterey Park, Calif.	Bultaco 250	9:51.510	
Charles Buchanan Clackamas, Ore.	Dusty Coppage Beaverton, Ore.	Honda XL360	9:55.150	

Note: The first three 250cc-and-under bikers were paid \$1,000, \$500, and \$350 bonuses respectively.

Bowling Green, Kentucky, a couple more from Houston, and many pairs more from all over the Yew-nited States were on the line and waiting.

At 9 a.m., the first two riders are shoed off. Every 30 seconds afterwards two more are flagged off ceremoniously, leaving like they're pulling a heavy load. By 9:19 everyone has gone except for a Yamaha with a whiskered plug and a Carabela that four-stroked, then died. All the rest are going banzai on a road paralleling Interstate 15, 75-90 mph. Off to fun and adventure. Spectators from Jean mosey into Pop's Oasis to drink and wait for the leader, about four hours away.

Don Whittington of Florida gets off at 85, breaks his arm. Never made it to the first check. Terry Clark, another graduate of the H-D Baja School, breaks his Husky into the lead and is first to check 2. On the way to 3 Terry tries to downshift to power out of a turn, traveling about 80. He crashes brutally. Tom Brooks, riding DKW for Hercules Distributing, stops for a moment but there's nothing he can do for Terry. Mitch Mayes does the same.

All this activity is being reported over the Clark County Sheriff's Jeep Posse Radio; the list of injuries grows with every report. Pure carnage, it seems. Out at check 9, two and a half hours from upcoming action, pit crews are sweating it . . . *Such a fast course . . .* when a deputy crackles over the radio, "We got a man down here and his arm is completely severed from his body. . . ." Knees buckle, silence. Who? What? The deputy repeats with the emotion of a weather report that someone has lost an arm. No number, name, type of bike, anything. *Jeez! Who is it?* Two hours later word finally rolls around that the victim was a 16-year-old kid out riding a dune buggy on the course. But a lot of tears were shed until that announcement.

Meanwhile, Larry Pfutzenreuter and Mike Patrick have inherited the lead, which gives them the lowest elapsed time since they're No. 1. Larry falls off the Yamaha once, having been used to a smoother-riding Bultaco for the last two years. Eventually dangling rear spokes slow them.

Scorekeepers have been watching No. 28, Tibblin and Mayes, since the start, and already the Husky has developed a steady beat.

Gene Cannady and Max Switzer



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lead the pack until, well, the big Kaw stopped running Somewhere Out There. Rumors flew from check to check like little desert whirlwinds that their bike had broken in half. Later, Kawasaki denied this, stating, "Well, that didn't happen. Something went wrong with the swingarm or something like that . . ."

Billy Silverthorn's Honda caught a rock and purged itself of gear oil. The gearbox lasted one loop, then turned to oatmeal.

The other factory Honda, the Jones', crashed hard with DeWayne aboard between 8 and 9. Much time was lost fetching them both and DeWayne was too hurt to continue. Brother Gary continued.

At Jean, the halfway point, Rolf Tibblin motored in a tad over four hours from the start. Three minutes later came Larry Roeseler to hand his CZ over to Jim Fishback Jr. (who are they?). Then Jack Johnson and David Laca. (What?) And Tom Smith/Jerome Ruzicka, Jack Knebel/Bryan Breker. (Where are the factory guys?)

Tenth into Jean was Steve Hurd, 18 minutes behind the leader Tibblin. Hurd flew out of town, down the road, and didn't shut off in time for an underpass. No one saw what happened, but it was a bad, bad get-off made no better by the 90 minutes it took to get him help.

Yamaha of Fontana came excruciatingly close to winning this year's Mint, 1-2. Of all the non-factory efforts, this was the most serious, most savvy, and most successful—up to that painful point when luck runs out. Yamaha of Fontana builds desert-racing CZs. Jim Fishback Jr., an ex-motocrosser, won the District 37 250 crown his first year out on one. YOF had Fishback teamed with Larry Roeseler on a 250, Jack Knebel and Bryan Breker on a 400.

Ron Lambert, the YOF racing chief, had thought up a clever rider switching program, three times a lap, for the race. His boys were always fresh. Lambert had covered just about everything, including some things even the factories hadn't thought of. Lambert didn't care how much they spent: "We're smarter than they are."

On the final loop both CZ teams kicked out the proverbial jams. No one was pushing gravel off the roads quicker than Yamaha of Fontana. Alas, Lambert might have foreseen

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the Jawa tank splitting open on Fishback's bike. But no one would have foreseen Bryan Breker picking up a goddamn nail in the middle of the desert. Ron Lambert bitterly saved his "\$10,000 nail." Just for old time's sake.

Rolf Tibblin hit Jean for the second time 8 hours, 9 minutes after Mayes had left. Their second loop was three minutes quicker than their first; the Husky 400 was functioning every bit as good as when it left, save for a bit of rich running. All the controls worked, shocks weren't sacked, forks were still strong, nothing was going to go wrong with the bike for perhaps another 400 miles. Note that Rolf had taken the bike apart and reassembled it three times, just before the race. There is a moral here.

But after the factory win, on came the Little Guys: Jack Johnson and David Laca from Las Vegas, doing the town proud, and earning \$3,200 in the process. Tom Smith and Jerome Ruzicka from Southern California, each 31 years old and mild-mannered as a Nazarene minister.

And the DKW Wunderkind Tom

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and Cordis Brooks, working yet another miracle, finishing their 125 17 minutes behind the leader in a race that finished 22 out of 71. Charles Curnutt and Bruce Llewellyn, two more Southern California desert whiz-kids.

And Gene Durham and Mike A-hern, two of New Mexico's best, startling themselves in sixth place.

And so on. The only other factory bike to win any money was Gary Jones' Honda. And Gary rode 300 miles to get it.

And so it went: Against all odds and expectations, Joe Lunchbox takes home more money at the Mint than he ever has before. That humorless bitch/goddess people call Luck worked for the privateer, spat upon those who dared try to buy her—except for Rolf Tibblin, who's got her figured out.

Gary Jones rode over 300 miles of the Mint after his brother was injured, finishing a startling eighth overall. At midnight after the race, he accepted a \$200 check for his efforts. "Might as well throw it away," smiled Gary. "It cost me more than that just to come here."

How much more, Gary?



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By the Staff of DIRT BIKE



Watching the start of a desert race is one of the all-time neat experiences. As far as the eye can see, there are bikes spread out—seemingly to the end of the horizon. Even smaller desert races often have three or four hundred entrants. The biggies? An AMA-sanctioned California race would normally draw 800-900 riders, with classics like Barstow to Vegas pulling in 2,500 desert freaks.

Walk down the starting line at one of these races, and take a look at the

bikes: Yamaha, Bultaco, Husky, Yamaha, Husky, Husky, Husky, Bul, Husky, Yammie, Husky, Husky . . . etc.

Yup. Sure do see a lot of Huskys in the cross-country events. And there must be a reason. After all, these riders (especially the savvy Amateurs and Experts) know what works best in the desert.

What works best in the desert, by the way, may not work worth a damn in other parts of the country. But about 30 percent of the riders in this

country have access to desert and cross-country-type riding, giving reason enough for more than one manufacturer to make a model designed for that only.

Which brings us to the latest from Husky—the 250 WR 6-speed—a no-compromise cross-country bike. Oh sure, you probably *could* ride it in motocross, but you'd spend all of your time shifting until you either wore out your left foot, or the gearbox.

Husqvarna offers a five-speed for the MXer, that is much more suited to the job of getting around a motocross in the most efficient manner.

Other than the gear ratios, gas tank and fork legs, the bikes are identical. A closer look at the actual ratios of the two bikes tells part of the story:

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5th 9.27	5th 11.00
	6th 9.24

Our test WR 250 came delivered with a 13-tooth countershaft sprocket (53 teeth at the rear wheel), which didn't give it much of a top end. We estimated around 62-65 miles per hour—not enough for the high speeds of most desert races. However, the bike comes standard with three countershaft sprockets—a 13, 14 and a 15. We feel the bike could easily pull a 15 and still have enough beans down low to torque up most any hill.

Lower fork legs are the old-style heavy items, not the spiffy new die-cast units. Therefore, front end response will not be as subtle as the CR's.

A 2½-gallon gas tank is the only other difference between the bikes (the MX version only carries 1.8 gallons).

OK. Now you know all there is to know about the six-speeder as opposed to a more-or-less normal

Husky 250. Except for how it works.

It works like any other Husky you've ever ridden. There isn't 20 cents' worth of difference—not really. Other than the slight increase in flexibility offered by the additional gear, a rider will travel just as fast in the desert with any other 250 Husky. And under most of the riding conditions, the extra gear will not be needed.

While it's possible to ride a Husky very quickly, the ride cannot be called a relaxing one — especially when compared to some of the long-wheelbased Bultacos'. Most of the top-line riders are running a longer swingarm on all sized Huskys. This seems to slow down some of the "busyness" and make the bike track straighter. Several establishments on the West Coast make a fine living altering the swingarms and frames on Husqvarnas. We feel the new 250 6-speed will receive the same treatment, too.

It's not that the bike cannot be ridden quickly "as is." It can. The problem is that the rider must constantly make corrections. Even the smallest bump at high speeds causes the Husky to shift uncomfortably and jiggle around nearly to the point of distraction.

Long-time Husky riders learn to ignore much of the wandering sensation and just go like hell. To a point, that is. There is that certain, magical, mystical, elusive, wondrous, fear-inspiring point of (you guessed it)—NO RETURN! Unless the Husky rider knows exactly where that point of no return is, he can be lulled into a false sense of confidence and stuff his head into the first of many ruts.

It goes something like this: The new Husky rider learns that his bike moves around a lot, and this frightens him at first. But after a while, he finds that the bike does not go down—just gas it a little bit and everything seems to work out OK. Sooooo, his confidence builds up and he attempts to push the bike harder. Strange. The bike doesn't seem to move around any more than when it's moderately pushed. Then one day, the bike takes a giant hop to the right and the rider blips the throttle and lifts the front end to correct the situation. The bike then hops to the other side, only about a foot further. Reaction again. Tug at the bars and work the throttle. Back to the other side. By this time, the bike is cutting



a 12-foot swatch through the pucker-bushes. Still, the rider has not given up. One final attempt at correction brings the rear end back to the other side again, almost sideways to his originally intended direction. Chances are, at this point, that he has bought the proverbial farm. The famed Husky Hop has struck again. And so, probably, has his body on the ground.

As the above rider learns to understand the Husky more and more over a greater period of time, he learns to recognize clearly what his limits in the rear-end hop really are. Experience teaches one quickly. The minute differences between moving around and being out of control are, by this time, firmly entrenched in his thought and reaction processes.

It has been said that a guy who *really* knows his Huskys can tell when the bike is lost long before the hop set in. He just steps off and saves the hassles that are sure to follow later.

So, the secret to succeeding with the Husqvarna seems to be spending a great deal of time learning the limitations, and riding as close to the edge of handling as possible, without getting into that gray nebulous area of "maybe."

The staff of DB has ridden many Husqvarnas, both stock framed and with long swingarms, and can report that the swingarm modification seems to be the warm setup and makes the bike much less demanding and more forgiving. Still, the hop does exist. It just happens later in the ball game.

As we said earlier, the bike can be ridden quickly in standard condition, which is true. The secret seems to

be to make needed corrections early and not let the rear end reach the point of wipe out. This will require a great deal of physical effort on the part of the rider. Body weight shifts, back and forth movements and wagging on the bars will be a necessary part of the act.

Still, the machine reacts quickly to effort input, and the light-reacting front end can be raised without even thinking hard about it. Fore and aft rocking movements will be needed to keep the Husky working properly over whoops, as with most other bikes. Bultaco excepted. These rocking movements are child's play on the Husky and hard work on most other bikes.

Much of the beauty (and we suppose the fascination) with the Husky is that, even though it requires a great deal of attention from the rider, the bike reacts easily and instantly to proddings from the rider.

It's not necessary to yank and tug to achieve the desired corrections. Once the light touch is mastered, it's almost fun to get in trouble, just 'cause it's so easy to get out. Watching an expert Husky pilot is a delight. He seems almost one with the bike. They flow together in a hippity-hop kind of interrupted pattern, but they can do it quickly.

Place two separate bikes at Point A and let them race to Point B with a lot of rough ground in between. Let one of the bikes be a properly set up Bultaco and the other a Husky 250. The difference will be astounding, even though both will probably get to Point B at approximately the same time. The Bul would track on a straight line with little or no rear



HUSQVARNA 250 WR

PRICE: Suggested retail, approx. \$1,295

ENGINE TYPE: Single cylinder, two-stroke

DISPLACEMENT: 245cc

BORE & STROKE: 69.5mm x 64.5mm

COMPRESSION RATIO: 12.3:1

CARBURETION: 36mm Bing

CLUTCH: Wet, multi-disc

PRIMARY DRIVE: Gear drive

FINAL DRIVE: Chain, (5/8 x 1/4)

GEAR RATIOS: 1. 29.50:1

2. 20.12:1

3. 15.47:1

4. 13.00:1

5. 11.00:1

6. 9.24:1

AIR FILTRATION: Paper element

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:

Femsa magneto w/lighting coil

LUBRICATION: Pre-mix

RECOMMENDED FUEL: Premium

RECOMMENDED OIL: Viking

FUEL CAPACITY: 2.5 gallons

FRAME: Single loop, Chrome moly steel

SUSPENSION:

(Front) Hydraulic forks

(Rear) Swingarm w/Girling shocks

TIRES:

Front: 3.00x21 Trelleborg Knobby

Rear: 4.00x18 Trelleborg Knobby

WHEELS: Front: Akront alloy

Rear: Akront alloy

DIMENSIONS:

Wheelbase: 54 inches

Ground Clearance: 8.75 inches

Seat Height: 31.5 inches

Weight: (claimed) 228 pounds

BRAKES:

Front: 140mm single leading shoe

Rear: 160mm single leading shoe

INSTRUMENTS: None

SILENCER: YES

PRIMARY KICK: No

PARTS PRICES

(Items subject to frequent replacement through wear or breakage)

Suggested Retail:

PISTON: \$30.10

RINGS: \$6.00

CLUTCH CABLE: \$4.40

THROTTLE CABLE: \$2.90

POINTS: \$3.40

CONDENSER: \$2.90

BRAKE SHOES: \$10.40 pair

CYLINDER: \$120.00

CYLINDER LINER: \$37.30

SHIFT LEVER: \$7.80

REAR BRAKE PEDAL: \$8.20

FRONT BRAKE LEVER: \$2.90

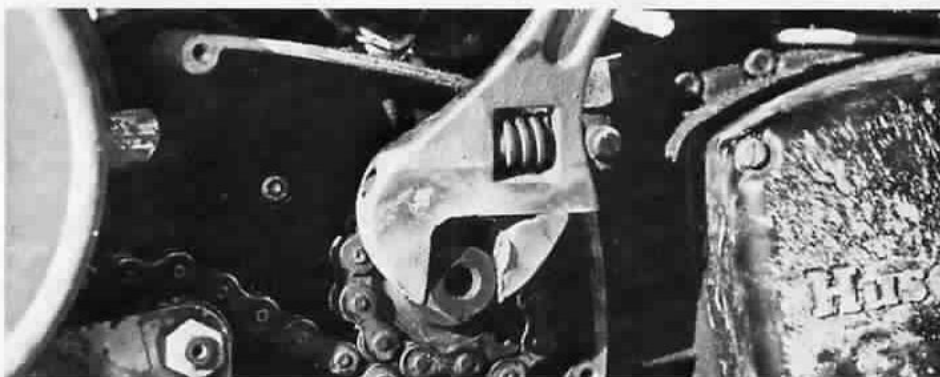
CLUTCH LEVER: \$2.90



Servicing countershaft sprocket was a hassle . . .



. . . taper fit was not up to the job . . .



. . . we used chain as holding device.



Super-fine Magura controls were standard.

end waggle, while the Husky would take up the equivalent of three free-way lanes.

So much for straight line charging. You'll still have to turn that bike from time to time, even in the fastest of cross-country races. Here, the Husky



is at odds. As long as the ground is loose or sandy, directional changes present no problem. And even if the ground is hard, as long as it's a low-to medium-range turn, this too is easily accomplished. But at high speeds on hard ground, like so many fire roads are, cornering becomes a spooky thing. The Husky is not a slider under these conditions and will let the rider know about it, by twitching all over the road as traction is gained and lost in sporadic, hesitating lurches.

That basic Husky chassis design (slightly modified through the years) was designed to work on the motocross courses of Europe. And that meant a bike that specialized in making quick turns on tight courses in traction-packed soil. The fact that the Husky works in the desert is nothing more than an accident. No one went out of their way to design the frame geometry around J. N. Roberts.

In standard trim, the suspension works quite well—for a while, that

is. Those front forks (once they loosen up) are equal to the best stuff on the market. They're slightly on the firm side, but not objectionably so. Lighter fork springs can be installed, but then the Husky loses some of its high-speed poise and light, dancing feel. As usual, they leak at a slow, steady, maddening rate. Husky has been ignoring this problem for years—it's about time they popped for some decent seals. On a machine that carries a high price tag, leaking seals are unforgivable.

Unlike the forks, the shocks don't improve with use. They just get worse. We haven't been exactly enthralled with Girling shocks as of late, and the ones on our test bike were no exception. They felt good for about 45 minutes of riding, then proceeded to get harsher and harsher. At the end of a full day's riding, the shocks could be rated as "marginally acceptable"—no better. Most of the riders who use a Husky in the desert use another good accessory shock, or the good rebuildable Girling that you and I can't get. Again, the money you have to lay out for the bike seems to demand something better in the way of rear suspension components.

After spending a great deal of time on the WR250, we must rate the power as average. It's not as fast as a 250 Yamaha MX, for example, but faster than a 250 AJS. These are bikes the Husky will face in everyday competition.

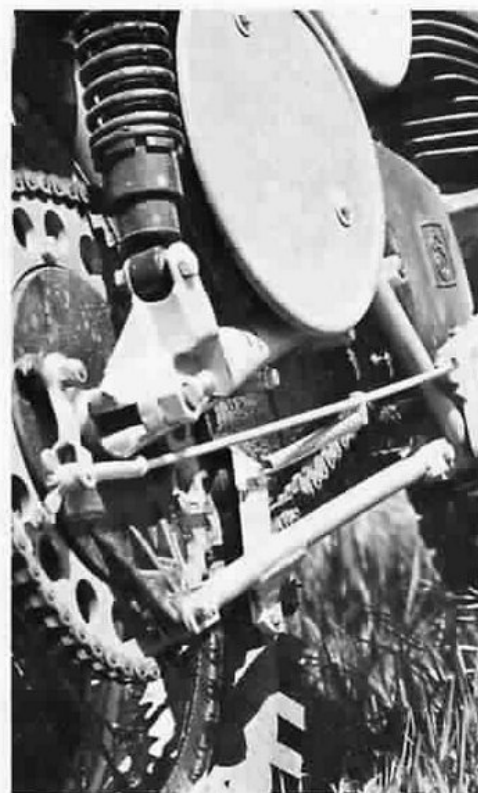
Still, cross-country racing consists of more than a straight line drag race. You must have a decent spread of power to keep from stirring the gearbox at all times.

Here, the WR250 comes on deceptively strong. At one test session in the Mojave, we found a long, sandy hill that proved a good test bed. A 250 Yamaha MX we had with us was forced to use second gear to complete the climb. Our Husky went up the hill easily in fourth gear. That's about the same as third on a normal 250. It would almost pull the grade in fifth, but not quite. We're sure a top-line expert rider could have banzaied the hill in fifth.

Most of the time we seemed to be in fourth, fifth and sixth gears, rarely dropping down to the lower cogs. The rider can let the speed lug down to 25 or so in fourth and the bike still will pull cleanly. Even the gnarliest



Worm's eye view of the belly button of a Husky.



Full floating rear brake eliminates rear-end hop under braking.

hills rarely demanded lower than second gear. If you have to put the Husky into low, then chances are you're going to do some pushing anyway.

It will not be necessary to buzz the engine as with other 250s, and this is much of the beauty of the powerband. A smart rider will be able to keep the engine at mid-range most of the time, especially so with the six-speed gearbox. This gives two benefits: less strain on the powerplant and reduced vibration levels. A screaming engine shakes and shaking prematurely tires the rider.

Another side plus is decent gas consumption (compared to other 250s). We were able to get over 60 miles out of the 2½-gallon tank. No need to go shopping for one of those giant accessory tanks.

We had a number of people ride the Husky, and comments about bike "feel" varied. Tall riders flat did not like the way they "sat" on the bike. They complained about awkward standing position and relationship of bars to seat to pegs. Shorter riders (approx. 5' 9") loved the position instantly. They claimed it was very easy to go from a seated position to a standing position — just a slight straightening of the knees and the proper attitude was reached.

Everyone loved the shape and height of the bars and everyone bitched about the exhaust pipe. It's a leg toaster, pure and simple. That heat shield is inadequate and the pipe bulges out too far, for all but ex-cowboys.

To complicate matters further, taller riders bitched about the air cleaner cover bumping their legs when they were far back on the saddle in a semi-standing crouch. Again, shorter riders did not notice or mention this. Many desert riders are adding shielding to the pipe, making it *more* in the way than ever. Still, it's better to learn to ride bowlegged than to become a crispy-critter in the left thigh.

BITS AND PIECES ON THE HUSKY

The left side, down-for-low shifting is a relatively smooth operating unit, with none of the hassles of the giant gap between first and second experienced in the five-speeder. Still, it's necessary to take a deliberate prod at the longish lever. Once the rider gets used to it, missed shifts are

uncommon and a missed downshift is rare. Neutral is not easy to find, but not as bad as the hide-and-go-seek setup on any Suzuki. Size-nine feet will want to shorten the lever a bit, to prevent removing the foot from the peg while changing gears. Lever throw is still on the long side (a la CZ), but not objectionably so.

Brake pedal is tucked in and takes some getting used to, but the rear brake is beyond reproach. The unit is strong and does not chatter, even under severe braking.

One finger is enough to lock up the

front wheel, and this too is a dynamite stopper. Many top racers pirate the Husky front brake assembly for their machines. It's one of the best available.

Pegs are the same scrap they've been putting on the Huskys for years. While they're new, the sharp little tab on the edge holds the boot adequately, but after a few hard hours of use, they round and leave the peg slippery and dangerous. Also, they are *not* spring loaded and flop around alarmingly. There must be a better way.

Cont'd. on page 109



As long as the surface was loose, Husky was an easy slider.



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OSSA'S SIX DAYS REPLICA

By the Staff of DIRT BIKE

On the seventh day they
shouldn't have rested

Consider this guy who's owned an Ossa Pioneer for the last three years: He's had to hassle with his bike more than his buddies that ride Japanese bikes, but all-in-all the Pioneer has been fairly reliable, and a far superior trailbike.

He has gone riding every weekend with his buddies.

His Yamaha friend fell off when he didn't in the whoop-de-dos.

He had to wait at the top of easy hills while his Suzuki friend tried an-



wrenches to make sure everything was tight, and trucked to Las Vegas.

And now we're on a pleasant sojourn through snow-covered mountains near Las Vegas, curious as to the ways of this impressive new machine. Lots of easy trails, comfy 40-mph speeds. Something is not right. It's hard to put your finger on it. . . . A washout. Stand the bike up and let the rear absorb the impact and, when you expect to hear a *foomp* you hear a *WHONK*. Whonk? Well, "whonk" is the sound of a 4.50 Pirelli being firmly nestled against the fender well and coming to a halt. More interesting sounds follow. Forks smash into the ground, a rider does a handstand and smashes into the ground. Fortunately, the only damage is to the small taillight and scratches in an artsy-craftsy helmet paint job.

Because of the lack of fluid the Betor shocks weren't damping and the rest of the 50-mile ride filled the desert with a steady *whonk whonk whonk* and some assorted ill-tempered epithets.

Back home, the shocks were replaced with some Boges lying around in the DIRT BIKE garage. Now we can see how this baby handles. One trip to the Dunes and the fork springs collapse. Gone. Zit.

Aw, c'mon, Ossa. This is an expensive motorcycle.

At Yankee's advice, we replaced them with Stiletto springs (an inch shorter and of heavier gauge), cute li'l boosters. The molasses was exchanged for some 30-weight and the forks worked exceptionally well. Plush, perfect damping, and ideal progression. Before the springs collapsed they were merely superb. Betor forks are boss.

Finally we can look at the handling. The chassis' behavior is that of a Stiletto's: a slider that is slightly busy when going in a straight line. This may not sound like the bee's knees for cross-country use but it does work.

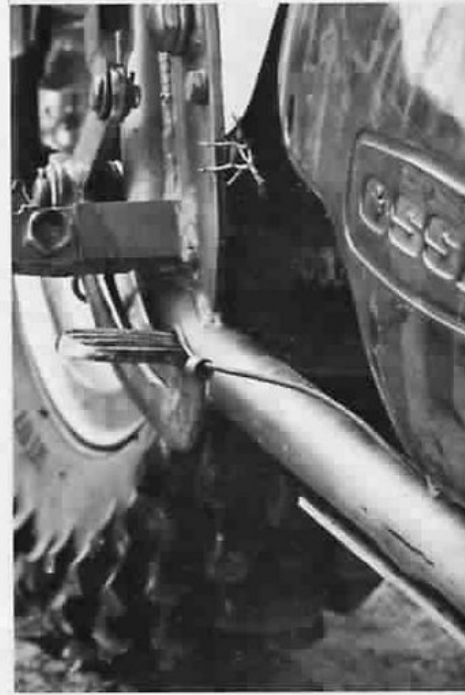
At all times the secret for control is in the throttle. You steer with the throttle, correct with the throttle. At high speeds you take advantage of the generous power on tap to guide you through fast-moving trees and bushes. It's a stand-up bike, by the way; the seat is comfortable but it ain't no love seat, so you better develop your leg muscles during the hot sections. Keep your cheeks back



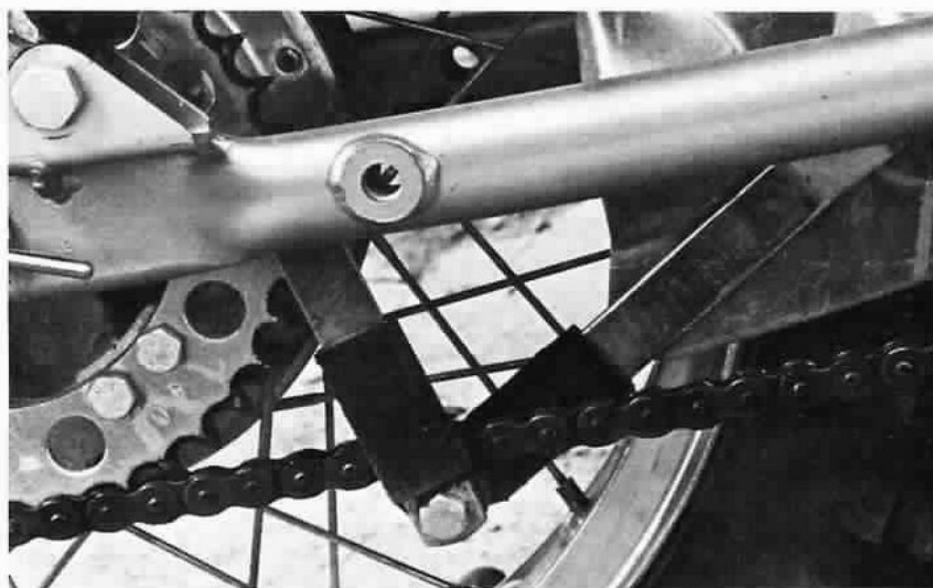
New Amal concentric is vastly improved, but still tinkles on rider.



Dirt collects at top of air cleaner. Sealing is needed.



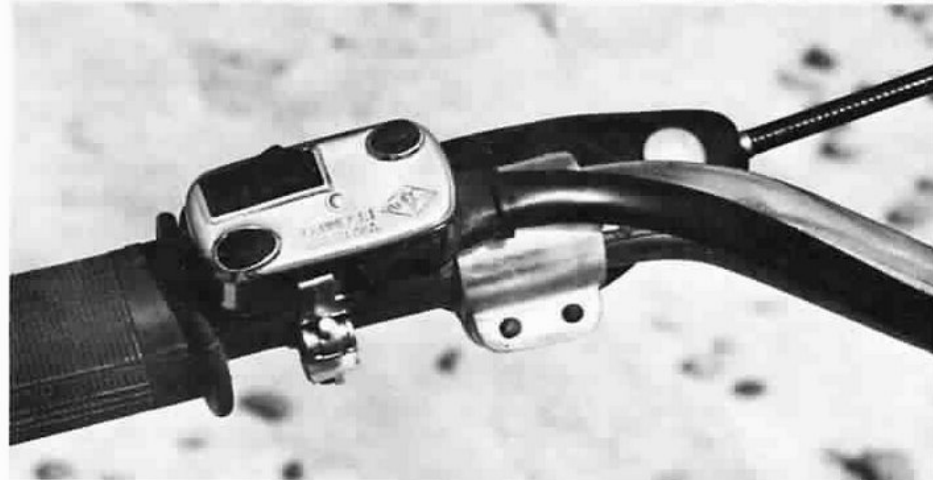
Brush cables come stock on brake pedal and shift lever.



Simple, sano chain guard reflects economical and effective design.



Uncluttered instrumentation tells rider all he should know.



This box controls otherwise uncontrollable electrics.

and work the SDR like a rumba dancer. The high bars allow you to keep the front light and use subtle blips of the throttle in conjunction with a weight shift to make minor corrections. Everything works so well that you will find yourself traveling in a graceful rhythm with the terrain. Listen closely and you may hear a string quartet accompany you, fa-la-la. A very responsive motorcycle.

OSSA SIX DAYS REPLICA 250

PRICE: Suggested retail, approx. \$1125

ENGINE TYPE: Single cylinder two-stroke

DISPLACEMENT: 244cc

BORE & STROKE: 72mm x 60mm

COMPRESSION RATIO: 12.3:1

CARBURETION: 32mm Amal

HP @ RPM: (claimed) 24 @ 8,000

CLUTCH: Multi disc, wet plate

PRIMARY DRIVE: Chain

FINAL DRIVE: 520 chain

GEAR RATIOS: 1. 3.60:1

2. 2.44:1

3. 1.82:1

4. 1.35:1

5. 1:1

AIR FILTRATION: Foam Element

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:

Motoplat pointless ignition w/lighting coil and battery

LUBRICATION: Pre-mix

RECOMMENDED FUEL: Premium

RECOMMENDED OIL: Full bore 50-weight

FUEL CAPACITY: 3.2 gallons

FRAME: Twin loop, tubular steel

SUSPENSION:

(Front) Betor hydraulic forks

(Rear) Swingarm w/Betor shocks

TIRES: Front: 3.15x21 Pirelli knobby

Rear: 4.50x18 Pirelli knobby

WHEELS: Front: 21-inch Akront

Rear: 18-inch Akront

DIMENSIONS:

Wheelbase: 54.5 inches

Ground Clearance: 10.5 inches

Seat Height: 31 inches

Weight: (claimed) 230 pounds

(actual) 241 pounds

On front wheel: 44.6 percent

On rear wheel: 55.4 percent

BRAKES:

Front: Single leading shoe, drum

Rear: Single leading shoe, drum

INSTRUMENTS:

Speedometer with reset odometer.

SILENCER: Yes, w/spark arrestor

PRIMARY KICK: No

PARTS PRICES

(Items subject to frequent replacement through wear or breakage)

Suggested Retail:

PISTON: \$16.74

RINGS: \$3.10

CLUTCH CABLE: \$2.50

THROTTLE CABLE: \$1.20

BRAKE SHOES: \$4.92

CYLINDER: \$111.54

CYLINDER LINER: \$43.38

SHIFT LEVER: \$9.60

REAR BRAKE PEDAL: \$11.44

FRONT BRAKE LEVER: \$5.36

CLUTCH LEVER: \$5.24

When you get in trouble the Ossa will try to buck you off if you don't pay close attention: if you are lazy you will fall down and your friends will laugh at you; if you are on top of things you will remember to keep your weight back and the throttle wide. As soon as the rear wheel comes down the SDR will snap back into shape. Your job is to hold on while the bike corrects.

The Ossa's slender profile allows you to clamber all over the thing like a kid on a jungle gym. The territory between the gas cap and taillight is

yours for the asking, and taking advantage of it will get you through tighter sections posthaste. The front tire is very sticky, so a weight-forward slalom through various obstacles can be done speedway-style. Let the rear slide and slither all over the place; it will always be delivering plenty of power. It's very hard to actually drop the bike.

When exiting a turn, do it like a motocrosser if you want a thrill. Say you come out of a tight turn in second gear and you have to make up time. Or you're just messing around.

Gas it hard and shift your weight over the rear tire and do a long power crossed-up wheelie until it's time for the next gear. Repeat as desired. This bike is a gas to ride.

The main thing to keep in mind is that the chassis will always want to turn even when you go straight. Every time the bike leaves the ground the rear will drift to one side or the other, but it will never get you in trouble. Trust it. Just keep the gas on—as you would with any other bike.

It's a good thing the SDR is throttle-oriented. The brakes are miserable. Ossa has redesigned the brake shoes 5mm wider for the SDR, but braking under the most ideal conditions is barely adequate. To stop the bike from a good clip calls for strangling the lever and standing on the pedal when casual pressure would have been sufficient on most other bikes. Get the linings wet or ride within 10 feet of someone with the sniffles and the brakes will go away completely.

Feel is poor, too. Ossa's rear cable makes for smooth non-chattery operation, but you don't really have much of an idea what the rear is doing. The front brake doesn't offer much feedback, either.

Enduro-bound bikes need lots of preparation. Ossa has done much of the work already: Resettable odometer/speedometer is web-mounted; headlights and other electrics are as unobtrusive as possible; brake pedal and shift lever have cable brush protectors; handlebar controls have Naugahyde boots; kickstand is long with a large pad at the bottom for your propping pleasure; the seat is held in place by a single plastic knurled knob and underneath is a good-size compartment and tool kit; pegs are great for mud (although in dire need of return springs); skid plate protects the cases and has been lightened considerably; rubber boots shield the rear brake cable from grit; waterproofing is very good even though we haven't the slightest idea why the plastic air cleaner box works as well as it does; a rear chainguard has rubber guides and is both strong and light; the Amal carb is mounted so main jets can be changed simply by rotation instead of removal; carburetor and air cleaner box are protected by a shroud which is secured by Velcro fasteners, the kind that sound like tearing pillow cases.

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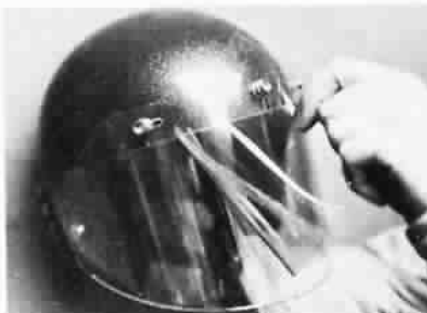
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Out of all the dual purpose 250s on the market, the SDR clearly offers the most performance and features; the Japanese "enduros" are silly by comparison. But for \$1,125 we would expect brakes that work at least 75 percent of the time. Remember that the shocks were useless at the git-go and the fork springs went away. We suspect Yankee will make good on any of these failures. Also, the fork seals leaked, some engine seals weeped and the gas cap oozed. And the electrics went all a-frazzle. The designers and executors of the Six Day Replica should not have rested on the seventh day.

BITS AND PIECES

The fiberglass developed some small cracks here and there. Meanwhile, the red paint flaked off there and here.

Gas tank holds three gallons, which is 60 miles' worth easy and maybe as much as 80.

Cable clips on the fork slider wipers need to be safety-wired so they will stay put.

The rubber license plate mount is most sanitary. Lookee here, Japan.

As with most other motorcycles, the shift lever boot fell off. Honda has the right idea by casting serrations into the lever itself.

Ossa has kept the weight to acceptable limits: 257 pounds with a full tank. Could be lighter, and they should start with the hubs.

Grips and levers are Ossa *especiales* and they are very good.

The SDR is one of DIRT BIKE's all-time attention- and compliment-getting scoots. Lots of oooh's and aaaah's.

Our test bike came with a genuine Filtron, but more attention should have been paid to sealing. We had to carefully grease the air cleaner to avoid glutting the motor with filth. Your SDR might not have a Filtron.

Next time you mosey by an Ossa, take a gander at the rear hub casting. Author!

Clutch takes lots of abuse and keeps right on ticking.

Transmission was slick and loose when we got the bike with 16 miles on it. 300 miles later it was appreciably stiffer. Care had to be taken when shifting quickly or we'd miss.

Akront rims are a light touch—but not the right touch for enduros. They collect mud.

Horn goes *whuuuuuu-wonk!* There were also three other switches on the

cluster but we never figured out which did what. The electrics went haywire the first time we tried to use them. Then all the snap connectors around the headlight flung apart like there was a spaghetti fight.

Three-position petcocks lead from each side of the tank. We finally learned the "off" is the middle and "on" is the "A."

SUMMARY

Our pal mentioned at the beginning of this story does have a prob-

lem. The Ossa SDR will be reliable, but not in the same category as J-models. If he gets the F-11, he will spend lots of time undoing many of the non-dirtworthy bozos on the machine. If he gets the SDR, he will spend a couple of months and lots of nickels and dimes straightening out the mess the factory left him. But the all-important basic package—handling, powerband, savvy preparation—of the SDR overshadows everything else. Ossa still builds the best dual-purpose bike to date.

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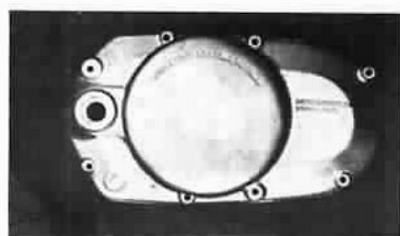
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FLORIDA AMA *Cont'd. from page 60*
cheeks off and traded slots with each other in the three motos. Squabble over the leavings, as it were. DeSoto? Poor John. Bike and body blues put him out of the picture again. By this time, his leg looked bad and felt worse. Wife Patty had to help him on with his leathers and boots. Yet he still rode. God knows why. The word had already trickled down from the honchos at Kawasaki — "bye bye John." He quit fraternizing with the Big K people and went to talk in dark corners with his first love, the CZ folks. They talked, he nodded—he talked, they nodded. Could it be?

Unless something drastic changed, it seemed that nothing could stop the pattern from happening at the big one—Daytona. But then, Honda was due there and they didn't come to watch.

RESULTS — OPEN CLASS FORT PIERCE

1. Pierre Karsmakers Yam
2. Brad Lackey Kaw
3. Jimmy Weinert Kaw
4. Bob Grossi Hus
5. Mike Hartwig Hus
6. Tim Hart Yam

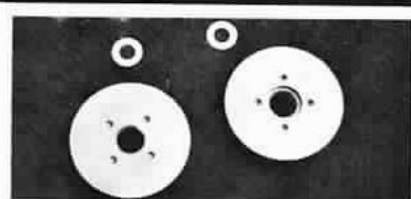
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Novices didn't seem to be as happy with the deep sand as the experts, as spills were more common and floundering was in prime evidence. John Dallaire seemed to keep upright more than anyone else and was rewarded with the overall for his efforts. Other than Stacy, Lyons and Huffman, the rest of the pack played Keystone Kops by running into and over each other. Anybody who didn't crash, placed in the top five—simple as that.

RESULTS — 250 NOVICE FORT PIERCE

1. John Dallaire Mai
2. Frank Stacy CZ
3. Dwayne Lyons Mai
4. Ron Huffman CZ
5. John Franklin Mai
6. Bruce Dengler Yam
7. Joel Nicholson Suz
8. Dan Farley Suz
9. Fred Little Mai

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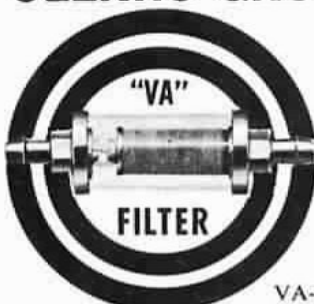
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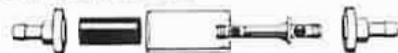
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ning races at Daytona—road races. And the excitement generated would have made a great tranquilizer. Now I'm sure it must be a great deal of fun to scrunch under a little piece of plastic fairing and run around at 150 mph, but it sure ain't much fun to watch. There were enough yawns displayed to run a medium sized windmill. But all the ballyhoo in the papers jabbered endlessly about the leather lads on their road racers, while the crowds stayed away in droves. "Oh yes," the announcer on the TV would say, "they're also going to have a motor-cross race on Saturday, folks. Try to catch it, if ya can."

But on Saturday, when they had the motocross races, people flocked to the stands. An estimated 50,000 people jammed the stands and many more hung over the infield fences.

AMA officials turned to each other and grunted, "Sheet, the road race is tomorrow. What're all these people doing here?"

The people who owned the Speedway were ecstatic. Money flowed through the turnstiles like unto a babbling brook. Not the 100,000 people that attend one of the stock car races, true, but it didn't cost them much more than a good drunk to put on the MX races. That's a lot of profit—easy profit—coming in the gates, brother. When the four-wheelers come to town, they have to spend money to attract people to the speedway. Big ads in the paper—hustle disc jockeys—billboards—discount tickets to the bars and restaurants—and that all costs money. By comparison, it's pure child's play to put on an MX race. Let the riders and the AMA do all the work, pop a few bucks (by comparison) for prize money, and let the good times roll. Whooooooooee!

An area directly in front of the grandstands was given to Gary Bailey, to lay out a motocross track therein. Gary bristled. Not enough room, he said. Wrong, said the people; they gotta see, so do it here.

Gary did.

So Gary (the professor of motocross) took that small wedge of flat, uninteresting earth, and laid out a spectator course. Not one that the riders liked, but one that guaranteed ooohs and ahhhhs from the witnesses in the stands. It was dangerous—yes—but then it was only dangerous if you wanted to do good. The first

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turn headed for the spectators, then abruptly snapped in to the left. Overcook it, and you were through the haybales and on the concrete banking of the speedway itself.

A machine gouged holes out of the ground—these were the downhills—and piled up mounds of sandy clay for the jumps. Ah yes, the jumps. Brutal things that lofted a rider straight up into the air at bad, bad angles. Whuuump! No smoothness, just controlled lurching. A drag race from rut to rut, with a turn or two to add flavor.

Many riders bitched. But when they were asked how they would lay out the course, they just went, uh, uh, uh, and walked away. What, indeed, do you do with this kind of real estate?

The day before the event, officials asked Gary to make a few changes in the track. Gary obliged and went out with hammer and stakes in hand to make the requested changes. As he drove the fifth stake into the ground, the sledgehammer slipped and Gary drove the hammer head into his hand. His knuckle was between the stake and the blow. Color drained from his face and he nearly collapsed to the ground. A glance at the hand demanded a trip to the emergency room at the local hospital. Gary passed out in the car on the way over. Yet, he raced the next day. With no gloves, as usual.

Race day!

Everyone was there. Honda had their usual allotment of giant vans filled with bikes and mechanics; Kawasaki had every bike extracting enough horsepower to go for a land speed record (with the proper gearing, of course). Suzuki had a token showing with Thorwaldson. Yamaha had Karsmakers. And enough back-up talent to do the job if he had trouble. Chances are he would have no trouble, as there was no water to be seen on this course.

Yamaha wanted to win here in the biggest way. All of their road racer types had been cleaning house all week in the snore events, but they were smart enough to realize the importance of motocross. For every young lad who wants to buy a Yammie road racer, there are a thousand who want to buy a YZ, or its nearest equivalent. Their job was to nurture that desire, and keep the faith. They were more than a bit nervous—hell, this course looked like a horsepower

thing, and Kawasaki had brought the whole stable with them.

Before the start of the race, chaos reigned. AMA officials, remote from the track up in the press box, jabbered one incoherent set of instructions after another. One man stood down on the field with a set of earphones and made sense of the whole scene: John "Light Brown" Lancione.

As you may, or may not, have gathered, we like John and his attitude. Screw the rules; let's do what's right. John has enemies, because they cannot manipulate him. He doesn't do this thankless job for the bucks, but for his love of the sport. His living comes from the dirt accessory business that he runs out of the great

state of Texas: Universal Accessories (purveyors of fork seals and foot pegs 'n' stuff). It costs him money out of his own pocket to be the AMA motocross referee, but he does it with no strings attached.

Stand next to John and listen to the crap coming from up in the executive box, located high in the stands, away from all the (you should excuse the expression) dirt:

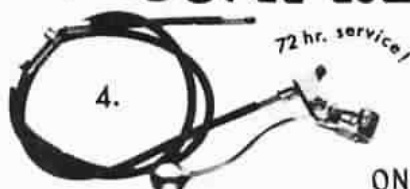
"Hey, Light Brown! Was that a good start? Looked to me like they jumped the gun..." slurs an official. "Why don't you restart the race, huh?" "Goddammit," yells Light Brown, "it was OK, it was OK. Just relax and have another drink and leave the race to the peons. OK?"

"Sheeet. Smart ass," goes the crackling set of earphones.

Finally, race time draws near. People in the stands are going absolutely berserk over practice alone, especially when Gary Bailey does a few of his patented wheelies down the front straight. They have to be seen to be believed; the bike is near vertical and Gary cocks the front wheel off to one side and gases it hard enough to sling up a huge, huge rooster tail. Balance that would make a tightrope walker weep with envy. Look at Gary's hand and you'll have to restrain a wince—it's ugly looking and blue/black.

Many riders crashed during practice, as the jumps developed huge

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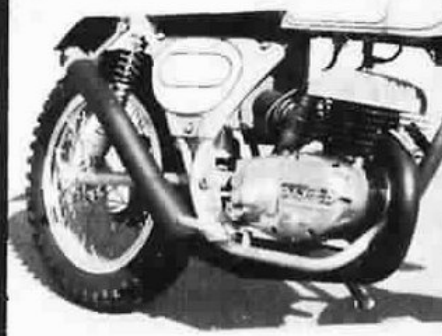
Several riders looked especially fast: DeSoto seemed like the John of old, Weinert slammed the bike through turns like he was already racing, Pierre was clean and crisp in his movements, Hart was flashy and confident. All of the Honda riders displayed brutally fast machines and bolted from one turn to the next. No doubt about it, they brought as many ponies as anyone else—maybe more.

Much money was on the line, and everyone wanted their piece of it. But first the stage had to be set.

Some weeding out had to be done, as everybody and their mother had entered the 250 class. That meant qualifying races. And qualifying races meant that the top 25 novices (point-wise) from the Florida series were automatically set to ride the motos — the balance of the herd would fight for the remaining 15 or so spots. And, like we said earlier, they would be trying to win these spots against some hard, hard experts. Big names like Grossi, Weinert, Jones, Thorwaldson, Lamppu, Rapp and Gary Bailey all elected to ride the 250 class. And they were not going to be denied a race.



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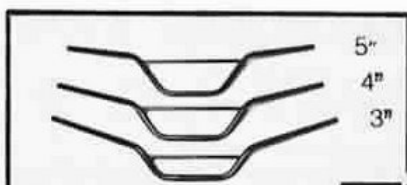
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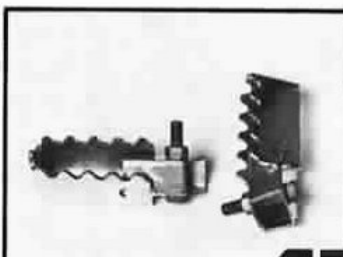
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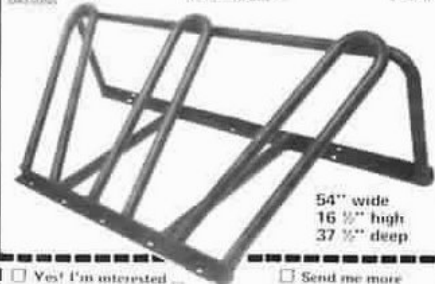
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The qualifiers were carnage. All of the riders knew the ride would be a short 15-minute thing, so the emphasis was put on the first turn. But when 50 riders all want the first turn at the same time, and there is only room in that turn for five or six of them, something must happen. And did it.

Bikes and bodies pummeled hay-bales, and more than one rider skidded down the banking of the speedway, with his bike doing big flip-flops. With 50,000 people looking, many of the novices suddenly got a big case of the "I-ain't-gonna-shut-off-for-nuthin'" syndrome. At least a dozen riders fell at the start of each qualifier, and a number of lesser pile-ups happened on the second and third turns. One rider in the second moto did a heart-stopping number when his bike smashed into the hay-bales on the first turn, and he flew through the air a good 20 feet, while his bike did a back flip to a handstand with a two and a half gainer thrown in. The moment bike and body stopped tumbling, he scrambled for his machine and fired it up. The crowd roared its approval of his

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courage . . . "Goddamn Willard. Didja see that? He got right back up and is ridin' again. Hooeee!"

During Gary Bailey's qualifying moto, the crowd went absolutely Twinkie-brained with excitement as Gary pulled a come-from-behind, last lap win. And he passed the leader right directly in front of the grandstands, at that. Little bit of show biz, Gary? Bailey was happy with the win, but not so happy with his hand. It looked gruesome, and he was having difficulty holding on.

Furor struck in the third qualifier, when Jones and Lamppu both jumped the feeble starting gate before it fell. Officials penalized them a lap and a howl of protest lit up the Honda camp. Gary claims that something gave way in his clutch and he couldn't hold the bike back. Lamppu had the courtesy not to attempt that kind of weak story on anyone. The referees believed that the only thing that gave way on Gary's clutch was his hand, when he let the lever go. Oh well, boys will be boys.

The two (Jones and Lamppu) went on to ride hard, but even though Jones crossed the line first,

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the penalty lap put him out of contention for qualifying. Same with Peter Lamppu—good finish, but no qualify.

Crowd mood was ugly and people were yelling at each other. Why in the hell were there no consolation races, they demanded of the officials in the ivory tower? Light Brown had been wanting to have consolation races all during the series, but could not get the promoters to agree on the point.

So Light Brown acted like Light Brown acts at times. He instituted a consolation race on the spot. There was no precedent—he just flat did it. John told us later (over pizza and beer) that people came to Daytona to see the big names race, and by God, they were not going to go home disappointed. We asked him if he would have had a consolation race if "no names" had jumped the gate, instead of "big names." He thought long and hard, then said, "I think so, Rick. At least I like to think I would have. But I honestly don't know. The situation hit me and I responded to it the only way that seemed fair and right at the moment. Why did

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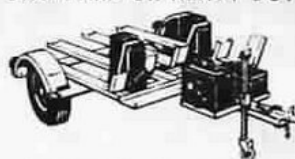
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you ask me that anyway? Give me back my beer."

In the consolation, both Jones and Lamppu easily qualified, proving something, I think.

Two heats were finally run after all the smoke had settled. Weinert won the first and Grossi the second, with Grossi getting the overall. Bailey took third overall, after leading much of the racing. But Gary smacked a steel post with his hand and got off hard. The fact that he continued at all is a testimony to the man's attitude. Weinert pulled the pass of the century in the final moto, as he passed Thorwaldson over a jump while doing a handstand. He accomplished this feat by taking the jump at least 10 mph faster than anyone had all day. Jimmy needed to pass Rich to lock up second place, so he just did it. When asked about it later, Jimmy replied in true fashion, "He should have moved over and let me by and saved me the effort. I'm Jimmy Weinert and he's just Rich Thorwaldson. Was there ever any doubt in anyone's mind?"

RESULTS — 250 CLASS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Bob Grossi, Santa Cruz, Calif.	Hus
2 Jimmy Weinert, Middletown, N.Y.	Kaw
3 Gary Bailey, Torrance, Calif.	Bul
4 John Franklin, Madera, Calif.	Mai
5 DeWayne Jones, Hacienda Heights, Calif.	Hon
6 Gary Ingham, Altoona, Pa.	Mai
7 Rich Thorwaldson, Cerritos, Calif.	Suz
8 Steve Stackable, Austin, Texas	CZ
9 Greg Thornton, Dalton, Ga.	Bul
10 David Clemence, Johnston, R.I.	Bul
11 Chris Douthitt, Ravenna, Ohio	CZ
12 Bruce Dengler, Marlton, N.J.	Yam
13 Wayne Welzien, Carpentersville, Ill.	CZ
14 Jerry Williams, Jacksonville, Fla.	Hus
15 Dan Farley, Orlando, Fla.	Suz
16 Scott Jordan, W. Monroe, La.	Bul
17 Greg McGovern, Grand Rapids, Mich.	Suz
18 Ricky Jordan, Little Rock, Ark.	CZ
19 Russell McFarland, Memphis, Tenn.	Mai
20 Tom Rapp, Buena Park, Calif.	Bul
21 Stewart Anderson, Mill Brook, N.Y.	Bul
22 Gary Jones, Hacienda Heights, Calif.	Hon
23 Peter Lamppu, Sherman Oaks, Calif.	Kaw
24 John Joyner, Plant City, Fla.	Suz
25 R. G. Martindale, Murfreesboro, Tenn.	Mai
26 Jeff Wecker, Davison, Mich.	CZ
27 Don Anderson, Miami, Fla.	Hus
28 John Borders, Valdosta, Ga.	Bul
29 Ken Strong, Daytona Beach, Fla.	Yam
30 Neil McCormack, Jacksonville, Fla.	CZ

Less crashing was done in the open class—much less. John DeSoto, disregarding his physical condition, charged to a huge lead in the first moto. There were a lot of people watching, and John is a proud man. They're all saying that John is washed up. Through. Not so. He kept his bad leg on the footpeg and rode like the John of old. Until his bike started to sour, that is. Finally, Karsmakers motored by the ailing Kawasaki, and a few laps later the engine stuck. John's moment of glory was not to be had. He tried to borrow a CZ ride for the second moto,

as the Kawasaki people would not let him have the spare engine. But the rules say that you cannot change mounts, and that was that for De-Soto. He will be back on CZ as you read this.

Not much doubt existed about Karsmakers' win. He merely rode faster and harder than everyone else. In the last moto, Brad tried to make up for his so-so first moto ride, and took an early lead and held it. Pierre dogged Brad for most of the moto, but made no real effort to pass. "Why bother," he said later. "All I had to do was take a second to win. It was not important to me to pass Lackey. I have proved I can do that, if I want to." Of special interest was Mike Runyard. His second and third finishes gave him a second overall and he looked impressive as he horsed his overweight CZ around the course. At 240 pounds, the machine was no feather. (Tripes' bike was 251 pounds at weigh-in, and Thor's Suzook was 205. He had to add weight to make the 209 limit.)

RESULTS — OPEN CLASS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP DAYTONA

1	Pierre Karsmakers, Buena Park, Calif.	Yam
2	Mike Runyard, West Covina, Calif.	CZ
3	Brad Lackey, Pinole, Calif.	Kaw
4	Mike Hartwig, Hadley, Mich.	Hus
5	Wyman Priddy, Ft. Worth, Texas	CZ
6	Gary Semics, Lisbon, Ohio	Hus
7	John Borg, Carlton, Mich.	Mai
8	Tony Distefano, Bristol, Pa.	CZ
9	Don Smith, Jacksonville, Fla.	CZ
10	Jody Foust, Ft. Worth, Texas	Hus
11	David Stuart, Miami, Fla.	Mai
12	Robert Harris, Windson, N.Y.	Bul
13	Joe Collins, E. Bridgewater, Mass.	CZ
14	Wayne Clunky, Silver Spring, Md.	CZ
15	Tom Summers, Fern Creek, Ky.	Yam
16	Tony Wynn, Sherwood, Ark.	CZ
17	Shan Moore, Sapulpa, Okla.	CZ
18	Tom McGill, Rochester, N.Y.	AJS
19	Billy Clements, Pasadena, Calif.	Hus
20	Dave Longcor, Vallejo, Calif.	CZ
21	Barry Higgins, Chamblee, Ga.	CZ
22	Ron Stockman, San Pablo, Calif.	CZ
23	Mark Blackwell, Mission Viejo, Calif.	Hus
24	Marty Tripes, Santee, Calif.	CZ
25	David Doerschuk, Columbus, Ohio	CZ
26	George Simmons, Milldale, Conn.	CZ
27	James Snow, Van Nuys, Calif.	Mai
28	Ron Kinyon, Highland, Mich.	CZ
29	William Moses, Hialeah, Fla.	Mai
30	Ron Turner, Jacksonville, Fla.	Mon

They all sat around later, and split up the money. Not a bad payday for the winners. Karsmakers got \$1,075 and a license to practice psychiatry, and Jimmy Weinert got a decent \$875 for his second place in the 250 class. Sounds good.

Until you realize that the very next day, Jarno Saarinen got \$15,050 for pushing a road racer around for two hours.

Now I'm sure that Jarno is a very brave man; but \$14,000 braver than Pierre Karsmakers? I think not. Perhaps next year, we ought to demand equal bucks for equal crowd draw. Or take our business elsewhere.

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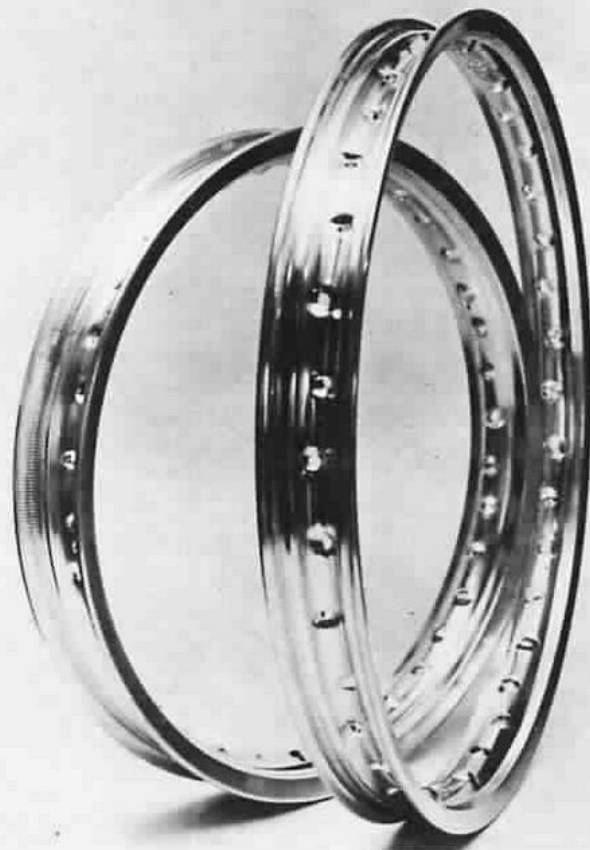
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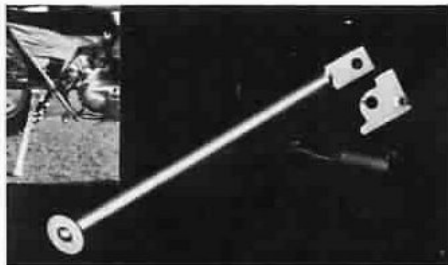
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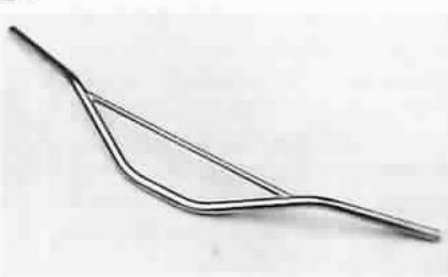
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ALLOY
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92806.**

Kickstarter is tucked in under the pipe and swings in a short, shin-biting snap. Fortunately, the bike is an easy starter. When cold, it took two kicks at most to get the metal moving up and down and round and round. When warm, it took one good kick, or many feeble ones.

In years past, if the rider spilled a Husky and it didn't restart on the first kick, he would just push it back to the pits, because he knew it just would not start again. Ever.

Not with our test bike. We laid it down a few times, and the bike fired easily with just a hint of blubbering. Carburetion is much improved.

Which is a good thing, because the Bing carb takes an act of God to get at for a simple look at the jets. The air cleaner must be removed, then the exhaust pipe bolts removed (plus a bracket or two), then get a friend to pull back on the pipe while the carb is rotated and the float bowl detached. Not really the simplest of operations.

Put aside at least a weekend if the bike is to be rejected. And another weekend cursing the designer of the setup.

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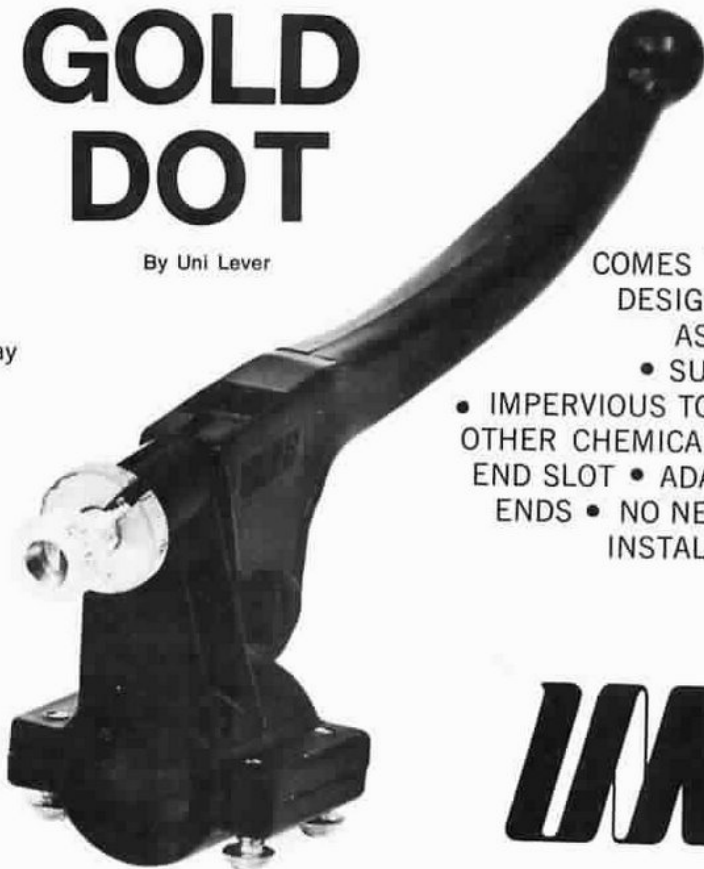
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By Uni Lever

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Send for free retail catalog.
Dealer Inquiries Invited.



UNI FILTER INC., 13522 NEWHOPE ST., GARDEN GROVE, CALIFORNIA 92643

While you're looking at the air cleaner, take a last peek and then throw it away. Our bike came with one of the paper filters that many manufacturers lamely try to defend. The canister around that filter is inadequate and allows premature dirtying of whatever filter you choose to run. If water is encountered, God help you. Several plastic shrouds are on the market and offer a partial cure for something the factory should take care of. Hodaka can offer the rider a canister like that and get away with

it, because they have an inexpensive machine. Husky is one of the most expensive bikes on the market and they should be red-faced for leaving such a piece of hardware on the bike.

Two shortcomings in the basic Husky design have proven to be weak links in an otherwise strong design: The countershaft sprocket mounting and the magneto flywheel. Both are on a tapered shaft and both are plagued with slippage. Long-time Husky riders learn to over-torque the hold-down nuts and

apply Loctite. First-time Husky owners generally learn the painful way—after the countershaft sprocket spins and galls the taper. Or the mag backs off and blows a hole in the cover. Both should have a key, or better yet, come on a splined shaft. This has been a serious problem with Huskys for some time now, and like their seal problem, has been largely ignored. The manual tells the owner to tighten the nuts several times during the first hours of operation, but this is often not sufficient to keep things intact.

Controls are top-quality Magura hardware, and feature the new double-bend levers. This is one feature that just might catch on throughout the industry, as it increases leverage and is comfortable to the hand.

Much mechanical clatter is produced from the engine and gearbox. Too much. Add an offensive exhaust note to the Husky (in spite of a standard Skyway silencer), and the total package is one that bothers the ears. Husky ought to consider rubber spacers between the fins to help cut down on the ringing.

Our gas cap leaked enough to be considered bothersome and some oil

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Daytona Bch., Fla.
Dealer inquiries welcome

found its way out of the engine to lie in a puddle on the back half of the cases. We don't know how it got out, despite much peering, poking and prodding.

Rubber is first-rate Trelleborg and the wheels are Akront alloy.

Husky wheels don't break easily, and this adds much to the legend of cross-country reliability. In fact, we had very little spoke loosening in over a month of hard riding.

Welds on the frame looked like they were squeezed out of a rusty tube of toothpaste, but the bike looked good in spite of that. Aircraft nuts abounded and nothing, absolutely nothing, fell off the Husky during the entire test period.

Vibration was about average for a 250 and motor mount bolts stayed tight.

Kickstand was tucked out of the way and the heavy spring kept it from flopping around.

Seat is narrow, but decently padded, especially at the rear where the thighs make contact while in the semi-standing position so necessary in high-speed charging.

Front fender is too short and the mud flap allows debris to fling up and pepper the rider in the face. Both fenders are aluminum and well mounted, but we suspect that plastic fenders would save a few pounds as well as last longer.

A reasonable selection of special tools comes standard with the bike—enough to do most field jobs.

SUMMATION

Thirteen hundred bucks (plus tax and fofooraw) is a lot to pay for a 250 machine, and discounts are far and few between.

And the price seems even more outrageous when you look at some of the shortcomings and flaws. Still, the Husky can be raced in near out-of-the-crate condition, and also raced successfully.

If the rider takes the time to "seat" the countershaft sprocket and the mag flywheel, he should finish every race that he enters—with no more than minimal maintenance.

CHROME PLATING

For Information and Prices write
Dept. C Gulf Plating Co., 408
S. Royal St., Mobile, Ala. 36603
Phone 205-438-4418

They are strong bikes and other than the occasional transmission hassle, have unbreakable powerplants.

One thing about the Husky—after living with the bike for some time, every other bike felt strange. Huskys are like that. Once the rider adapts, he likes the bike.

And at resale time, nobody has a bigger grin than the Husky rider. They have the highest resale value of any dirt bike. Come to think of it, that reason alone tends to make the initial price almost bearable.

Almost.



EXPERTS

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of Pomona

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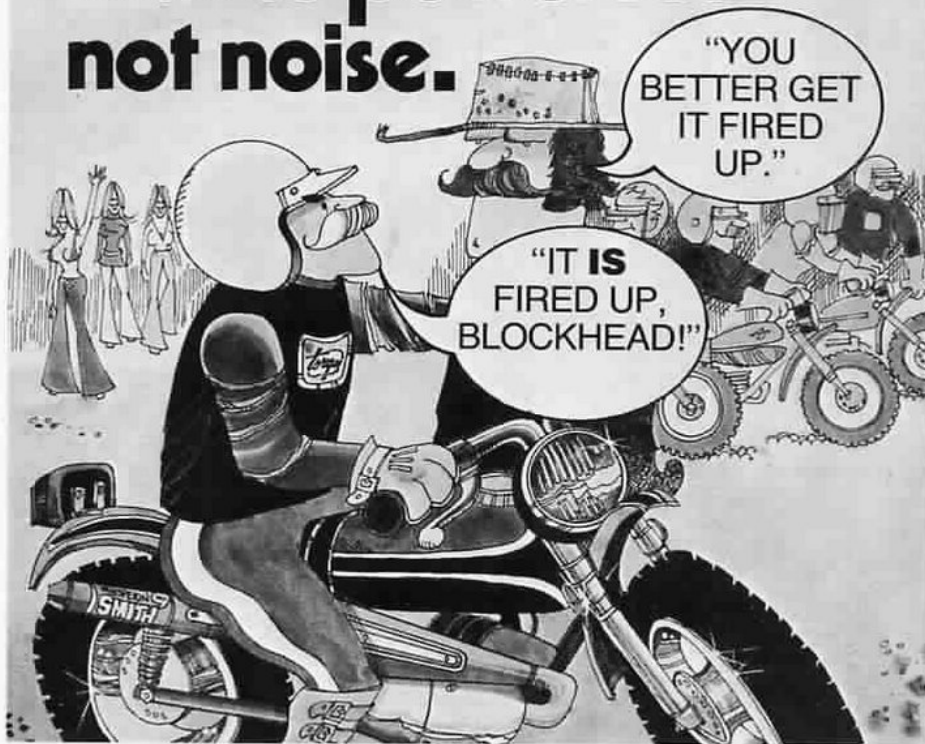
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So just who was it that said you can't have your cake and eat it, too? Not Whisperin' Smith.

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