

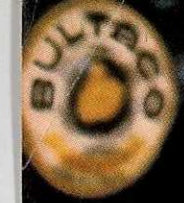
# Cycle

3-80

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Mercurio 200

# Cycle Magazine

December 1967 Volume XVIII Number 12

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**This Month's Cover:** We sent photographer Dan Rubin out to Long Island, New York, to find a romantic Spanish setting suitable to the photogenic Ossas and he wound up at a picturesque Russian Orthodox church—which was a little unorthodox, but all right with us. The Ossas are all right, too (see road test on page 27). We don't know about the girl, except that she's wearing a pair of fancy custom-fitted leathers from The Rack of New York City, and that seems quite all right too.



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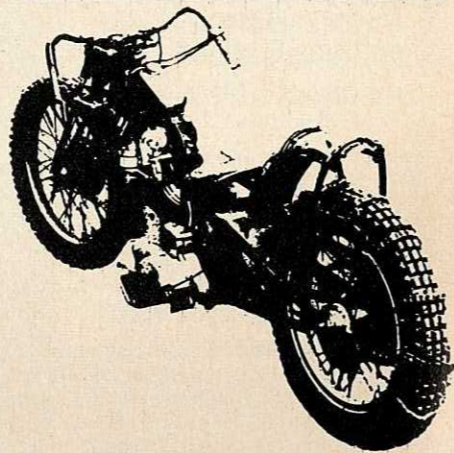
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CYCLE

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# SPEAKING OUT

• It is that time again. As this is written, the AMA's Competition Committee meeting is just around the corner, and although these annual meetings usually become mired in piffling detail, this one should produce some fireworks. At this meeting, opponents of the proposed 350cc limit for Formula-C racing will have a last chance to bring about a change. Unless something is done now, 1968 will be the end of the 500cc ohv/750cc side-valve displacement formula. In 1969 we will have a straight 350cc displacement limit for both road and oval-track racing.

Proponents of the 350cc limit tell me it would be a Good Thing. They say that the present crop of 250s are just about as fast as the big stuff, and that fully-developed 350s would be even faster than the 500s/750s now being used. Moreover, they say, the 350-limit would induce more of the manufacturers to get into racing.

I think they're wrong. There is no doubt that the 350s would be fast—but would they *look* fast. Racing is, above all, a spectacle; we should keep it as spectacular as is consistent with a modicum of safety.

The claim that a 350cc limit would bring more manufacturers into racing is silly. Bring *who* into racing? There is no manufacturer of consequence not already represented; excepting Honda, and even Honda was involved at the 1967 Daytona road race. Honda's involvement would probably have continued but for the showing made by their 450s, which were astonishingly reliable but somewhat short of sheer speed.

Of course, it can be argued that the 350cc-limit would allow some manufacturers now only involved in lightweight racing to make the *Big Time*. You could argue that if you regarded the AMA's habit of treating the lightweights like poor country cousins as the natural order of things, it might be better to give the 250s a better spot on the racing program. Interest in the lightweights is high enough to justify more attention on the part of organizers.

In any case, a lot of those manufacturers who do not now have big bikes are going to be marketing 500s soon. Suzuki we already know about. Kawasaki has a 500cc two-stroke twin well along the way right now. It is to be expected that a company as aggressive as Yamaha will also have plans for bigger motorcycles.

A couple of years ago, there was a lot of interest in a 750cc displacement limit, and the Competition Committee indicated that things might go that way. They later changed their minds, for there was a fear that this might not be safe. The Competition Committee was probably

right. On many tracks, the 750s would be no more dangerous than our current ohv 500s; only more spectacular. But at Daytona, particularly, the 750s would be banging around at probably 170-180 mph and any major mistake at that speed has lethal consequences.

Considering the disadvantages of both the 750 and 350 displacement limits, it may be that we should simply stick with what we have. Racing right now is very close, and certainly pleasing to the crowds—which grow larger each year. A change in displacement limits would work an economic hardship on everyone in racing—especially the privateers—without offering any visible benefit.

This is not to say the Competition Committee should sit around twiddling its collective thumbs, thinking that God is in His heaven and all is right with the world. There are some changes needed if the privateers, who make up those large starting fields that lend so much excitement to racing, are to remain active. Most of the privateers expect to be beaten most of the time; but they do not like to feel that they have no chance at all. And that is precisely how many are beginning to feel.

That feeling came to many just this last season, which saw the factories deeply involved, and development pushed ahead at a fantastic rate. Look at it from the standpoint of the privateers. Yamaha hit them with last year's GP bikes—fitted with rather special engines. The privateer could hope to duplicate those engines, by buying 5-port cylinders, but the chassis are definitely not available. Especially not the 4-shoe front brakes, which are so vastly superior to the standard TD-1 brake (now unequal to the task at the speeds possible with the new 5-port engine). Curiously, the Yamaha team was beaten by Yamaha-mounted privateers on a couple of occasions this season but that was a matter of luck and not likely to happen much in the future.

Harley-Davidson probably *tries* to treat its faithful well, but harsh reality is that a privateer running H-D's KR is always going to be at least a jump behind. There have been *three* different frames this season for the KR, and what the H-D team will field at Daytona next spring is anyone's guess. Whatever it is will not be available in sufficient quality, soon enough, to be of any help to the private entrants.

Honda will not approve anything but Honda-manufactured equipment and, as there is none available, anyone trying to race a Honda is swimming against the tide. The official attitude at Honda is that they assume legal liability for any equipment they offer approval and they are not going to get involved.

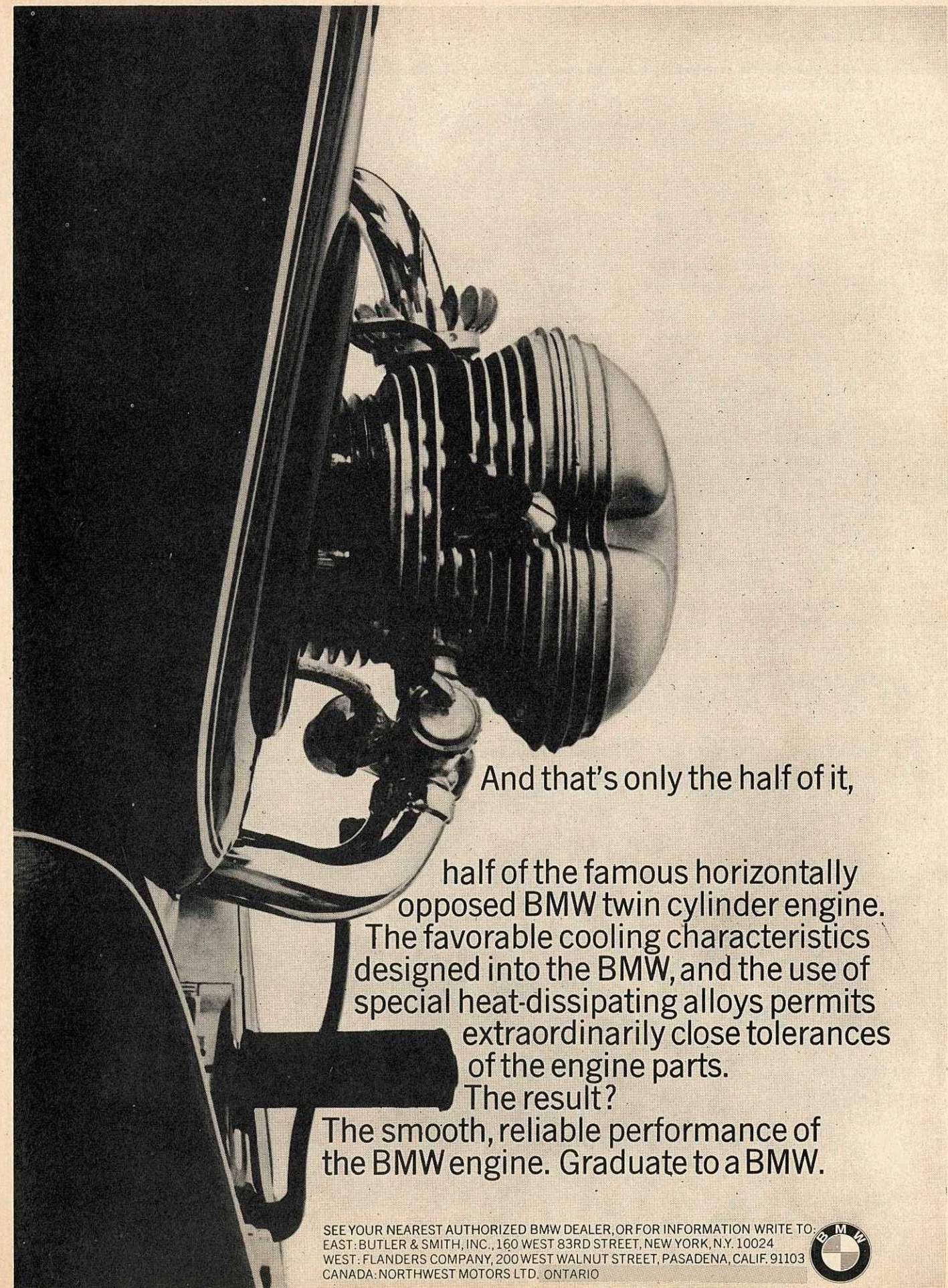
Triumph is the worst offender. This year, at Daytona, the Triumphs had special frames and special forks (shortened, and with special internal damping units). Neither the frames nor the forks are available to anyone, and Triumph's Rod Coates (an AMA Technical Inspector) is the first to land hard on anyone who tries to slip through with a Triumph on which frame or fork modifications have been made. And I do not mean parts that have been dangerously lightened; I mean *modified* in any manner not specifically permitted by the rules. I don't think Coates does this just to be a Bad Guy. He is a stickler for rules and tries to enforce them. He is also employed by Triumph, and is not really in a position to tell the people at the factory, in England, that the racing equipment they sent over is not legal and cannot be allowed to run.

Unless we want to go back to racing showroom stockers, which would be a retrograde step, something should be done to give the privateers a chance to toss in a little special equipment of their own. Some of the equipment available has been appearing, piecemeal, as the factories decide it is needed. Why not let everyone have a shot at it right now?

Perhaps what is needed is a blanket rule based on suitability and availability. If it is suitable, and available, it should be placed on an approved list. I can think of no good reason why Ceriani forks should not be approved equipment; and Oldani and Fontana brakes, more widely used, would make racing better and safer. Those lovely Rickman Metisse frames are unquestionably safe, and are now being made available in this country at a decent price. Why not let the guy racing a Triumph use the Rickman frame for road racing? It would make his life easier, and give him a better shot at the factory-prepared Triumphs. The Fontana brake would do wonders for any race-kit 450 Honda.


Unfortunately, all of this must follow an increased willingness on the part of the AMA's inspectors to check bikes for safety. A poor installation job could keep the best of brakes from working. At present, they only check for safety-wire on oil drain plugs—and very occasionally turn back an outrageously scruffy motorcycle. I know a couple of the AMA officials who would very much like to have more latitude in rejecting badly-prepared motorcycles. We should give them the latitude, and the responsibility, and let the privateer use some of that good equipment that is so tantalizingly available, yet currently placed beyond reach by rules written before you could buy anything more exotic than custom handlebars.

—Gordon Jennings



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# MAIL.....

## CB SUPER DISSENTION

Regarding your article in the September issue of CYCLE, about the CB 450 Super Sport:

My buddy and I both own one of these awkward (as you insinuate) pigs. I have had 23846.6 perfect miles on my ugly duckling. And my buddy has 17531.3 on his. We've both been to Seattle, Washington, from Bakersfield, California, twice, and we crept at an average of 75 to 85 mph all the way. I have never had any trouble with any Limey 650s yet. I've had it at the drags and took my class easily running against 500 Limey machines (Triumph and BSAs) My ET was 14.01 and the speed was 99.87 mph. (I only weigh 118 lbs.) It doesn't use oil or smoke or jerk or lunge the way you claim; the running condition of a machine depends partly on the driver's ability to drive the machine properly. It doesn't vibrate but very little. Before I got my ugly duckling I rode the Limey machines and the Honda is five times as smooth through all the gears. Before I got my wonderful machine, I had a CB 160 (which I modified considerably.) It had 305 valves (Honda) a racing clutch, 250cc Honda pistons and carbs and the

high performance racing cam. It would flat eat 250 and 305 Hondas alive, and had no trouble with Suzukis, Yamahas, Ducatis, or any machine not over 305cc. Take it as you wish, but I disregard your write up about the 450 Honda.

Terry Herrick & Doug Phillips  
Bakersfield, Calif.

I recently traded in my Honda 450 with 4600 miles for a BMW R-60 which was featured in your August issue. I was so dissatisfied with the 450 that in the last two weeks that I owned it, I wouldn't even ride it. I decided on a BMW from your writeup and on the experience of friends of mine who own BMWs. Although I am still in the process of breaking it in, I can honestly say that I have never been so pleased and satisfied with any bike or car as I am with the BMW.

I certainly had more than my share of troubles and frustrations with the 450. The most serious shortcoming was the carburetion. My dealer never could get it adjusted properly despite three tune-ups. He told me that it needed a special carburetor kit, which he could not obtain after being on order for six months. Also it leaked oil all over my pants legs which the dealer could also not correct.

Also it vibrated badly between 50 and 60 mph, so much so that I couldn't ride for more than a half hour without resting. It did smooth out over 60, but unless traveling on a throughway it is very seldom that one can ride over 60. The gap between first and second gear was also very aggravating, especially when riding in traffic. It required such high rpms to run even moderately well that it was never a pleasant machine to ride. As you state in your article, the 450 is a strange and contradictory beast indeed. I let two of my younger friends ride it, and they both thought it was the greatest. How can you figure it?

John T. Gorman  
Yarmouth, Maine

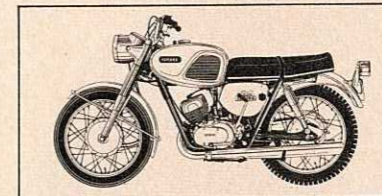
I couldn't help but write to you after reading the article on the Honda CB 450 Super Sports. I felt that your impressions as such might mislead many a prospective buyer of one of these machines, as from your article you seemed to be somewhat undecided yourself.

To begin with, I am the proud (and I must emphasize proud) owner of the above mentioned cycle. It is a 1966 model, with some ten thousand odd miles on it. Having owned four Hondas (two 90s, one 305 Touring Dream). I think I can speak with certainty when I say this is the finest Honda I have ridden. For a racing type setup, it has a very

# Carlsbad win makes it 4 wins out of 4 Nat'l Races for Yamaha.

What's that to you?

Do you think racing wins mean nothing to you because the machines are super-exotic? Think again. The YDS-5-type racers that swept every 250cc National Championship in 1967—Daytona (Gary Nixon), Laconia (Don Twigg), Indianapolis (Nixon), and Carlsbad (Ron Pierce)—are essentially the same as the YDS-5 street machine you'll find at your dealer's. In fact, about 95% of the engine parts are identical! • Do you think that racing wins are unimportant to you because only factory-sponsored super hotshoes can win? Think again. Ron Pierce, of Bakersfield, California was a private entry and an Amateur to boot.



True, he was the first Amateur ever to win a combined Amateur-Expert Class National Championship event, but he probably won't be the last. • Do you think racing wins prove nothing because different brands take turns winning the events? Think again. Not only did Yamaha take 1-2-3 at Carlsbad,

California September 24th—making it a clean sweep of every national championship 250cc road race in America this year—but Yamaha consistently wins the big, important races each year, year after year. Take Daytona for example: Yamaha took 8 of the first 10 in both 1965 and 1966, and this year copped 7 of the first 10. • Now, if you still think racing has no relationship to improving an already superb product you've got another think coming.

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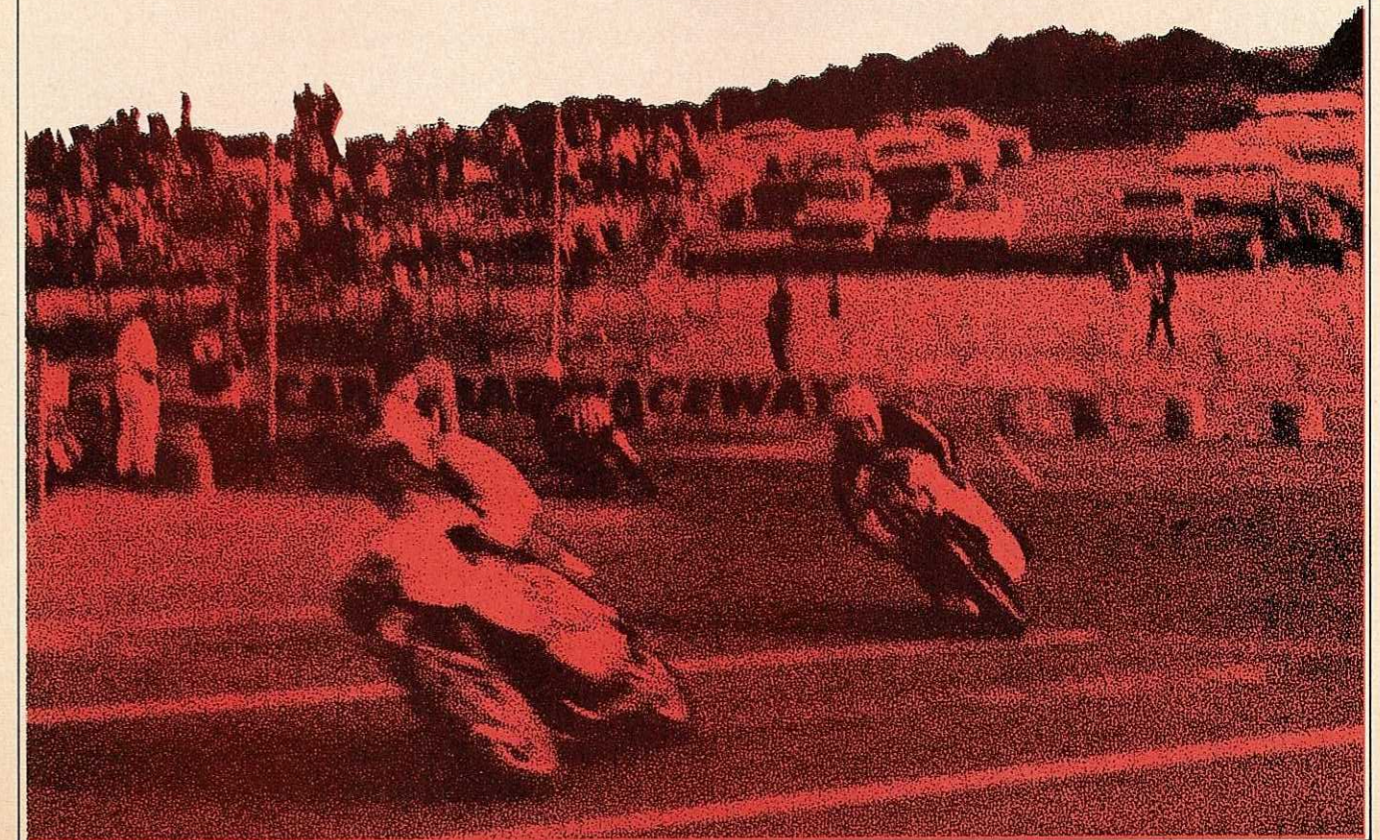
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MAIL Continued

fine suspension, at least where my setting is, and I thought my 305 had one of the best suspensions going. As for gasoline mileage, I am averaging 53-56 miles per gallon and I get that kind of gasoline mileage staying between sixty to sixty-five miles an hour. As for cruising speed, I find it best between sixty and seventy miles an hour. As far as lurching and leaping in the slow speeds, I find that around town I very seldom need to go any higher than third, as it is quite easy to cruise without lurching once you become use to the throttle response. If you have to cut down your speed the engine

braking itself is very efficient as you mentioned in your article.

As far as vibration goes, I don't find it distracting or annoying. As a matter of fact, I hadn't thought about it at all until I read your article.

Needless to say, each cycle will differ, and each rider's opinion will vary, but to my way of thinking, for the price, performance, dependability, economy, etc., within it's displacement, there is no bike on the road today that will touch it.

Honda advertisements stress "You meet the nicest people on a Honda" Well, in my case, I am not only happy,

but proud to be an owner of such a fabulous machine, and a member of the cycling fraternity.

H. W. Masley, Jr.

At the conclusion of your road test of the Honda 450 Super Sport (Sept. '67), you asked if the readers had any suggestions of "What to be done with this perplexing, indestructible, 430 lbs, 450cc lightweight motorcycle?"

I have the answer. Give them to the city of Long Beach to be used as mooring anchors for the Queen Mary—soon to be permanently harbored at Long Beach as a hotel-convention center.

Bob Brownell  
Pomona, Calif

ONE-UPMANSHIP

In your recent article about hillelimbs you appeared to be in apparent agreement with a common misconception regarding percent grades and degree slopes. Although 60% of 90° is 54", a 60% slope is only 31° since the percent slope is determined by the ratio of rise to horizontal distance, or in trig, the tangent of the angle— $\tan 31^\circ = .6$ . A 30° hill is a lot steeper than most people realize and it wouldn't surprise me if the hill in the article was no more than that. A 100%, or 45°, slope such as might be on a steeper hill, with a loose surface would be impossible to stand on at all. Otherwise fine article and issue.

Finally, I'd like to add that I think the impression you and other cycle magazine writers give readers about BMWs (I own one) as a sport machine is not wholly correct. My R69S does not bound about in corners, it is stable to the point where the heads ground—about 45° angle of bank and 1 "G" side loadings. The engine is strong enough to haul rider and machine along very respectably when kept reved up (which it does happily), and though the machine is heavy, it is very managable even for relatively small riders like myself (145 lbs). These virtues, combined with smoothness, reliability and ease of maintenance make it a machine suited to many more than just "long distance tourers."

Frederic M. Murray

AIR FILTERS

I wonder if you might explain why, in your July issue, you attacked the wire mesh air-cleaners on the BS competition dirt bikes, and yet, in the exciting GTR test, you made no mention of the same wire mesh type filter?

I am eagerly awaiting delivery of a GTR, and after a test ride, I am in complete agreement with your enthusiastic report. Still, I think you should have

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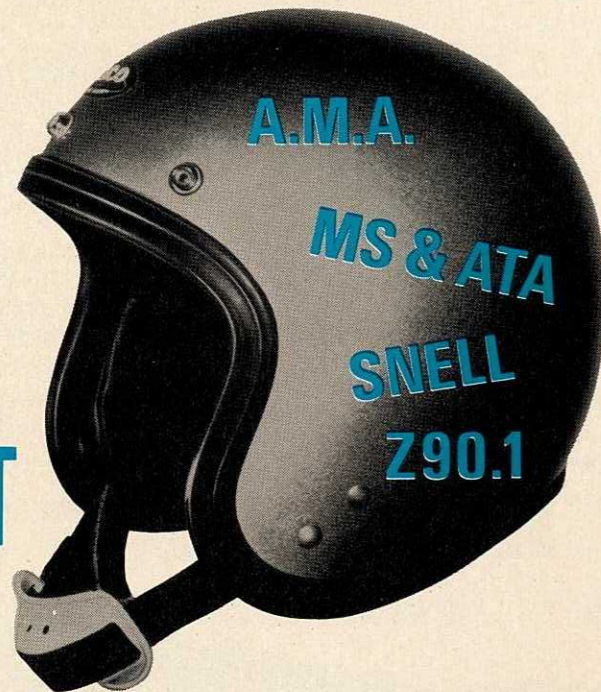
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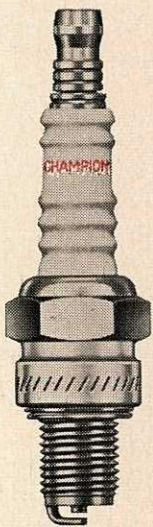
As of this writing (October, 1967), thirty states have passed mandatory helmet laws for cyclists. Buco has already been approved in such states as New York, Indiana, Tennessee, Michigan and Washington. Buco has pending, or anticipates, approval in every other state that may establish helmet standards—in all fifty, if that is the case.

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## MAIL Continued

taken exception to the "gravel strainer", since everyone knows that foolproof air filtration is worth much more than a few tenths of a second on quarter mile time. I plan to substitute "Filtron" for the mesh.

Thank you!

Jay Miller  
Victorville, Calif.

*You're right, you know! Good air filtration is essential to long-term reliability, and those wire-mesh strainers are inadequate in a dusty environment.—ed.*

## WRONG AGAIN

I enjoy your magazine very much and would like to see some articles on Southern California Desert riding in the future. In your article on the BMW R-60 (Aug. '67) you list the brake swept area as 56.4 sq. in. this is the brake lining area. Brake swept area is  $7.8 \times 3.14 \times 1.4 \times 2 = 68.57$ . This gives a specific brake loading of 8.97, much better than the 10.9 lb. per sq. in. you gave. Being a BMW owner I know they are not fast, but in the text of your article you gave the 0 to 60 mph time as 16 sec. and in your specification box as 7.8 sec. It was a very interesting article, and with these corrections, very accurate.

Bill Johnson  
Long Beach, Calif.

## HELP!

Please be so kind as to tell me where I can obtain more information regarding the Van Tech kit motorcycles mentioned in your issue of September 1967, and explain the procedure for contributions to your magazine.

R. C. Linden  
Winona, Minnesota

*For all you folks who have responded to this article, here is the address of Van Tech: Grant Industries, 3680 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, California. As far as editorial contributions are concerned, please see the paragraph on the top inside column of page 4. We welcome good, creative, interesting stories from readers and pay upon publication.—ed.*

I am a dyed in the wool motorcycle enthusiast with a problem. I am an avid spectator at road races and scrambles, but ever since the City of Peninsula banned the hill-climb at Seikel's Hill, I have not seen a good hill-climb.

Can you provide me with a list of all the major hill-climbs within a 300 mile radius of Cleveland, Ohio? Any help would be appreciated. Thank you. I enjoyed your September article on hill-climbing very much. Keep up the good work.

J. S. Young  
Pepper Pike, Ohio

*Sorry, Folks, we just don't have information on local Sportsman events. For AMA club events in your area, please contact the American Motorcycle Association, P. O. Box 1049, Columbus, Ohio.—ed.*

Recently I traveled from Milwaukee to Los Angeles to see the National TTs at Ascot. Although there appeared an article in the L. A. Times about the race, I failed to see any TV coverage.

If all motorcyclists were to write to their local TV stations to demand coverage of both local and national events, it would do much to encourage our sport and its image.

John McCormick  
Milwaukee, Wisc.

In most of Canada a helmet must be worn at all times while riding.

In Alberta no passenger under 16 may ride on a motorscooter or cycle.

If you own a motorcycle or scooter under the age of 16, a governor must be on the machine so you can not go any faster than 30 mph.

You see, you're not the only ones with problems.

Robin Fraser  
Edmonton, Alberta

## FAN MAIL

I would like to congratulate you on your layout. The photographs used in your magazine are not the usual run-of-the-mill pictures that one usually finds in motorcycling magazines. I particularly liked the one on page 70 of the August issue taken by Eberhard Luetheke.

It was with a certain amount of sympathy and understanding that I read David T. Hugo's article on his Velocette Thrupton. I am the owner of a 1965 Venon Sports—or rather it owns me.

There are a lot of people who think that a Velo is a hard machine to start. It is if you don't follow the drill; I can start mine at the first kick, second if she is temperamental. If she won't start on the second, I usually change the plug.

In his story, Hugo mentions that bits and pieces are liable to drop off. This is something one has to learn to live with. I had the misfortune while traveling from Manchester to Liverpool via the East-Lancashire road to lose my kick-start pedal while doing 70 miles an hour; luckily it lodged itself between the silencer (muffler?) and I was able to fix it back on by borrowing a bolt from another part of the bike. The time to start getting worried is when the engine starts departing from the frame. I check my bike every so often to see what is missing, and have only had to replace one or two nuts and bolts.

Harold E. Owens  
Lancashire, England

CYCLE

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All-Traction has the muscle to take highway seams and potholes. And enough agility to make you feel sorry for all the people snarled in that tie-up, back there.

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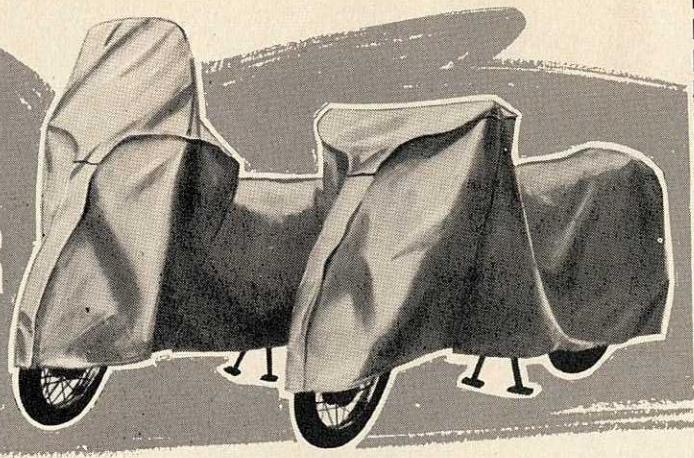




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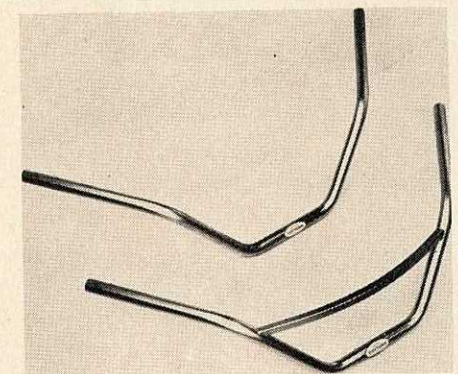
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### MAIL Continued

After the September issue I felt that I must write to tell you what I think of your fine magazine. I have been a fan of Mr Jennings since his ROAD AND TRACK days 15 years ago. When I saw his name connected with CYCLE WORLD I was delighted, and then when it was missing I was disappointed. When he took over as editor of CYCLE, I took out a subscription immediately. Then we had a write up on Mr. Markel and the next month on Mr. Nixon and this month was too much, Walt Fulton the III and would you believe an honest to goodness report on a dirt track national. If I get much more I will not have to continue to subscribe to AMERICAN MOTORCYCLING or CYCLE WORLD. I enjoy the *Speaking Out* column and the bad guys vs the cops really hits the nail on the head. I was beginning to think Jennings was anti-AMA, anti-Harley and Anti-American; but now I believe the opposite. It must have been his former employer.

Keep up the good work; we need more like you.

Joel Haynes  
 Waterford, Mich.

*It is very nice to know that I have a fan, and I appreciate all the things you have to say about Cycle. However, you have drawn some unfortunate conclusions about my basic outlook. Let me say that I am not "anti-Harley" nor indeed anti-any motorcycle. Bikes are just machines and have neither position nor politics. But I have been anti-AMA occasionally and very likely will be again. At times, when as a nation we are doing something shabby, I am even anti-American. Give me time and I will probably get in a few licks against Motherhood and Apple Pie.—GJ.*

To the writer of the Laconia race story goes a hearty "good show." The report was well written and contained just the proper amount of humor to make interesting reading. I'm sure Mr. Nixon's advice to the tuners have been quoted by us all at one time or another. I think they might have to rename the chassis if they followed our advise.

I was one of those "faces in the crowd" at Louisville and watched Mr. Markel have a good day. The complete show was quite well organized and ran rather smoothly. The Louisville police department also should be commended as to their traffic control. The bikes were all allowed to move before any engines were overheated. This is quite a feat when so many people all go the same way to the interstates.

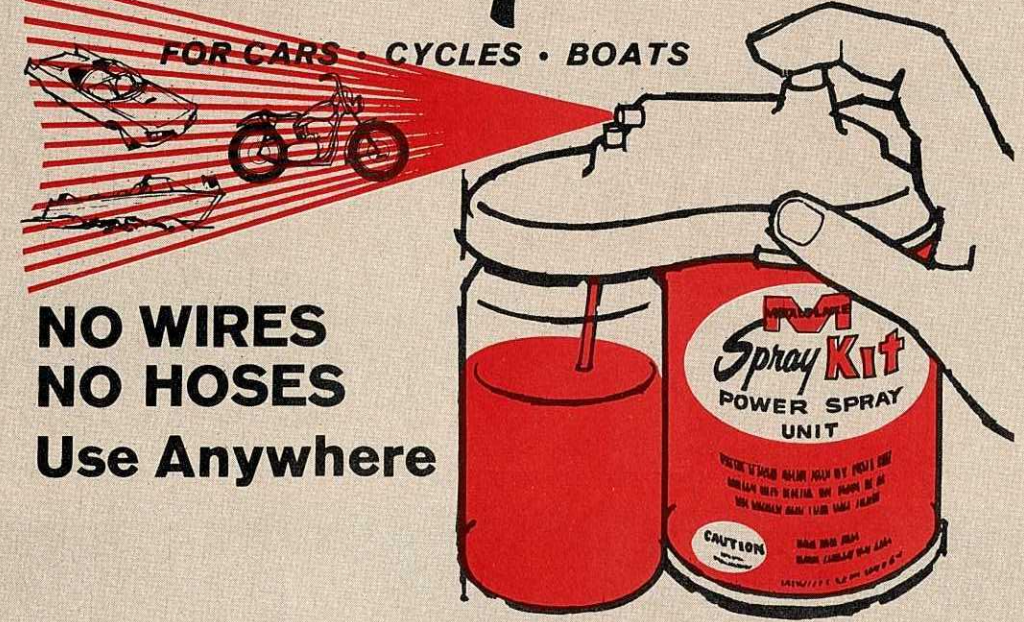
One other point of interest is the letters concerning girls in CYCLE ads. The girls don't sell cycles. It is the performance and durability that does. So keep the girls they don't hurt the page at all.

William Kiper  
 Cleveland, Ohio

CYCLE

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# THE NATIONAL SCENE

• The book is closed on another season of National racing. Thirteen of the seventeen events were held on dirt surfaced tracks of varied conditions from excellent to just plain ridiculous.

The past few seasons have found less and less attention being paid to the condition of many tracks whether it be on a national or non-national basis. Riders are riding without benefit of brakes on tracks that would not be considered good scrambles courses where brakes are employed.

There are many rules in the book covering what should be done and how a track should be, but like so many other rules that jam the present book, they are never used or not familiar to the people that are supposed to use them.

Dirt track events continue to be the backbone of cycle racing and are still the biggest draw for any promoter, yet each one has his own idea as to how a track should be prepared for a cycle event.

Referees and other race officials are still expected to be authorities on track preparation and development. The season just concluded again proves that they are not, nor should they be required to be.

Close to half of the dirt track events that were actually run left something to

be desired when it came to track condition and safety features. The end result was that there were more spills and injuries on the national circuit than at any other time in recent seasons.

Races run in the daytime seem to have a habit of coming up with extra narrow groove tracks that produce follow-the-leader-type racing and make it dangerous for a rider who strays elsewhere trying to pass—as was the case at Oklahoma City.

Rough tracks with holes and bumps also take a heavy toll—like at Tulare, San Jose and Portland.

Flat mile tracks cannot be run without placing hay bales on the turns—as the riders and promoters discovered at the ill-fated Sedalia event last August.

All the rules in the book are not worth a Tinkers-Damn if the track is not in shape to run a race and no group or individual has a right to lay a rider's life or limb on the line by allowing an event to be held if the course is not in a raceable condition.

There was a rule passed a few short years ago that required all promoters to put up a thousand dollars in advance if they desired a National event. For some reason or other, like so many other re-

cent rules, it has been misplaced and is not being used.

This would be an excellent lever to guarantee that a track is in top shape by race time—if not, the event is called and the money placed in the rider's point fund.

Too often the plight of the rider that competes on the national circuit is overlooked. The cycle circuit is not on par with that of USAC and NASCAR in that the winners and consistent high finishers enjoy a bankroll of any size. It is a simple matter that the rider, any rider, cannot afford to be injured without suffering a serious financial setback.

This very item cropped up many times this year and on two occasions top riders were allowed to compete even though they had serious injuries because they were in the thick of the point battle. This was done with full knowledge of many officials. Who was really hurting who?

The present rule book is burdened with many rules that are not even well known to the people that make and change them each year. Perhaps the entire book should be thrown out and twenty or thirty workable rules put in and used to everybody's benefit. Every one of the present day rules was stretched, forgotten or ignored this past season at least once. Everybody enjoys a good race but let's make them as safe as possible.

—Roxy Rockwood

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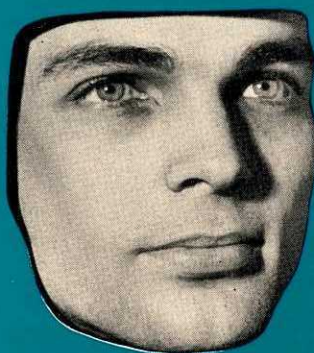
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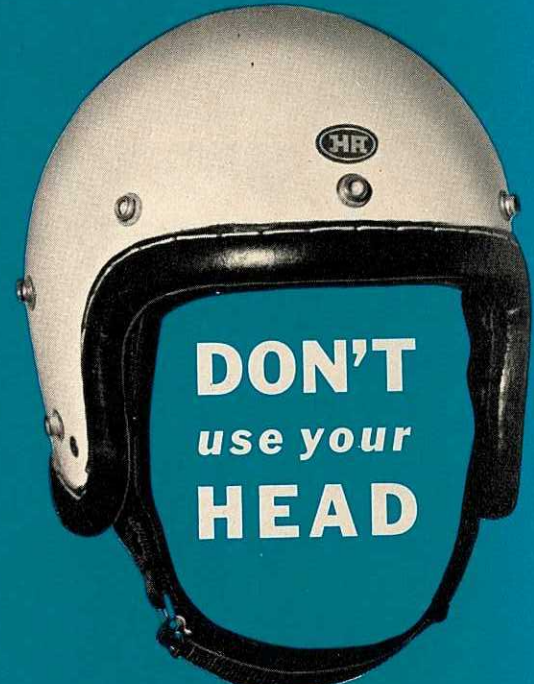
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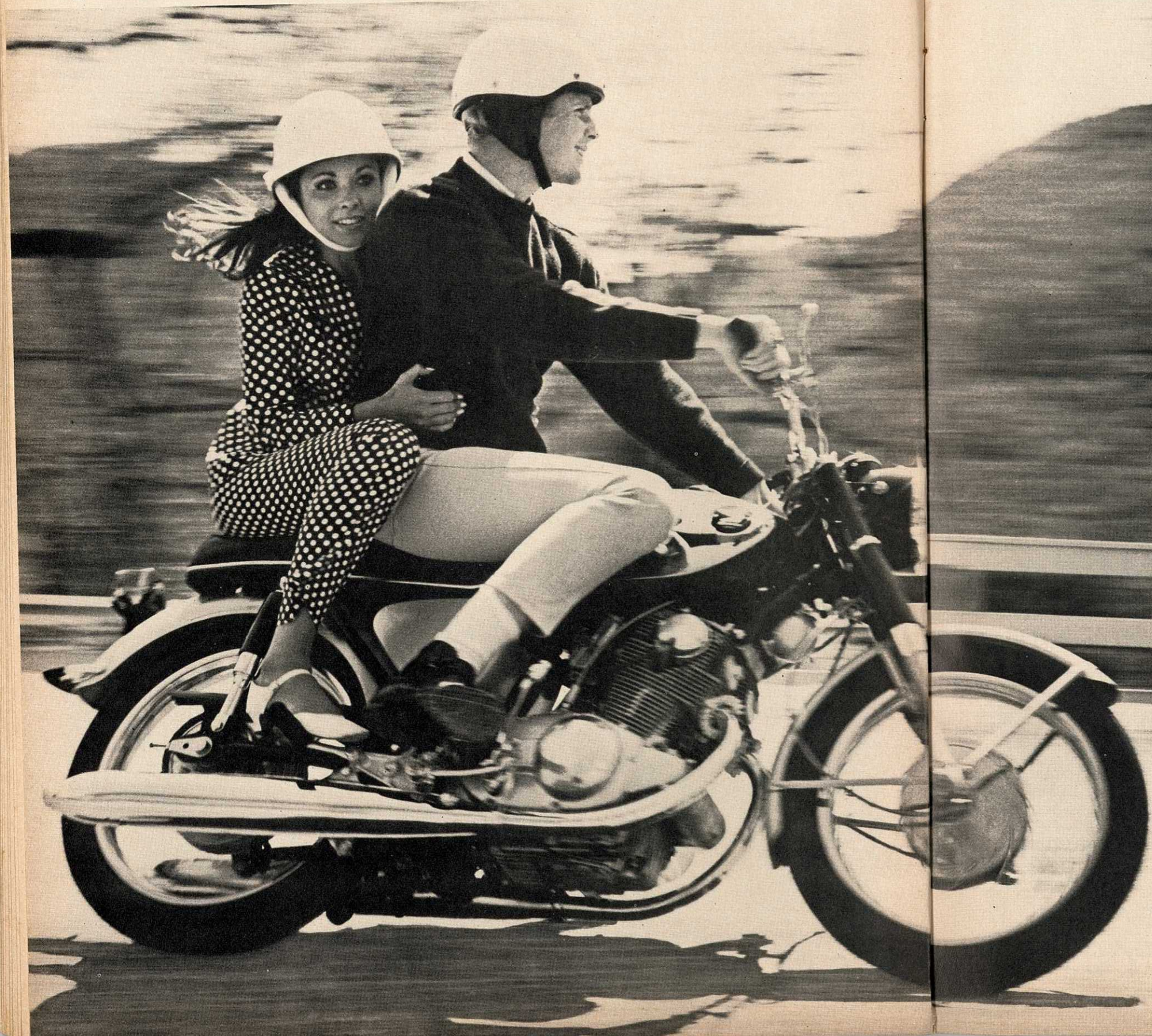


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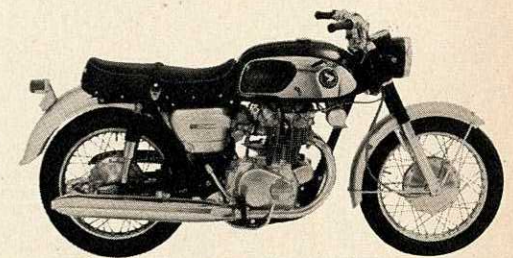
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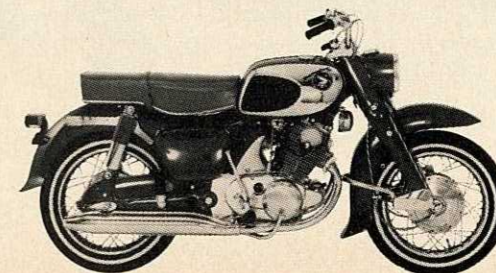
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# SERVICE TIPS

From time to time reader's disagree with our service tips, or they have better solutions to propose. Believe it or not, we like to hear when an idea can be improved upon, and we appreciate hearing from you.

• Regarding the recent September 1967 article on the Honda 450, I must congratulate you on your objectivity and honesty. It was really well-done, and I believe you appraised your machine as best you could.

All of the difficulties you noted are known to me in connection with this model. I write this letter both as a long-term owner (21,000-plus miles) and as a technician who has spent some time dealing with that model. I felt that perhaps my reactions would be helpful, if furnished specifically enough, so here is some of my experience that may benefit your readers.

First, for vibration. When I first purchased my CB-450, the vibration was, as you say, offensive. After a certain engine number, however, Honda installed a modified crankshaft that was intended to reduce the vibration, and, in some measure, did. Another thing I found, and that the American Honda Company, Inc. has confirmed, is that on Type "I" engines (180 degree crank, the only type of CB-450 sold in the States), removing the top engine mount

changes the vibration. As you have noted, the framelengine system is very solid. As furnished, engine vibration is at its most severe at approximately 5500 rpm. If you remove the top mount, the vibration is reduced by being transmitted only through the bottom mounts (which are adequate as mounts themselves). Further reduction can be had by this, because it also has the effect of changing the resonant frequency; with the top mount removed vibration is most severe at 2500 rpm. Since this engine is not very practical to operate at such speeds, the vibration is in effect out of the way.

Another factor of vibration is tune. Certain elements of it require near-perfection. The valve-clearance is critical for minimum vibration, although not so much for speed. If you have trouble with Honda's instructions, as I did, set the valves using a feeler gauge (.002") at the valve stem. Carburetor jetting and ignition timing, while again not critical for performance, definitely help smoothness.

These engines do take a long time to break in, although it should not matter particularly. You may consider the engine well-broken-in at about 10,000 miles—but you can run it in the normal way (and it should be fairly smooth) after 100 or 200.

In mentioning the difficulties we had

with the carburetors, I was glad to see that you also printed the reason for all the fuss—unfamiliarity with them. I have never had much difficulty with them, except slightly with idling. True, my machine had some low-speed troubles as received, but a very small amount of internal adjusting relieved that. Idling has been helped by critical valve adjustments, and by rejetting the low end.

I feel the worst feature of the suspension is not the springing but the seat. The seat is slightly narrow, and not very deep. If your front suspension is in fact stiff, try replacing the oil with shock absorber fluid in the correct quantity.

If you find that all the above is useful to your machine, you will find the "cruising notch" at right about 7500 rpm (about 300 rpm above maximum torque). Mine, with a 16-tooth countershaft sprocket (15T is stock), cruises beautifully at that rpm (about 87 mph in fourth, 77 in third) with no sweat and less vibration.

Bill Gommel San Andreas, Cal.

• Here's another answer to your Yamaha owner reader's neutral indicator problem. If the Big Bear's neutral light is malfunctioning, use the tachometer. With the clutch in, the tach will not work when the bike is in gear. It will work if you're in neutral. Thus if neither the light nor the driver can confidently sense neutral, the tach will tell without fail.

Mrs. Musia Stagg, San Francisco, Cal.

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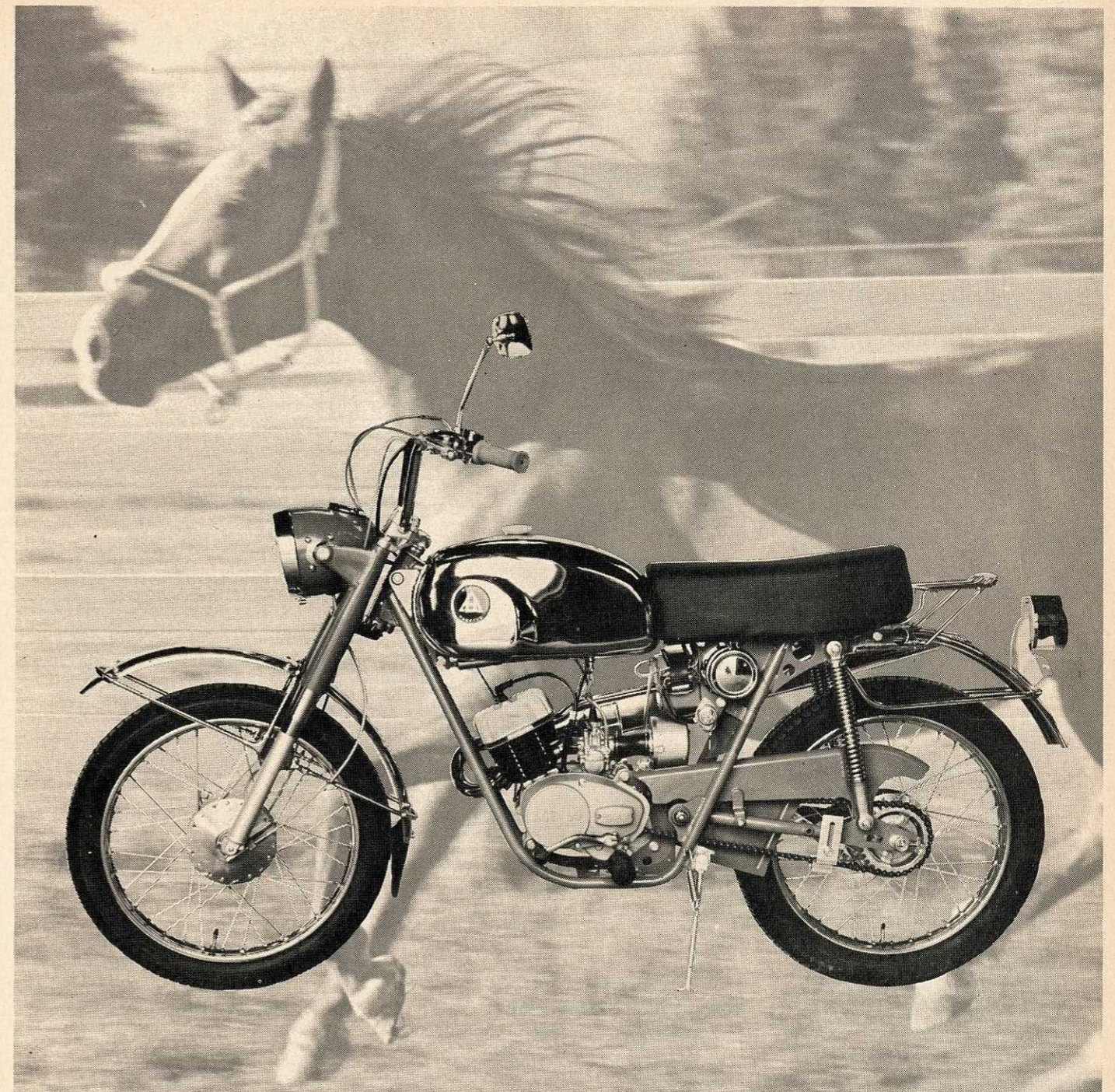
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## THE DOWN-HILL STRAIGHT

• Here it is, time again for my annual report. I'll start with the bikes I did not ride this year. Seems the days and months slip by like low melting point grease in a wheel bearing and the number of machines I haven't tested is astounding. It always is. And every year I tell myself that next year, *next year*, the number will be even greater. And it always is.

Now there are the really hot ones—like the new Swiss-made Vincent, Mad Man Munch's Mammut, and the Chevy-engined V8 dragster of the Michigan Mad Man. Having not ridden any of these, I can still find them to be really interesting devices. And since I never timed them, it can still be assumed that they are all very potent bikes. Handling was undetected.

Then there was a whole raft of mini-bikes I didn't ride. The prime appeal of these little things is that they are scaled for a person of about nine years of age, although the power output is enough to haul a fully grown person at considerable speed. The combination of those two characteristics may have had something to do with why I didn't ride any of *them*.

I failed to enjoy the new Mobylette with its wide power band, the Gemini with its tremendous low-speed handling qualities, or the Batavus Flying Dutchman with the double shocks at the rear wheel. I crashed through no underbrush on the Yamaha Big Bear, sped down no cliffs on the Norton 750 Scrambler, nor plodded along a mountain stream bed on a Greeves Anglian Trials bike.

There was an abundance of factory road racing stuff this year, and like the movies, they were better than ever. But I am happy to report that I was unable to ride any of them. That includes the entire Honda stable, all of the Yamahas, Suzukis, Bridgestones, Kawasakis, even the water-cooled Bultacos—but no one else could ride *them* either.

Speaking of racing bikes, I must admit that I was offered rides while watching some friends sort out their machines last spring, but I managed to avoid their hospitality completely. Overlooked were some Aermacchis, Ducatis, Superhogs, Benellis, Guazonis, Guzzis, and MVs. A few of these were really hot, too. Braking and handling must have been superb.

A lot of combination street-woods machines went untested as well. These combination designs are aimed at the rider who either rides on the street, but likes to go off into the rough once in a while, or, for the rider who likes to ride in the woods and goes off into the street once in a while. All in all, a very clever approach. I have seen many riders who quite inadvertently go off of the road into the rough and I'm sure they will ap-

preciate a machine designed with them in mind.

I managed to keep my record clean in the tiddler department, too, successfully avoiding everything of under 100cc capacity, including the haunting Itom Astor Competizione 50cc road racer. The Itom has been gaining ground on me since its inception years ago but again I shrugged off the opportunity to get aboard one. The most endearing quality of the teeny racers is their exhaust note which is best described as "ear-shattering". Incidentally, it seems that now that the 'fifties are going pretty fast, the factories are going to stop racing them. I have no doubt they will blame their withdrawal on me for not testing their bikes.

Those of you who are vintage motorcycle fans will not need to be told that I haven't been aboard a single old clunker all year. And I know exactly what I have missed.

Certainly the accessory people bear mention, and regret. Alas, I did not try their answer to anti-apehanger legislation. I rode no bike fitted with a deluxe six-foot triple-chrome-plated sissy bar.

As is my habit, every year I like to hand out a few awards. This year there are even fewer than before. One is the Blatant Duplicity Award, given this year to CZ because they have continued to race four-strokes while selling two-strokes. Another is the A.S.H. Tray, a handsome prize awarded to any organization that manages to retard the progress of motorcycle sport during the year. The tray remains in the hands of the current title-holder, the FIM. Considering the efforts of some of the other clubs, it is no small wonder that the FIM has managed to retain their supremacy in this field. Let's give credit where it's due. That takes care of this year's rather limited supply of awards. Oh yeah, there's one more. This year, after floating around at a number of races, I decided to establish a prize to be given to the most outstanding manufacturer of race trophies. I had a really gruesome placque made up, consisting of a bronzed baby shoe mounted on a walnut-stained knotty pine board with a space for the winner's name to be carved in with a wood-burning pencil. The award was to have been given to the first trophy maker to come up with a bike-and-rider casting representing a machine newer than the 1931 Indians currently used to top off trophies. Unfortunately, the award cannot be given this year.

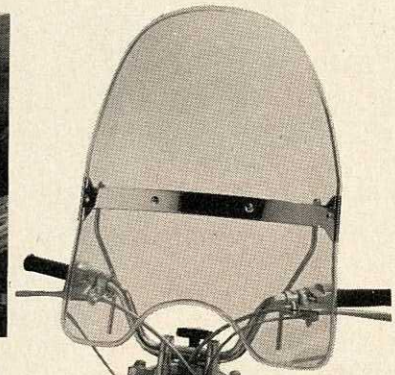
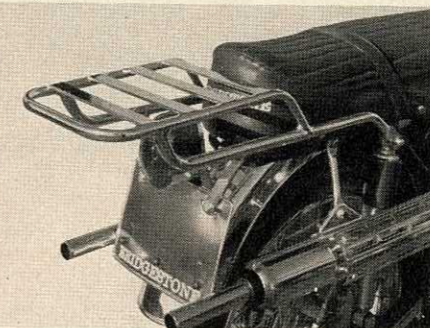
Again this year I want to thank the designers and builders of those fabulous, decrepit outhouses that go such a long way toward making an afternoon at a scrambles course such a pleasure.

—Michael Shuter

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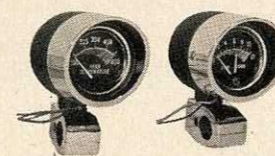
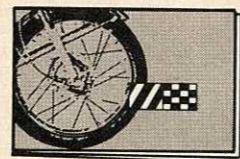
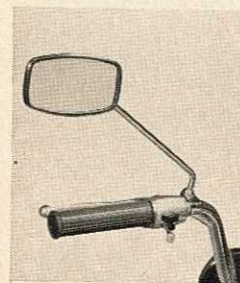
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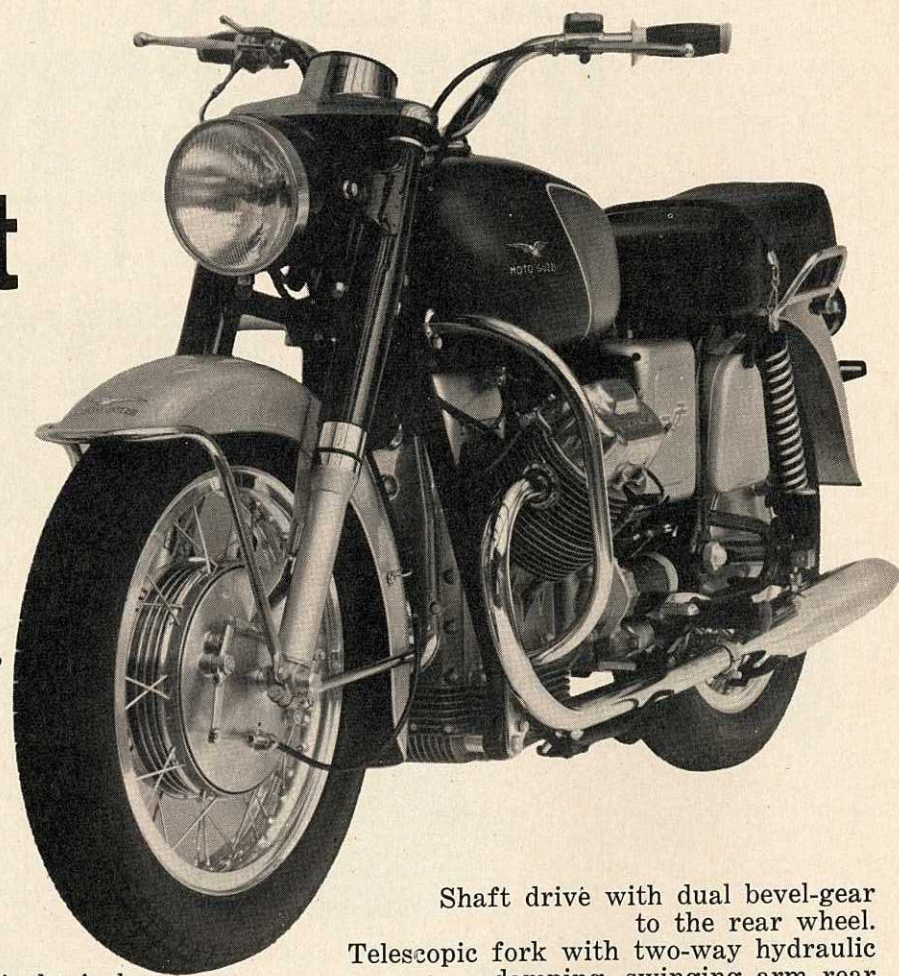
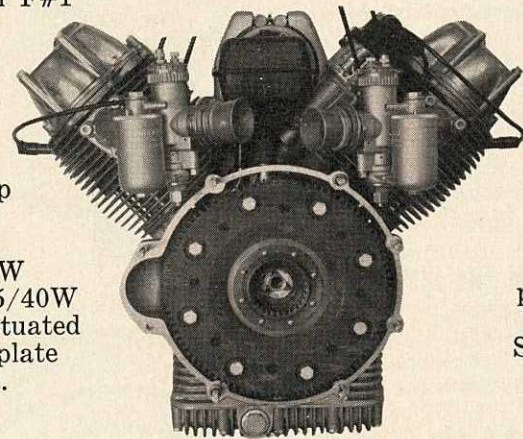


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# the GUZZI V-7 wasn't built for everybody

It was built only for those who want the ultimate in styling, performance and craftsmanship, all carefully blended into a vehicle so safe, so reliable, so smooth that it has won the praises of the world's foremost experts.

Specifications of this Italian masterpiece include the following: 704cc V twin, air-cooled, OHV engine. C.R. 9 to 1, light-alloy hemispherical heads, Alloy barrels with hard chrome steel lining, steel con-rods, with anti-friction bearings, thin wall main bearings (as used in all F#1 Race Cars), wet sump lubrication, gear type oil pressure pump, dual Del'Orto 29mm carburetors. 50 SAE BHP at 5800 RPM guarantees effortless cruising two-up in 4th gear from 20 to over 100 mph. Battery powered 12 Volt 300W system, electric starter, 6" 45/40W headlight. Four-speed, foot-actuated gearbox, velvet-smooth, twin-plate dry clutch with cushion-drive.

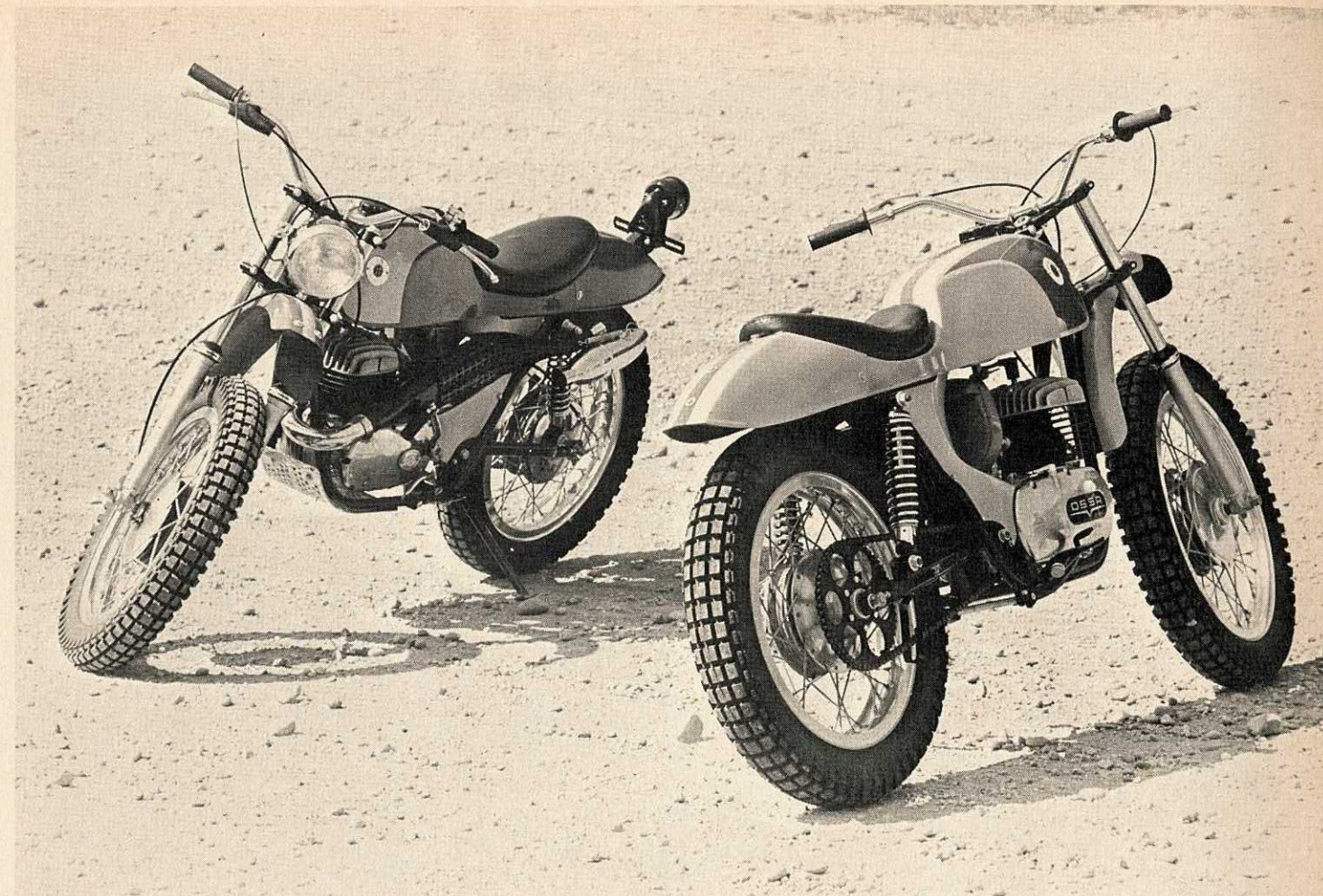


Shaft drive with dual bevel-gear to the rear wheel. Telescopic fork with two-way hydraulic damping, swinging arm rear suspension with hydraulically damped 3-way adjustable shock absorbers. Duplex tubular cradle frame. 18" wheels, alloy rims. 4:00x18" tires front and rear. Large diameter twin leading shoe front brake. Single LS rear. 4 1/2 gallon fuel tank, dual-seat with chrome hand rail, safety bars, center and side stand dual exhausts, and Borletti Car type Speedo instrument, (oil pressure gauge, neutral indicator and charge indicator). Suggested retail price: FOB NY, \$1439.00 completely assembled.

Other Guzzi models available include the 125cc Sport \$429, the 125cc Scrambler \$469, and the 125cc Trial \$589.

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CYCLE ROAD TEST

## TWO 230 OSSAS PIONEER AND STILETTO

A pair of sparklers from sunny Spain. The suspension is right, quality is right, balance is right, and the price is right—Ossa is back in the chase.

Whatever happened to Ossa, the little bear? Ossa motorcycles arrived in the U.S. amidst much flag- and arm-waving, full-page ads and other assorted hoopla, and were met with approval by all who saw them. Then, sadly, they were buried under great mountains of distributorship foul-ups. The Ossa effort here in America fell upon hard times.

The bikes were, it seems, getting to this country all right, but somehow a lot of the money wasn't getting back to Spain. So Ossa's parent company did away with the myriad distributors and sub-distributors, and handed the whole package to a Mr. Frank Conner of Houston, Texas. Conner heads the new national distribution company, which is

called "Ossa West." Ossa West is taking the conservative approach, concentrating on building a nationwide network of reliable dealers. It seems that now the grinning little "bear" (the term is a pun on the Spanish word for bear, "osso") will have something to grin about.

Ossa West plans to import only the 230cc motorcycles, reasoning that this displacement will have more appeal than the smaller 175s from the same company, and this concentration on Ossa's top line (Wildfire, Stiletto, Pioneer and Plonker—all 230s and variations on the same basic mechanism) will also simplify the spare-parts inventory problem.

We were sent a pair of the new 230cc Ossas: a Pioneer (the "enduro" model) and a Stiletto scrambler. The bikes ar-

rived in crates, and had not seen the light of day since they rolled off the factory assembly line. Frank Conner sent us owners' manuals, and a checklist the dealer is supposed to use when doing the setup. We checked what was listed, but found that the bikes were ready to go right from the crates. Just bolt on the handlebars, and go riding.

Maybe they should have ridden them for a time before shipment, though, for the Stiletto gave us just one lap around our one-mile scrambles/test track before the fire went out. The spark disappeared, and nothing we could do would make it return. In point of fact, we could do very little. The ignition system does all the spark-developing in an encapsulated, transistorized electronics package. When it goes "Pfft!" you just send for a replacement package. And if it is going to fail, it does the deed in the first few minutes of running.

Actually, the ignition system is inherently reliable, because it is very simple. Magnets cast into an external flywheel sweep past low-voltage coils and generate a working current. This flows into a condenser, where it is stored until needed. A spark emerges from the electronics package when one of the flywheel magnets sweeps past a particular generating coil. That generates a current that, in



turn, triggers a silicon control rectifier. The SCR then dumps the condenser through a high-tension coil, and that gives you the spark.

It is characteristic of condenser-discharge systems to produce an ultra-rapid rate of voltage rise at the sparkplug, and that greatly reduces the tendency toward plug fouling. The Ossa's "Motoplat" ignition system also eliminates the conventional contact-breaker points, too, and should represent a great advance in motorcycle ignition technology. Should—and does when it is working. And the identical system on the Pioneer worked very well.

One final comment on the ignition system: Don't expect the owners' manual to be a help. Under the heading "Ignition Timing" it says that "Performance and

reliability of a two-stroke engine depends heavily upon the ignition timing being right." We'll buy that, but we wonder *why* the manual makes no mention of *how* one goes about checking or setting the timing. There isn't even a picture. Maybe your dealer can tell you how it's done.

So anyway, there we were with two bikes to test and only one in running order. It would have been a disaster except that there really isn't much difference between the Pioneer and the (sulking) Stiletto. Compression ratio, carburetor throat size and transmission ratios. That's all. The overall drive ratios are the same. Of course, the Pioneer has a headlight, taillight and horn, and a removable muffler/spark-arrester. But this is just a disguise. The Pioneer is obvious-

ly intended for bashing around in the dirt.

Like, look at that front fender all jacked up in the air, and that big, chromed-and-drilled bash-plate shielding the engine/transmission cases. There is no doubt about Ossa's intent when they made the Pioneer. Sure, you could use the bike on the street—but that would be a waste of its natural talents. The only road mileage any Pioneer should log ought to be going to or returning from the boondocks. At such times the lighting equipment may be useful—and you may want to use the muffler.

That muffler is a clever device. Very small, but surprisingly effective. When in use, it fits on the expansion-chamber outlet tip, and is held in place by a large spring (which has a pull-loop at its free



end for your finger). A nubbin on the pipe keeps the muffler from working its way on too far, or (as the nub fits in a slot in the muffler) rotating. So you've turned off the road and you want the added zing of an open exhaust when you go blasting up that logging trail. Just unclip the spring, slip the muffler off and you can stow it away, out of action, by hanging it from its mounting ring right back on the pipe. Do this, and you get enough noise to startle a professional demolitions man.

We just can't say enough about the Ossa's great suspension. The front forks are Telesco units, which provide the enthusiastic rough-trails basher with a mighty 7-inches of front-wheel travel. That's a lot of travel, and it is combined with magnificent damping. You wouldn't

think so if you just pumped up and down on the handlebars. Doing that, the forks feel like there is no damping at all; like maybe there is no oil in the forks.

But we checked, and there was oil in the forks, and there was damping when it counted. We have this scrambles course where we test dirt bikes, and it combines just about every kind of terrain. Some of it is covered with stones of divers sizes, from pea-gravel to minor boulders. There's a section with ditches and potholes, too, and other places where it is smooth, firm and lightning fast.

The Pioneer's suspension was not fazed by any of it. Those forks make the front wheel follow the ground over humps and hollows, but none of the bounding and oscillating gets transmitted up to the handlebars. The front forks

never hit either end of their travel—not even when we got all clumsy on a jump and landed on the front wheel—not a technique endorsed by those who rocket around TT courses and such for prize-money. It is a fine way to really bust your fern, and the fact that we did it even once without serious consequence says a lot for the Ossa's front suspension and generally forgiving nature.

Charging through our sand-pit (located right at the end of a downhill straight-away) brought a slight amount of twitching and hunting at the front wheel, but then this sand-pit is about axle-deep. In sand, when the front wheel sinks slightly, the tire contact patch effectively moves forward, and you lose a lot of the self-aligning caster effect. Maybe another 3-degrees of rake in the steering would be

## 230 OSSAS *Continued*

a good thing; or, maybe we shouldn't expect any bike to go through that sand-pit without some sign of displeasure.

As the day wore on, and we became more familiar with the Ossa, we began riding right over things usually detoured. The Ossa was a grand proving-vehicle for both rider ability and rider courage. The bike is agile enough to let you try anything, and stable enough to do what you thought probably wouldn't work, which keeps you pressing further into the unknown to try and find the limit. The limit is there, but the Ossa will not play you false. Go faster than you usually ride. Zip it into those turns. Clout along over the rocks. Blast through the sand. Press it too far and you'll get pitched, but "too far" on the Ossa is farther down the road to disaster than with almost any other bike.

The engine incorporates no new earth-

shaking aspects, no overpowering technological breakthroughs. It's no different actually, from any of the Spanish scrambler-type engines—just simpler. Its components are straightforward, husky, and the interchangeability factor helps to keep the price down. The motorcycles are assembled individually; each assembler is given all the bits and pieces to build one bike at a time. The engines, though, are built on an assembly line for good reason. There are test stations along the line where the crank assembly is shimmed up and fitted into its individual cases. The Ossa people feel that inattention to tolerances leads to rapid wear, which leads to increased replacement parts production, which leads again to rising prices. Manual Giro, Ossa factory likes to put them together right the first time. The same chief attention is paid to the assembly of transmissions; all

shafts and gears are spaced up perfectly.

The engine delivers power smoothly, with no trace of pipiness (perfect for a loose track, where an unexpected burst of horsepower will get you bent out of shape immediately and sore all over later). While the engine won't pull your arms straight at the crack of a throttle, it's not weak either, and certainly muscular enough to keep you going faster than discretion normally permits. With a bore of 70mm and a stroke of 60mm, the Ossa powerplant is oversquare and free-revving, though we found no need, really, to wind it up so tight that it screamed. It's got a fair amount of torque for its size, and the ball- and needle-bearing bottom end is strong enough that it won't give trouble. The engine is also generously finned, and refused to overheat although we ran ours continuously, and hard, for long periods of time. Cylin-

der and head castings were clean and well-finished. In fact, the bike as a whole was as well turned out as any we've seen. The engine cases are of highly-polished alloy, the wheels and hubs are likewise, and the paint is beautifully laid on—with the exception of the fuel tank accent-panels, whose edges were a little fuzzy. The fiberglass was of high quality, smooth and ripple-free, and contributed significantly both to the Ossa's appearance and light weight. The seat looks a little thin, but appearances deceive. It's not. Seating comfort, and position, were excellent, and with those high footpegs you at least *felt* like a scratcher.

Although we were blessed with but one lap on the Stiletto, we were able to conclude that it does have a personality of its own. Its nominal compression ratio is higher than the Pioneer's (13.7:1 v. 11.4:1), the gearbox ratio is tighter in

first, second, and third, its carburetor is bigger (32mm v. 29mm.)—and the engine is markedly woolier with a narrower power band.

Both the Stiletto and the Pioneer are essentially twin-carb models, only with Ossa, one carburetor is *inside* the other. That's right. The IRZ unit is similar to any normal slide-type carburetor, but it has two needles attached to the slide—one longer than the other. And there are two separate spray nozzles, the shorter low- and midrange nozzle located in front of the taller high-speed nozzle. Then there's a horizontal partition located roughly on the middle of the choke, just below the tip of the high-speed nozzle. At part throttle the slide lifts and exposes the low-speed nozzle to the flow of incoming air, while the high-speed nozzle is blocked off by the partition. Then at full-throttle, the slide lifts above the

partition and the high-speed nozzle is exposed. It's a fairly sophisticated arrangement, for a motorcycle, and one that works beautifully. Metering is accurate throughout the rpm range, and the carburetor is largely responsible for the Ossa's ability to run cleanly at low revs.

The transmission and clutch are superb. Clutch action is positive and smooth (notwithstanding a decided lack of lubrication on the cable), and the clutch itself, with four driving plates and four driven plates, refused to overheat, bind, slip or grab—regardless of abuse. And the gearbox was just as good, with swift and easy shifting.

So the Little Bear is back, stronger and more solid than ever, with superb handling, great looks, and tractable but gutty engines. It looks to us like Frank Conner, and Ossa West, have got a winner on their hands. ©



**OSSA PIONEER 230 STREET-SCRAMBLER**

Price, suggested retail .....	\$730
Tire, front .....	3.50 in. x 19 in.
rear .....	4.00 in. x 18 in.
Brakes, front .....	6.22 in. x 1.6 in.
Brakes, rear .....	6.22 in. x 1.6 in.
Engine type .....	Two-stroke single
Bore and stroke ...	2.76 in. x 2.36 in., 70mm x 60mm
Piston displacement .....	14.1 cu. in., 230cc.
Compression ratio .....	11.4:1 (nominal)
Carburetion .....	29mm IRZ
Air filtration .....	Foam and cloth
Ignition .....	Motoplat electronic
Bhp @ Rpm .....	Not specified
Fuel capacity .....	2.6 gal.
Lighting .....	Alternator, 45 Watts
Wheelbase .....	53.6 in.
Seat height .....	27.2 in.
Ground clearance .....	9 in.
Curb weight .....	228 lb.
Test weight .....	401 lb.
Instruments .....	Speedometer/odometer



**OSSA STILETTO 230 SCRAMBLER**

Price, suggested retail .....	\$785
Tire, front .....	3.50 in. x 19 in.
rear .....	4.00 in. x 18 in.
Brakes, front .....	6.22 in. x 1.6 in.
Brakes, rear .....	6.22 in. x 1.6 in.
Engine type .....	Two-stroke single
Bore and stroke ...	2.76 in. x 2.36 in., 70mm x 60mm
Piston displacement .....	14.1 cu. in., 230cc.
Compression ratio .....	13.7:1 (nominal)
Carburetion .....	32mm IRZ
Air filtration .....	Foam and cloth
Ignition .....	Motoplat electronic
Bhp @ Rpm .....	Not specified
Fuel capacity .....	2.6 gal.
Lighting .....	none
Wheelbase .....	53.6 in.
Seat height .....	27.2 in.
Ground clearance .....	9 in.
Curb weight .....	223 lb.
Test weight .....	396 lb.
Instruments .....	none



# BSA 650 THUNDERBOLT

Easy starting and superb roadholding from the workhouse of the BSA line—but tell us about assembly, John Bull!

It can be said of some motorcycles that "The more they change the more they stay the same". Not so the Thunderbolt. It has stayed the same—but changed. Although the bike is replete with variations on the 1967 theme, these variations do not constitute mere gimmickry. The desire here has been, it seems, to genuinely improve the product. The plastic tank badges of years gone by (which had a tendency to crack) have been replaced by badges of anodized aluminum. The kick-starter lever has been lengthened to make starting easier (and we have tested few bikes that started as willingly as did the big Thunderbolt). The dual ignition points can now be adjusted individually, an improvement that allows much more accurate tuning. The fuel tank utilizes a quick-release filler-cap that pops up at the touch of a finger. The bike rolls up on its sturdy centerstand easily, and a sidestand is provided as well.

Admittedly, these are small things, and quite unobtrusive. They do not shout "New!" or "Different!" Rather, they merely suggest "better," which is, we feel, the only sensible reason for introducing a new model at all.

For some reason the BSAs imported to this country emerge from the crate with gearing suitable for running on the Bonneville Salt Flats. While this enables the Thunderbolt to cruise at relatively high speeds with little or no effort, the price is paid in around-town plonking. Although the engine is more than willing to slog along extremely slowly, the clutch has to be slipped rather brutally getting away from traffic lights and other roadway impediments. The clutch, though, handled this abuse manfully, and is itself a minor masterpiece of strength, smoothness, and reliability. The inner clutch hub is equipped with a cush drive that goes a long way towards smoothing out the flow of power and relieving the drive train from sudden torque loadings. And, no matter how much the clutch was slipped, it refused to show signs of petulance. We had suspected, because of its "wet" configuration, that a series of all-out, flat-shifted runs at the dragstrip would lead to the clutch's demise—but we were wrong. Five back-to-back, full-bore runs and fifteen speed shifts later, the clutch

was just as positive as it was when we first took delivery of the bike. Some clutch. And the fact that the Thunderbolt is over-gear is, ultimately, a fairly insignificant problem, one that can be cured by a simple change of counter-shaft sprockets.

The Thunderbolt is equipped with the latest from Amal, the concentric-float carburetor. While the new concentrics do away with the flooding problem that has plagued Amal since time immemorial, the one on our Thunderbolt was bothered by a curious malady indeed. In the first place, a reasonable idle speed could only be attained by winding the adjust screw all the way in, and in the second, it would be idling along nicely and then . . . just . . . STOP. We suspected at the outset that this was caused by a sticking slide, but occasionally the engine would cease operating almost completely and then suddenly shudder back to life.

The engine itself has an alarming tendency to detonate when placed under a heavy load at low speeds, regardless of the octane rating of the fuel used. Even so, the engine did perform quite well at low speeds, if you could turn a deaf ear towards all that detonation. Its relatively mild cam provided a very wide and useful power spread from idle all the way up to valve float. And its mid-range torque is really impressive; the bike would pull from 50 mph to 80 mph as strongly as many hotter 650s. Down-shifting is not required—just screw it on, and lean forward. This kind of performance is made all the more impressive when one considers the fact that the bike is, as we have said, cruelly overgeared.

The Thunderbolt transmission is one of the best that we have encountered. The gears are well-spaced and shifting is very smooth. So smooth, in fact, that we wished the shifting lever had been made somewhat shorter; the throw between gears is a little on the longish side, and the gear changes that we managed to foul up came as a result of the length of the foot-movement required. With a shorter lever, gear-changing would be more positive, and could be accomplished a little quicker and just as easily.

Anyone who has ridden a great num-

ber of motorcycles will tell you that finding neutral, especially when at a halt, can be one of the most infuriating experiences imaginable. It's usually somewhere between second and first, but on most bikes, only your shop foreman knows for sure. And if the bike happens to be idling a little rapidly, or if the clutch drags just a hair, the transmission has a tendency to leap like quicksilver between first and second and you may just as well forget the whole thing and sit there hauling in on the clutch lever. Not so the Thunderbolt. Due, as we

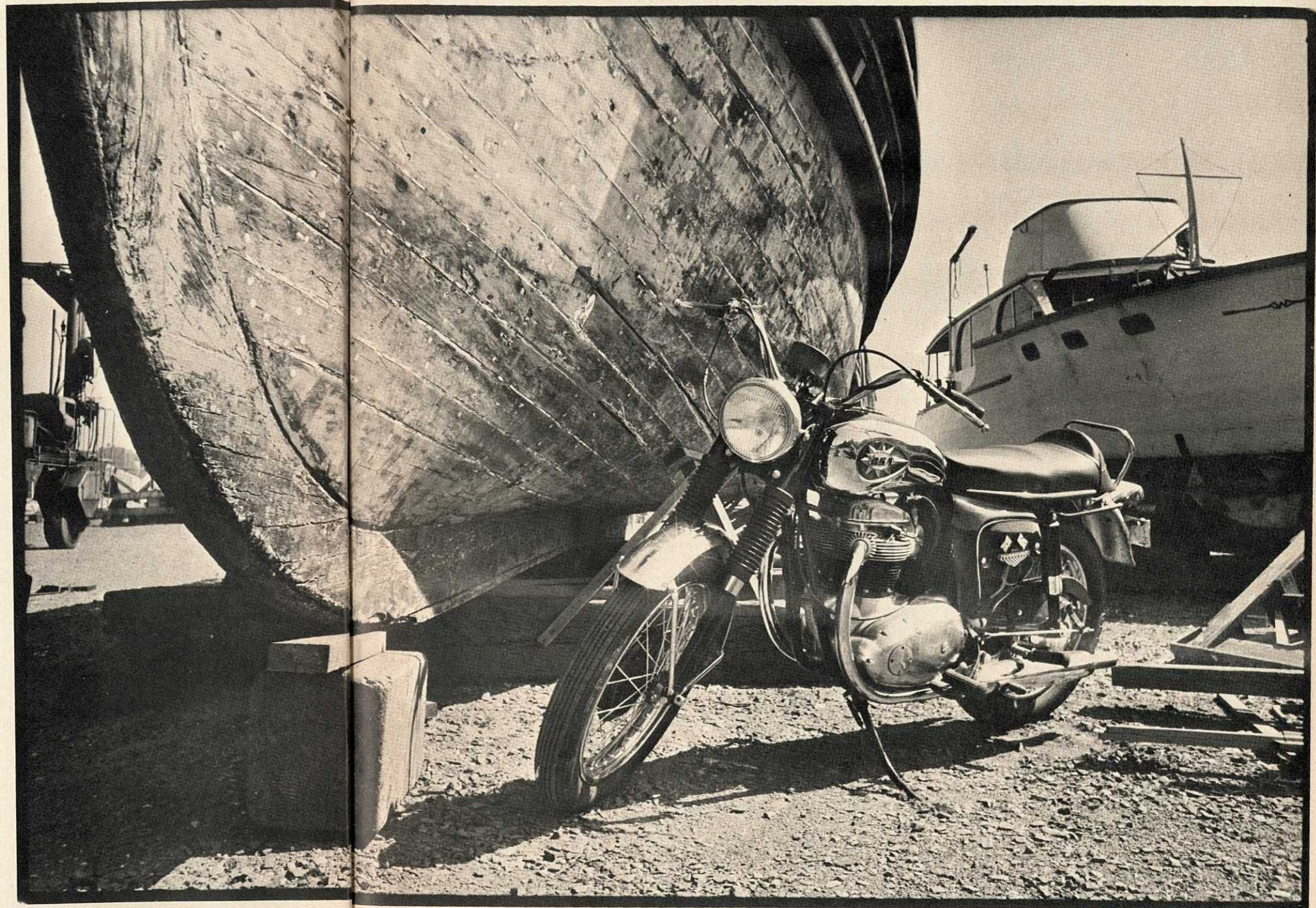
said, to slight carburetor maladies, the engine tended to idle rather briskly. Yet at no time did we have any trouble finding neutral, whether we were moving, stopped, or even coasting backward slightly. The contribution the gearbox makes to riding pleasure cannot be underestimated. Indeed, the clutch-transmission package could not be improved upon in any way.

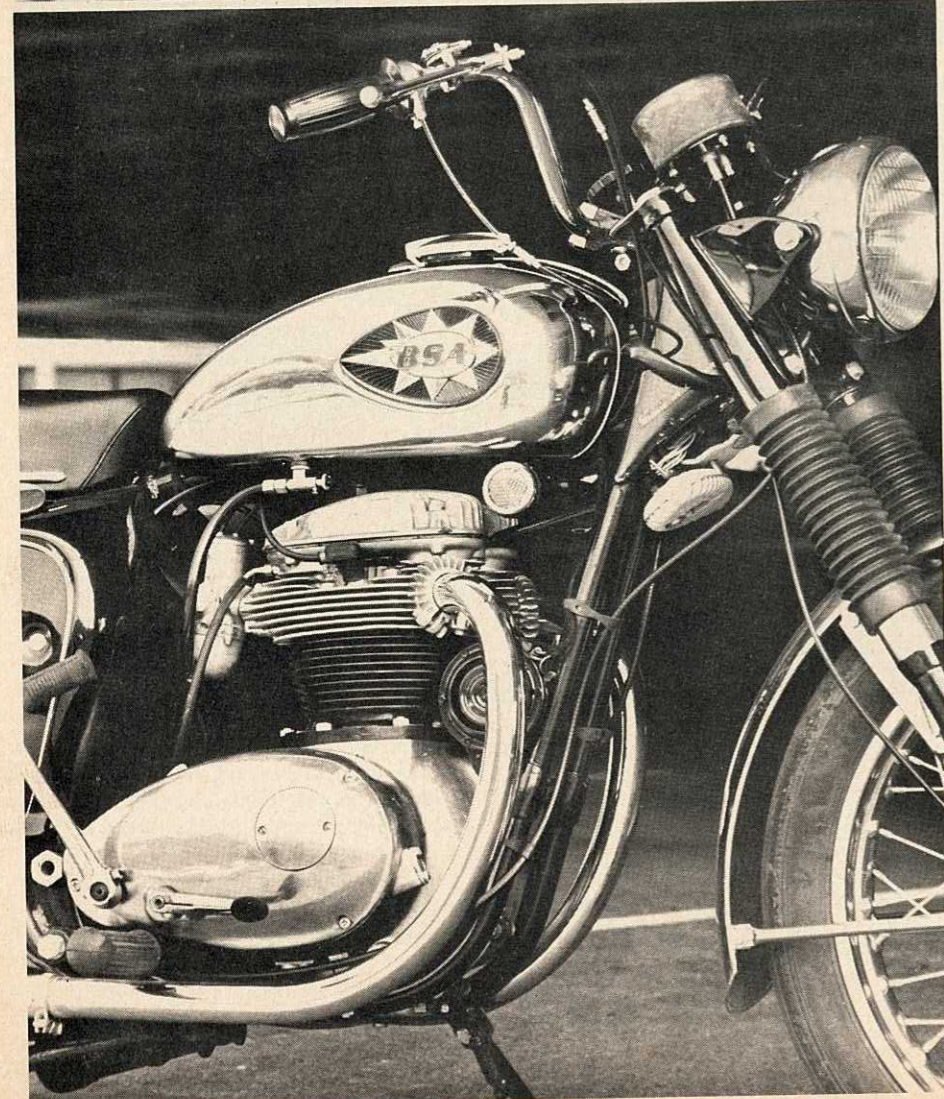
The same can be said of the Thunderbolt's handling characteristics. Historically, manufacturers of one brand or another have felt that their job entailed a

close research of the market that any given model would attract, followed by a rather arbitrary choice of suspension type: the bike would either (A) go around corners like slot car and ride so harshly that your backbone fused, or (B) float along like the Goodyear blimp and handle as if its heart were filled with malice. The BSA engineers, however, have changed all that. Not only does the Thunderbolt ride superbly over the roughest roads, it goes around turns with nary a bobble—at any velocity the rider chooses. With a number of production machines,

cornering speed is governed to some extent by the softness of the ride; ground clearance is minimized by the centrifugal force pushing the bike down on its suspension. The Thunderbolt, to the contrary, does not squat overmuch when heeled over; its generous eight-inches of static ground clearance helps to keep the tires from being levered off the road by the odd footpeg or center stand.

Braking, unfortunately, does not quite measure up to the Thunderbolt's superb handling qualities. Both binders are of the single-leading-shoe variety, and both





are, for the most part, adequate under most circumstances. Under the duress of repeated stops from high speeds, however, the front-wheel brake demonstrated a tendency to fade, while the rear overheated, squealed in protest, and became grabby.

Now the BSA folks do manufacture an excellent front-wheel brake, which they install on the 1968 versions of the Spitfire, Lightning, and Firebird Scrambler. It has the same diameter as the Thunderbolt's brake, but has a full-width hub and double leading shoes. And works.

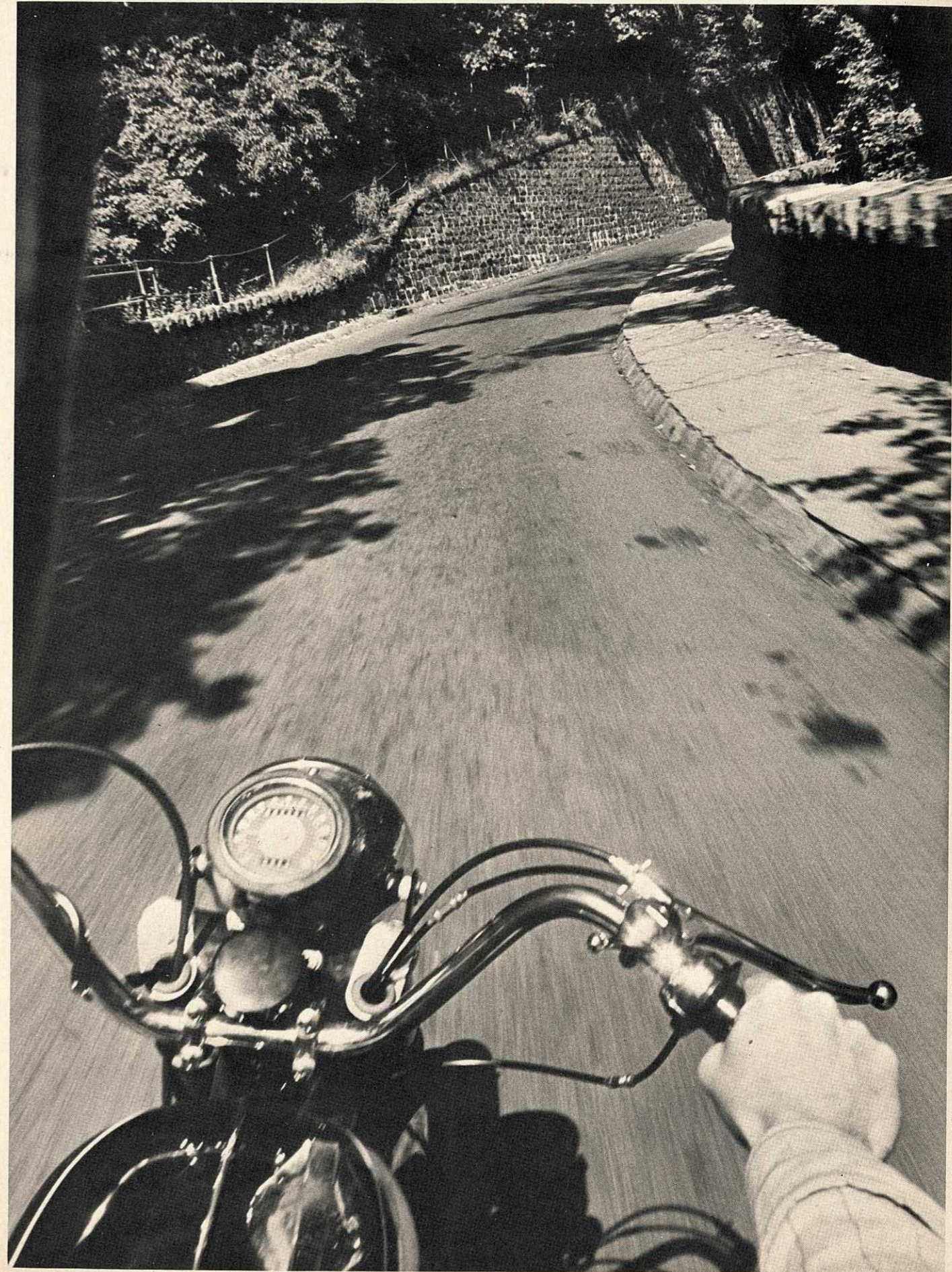
The Thunderbolt is not a small machine—it weighs 391 lb. dry—and, with a top speed of nearly 100 mph, it certainly isn't slow. We feel that if any motorcycle deserves good brakes, the Thunderbolt does. Everything else is awfully nice, and with the inclusion of good brakes the Thunderbolt's road manners would be well-nigh perfect.

As anyone can tell from looking at the pictures, the Thunderbolt is a devilishly handsome piece of machinery, beautifully laid out and superbly proportioned. The seat is long, wide, and comfortable, with plenty of room for two. The rear portion of the seat is slightly elevated above the front; and the contribution that this seemingly insignificant aspect makes towards passenger/pilot comfort is worth mention. In the first place, the passenger can see where he's going; and in the second, the division in the seat itself helps to more firmly locate the man at the controls. Furthermore, the large and sturdy grabrail not only increases passenger safety but is itself esthetically pleasing.

Our test machine was fitted out with elkhorn-type handlebars, and while extremely comfortable around town, they are somewhat fatiguing on long trips. You sit bolt-upright, and the wind tries to blow you off the bike.

A good example of the thoughtful design work that went into the Thunderbolt is the little Zener diode that serves as voltage regulator. The diode absorbs excess electrical energy and converts it into heat. Being an instrument of some delicacy, it must be both exposed to a flow of cool air as well as located out of the way. What better place to put it than under the steering head, between and slightly forward of the frame downtubes? Nothing short of a violent front-end collision could possibly affect it, and there is nothing in the way to impair the flow of air that it needs in order to function efficiently. Good thinking, wouldn't you say?

Contributing to the clean overall appearance of the Thunderbolt are the large fiberglass panels that enshroud the air-cleaner, oil tank, and toolbox. Even the control cables (with the exception of the throttle cable) are carefully routed through rubber-grommets guides ex-



tending from the tops of the fork legs.

BSA has seen fit to chrome-plate both fenders on '68 Thunderbolts. We feel that the chrome side panels on the fuel tank embody a sufficiency of ornamental glitter, but this is after all a matter of personal preference. And the bike does not in fact appear over-done, the center section of the tank, fork legs, and side panels being black.

The cylinder, head, and rockerbox castings are very well done too. The outside rockerbox fin has been highly polished, *à la* Suzuki X-6; upper engine cooling is certainly not significantly changed, and the engine *does* look better for it.

We found the Thunderbolt to be an appealing machine basically: we liked its handling, we liked its styling, we liked its performance (80 mph in the quarter, with an ET of 15.51, is not slow, espe-

cially when you consider the gearing). We were impressed by the sensible improvements and alterations made on the new model. In general, the bike is excellent in design—but a little short of that in execution. For example, the engine was prone to rather severe vibration in the 55 to 60 mph range, a vibration felt most predominantly in the handgrips. This problem was later traced to a loose upper motor mount. The chrome strip running down the center of the gas tank came loose immediately upon delivery, and one of the side reflectors disappeared shortly thereafter. Rust reared its ugly head around the spoke nipples of the front wheel, and the engine could not honestly be said to be oil-tight.

Now, granted, these are small things, and relatively insignificant whether taken singly or as a whole. But lack of attention to detail in the assembly stage,

especially when it involves a machine as nice as the Thunderbolt, is a little disappointing.

When the people at Birmingham Small Arms had finished designing the 1968 version of their 650 Thunderbolt, they probably leaned back in their chairs, put their feet up on the desk, and complimented one another on a good job, well done. At least they should have—the Thunderbolt is one of the best-designed motorcycles that we have had the pleasure of testing. Unfortunately, what is obviously an outstanding engineering exercise has been negated, to some extent, by a lack of attention down on the assembly lines. Blessed with beautifully proportioned lines and as clean an engine-transmission assembly as there is on the market, the Thunderbolt has been flawed by indifferent workmanship. Flawed in a way it doesn't deserve.©

Your Triumph Distributors extend their thanks to you—the thousands of riders from coast to coast, who have demonstrated their realization of the excellence of Triumph Motorcycles.

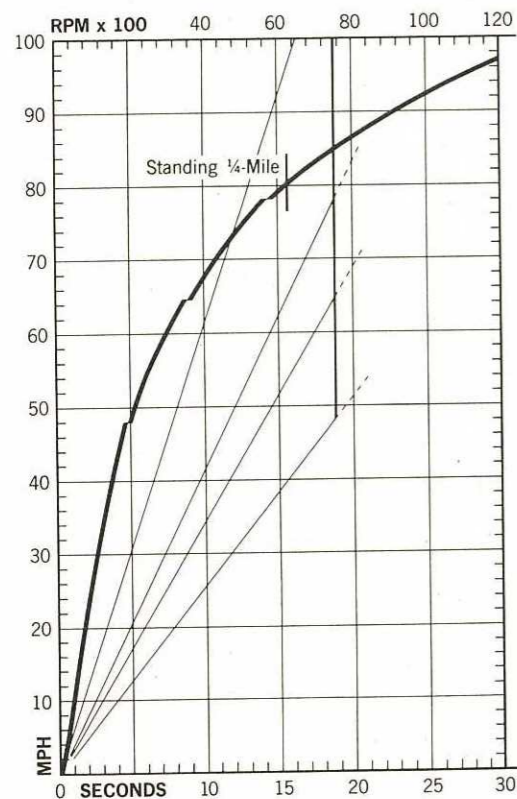
Thank you for another wonderful year. Triumph welcomes you who will be joining the Triumph ranks for the first time.

Motorcycling continues to become a more popular sporting activity. With this expansion of the sport the need for skillful and responsible riding is increasingly more important. Triumph joins all enthusiasts in urging everyone who rides to remember that the use of the roads is a privilege as well as a right. Let us guard this privilege well.

# TRIUMPH



BSA 650 THUNDERBOLT



Price, suggested retail .....	East coast, POE \$1,199
Tire, front .....	3.25 in. x 19 in.
rear .....	4.00 in. x 18 in.
Brakes, front .....	Single leading shoe, 8 in. x 1.625 in.
rear .....	Single leading shoe, 7 in. x 1.125 in.
Break swept area .....	66.23 sq. in.
Specific brake loading .....	8.58 lb/sq. in.
Engine type .....	Four stroke twin
Bore and stroke .....	2.95 in. x 2.91 in., 75 mm x 74 mm
Piston displacement .....	39.91 cu. in., 654 cc
Compression ratio .....	9:1
Carburetion .....	(1) 28mm, Amal concentric
Air filtration .....	Gauze and wire mesh
Ignition .....	Battery-and-coil
Bhp @ rpm .....	42 @ 6800
Mph/1000 rpm, top gear .....	15.9
Fuel capacity .....	4 gal.
Oil capacity .....	5 pt.
Lighting .....	Alternator, 15 watts
Battery .....	12 v, 10 ah
Gear ratios, overall .....	(1) 12.27 (2) 7.80
.....	(3) 5.58 (4) 4.87
Wheelbase .....	56 in.
Seat height .....	33 in.
Ground clearance .....	8 in.
Curb weight .....	391 lb.
Test weight .....	568 lb.
Instruments .....	Speedometer/odometer, ammeter
0-60 mph .....	7.40 seconds
Standing start 1/4 mile .....	15.51 seconds—80.00 mph
Top speed .....	98 mph

# EDDIEWIRTH THE EDDIEWIRTH

Take yourself down to Ascot on the first Saturday night of any month, plunk down on one of the crusty plank benches, and peer through the dim brown haze to the infield. You will see all the riders and mechanics there, standing in small groups talking or fiddling with the bikes. Because it's TT night, you'll also see Eddie Wirth, Jr.—unmistakably. Eddie doesn't look much like your average small wiry professional motorcycle racer. In fact, standing there in his colored leathers, he looks far more like a Green Bay Line Backer who's wandered into the wrong ball park. At six foot three and 190 pounds, he'll be the blonde giant looming above the others. Somewhere near him you'll see a smaller, older fellow who looks more at home. That's Ed Wirth, Sr., founder of a father-son tuner-rider competition team that has cut quite a respectable notch in TT and other U.S. professional racing.

Not that the Wirths are world beaters—Eddie the Younger is only twenty-four and probably has too much going for him to generate that show-'em-all motivation. And Daddy's got himself a prosperous little business, a house overlooking the Pacific, and too much independence to be bound by the competition grind. Right now the Wirths are just a highly interesting variation on the breed of men that tune and ride, partly for prize money but mostly for the sheer excitement of it.

The whole enterprise got going way back in 1930 when Ed Wirth Sr., fresh out of high school, went looking for a job. Now in 1930 this country's corporations were much happier just staying in existence than handing out promising futures to teenagers. Eventually a printing shop offered Ed a job as a messenger—providing he drive their ancient H-D sidehack. Ed snapped up the deal but promptly went down to make payment on his own, new, 45 cubic inch sidevalve Harley-Davidson. He shagged zinc plates and print orders all over Fargo, N. D., until the boys inside saw how much energy he was putting into his work. They offered him an inside job on the presses, and Ed Wirth Sr. had taken his last motorcycle ride for pay.

Twelve years later he knew a lot about printing and had worked his way West to Los Angeles. When World War II loomed up, he temporarily abandoned his trade to become a flight test mechanic at Douglas Aircraft. Soon after Ed Jr. was born.

The elder Ed found working on experimental aircraft an engaging occupation, and he was fascinated by jet engines when they first appeared. He describes with amusement one of his favorite projects: fixing a jet to a piston-engine aircraft. The reciprocating engine was to tow the plane to an altitude where the pilot could "safely" experiment with the unfamiliar powerplant.

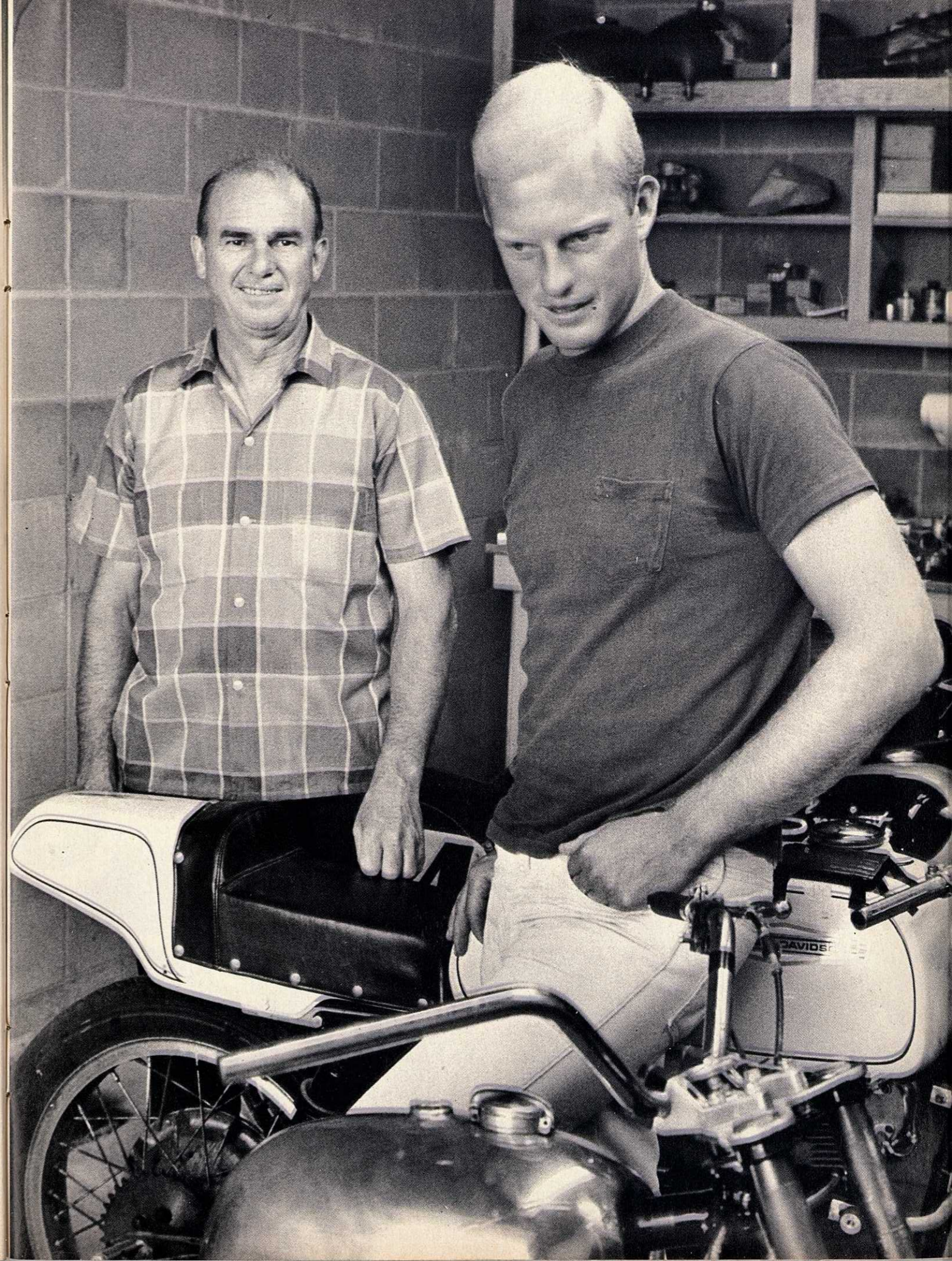
After the war, Ed Wirth's former interests and a growing need for independence asserted themselves. In 1949 he quit Douglas to set up his own printing company. His shop sat on a hill overlooking Manhattan Beach, and the family moved into an apartment upstairs. Eddie Jr. was soon working among the type racks and printing presses along with his parents. That was, of course, somewhat before the coaches at school began eyeing his already impressive physique, and before Eddie himself began eyeing the dirt bikes roaring about the Southern California landscape.

At 16, Ed Jr. was riding scrambles on a Maico 250 bought and tuned by his father. Despite his physical size, he was quick and brave, and soon began winning regularly. His next bike was a BSA 250, and then he graduated to a BSA 650 twin. By the time he was 18, Eddie was riding Class C Novice events at Ascot Park, only a few miles from his home. Running against the swift, he didn't always win, but he won enough to make Amateur at the end of his first year, and Expert at the end of his second.

During high school, Ed Jr. had alternated between the sport that seemed such a natural for him, football, and the sport that really fired his competitive spirit, motorcycling. By the time he got to college, where he studied printing, he had made his choice. Weekends and summers saw him riding the half-miles and TTs. He was best on the TT circuits, which on the West Coast are run on a winding dirt surface that contains one or more jumps—much like a scrambles course except the dirt is packed almost as hard as pavement. Another reason that Ed may have made the best of the TTs is that there is no 500cc limitation to engine size. He could ride a machine strong enough to haul around his considerable size at speed. He began with a Triumph 650 and in the last couple of years has been riding a factory-sponsored BSA in the TTs.

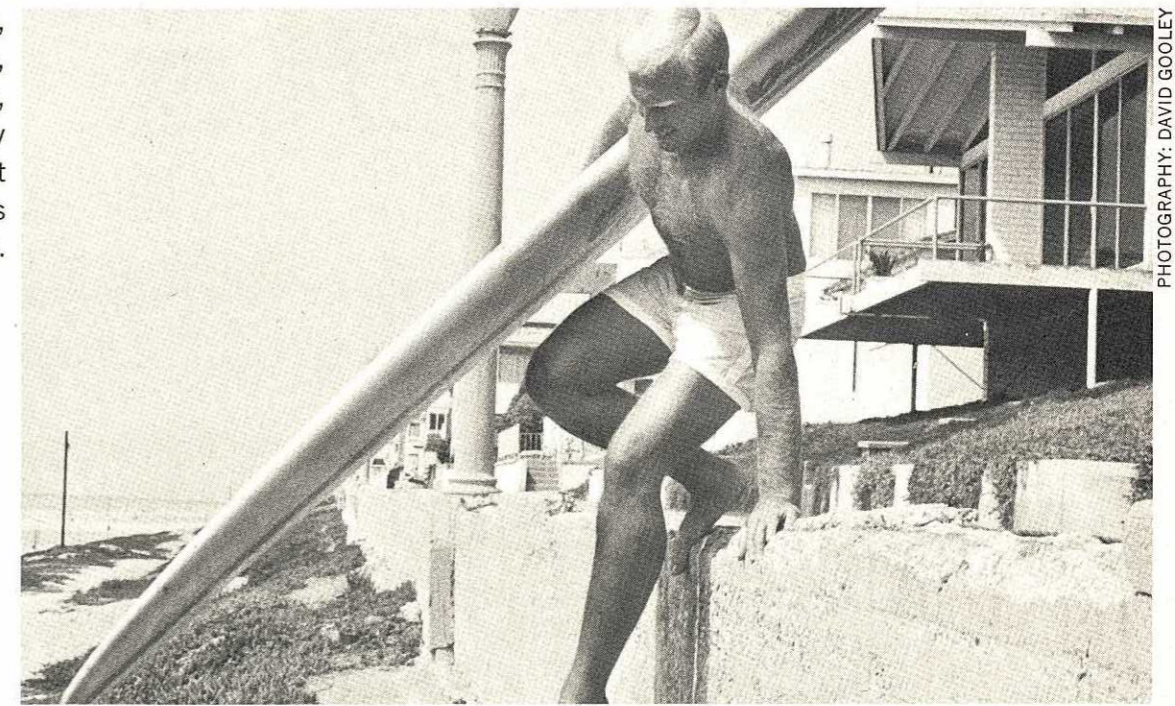
Eddie rode enough and won enough to get assigned National Number 84 by the AMA. He knew that to really develop as a professional he would have to fill out his range of riding talents. In 1965 he took his first crack at the "eastern county-fair round"—the innumerable half-mile and short-track events held during the summer in the eastern and middle-western states. For the most part, it's Harley country, and the competition has spawned such great riders as Bart Markel, George Roeder, Carroll Resweber, Roger Reiman, and many more. As Eddie says, "You might pull up at the most obscure little county fair in the world and find all the country's greatest dirt-trackers just waiting for you." He adds, "My first season wasn't exactly what you'd call spectacular, but I came home with money in

Father and son go racing, the one a tuner and the other a rider. Junior's almost too big for the game, and Dad's got a full-time business to run. Yet the Wirths are that rare family team that works hard enough and harmoniously enough to bring home places and prize money in top professional competition.





In the pits, on the course, or at the beach, the Wirths play for excitement as much as for the victory.



PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVID GOOLEY

my pocket. Not much, but I was alive."

That first year on the road actually included only the tail-end of the summer season. In 1966 he waited until the major spring Nationals were finished in California before setting out once again. His travelling companion was Harold Sellers, who prepared and tuned the bikes and got half the prize money. Eddie and Harold set up a sort of super pick-up truck with make-shift bunks and room for the bikes; a Harley Sprint short-tracker, a Harley KR half-miler, a BSA Gold Star half miler, and the BSA 650 TT bike. There were also tires, tools, parts and all the miscellany necessary for week-in week-out racing.

It was a better season for Eddie, and he returned home with a little more money in his pocket. "We were usually the first to get to the track and the last to leave," he says. "We couldn't even get out a wrench without unloading the whole truck. Bart and the others would show up with one bike, ride, and go home. Not us." They arrived back in California having put some 110,000 miles on the truck, and Eddie was one giant step closer to being a top professional rider. One of his prizes had been first place in the TT National at Santa Fe, Illinois.

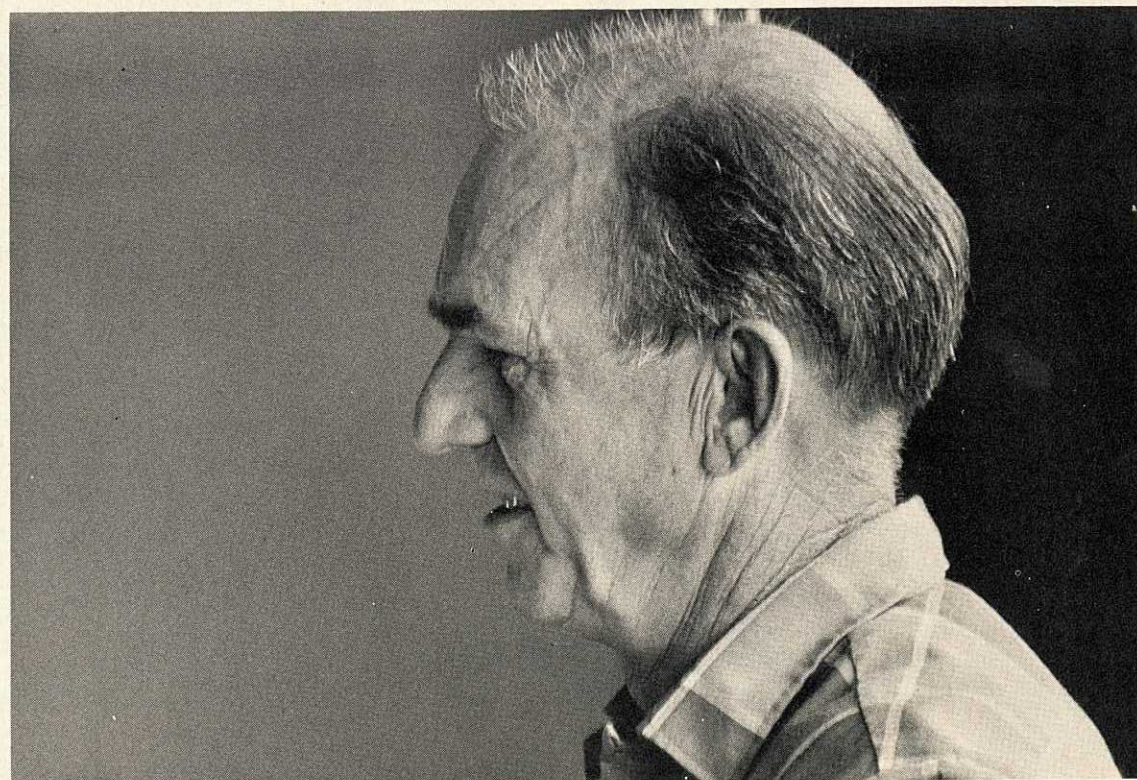
Riding regularly at Ascot as well as doing part of the National round, Eddie Wirth Jr. has gotten to know most of the top AMA riders, particularly those from California. For a while he worked with Ralph White and learned much about riding and preparing race machinery. Dan Haaby and Mert Lawwill also helped him learn the trade, and his visits to Ascot brought him into contact with such regulars as Sammy Tanner and Eddie Mulder. The top pros are always on the move, though, and Eddie probably got to know Swede Savage better than the others. He follows Swede's new auto racing career with considerable interest and thinks maybe if somebody someday offers him a car, he'll try his hand at driving.

Meanwhile he and his father keep the printing

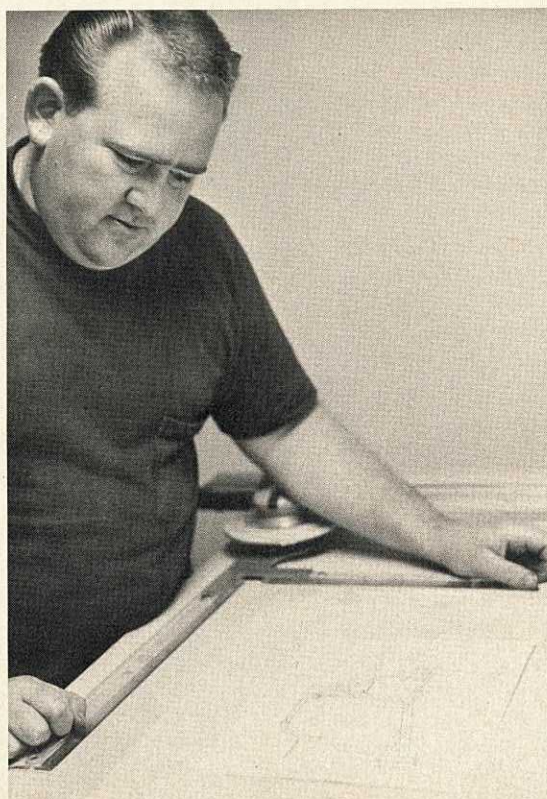
business going. Because it's a family business they can open and close shop at will. This gives them great flexibility, allowing them to take time off for the longer race weekends or distant tracks. Ed Sr. still takes care of the KR, a machine with which he has become quite familiar over the years. He can fit it either to the road-racing or flat-track frame, and tune it accordingly. He goes with Ed Jr. to as many races as he can, which is just about every race on the West Coast and one or two Nationals, such as Daytona, in the East. He never misses any of those monthly TTs at Ascot, where his son's talents have so far shown their best.



Ed Sr. tuned his first Harley sidevalver in 1930, still tunes Jr.'s KR. Close pal Harold Sellers takes over for the new BSA dirt trackers.



The Wirths, father and son, have a similar manner of presenting themselves, however different might be their inner thoughts. Both are quiet and almost gentle in their dealings with strangers. They are invariably open, earnest, and friendly. Ed Sr. seems to take pride in his son's accomplishments and asks no credit for himself. If he worries about the dangers of professional racing, he doesn't burden his son with it. "I suppose I worried more at the beginning," he says, "but now I just go and hope



he'll win." He enjoys helping prepare the race bikes, although as his business prospers and motorcycle engines evolve, he leaves more and more of this work to Harold Sellers. The business gives Ed Sr. the independence he loves and allows his son the flexibility necessary to pursue racing. When he retires, he'll turn the shop over to Eddie Jr. and maybe buy one of the many ocean-going power boats that moor at the marinas a few hundred yards from his home.

Although Eddie Jr. may look a bit out of place standing among small professional racers, he rarely looks out of place anywhere else. Recently he and some friends rented a house right on Manhattan Beach. Not far from the Los Angeles airport, the beach scene is a favorite for airline hostesses and the bachelor crowd. Eddie goes surfing at dawn or during his mid-day break and doesn't want for companionship. He points at the relative shambles of his beach house and says, "What's the sense of cleaning up? You get everything right and that night there's another party." A man needs relaxing after the hard grind of Class C riding.

The Wirths will return to Daytona next spring for another go at the 200-miler. They haven't had much luck with the road racer yet, but Eddie Jr.'s determined to become an all-around rider. Meanwhile Harold Sellers, a machinist by trade, is building a new frame for the TT bike with BSA support. If he gets more backing, Eddie Jr. may do the whole national circuit next year. The one thing he has in common with other riders: he likes to ride. So look for him out front at the Ascot TTs and look for him trying at everything else. You won't have to look much further to find someone else looking just a little harder. Ed Wirth Sr. saw his boy on his first set of two wheels and will stay with him as long as there are races to be ridden. ©

CYCLE

# BSA



# THE BOLD WORLD of BSA for 1968



**BSA**  
**LIGHTNING**

650cc (40 cu. in.) Twin  
with dual carburetors

Acceleration to match its name, sport bike stop-and-go power.

This is the thriller, scaled up to highest highway performance. This is the BIG dual twin: twin carbs, twin cylinders, new double leading shoe racing front brake. This is the one with the revs, the full race camshaft, with the 53 long-legged horses. This is the best in super sport.

Twin mounted speedometer and tach give you a commanding view of real performance. See and feel surging power at the flick of your wrist.



**BSA**  
**FIREBIRD  
SCRAMBLER**

650cc (40 cu. in.) Twin  
with dual carburetors

This big twin leaves the other scramblers buzzing in its wake. It's the famous Lightning engine with 10 to 1 compression and quiet, free-flow exhausts to give you every last fraction of horsepower. Add to this our new double leading shoe, racing type front brake and you have the winning edge in power, speed, and handling.



**BSA**  
**VICTOR 441  
SPECIAL**

441cc Alloy Single

This is the one that won the 250-Mile National Championship Enduro. It acts and looks like a winner. Doubles as a road cruiser with new 12 volt battery, lighting and ignition contact breaker. The best in both fields is BSA.



# CLASS

In every performance range, in every type of bike, BSA class tells. It shows in the chrome plate and flashing enamel colors on the outside and in the superlative finish of all moving parts inside.

Class tells in performance. In every category, BSA puts surging power at your disposal.

Class tells in engine features: high-lift camshaft for maximum go and speed — finned rocker box cover cools the oil as it hots up the looks. Large-bore exhaust pipes hush the power and ease up on the back pressure. Finally, class tells in durability. Every BSA is built to give you all the go you can handle — and to go year after thrilling year.

# TOUGH AND FAST



BSA power wins! Here's Dick Mann winning the 1967 Peoria National TT Championship in his BSA 650.

Dick also rode his BSA to victory in the 12-mile National at Reading, Pennsylvania, where BSA made a clean sweep.

BSA — with Dan Haaby up — won the 8-mile National at Ascot, California. BSA took 4 out of the first 5 places in this greatest of all dirt track events.

Great for the roughest trails. And underneath the glossy beauty there is ruggedness to spare. Oversized racing brakes, rugged shock absorbers measure up to the engine thrust.



**BSA THUNDERBOLT** 650cc (40 cu. in.) Twin

Big engine, small rev-count per mile, smoothest cruising performance and flashing new chrome fenders. The Thunderbolt is the one with the tamed thunder.



**BSA ROYAL STAR** 500cc (30.5 cu. in.) Twin

All the power you'll ever need to flatten the steepest hills, even with two up. Easy starting, easy riding, easy to look at and the lowest priced, full sized Twin in the line.



**BSA STARFIRE 250** 250cc (15 cu. in.) Single

This is the lightweight with the heavyweight performance. Four-stroke o.h.v. power makes this one look and act like a bike with twice the displacement.



**BSA SPITFIRE MK IV SPECIAL**

650cc (40 cu. in.) Twin with dual carburetors

This is the super sport tuned for performance. This is the one described as the "fastest street machine under 750cc". This limited-edition bike has racing parts and the new double leading shoe racing front brake and has been timed at an actual 120 mph, but canters along at top legal speeds like a well-mannered thoroughbred.

Specifications may vary between Eastern & Western models. Prices and specifications of all models subject to change without notice.



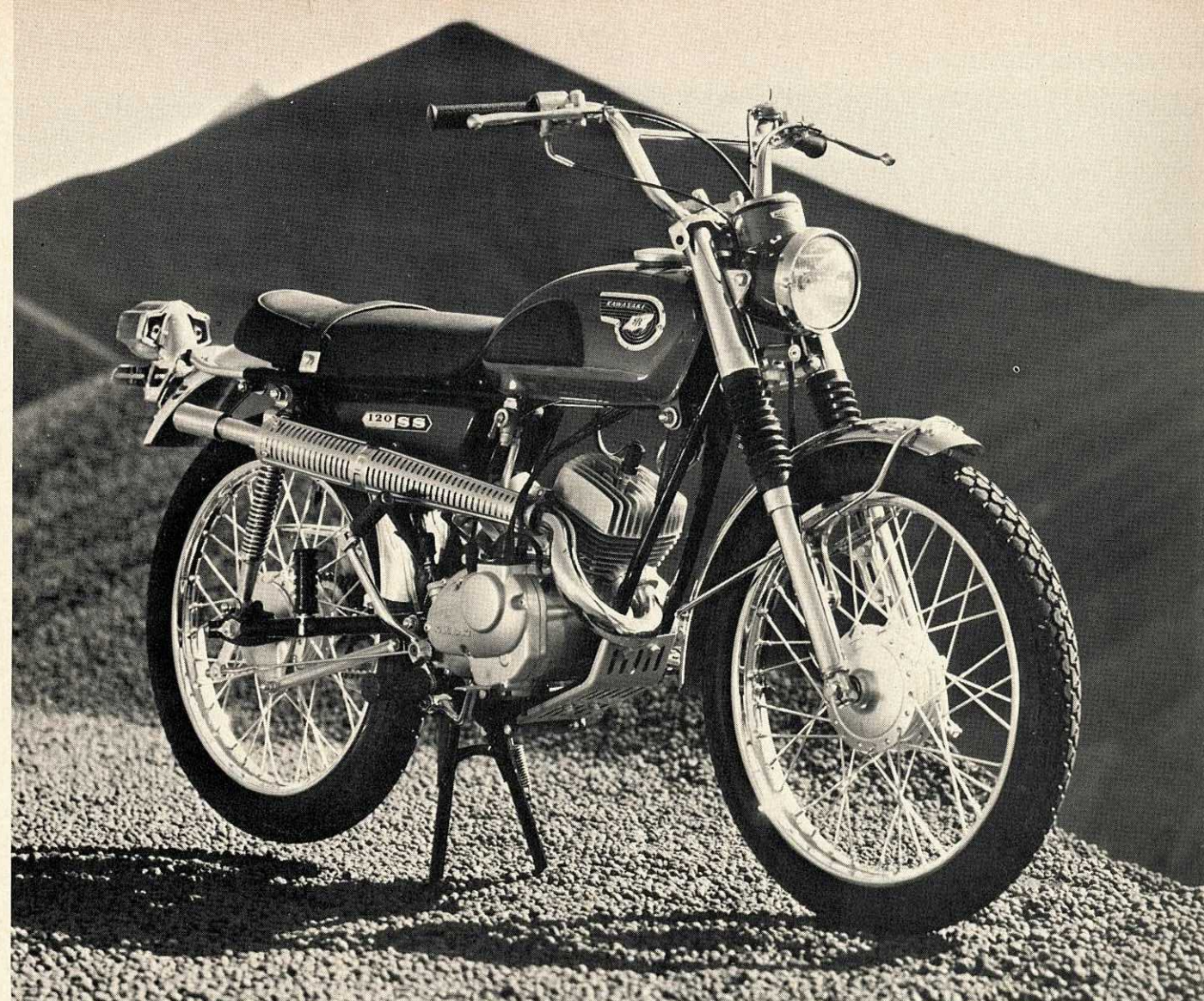
**BSA SHOOTING STAR 441** 441cc Alloy Single

Big power, light weight, this adds up to the best of handling and sparkling top-end performance. And because go-pow without stopping power is no go, the Shooting Star has a new front brake — a full 8" in diameter.

# BSA

BSA East:  
639 Passaic Avenue,  
Nutley, New Jersey 07110

BSA West:  
P.O. Box 337  
Duarte, California 91010



CYCLE ROAD TEST

## KAWASAKI 120 C2SS ROAD RUNNER

Not an expert's super-swift scrambler, or even a good enduro machine, but absolutely irresistible as a "duffer's delight".

Once upon a time, motorcycle manufacturers found it easy to add a "trail bike" to their line of models. Bolt on a set of leverage-type handlebars and a high exhaust pipe, and the old street-rider's tiddler became a new street scrambler. It was a snap, and a lot of people made a lot of money doing just that and no more. Now, things are different. The realization that this country is crawling with hill-and-gully riders has moved the manufacturers to produce models designed expressly for a ride in the woods. Not scramblers, and not even "trials" bikes; simply nice, inexpensive little play-time

motorcycles for exploring country trails.

A prime example of the type is Kawasaki's model C2SS "Road Runner." That name, Road Runner, should not be taken to mean that the bike is made for the road. The Road Runner is a bird, common in the southwest, that can't fly but runs like you wouldn't believe out across the desert. Kawasaki's meaning, in giving their C2SS this designation, is unmistakable.

The bike's appearance doesn't leave much room for doubt, either. It has been designed to go places that would founder a low-slung touring bike, and it looks the

part. Not only is it high, with bags of ground clearance, it is also narrow—all of which means that the bike will go between obstacles as well as climb over them. That ability to squeeze through narrow gaps is enhanced by the fact that the footpegs fold. And, if the pegs get folded accidentally, they are spring-loaded and will pop right back out into their extended position.

One thing that really impressed us was the "rightness" of the little Kawasaki's design. The frame is a light, sturdy, duplex cradle-type structure, which surrounds (and protects) the engine. The engine itself is a rotary-valve, 2-stroke single, fitted with an automatic lubrication system and driving through a 4-speed transmission. In the modern fashion, engine and transmission are carried in the same casing, and all castings are of light aluminum alloy. Even the cylinder is mostly aluminum, but with a cast-iron sleeve.

Because the Road Runner is intended for some street riding (as in making the trip between home and hills), it has been equipped to be legal out on the public roads. That is to say, it has lights that





really work, and a horn ditto, and a speedometer, and a battery in the electrical system to keep the lights burning brightly even if the crankshaft-mounted generator is being twirled too slowly to work up much output.

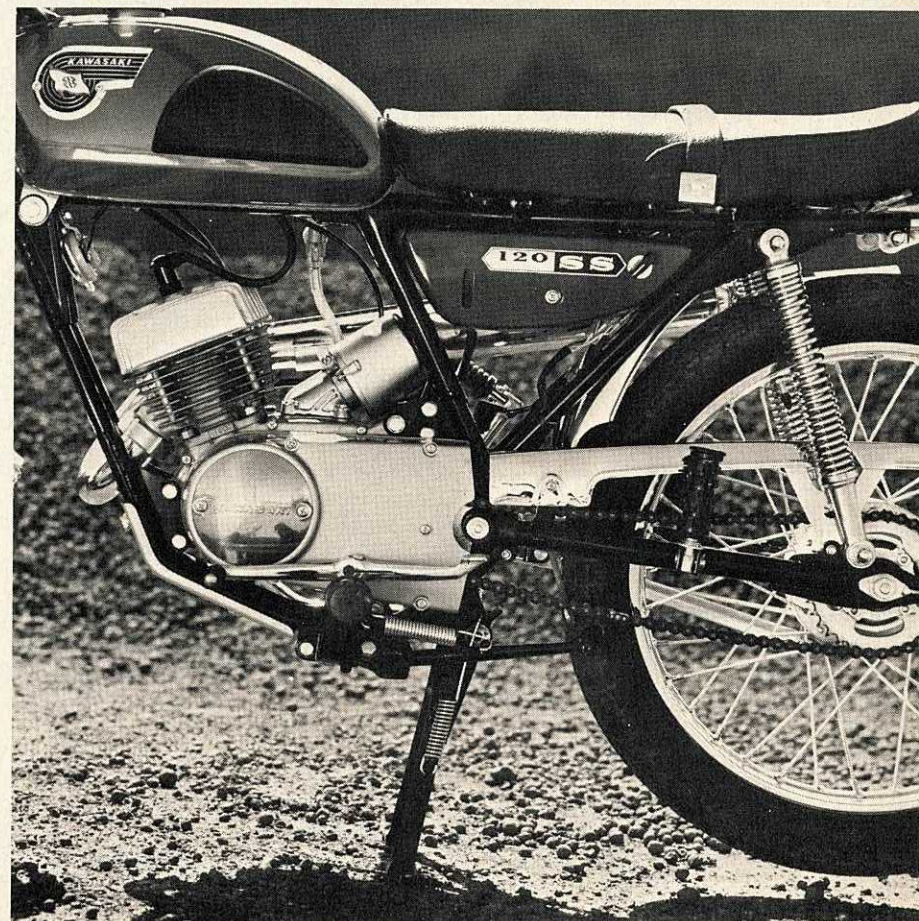
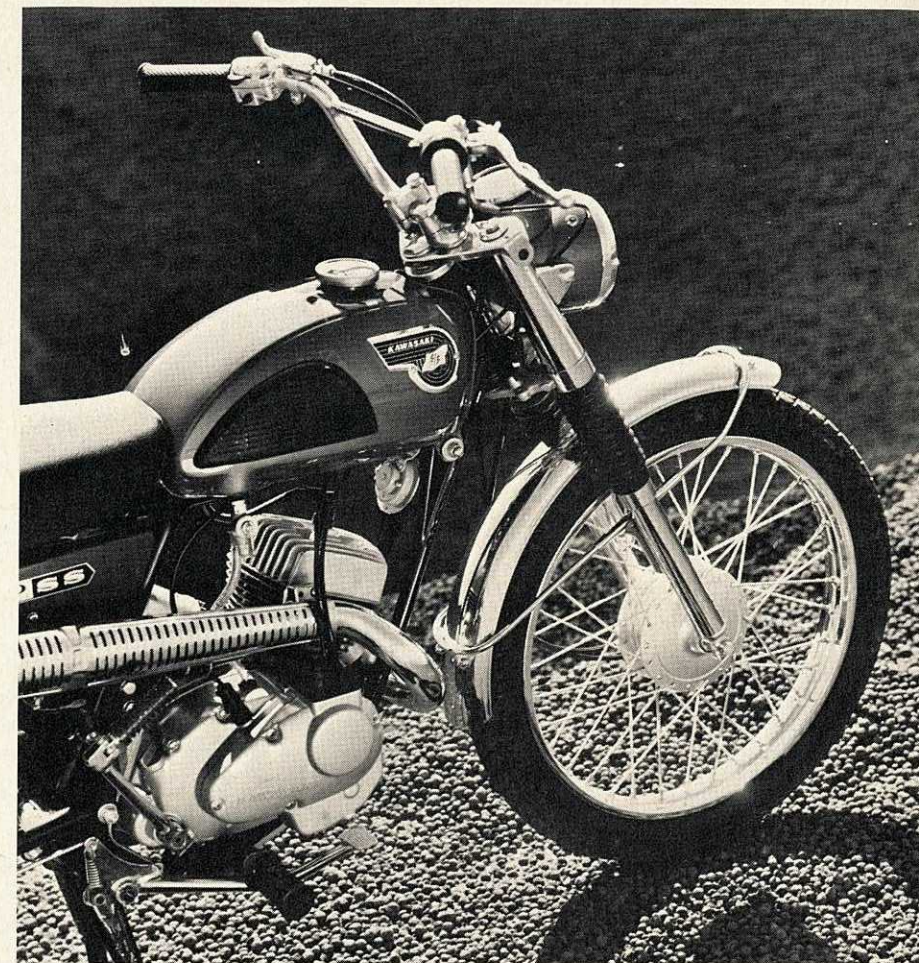
Of course, some riders may live out in areas where road equipment is not strictly necessary, and such riders may want to lighten the bike by removing all the street-legal hardware. With some motorcycles that presents a serious problem, for most ignition systems do not work unless connected to a battery. Fortunately, the little Kawasaki's generator is also a magneto, and the engine gets a spark even if the battery is discharged.

Some riders may also find it more convenient to go for the model C2TR "Trail," which is nearly identical to the C2SS Road Runner but outfitted with knobby tires and a quick-change rear sprocket arrangement. Or, they can buy these items separately from Kawasaki and convert their C2SS.

That quick-change rear sprocket is a wonderfully clever device. The rear hub carries two sprockets: the smaller, "road" sprocket has 37 teeth and is fixed securely to the hub; the larger, "power" sprocket, which has 59 teeth, is attached to the road sprocket. There are four bolts linking the two sprockets, and when you tighten these the large sprocket, which has a dished center, is pulled into place over the smaller sprocket. Obviously, the chain must be removed before doing the job, and equally obvious is the fact that the chain is going to be too short after the big sprocket is in place. To handle that, you have a 12-link extension, with an extra master-link, which is added to the chain. Anyone reasonably adept with wrench and pliers should be able to make the change in about 3 minutes.

A respectable 11.5 bhp from 115cc places the Kawasaki's engine right in there with all the tiny tigers—but it is wide-range torque, rather than horsepower, that is most noteworthy. The torque "peak" is at 5000 rpm, only you really couldn't call it a peak because the torque curve is so nearly flat. At 5000 rpm, you get 9.1 lb-ft of torque. This flattens only slightly (to 7.0 lb-ft) clear up at 8000 rpm and there is 6.5 lb-ft down at 2000 rpm. The very flat torque curve is reflected in the engine's willingness to tow the bike along at almost any speed in any gear. To this extent, it behaves exactly as though it was a mildly-tuned engine of about twice its displacement. It is this characteristic, as much as any other, that makes the Kawasaki Road Runner such an appealing fun-and-games motorcycle.

The engine did have one unappealing peculiarity. It started easily, and ran smoothly most of the time—the exception being when the bike was being run



## KAWASAKI 120 *Continued*

fast over choppy terrain. Then the carburetion would go all funny and the engine would misfire. We have heard others, who have bought Road Runners, complain of the same problem, so the difficulty was not one confined to our test bike. We also know that the people at Kawasaki have been working to correct the problem, and may even have it cured by now.

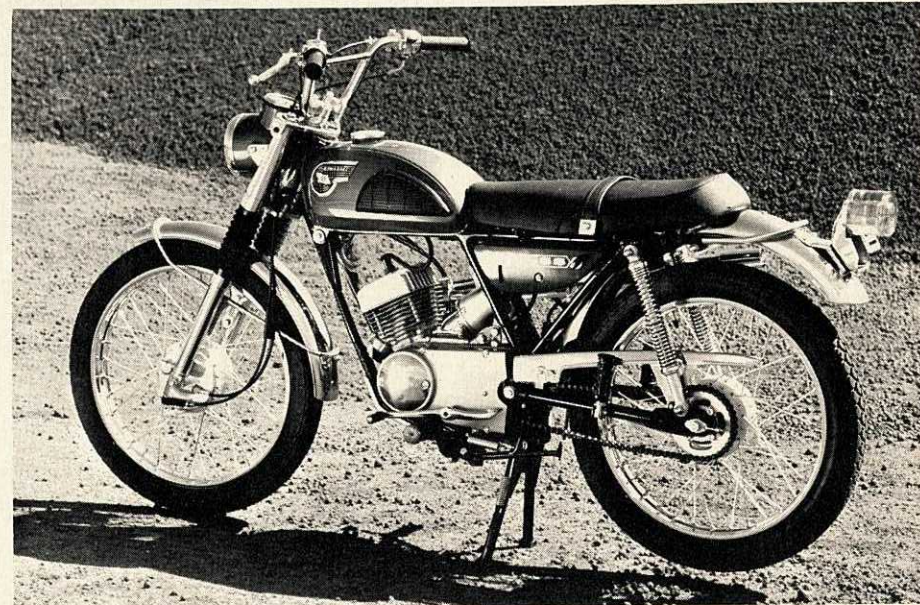
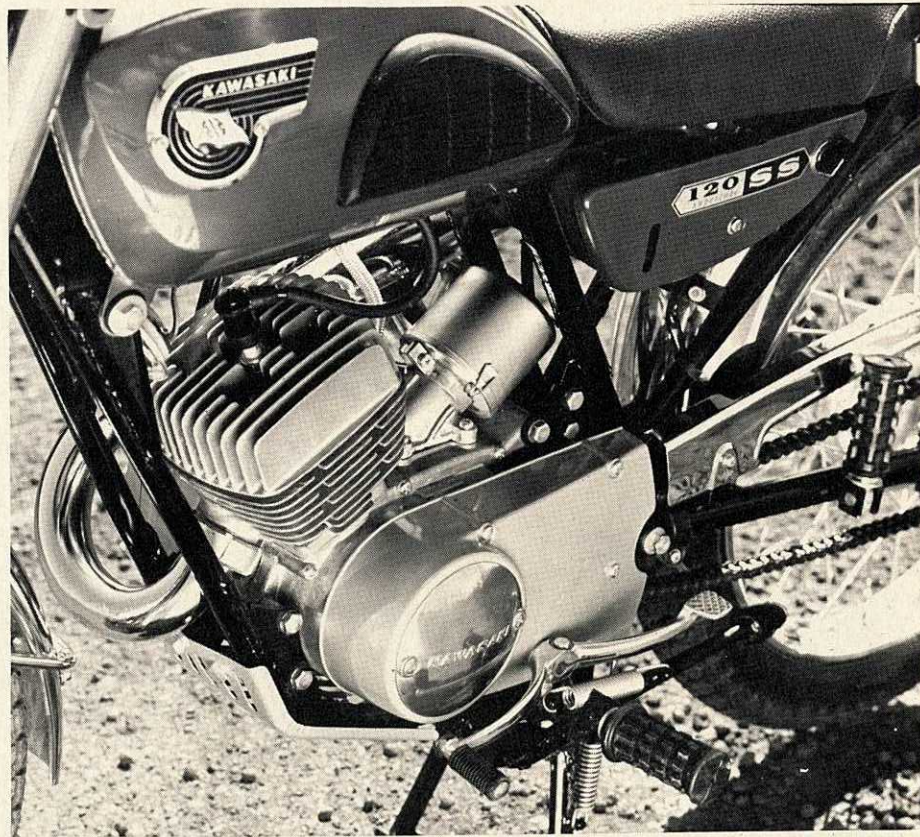
While they are working on that problem, they should give a thought to improving the Road Runner's suspension. Wheel travel seems adequate, and the spring rates are about right for the average American rider, but the damping is all but non-existent. Get frisky with the bike, over rutted ground, and the wheels go absolutely wild. This sort of behaviour is, of course, characteristic of small, inexpensive (maybe that's the key word) playtime motorcycles. Perhaps, at the price, we have no right to expect more. The C2SS goes for about \$450 (west coast, POE) and the C2TR costs another \$10. You get a lot for the money.

One of the things you get is what Kawasaki calls "Superlube." This is another automatic oiling system, in which a crankshaft-driven pump keeps the engine lubricated. The pump pulls oil from a supply tank under the seat, and delivers it to the engine at the intake port, just in front of the rotary valve. There is an over-riding control on the pump, linked to the throttle, which adjusts the flow of oil to match throttle-opening. No pre-mixing of fuel and oil. No mistakes in fuel/oil ratio, and a much-reduced tendency toward plug-fouling.

You also get a surprisingly comfortable motorcycle. The seat looks too thinly padded, but isn't; the handlebars are up high enough, and have enough reach, to suit even a rather tall rider. Provision has been made for the carrying of a passenger, with a grab-strap stretched across the seat and an extra set of pegs that fold down from the swing-arm.

The Road Runner's handling is a trifle "sudden," which is not really surprising when you consider that the wheelbase is only 45.7". However, this trait does not show itself unless you ride harder than is prudent and harder than will most of the people who buy this type motorcycle. The average rider will not find the little Kawasaki lacking in any way unless he plows into loose sand—at which point the narrow-section tires sink from sight.

Unquestionably the best aspect of Kawasaki's Road Runner is that the bike is simply *fun* to ride. It is sturdy, so you can't break it with your exuberance, and it is too mildly tuned to be fussy about what gear you use. The Road Runner is perfect for the Sunday-afternoon duffer who likes to give his bike a high-spirited flogging and not worry about consequences. ©



### KAWASAKI 120

Price, suggested retail .....	West Coast	Ignition.....	Magneto
	POE \$419	Bhp @.....	11.5@7000
Tire, front .....	2.50 in. x 18 in.	Mph/1000 rpm, top gear .....	7.7
Tire, rear .....	2.75 in. x 18 in.	Fuel capacity .....	1.7 gal.
Engine type .....	Oil injected two-stroke rotary valve single.	Lighting .....	6 v alternator, 19.5 watts
Bore and stroke.....	2.09 in. x 2.07 in., 53 mm x 52.5 mm	Battery .....	6 v, 4 ah
Piston displacement .....	702 cu. in. 115 cc	Gear ratios, overall ...	(1) 24.8 (2) 15.4 (3) 11.0 (4) 8.94
Compression ratio .....	6.7:1	Wheelbase.....	45.7 in.
Carburetion.....	18 mm, Mikuni	Seat height .....	28.1 in.
Air filtration .....	Felt-type	Ground clearance .....	6.3 in.
		Curb weight .....	186 lbs.
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## Flat-top haircuts and gunfighters' eyes...

BY DAVID E. DAVIS, JR.

Lately, it would seem, the Republic has been filling up with frozen-faced, blue-haired ladies who staunchly believe that Today's Youth (as they call it) is going straight to hell in a hypodermic syringe. Many of these dowagers, for whom active sin is only a memory anyway, have somehow managed to include motorcycling in their list of subversive teenage activities—along with draft card burning, folk singing and free love—but they couldn't be more wrong.

Ah, calm yourselves, post-menopause pessimists . . . the American Motorcycle Association is on your side. If you could only have attended the August AMA National at Indianapolis Raceway Park, you'd be enlightened and uplifted by the knowledge that there's a whole important segment of Today's Youth that is kept pure, unblemished, and out of touch with the contemporary world by the kindly, paternalistic AMA . . . a sort of DAR, or Eastern Star, for motorcyclists.

If you read the frozen-faced, blue-haired periodicals, you know that any large gathering of motorcyclists is going to be a sensational orgy with Hell's Angles types sacking the town and committing unspeakable outrages upon the frozen-faced, blue-haired dowagers and their daughters, right? Wrong. The ladies should be so lucky. The towns of Indianapolis and Clermont and Speedway with their old white clapboard houses and cinder block shopping centers and tool-and-die shops

were invaded by some 4000 enthusiastic motorcycle fans, and the two-wheeled influx caused fewer headaches for the cops than an Oral Roberts Tent Meeting.

What a disappointment. A long-time observer of the Indianapolis 500 blew into town to watch his first big motorcycle race, and went looking for some action at the Holiday Inn. There were a lot of pickup trucks full of racing bikes parked outside, and there was even a big Hairy Mastodon of a motorcycle parked right in the lobby. Later examination revealed that it was not a Hairy Mastodon but a Mammoth, that it had been parked there by Mr. Floyd Clymer with the full agreement of the management, and that it advertised the facts that Mr. Clymer has emerged recently as America's premier Mammoth-Merchant, and that he was promoting the race this weekend. But for now, our tourist was happy to believe that the big beast had been ridden into the lobby by Peter Fonda and Nancy Sinatra, who'd parked it there while they carved their initials in the room clerk or something.

The bar was where the action would be. The bartender was wearing a bizarre pseudo-military uniform of a style and size that indicated it had been last used in an elementary-school production of "March of the Wooden Soldiers" . . . only the bartender was a splendidly-stacked lady in her

middle-twenties, and the ample proof of her sex and overall good condition was doing its best to escape from both ends of the little soldier suit. Orgy-ville!

There was a piano bar in the corner and two bored local housewives sat there, attracted—like our tourist—by the hope of a little wild, motorcycle-type swinging. They sang along and smiled with their mouths, but their eyes and every line in their tired faces seems to be scrubbing bathrooms and bitching at the kids. A wholesale hardware salesman tried to seduce them with his off-key Al Jolson impressions, but they weren't having any—thanks, anyway, they'd prefer to wait for a couple of those tough young motorcyclists to come along.

A half-dozen tough young motorcyclists sat at a center table. They had half-rimmed glasses and clip-on bow-ties and white hair and wives at their elbows, but they were real motorcycle people. You could tell right away, because they were discussing the thrills and excitement of the AMA administrative procedures and protocol. Four more tough young motorcyclists sauntered in and sized up the bartender. It appeared that they were less interested in her body than the possible ability to guess that they were under-age. They looked like off-duty GIs in wash-and-wear suntan pants and white sidewall haircuts, but they ordered their drinks like seasoned veterans—one Brandy Alexander, one VO and 7-Up, and tall things with a lot of orange-sections and cherries harpooned at the tops of the glasses. They were smooth as hell, and getting pretty loquacious after a while, but then a pretty little girl approached one of them—apparently a younger sister—and said Mom said it was time to come back to the room. So much for Thunder At The Holiday Inn.

If you doubt for a moment that AMA racing is fun for the whole family, breakfast the next morning would have convinced you. There seemed to be as many kids as adults, and there were no Hell's Angles or ladies-of-the-evening anywhere in sight. All very chatty and cheerful, but there's something about it that makes you wonder. Maybe it's their eyes . . . Everybody looks older than he or she really is. Even the little kids have an experienced kind of cool that comes from countless weekends spent in Holiday Inns and Quality Courts just a short drive from countless Carlsbads and Daytonas.

They look like dustbowl-depression people who've finally made it. They've worked too hard and traveled too much and seen too many guys hurt themselves. They aren't the sleek fat-cats that turn out for the sporty car races—these motorcycle families are Grant Wood's American Gothic farmers in short-sleeved sportshirts and AMA-offical golf-pro hats.

The impression is reinforced at the race track. It's an old-fashioned world where men are men and women are banished to the nowhere beyond the fence. The older women have been there before, and they expertly head for the most comfortable spots to watch the day's events, discuss matters technological and personal, and keep an eye on the kids.

The younger girls—newcomers not yet steeped in the pre-war lore of male-motorcyclist supremacy—tend to hang around the pits too long, finally getting chased out by track officials (bad guys), AMA officials (hard-handed, flinty-eyed,

but lovable daddies), or all the rent-a-cops (Zero). These young ones are also noteworthy because they don't yet have the *look*—the weary, too knowledgeable, sunburned-eyes look of the senior women.

With the women gone, the pit scene looks like a Marine bivouac. The motorcycles are heavy weapons, the shirtless riders in their leather pants and boots are seasoned combat veterans, and the bustling officials are non-coms and junior officers. Cool is everything. Even the rankiest novice lounges around and talks easy and hopes he looks like a battered old pro who's bounced off stone walls in Belgium and hung on to finish in the freezing rain at The Isle.

Not that there aren't plenty of genuine battered old pros around, though . . . "Old" is apt to be something like 34, but there are plenty of guys who obviously have some pretty interesting miles on them. Guys with scarred lips and chins. Guys with broken or missing teeth. Guys too young to limp like that. Older guys—officials—with variations on the same battle-scarred theme. One with a missing arm.

It's the most American-looking and sounding bunch in the world, and the frozen-faced, blue-haired ladies would swoon with middle-aged motherly rapture if they could only touch one—and maybe tell him to wash his face, and put his shirt on like a gentleman. But gentlemen they ain't. Not in the time-honored NEW YORKER magazine sense of the word. They come from Texas and Southern California and Tennessee and Baltimore and they tend to be fat-free, bantam-weight-contender-types with flat-top haircuts and gunfighters' eyes.

The rules for acceptable rider-behavior are so well established and strict, and conformity to the pattern is so universal, that it's almost impossible to spot the real stars among the hopeful hordes of amateurs, novices, and spear-carriers. But class will tell, and before long, you've got Gary Nixon, Cal Rayborn, Bart Markel, Dick Hammer, and a couple of others like Ron Grant and Georgie Roeder spotted.

On the track, it's a lot easier. In spite of full-coverage evil-robot helmets and dark visors and your inability to tell one racing bike from another, you soon get people sorted out. Nixon is easy—he has a quality that experts also attribute to John Surtees and Stirling Moss, a visible blend of aggressiveness and empathy with the machine that makes his man-bike combination stand out in the pack. Somehow, that one bike and rider looks faster and more purposeful than the rest, even pulling out of the pits.

Standing at the edge of the track, the sensation of speed and power is really incredible. In the heats, or in the early laps of the feature events, when the bikes are bunched up, and they flow by like water from a ruptured dam. The effect is heightened by the liquid grace of the riders as they roll through the right-left-right transition of an ess-bend—leaning it right down to the peg on one side, straightening up, then down again on the other side, all in a continuous flow of motion that would probably embarrass the guys if they knew how beautiful they were.

For the paying customers, though, it's not the same.



Huddled behind fences so far away that the bikes look like insects, they can only bask in the sun and depend on the public address system for some clue as to the progress of the race. Fortunately, the P.A. commentary is excellent, provided by a Los Angeles motorcycle cop with the unlikely name of Roxy Rockwood. The dynamics of bikes, and their characteristic behavior in accident situations, being what they are, it seems silly to make motorcycle race spectators suffer under the same rigid safety precautions established for the much more dangerous and unpredictable cars. Surely, more people would pay to watch motorcycle road races if they could get close enough to see and feel what's happening.

The cool, no sweat approach to riding makes it absolutely mandatory for every rider out there to pretend the whole thing is safe as a house, and the last thing in the world he'd call himself is brave. Ha! One Nixon-style lap on his immaculate, electric-blue works Triumph would convince the coldest cynic that "brave" is an extremely useful adjective in this league.

He can get 8200 rpm in fourth or 125 mph on the long front straight. He backs off, brakes, and takes the first turn—a long, scary sweeper—at 100 in third, which is about 8000 on the tach. He stays in third on the short chute between the first and second corners, negotiates a bump at the beginning of turn two ("It's no problem if you're on it," he says, and he's on it), then through the diminishing-radius right-hander, slowing to about 80 in third for the first set of esses. Down the back straight at about a hundred in third, then brake sharply to 50 and change to down second for the second series of esses. He comes in hard, leans in over as far

as it'll go, and blasts toward the very tight right-hander that leads onto the main straight again. This he takes in first at about 35, traversing a nasty hump in the road, and then stays in tight as he exits, catching second just before the straight opens up, then into third, and finally fourth and flat out just before the pits.

Even though Cal Rayborn won the 110-miler on a Harley, and even though every top finisher in that event was on either a Harley or a Triumph, one's most lasting impression is of thousands of Japanese bikes. In the novice event, in the Amateur/250 combined, in the spectator areas, on the highway—jillions of Yamahas, Suzukis, Kawasakis and Hondas.

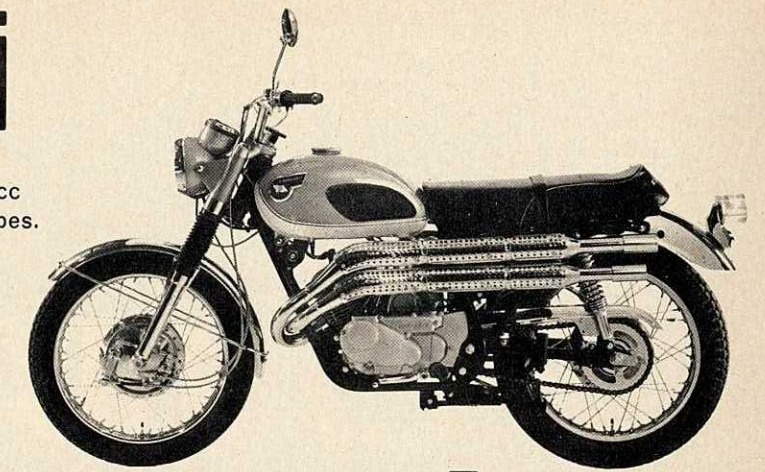
All those machines from the mysterious East might give our frozen-faced, blue-haired criers-of-doom a moments' discomfort, but everything else that happened at IRP's AMA National should give them a new lease on life.

American-style professional motorcycle racing could provide a magic looking glass for all those middle-aged Alices who fear the final collapse of our morality. It's a world where the Jefferson Aeroplane is something with a Liberty engine that landed in Pa's pasture in '31, and STP is nothing more than an oil additive.

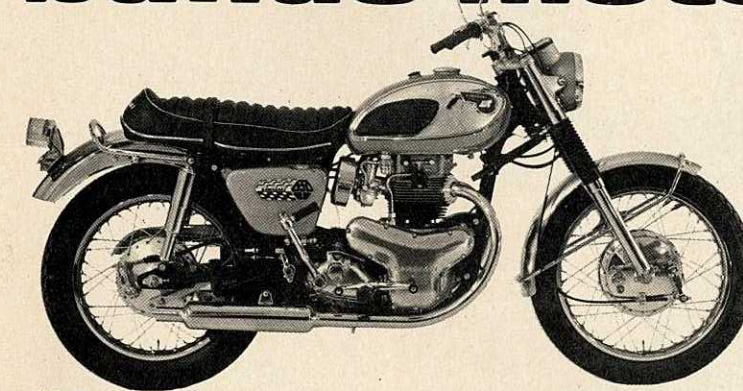
It's a place where young men display their courage and ability in a way that is both beautiful and worthwhile, yet they remain happily bound hand and foot by the thirty-five year old rules of the adults who run things. It's another time and place where all of the old manifest-destiny values still apply and a man could make a million bucks with the concession of Piercing Blue Eye Cream. Frozen-Faced, blue-haired matrons, take heart! ●

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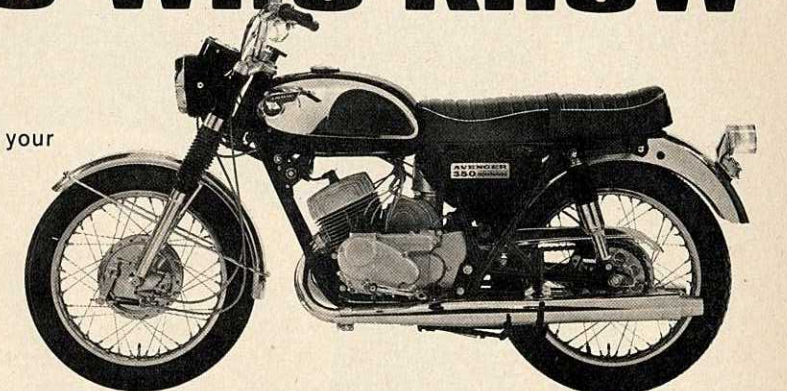
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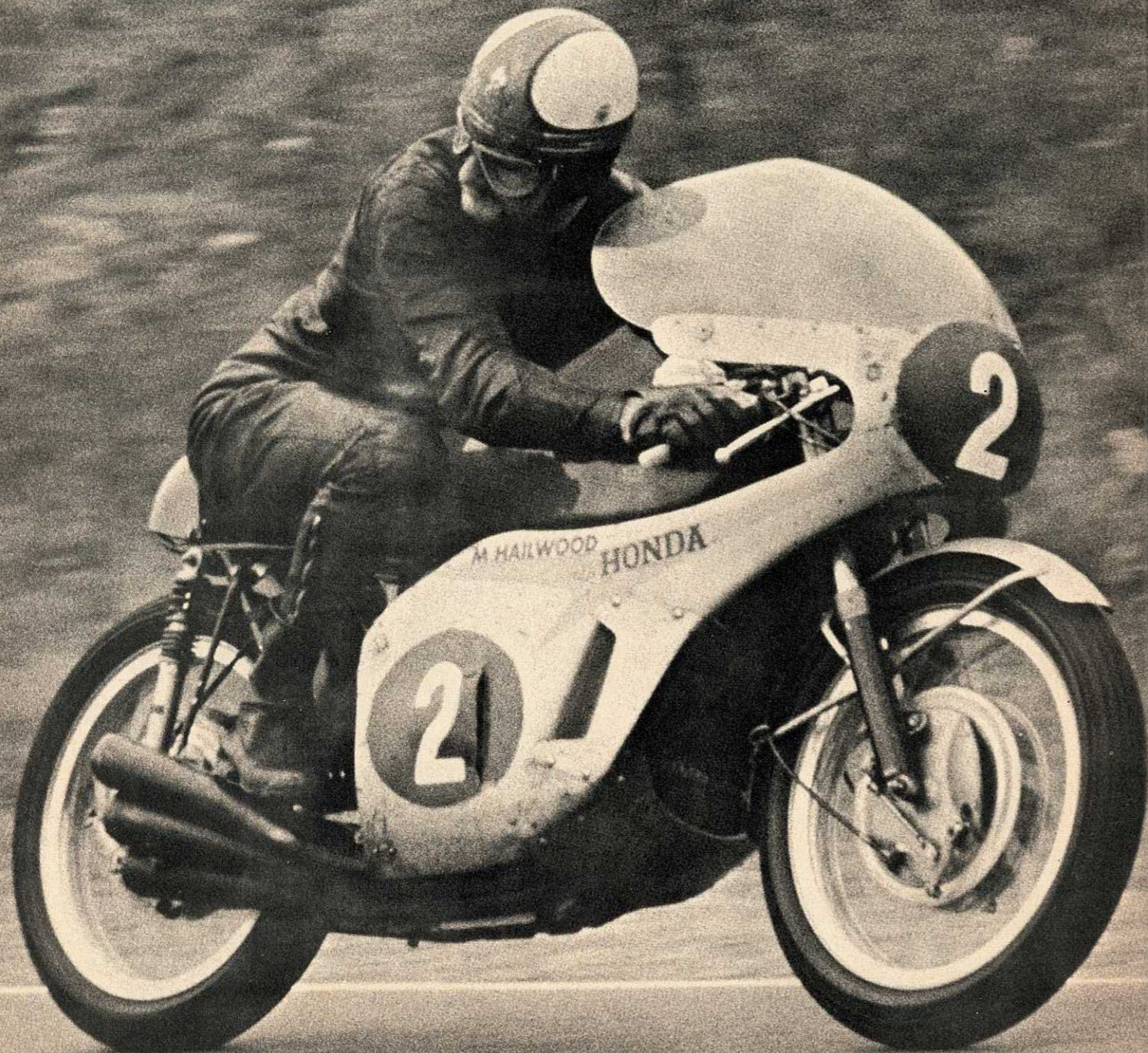
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# THE CANADIAN GRAND PRIX

BY MICHAEL SHUTER



An international event. A classic. A Grand Prix. Like the Belgian, at Spa. Like the German Grand Prix, at the Nurburgring. Well, kind of like that. It was the very first Grand Prix of Canada. It may have been the last.

Those of us who were there know what we saw, and what those who were absent missed. What we saw may have been, from a standpoint of competition, a dreadful bore. But there was more, for we saw, and heard, and smelled, the You-Ro-Peen racers! Spectacle! Sensation!

There was Hailwood, Agostini, Read, Bryans, Ivy. And the factory machinery that goes with them—the Honda six, the Yamaha four, and the MV three. The machines built with little regard for cost; built to go fast, fastest. The men who are able to handle them. It is something to see, at least once. Man, do they go! They have up to a forty mph advantage on anything else on the course. And that is what made the racing such a bore. Outside of one scrap between two of the furrin' visitors, they ran away from everyone else. And when the race becomes a procession, that's dull, boy.

But even a procession, when it is staged by these fellas, is worth a good long look. After all, the matador almost always wins but the fans still come to see how nicely he kills the bull.

Held at Mosport (pronounced Moe-sport, the name being a contraction of Motor Sport) Park, Ontario, the program included a 250cc national for Junior (like AMA amateur) group riders, 125cc, 250cc, and 500cc International expert races and a sidecar demonstration five-lapper. The international numbers count in scoring for the World Championship, and it was expected that the half-liter title battle between Hailwood and Agostini would be decided on the spot. Bill Ivy had already tied up the 125cc championship. The 250cc series point leaders were Yamaha's Phil Read and Honda's Hailwood. This being the year of Canada's Centennial Celebrations, the Canadian Motorcycle Association with the help of practically everyone in the business up there, and most importantly, a large dollop of money from the Centennial Commission, was able to get the factory teams to come all the way to Mosport to have a go. Unfortunately, while the

prize money attracted the racers, the racers failed to attract a good crowd. A gate of just 4000 spectators doesn't pay for running an event of this scope, and next year, with no Centennial Commission dough, there will probably be no Grand Prix of Canada.

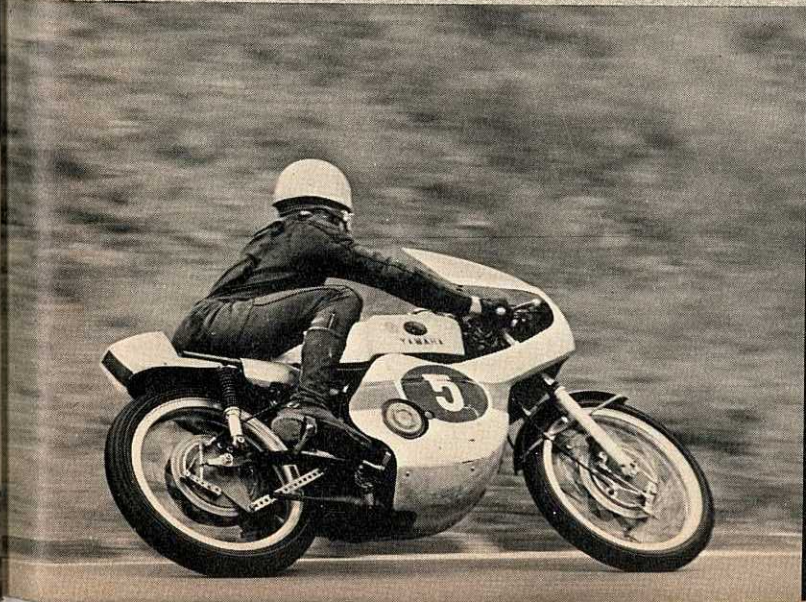
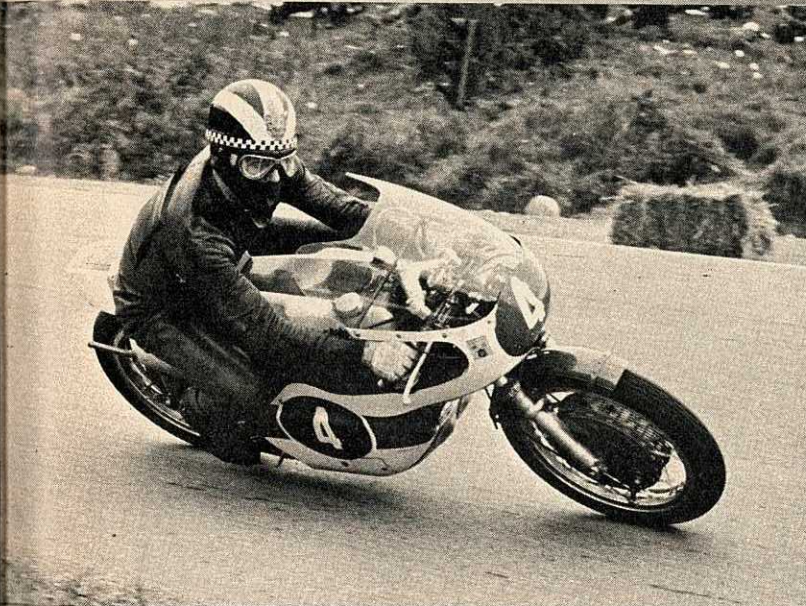
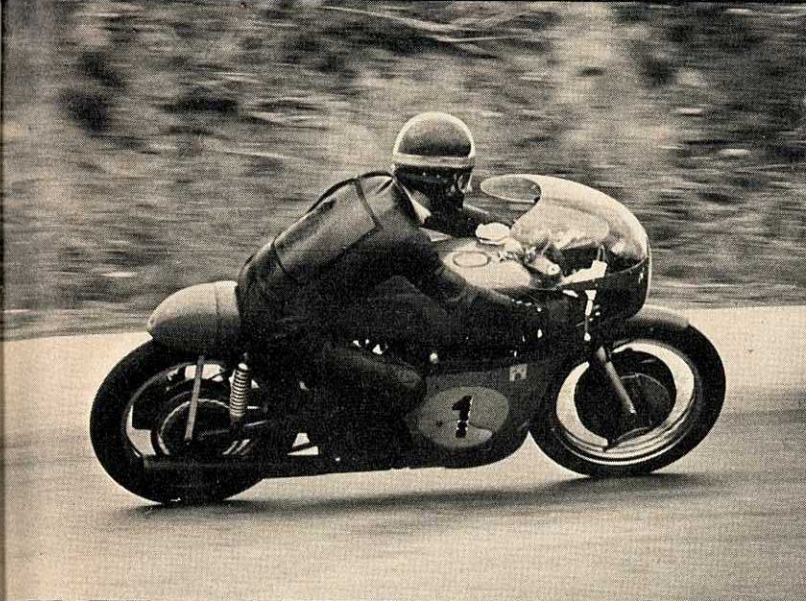
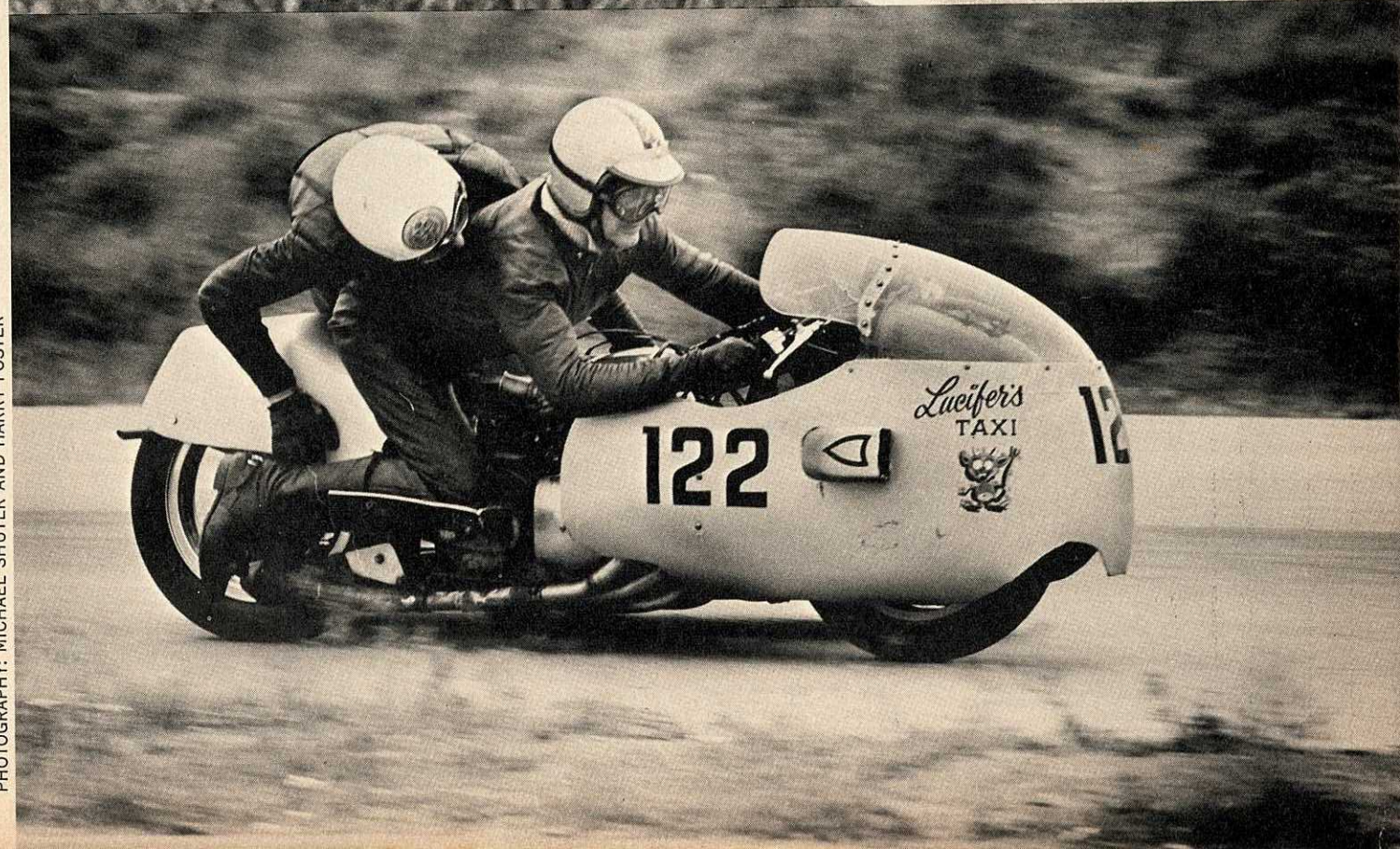
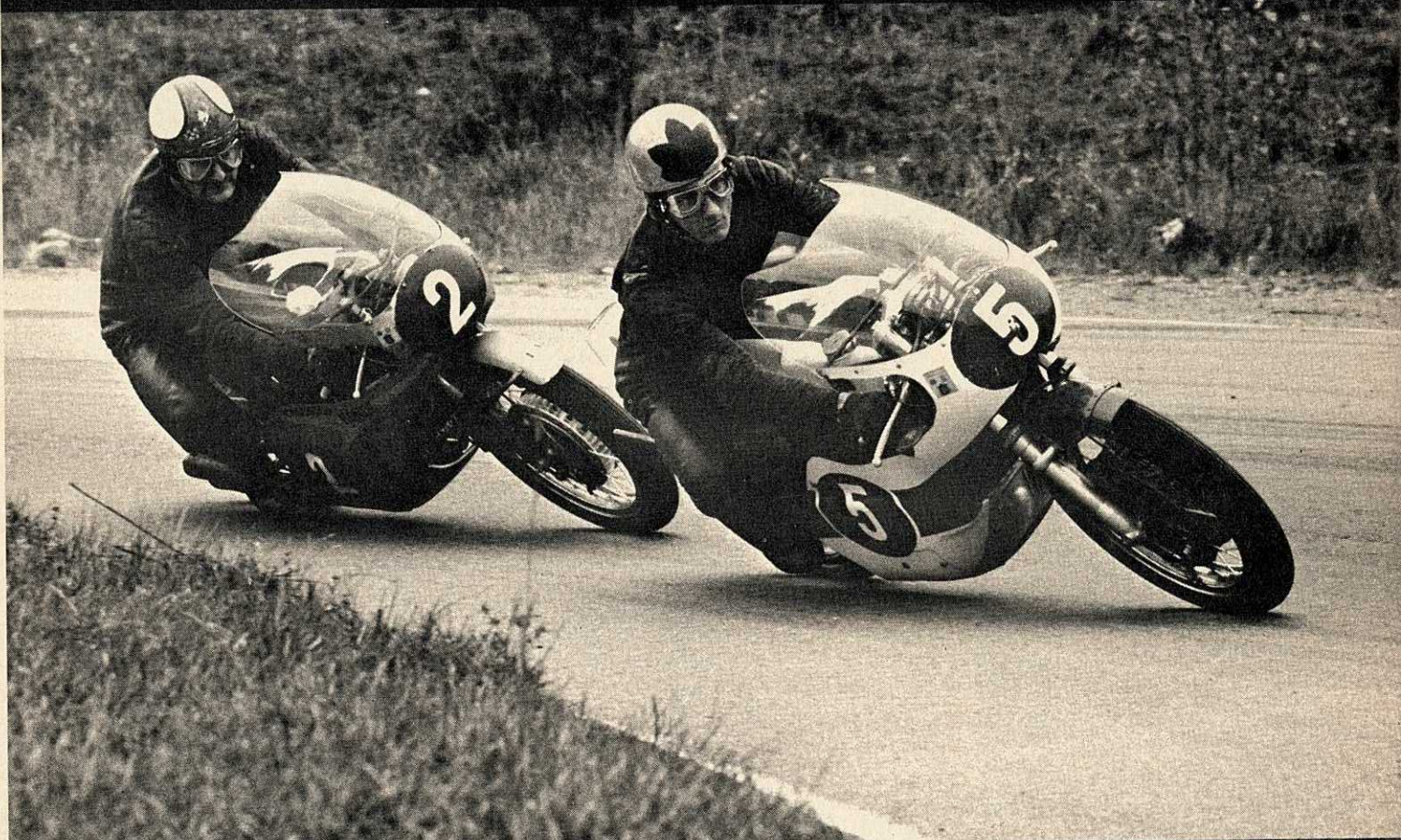
Anyone who expected to see a contingent of top-ranking AMA riders up from the States was disappointed. Gary Nixon was on the entry list, but he was physically in Oklahoma picking off a few needed points. Maybe had there been more American riders the crowd would have been bigger.

Anyone who expected good weather had to be out of their mind. A reasonable forecast would have helped attendance figures, too, but the entire East Coast had been blanketed by clouds, rain and fog for days and no change was in the works. And the farther north you go, the colder it gets.

The temperature was hovering about the forty mark at eleven o'clock Saturday morning. The paddock area had been buzzing for hours. Those who had no further preparations to make stood around watching those who did. One popular pastime was to risk your eardrums while the ever-cool Japanese crews warmed and tuned their multis. If you can take it, it's fun to watch the tach needle swinging between 8000 and 10,000 rpm on the Honda Six. That's just for warm-up. And the sound is indescribably delicious. The Yamaha fours are warmed by continuous blipping from near zero rpm up to 12,000 and back. The effect of this on your ears is hard to describe. If you can imagine somebody ripping out your eardrums, throwing them on the ground, grinding their heels on them, then popping them back into your head upside down, you have some idea. It is good fun, though, and if you dig sounds, it makes the whole thing worthwhile.

A cursory examination of the factory models reveals nothing that hasn't been printed before. Except that they are very shabby. Obviously they don't care what they look like as long as they work. A big sloppy patch on a Honda crankcase shows where some bits passed through. By way of contrast, the slower privateers' bikes could win at a *Concours d' Elegance*. As it was to be expected, the factory mechanics couldn't turn around without bumping into some eager, staring, poking spectator. One of the

# THE CANADIAN GRAND PRIX *Continued*



Far left: Ivy (5) on Yamaha-four nips inside Hailwood (2) on Honda-six during day's fierce 250 dice. Side car winners Hermann & Davis below.

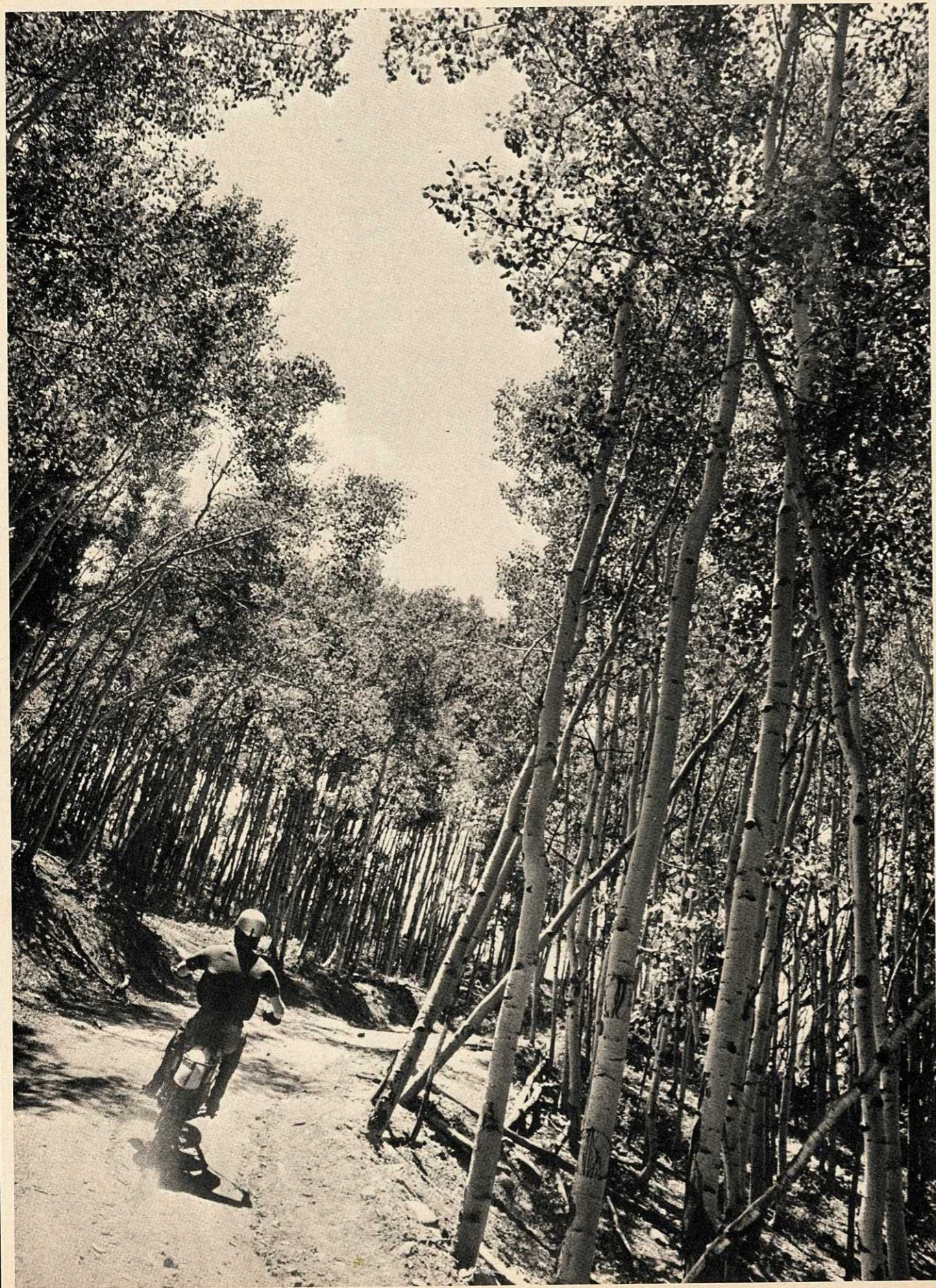
Yamaha inscrutables had just bump-started a bike only to run right up the leg of an ogler. As the ten thousand dollar machine lay there in the gravel, we witnessed the only display of Japanese temper ever recorded.

Anyway, at eleven, the riders meeting was held in front of the Esso tower. The 250cc Junior event had just ended. You could tell that it was a Junior event because the ambulance was out on the course four times in the 21 minutes it took to run ten laps. The first eight places went to Americans led by Doug Libby of Milwaukee aboard the Livonia Yamaha. The paint job on this model is a guarantee of a psychedelic trip. Up-and-comer Leon Cromer did not race, having dropped his Ducati during the warm-up lap when his front brake lining developed a strong attachment for the drum. The bike was bent but Leon only sprained his wrist and damaged his dignity (upon which he landed).

The riders' meeting was held, and everybody showed up with the exception of the European Stars. Of their number, only Bill Ivy didn't think he was beyond showing up for the pre-race lecture. At this time the first fault in the otherwise faultless organization was announced. The gas tank at the track had inexplicably dried up. Organizer Ron White, President of the CMA, explained that a tank truck was on the way out from town, and did all of the 125cc folks have fuel for their event? Only one rider's hand shot up indicating a lack of gasoline and he was urged to go and borrow some so that the event could get off on time. And so, after the National Anthem was played, it did.

Bill Ivy was the only star entered and he and his Yamaha ran away with the "race". Ivy finished two laps ahead of second place man, Vancouver's Tim Coopey (Yamaha), who was one lap ahead of American Bob Lusk. Despite the lack of competition, Ivy was not taking it easy and at one point was almost four laps in the lead. He pitted for water at about half way point. The only thing you could call a scrap in this event was between Lusk, Canadian Jean Guy Duval, and Ralph Swegan (whose sister Sally races a Ducati) of Warren, Pa. After some place swapping Lusk wound up in third, Duval fourth, and Swegan took fifth. These three finished within ten seconds of each other, which was as close as anything got. Little Bill handled his four beautifully and wrapped up the 25 laps in 46 minutes, 39 seconds, and a new track record for 125s on his twenty-fourth lap at 1:45.9 (80.5 mph). As he romped around the course lap after lap, he was followed by a wave of embarrassed giggles and head shaking by spectators who realized just how ridiculous the race had become. Canada's best, Yvon du Hamel, tied up 11th place in a field of eleven. *Continued on page 79*

Top to bottom: Agostini (1) kept his 500 title by holding safe second. Read (4) clung to points lead with a 2nd in 250. Ivy (5) raced alone to 125 win.



# A TRIPTO ASPEN

BY PAUL RYAN

Certain events in our experience take on a dreamlike quality no matter how hard, how clear, or how intense they were at the time of occurrence. Aspen, Colorado, is a real place, a very solid place, a place of rugged mountain beauty that registers on your senses like the clang of a miner's hammer on granite. Yet, before I arrived there was no Aspen, and when I had gone there were only the ghost images captured by my cameras. The people, the mountains, the wild motorcycling . . . came alive again in a tank of developer, but in my mind already had the shadowy quality of fantasy. A stopover on a journey across the continent—call it a brief flight. Call it a trip.

Somehow, I got there, driving from San Francisco, my Triumph 500 in tow. Coming across the desert, then the early, 8000-ft. passes is forgotten, a thousand miles in a day. I first remember being awakened for an early morning ride in the mountains. My guide was Bobbie Neiman on her little Yamaha. She waited impatiently as I unloaded the Triumph, then she led the way, wailing up the Conundrum Valley Road between 12,000 ft. peaks. The creek was still white-water from late snow runoff, the sun barely in the sky, and white aspen trees whipped past as we ascended. Before too many miles we turned into a dirt road, threaded through more trees, and arrived at the home of Chuck and Lydia Rand, two more motorcyclists.

The power of the mountains and the quiet, except for the rushing of water, were overwhelming. I looked at the curious house which my hosts had built themselves, smelled the air and the coffee they were preparing. I took in everything, di-

rectly and without reflection. Another world. I suppose I should have felt like Lewis Carroll's Alice, ". . . when she thought it over afterwards, it occurred to her that she ought to have wondered at this, but at the time it all seemed quite natural."

Later I was to learn that much of the time at Aspen is spent idly, just talking or digging things. At first this seemed a costly luxury in a place where there is so much to do. But I found that it is very important to life there, serving as a counterpoint to the hyperactivity which begins randomly but frequently. And your internal energy level remains the same—screaming up the mountain on a motorcycle, skiing down the mountain, dancing all night at Galena Street, or sitting and watching the grass grow in the mountain fields.

In a megapolitan city many people understand what is going on, but they often lack the ability to actually experience the pleasures available. Weekend lovers can be

precious in their enjoyment of nature, idealizing things like picking petals from a flower. On the other hand, country people really in touch with their outdoor surroundings seldom pause to review their experiences. Aspen has a nice fusion of both these worlds. Nature is right there—mountains to be climbed, on foot or by motorcycle, water to be fished, kyaked or swum—and there's plenty of both. You can take it in great big hunks. You don't have to pause over a single flower; you can pick up whole armfuls. But all this is not taken for granted. Aspen life is a *chosen* existence; people are there because they *want* to be there, not for economic reasons. And when you come to a place for the experience of it, you are usually curious about what you are doing. So Aspen people sit around and wonder a lot about what is going on and how to enjoy it most.

They also sit around and think up nutty ideas. Soon after my arrival I learn that Steve Highland and





PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE AUTHOR



Phil Clark, who runs the Daisy Duck Bar (right over Rick Deane's motorcycle shop) are planning a lobster feast. They've imported some sixty-odd live lobsters and God knows how many clams, straight from Maine. Tickets are going fast. They're only selling twenty-five, so if you're a good eater you've got a fair chance at three whole lobsters before they run out. Sunday afternoon at the Daisy Duck resembles a massive *Tom Jones* scene. Rick Deane closes up his shop and takes a long lunch break.

Aspen is physically isolated from the rest of the world; from the east by the Continental Divide and from the west by a thousand miles of desert. Even the radio will only get you KSNO, the local Aspen station. A consequence of this isolation is that you have no "normal" world to use as a sounding board for new ideas. Former *cognicenti* who find themselves in similar isolated cultures usually retrogress. They try nothing new because the unknown may not work, and the old way is good enough anyhow. Perhaps it is the transient nature of the population, but whatever it may be, Aspen has developed an isolated culture that is unusually positive. Anything can be done, or at least tried. Ludicrous ideas are greeted with monumental enthusiasm. No one can be bothered to inquire of tradition what is and isn't possible.

There are many motorcycles in Aspen. You see a lot of Yamaha 100s and Honda 90s, which belong to the cocktail waitresses. Nearly all able-bodied males ride more vigorous machines—Bultacos, Tri-

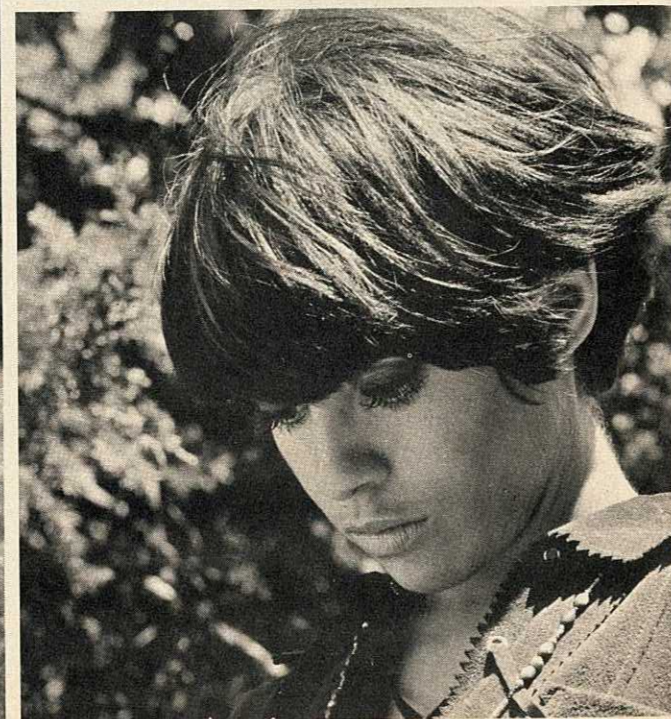
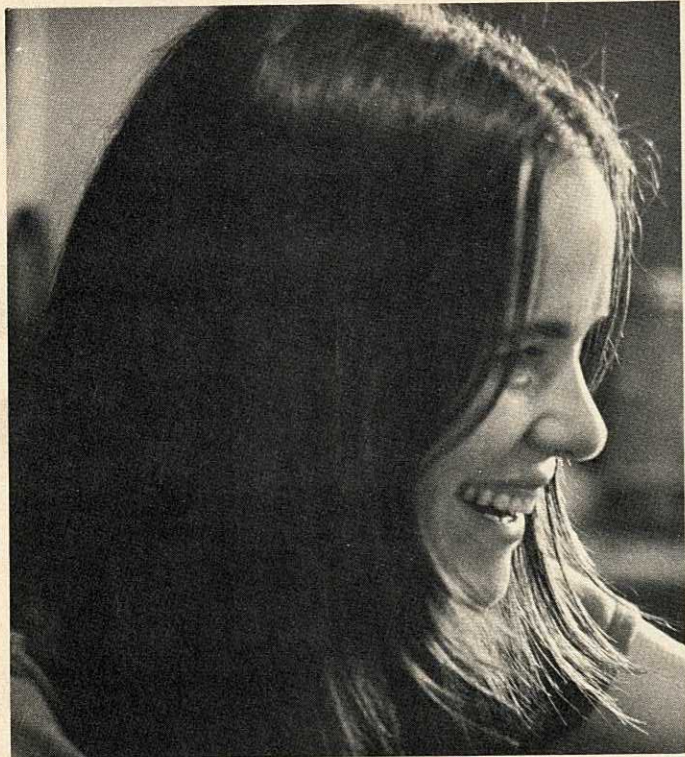
umph 500s and Bonneville, Montessas and Greeves. You might think that they are all long-time, hardcore, from-way-back-when scrambles fanatics. Fanatic, perhaps, but as Don McKinnon who rides his Greeves very well told me, "A couple of years ago there were about five bikes in town. Vicky had a Greeves. I rode it one block and got really stoked, so we went down to Denver and bought one that very day. We just jumped in the car and drove to Denver and I bought one—a used Greeves. Then Vick sold his to Lloyd Pelletier and bought a new one and we started racing. Then we got organized and built a track . . ."

"The bike scene more or less centers around the Chart House: a lot of the guys work there. This year everyone wanted to get in on the thing and they all started buying dirt bikes, right away. In April they sold 42 motorcycles at Alpine Triumph. About 30 of them were 250 Montessas and most of those La Crosses. All these guys were quiet guys, y'know, most of them never rode before—good skiers or surfers, but not good riders—and all of a sudden they've got La Crosses.

"So before the snow was even gone, we were riding going as far west as we had to until the snow ran out—just jumping out of the trucks and onto the bikes and splitting across the desert."

Splitting across the desert! Yes! On a brand new motorcycle you don't even know how to ride! It was the same way when I was skiing in Aspen. A lot of the California surfers came to Aspen to learn how

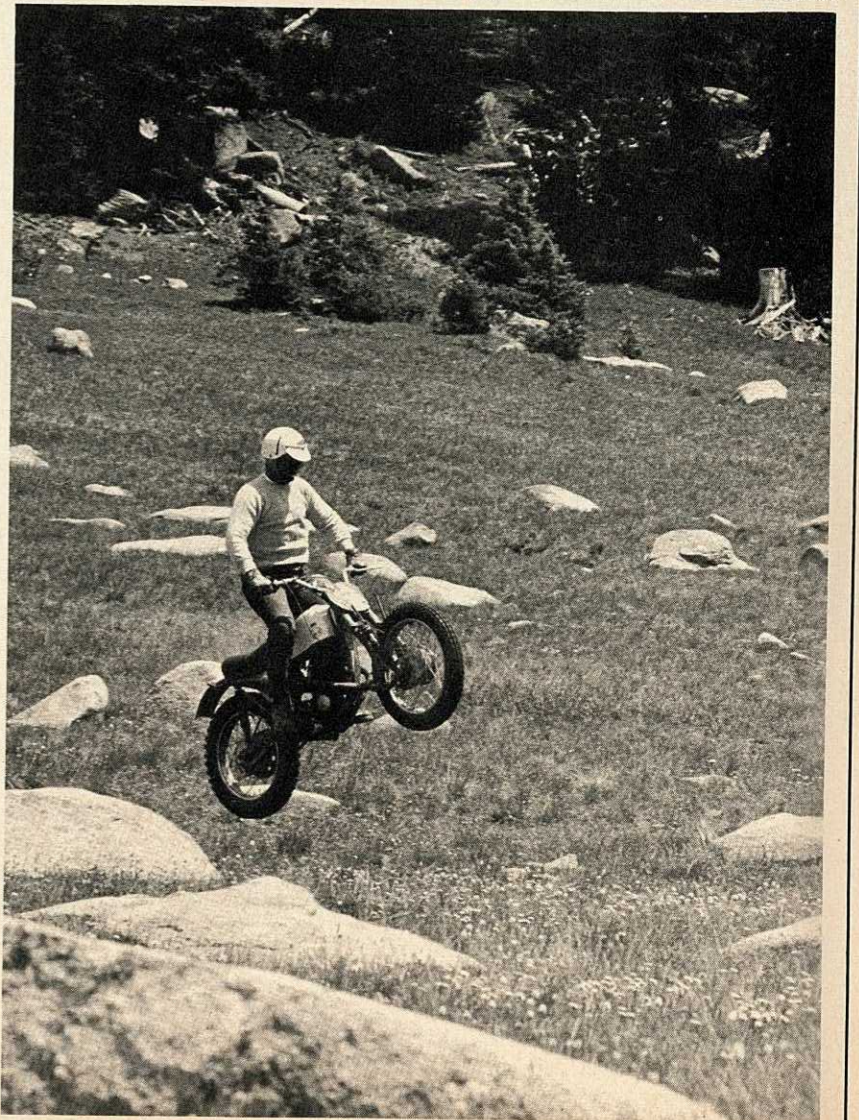




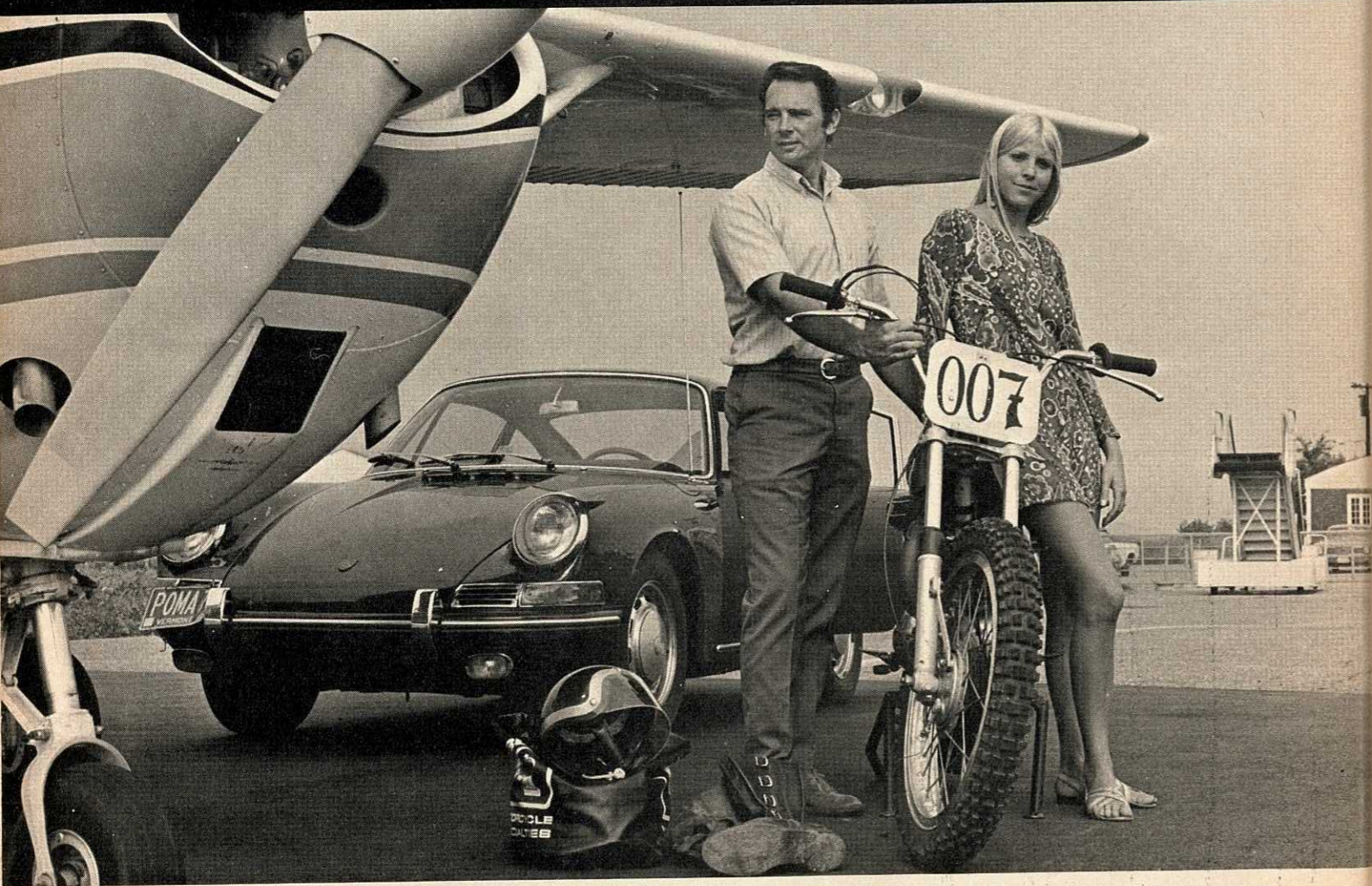
to ski. Lessons? No, man, just buy a pair of Head Competition skis, \$100 a pair, stretch pants, \$100 boots, ride the chairlift to the top and wail! Crash, get up, go like hell, fall again, bitchin'. And it works, in two weeks most of these wild surf kids were keeping up with anyone on the mountain—no points for style.

But now it's summer and all the snow has gone and you can ride right up the side of Aspen Mountain. It's 3000 vertical feet up some five miles of winding dirt mine roads. At the top it flattens out and you're riding along the broad ridge of the Continental Divide, 12,000 feet in the air. Enormous meadows spread out in every direction, leaving you an infinity of options. You could spend all day screaming around in the meadows and not cover the same track twice. There is also a scrambles course at the top of the mountain that serves as a meeting place, a place to tell war stories about the day's riding or last week's race, and an opportunity to challenge claims of riding skill.

Anyone with a bike in Aspen will sooner or later show up at Rick Deane's Triumph Shop. Four of us started off on a ride up Smuggler Mountain one morning. After a stop at Rick's for oil, our group had doubled. Even Bill Kidd, the Olympic skier, decided to come along for some pre-season "training." At the top of Smuggler there is another giant meadow, but this one has innumerable rock slabs in it and happens to be called Warren Lake. Apparently it's flooded part of the year. It's a great place to ride, especially if you're a skier. You ride it just like you ski a field of moguls, threading your way through the rocks, looking for an occasional good one to jump off, and then turning on in the open part. Jocko Craig, the Bultaco dealer in town, is keeping up with everybody on his hopped-up little Lobito until he blows a rear tire. By that time, he is having so much fun just goofing . . . standing on his seat, riding backwards, no hands all around the field that he isn't about to quit for a flat tire. When he gets back to town, the Lobito has exactly seven spokes in the rear rim, which has assumed the *Continued on page 83*



# Meet the Cycle Set



No. 4 in a series

Bill Alsup is a sportsman from the word go. He skis. Pilots a Cessna 172. And cycles every chance he gets.

As far back as Bill can remember, he always wanted a motorcycle. He finally got one — at the ripe old age of 12. And he's been riding ever since. He presently owns a Bultaco Scrambler.

The workaday Bill Alsup is Vice President and General Manager of Poma Aerial Tramways Ski Lift Company. A subsidiary of one of the oldest concerns of its kind in the world.

When weekends roll around, Bill usually makes tracks for the nearest motorcycle race. But not to watch. He frequently competes in events, and is numbered among the top ten riders in the New England scrambles circuit.

A University of Colorado graduate, Bill lives with his

wife, Andrea, in Woodstock, Vermont. Population: 2,786.

"Next to me," Bill says, "Andrea is the greatest advocate of cycling I know. She's a student at Middlebury College — some fifty miles away — and rides her own Bultaco Metralla to school when the weather permits. All in all, I guess that's the beauty of cycling. It's one sport that's suited for most everybody.

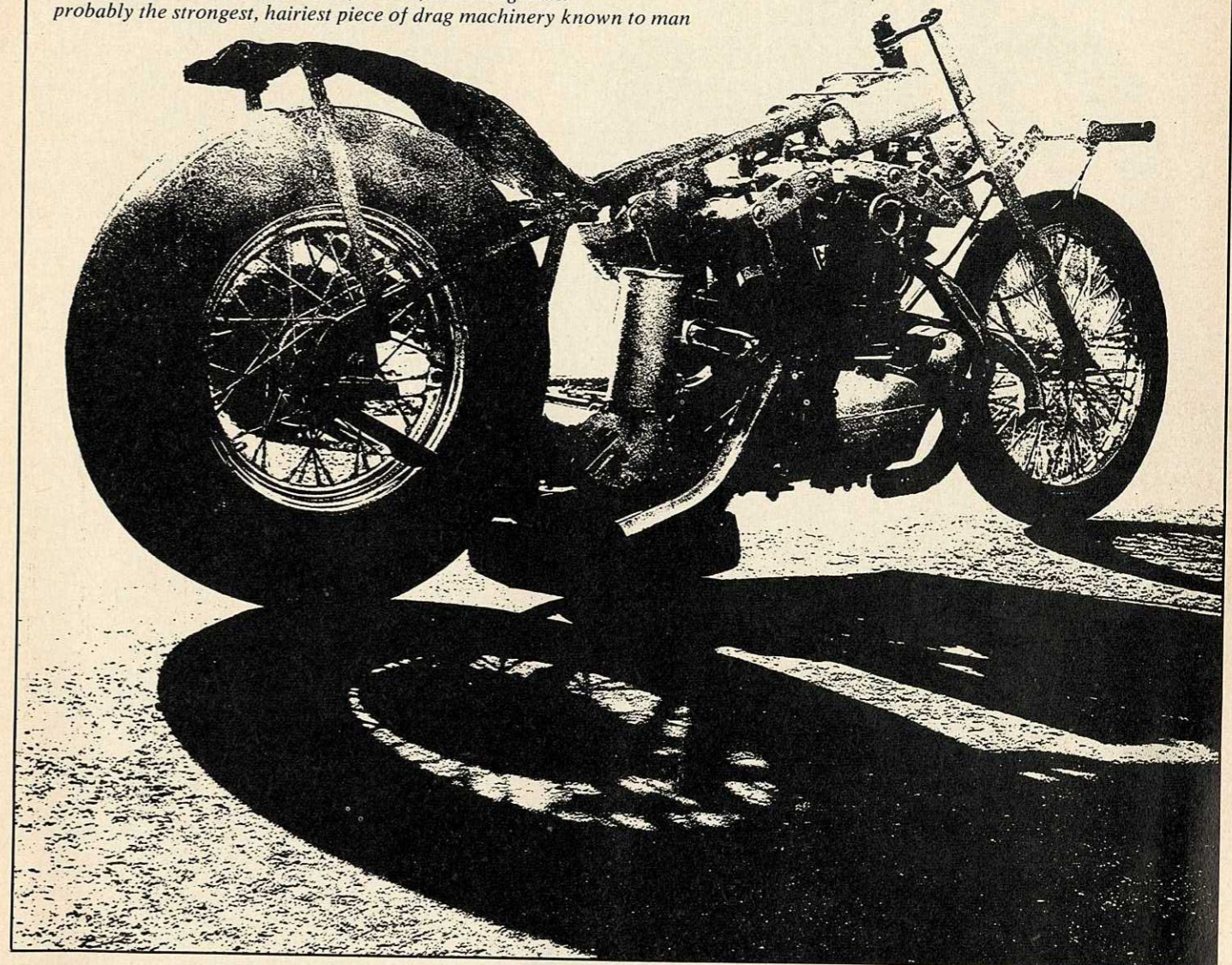
True. That's why more and more people are taking up cycling for fun and transportation. And why it's the fastest growing participant sport in America. By far.

## Cycle

Ziff-Davis Publishing Company  
One Park Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10016

# GODZILLA LIVES!

Out of the frozen North it comes, an evil, bellowing beast—  
probably the strongest, hairiest piece of drag machinery known to man



It started out a few years ago as a street bike that I could enter in motorcycle shows. And *now* look at it." Elwood Sperr is talking, and the reference is to his 148.4 cu. in., double-engined, 300 hp, fuel-burning, rump-rump-idling, great big bellowing monster of a drag bike. In a game where the cliché, "If some's good more's better" applies almost universally, this behemoth has the most: most displacement, most horsepower, most *meat*. Who built it? Elwood did, and his partner, Tom Rudd—the head *honchos* of an organization known as Drag Specialties in Minneapolis, Minn.

D.S. came into being in 1964. Rudd and Sperr had been racing against each other for some time, and growing weary of beating one another's brains in, decided to pool their resources. Elwood is in charge of engines, transmissions, and frames, and Rudd of carburetors, ignition systems, fine tuning and paper work.

For anyone even vaguely interested in all-out engine performance, a trip

through the little D.S. shop is a genuine mind-bender. The double-engine job lurks quietly off in a corner, jackets and tools heaped on its seat. A 78 cu. in. finless (Elwood knocks them off with a hammer) fuel XLCH engine, brand new, perches atop a 55 gallon drum of nitromethane. Twin-plug heads, drag slicks, experimental cam sets, Ferrari pistons litter the shelves. David Cernohous' street Sportster shoulders next to the double, very showroom-looking, but it has turned the quarter in 11.09 seconds at 126 mph. Sort of the definitive sleeper.

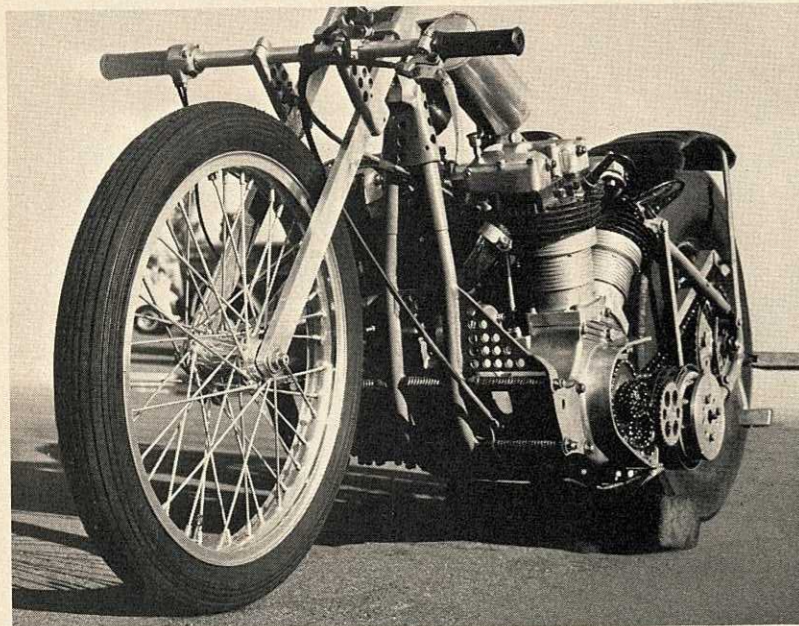
Rudd and Sperr do not choose to work with any engine other than the Sportster, and the thinking behind this is logical enough; at 883cc, it's big to begin with, and with the proper application of stroker flywheels and oversized cylinders, it can be stretched to a little better than 1300cc. The engine, in growing, will have lost some of its ability to rev and some mechanical efficiency, but it will have gained enough low- and mid-range

torque to jerk your eyeballs out. And in drag racing, torque is what it's all about.

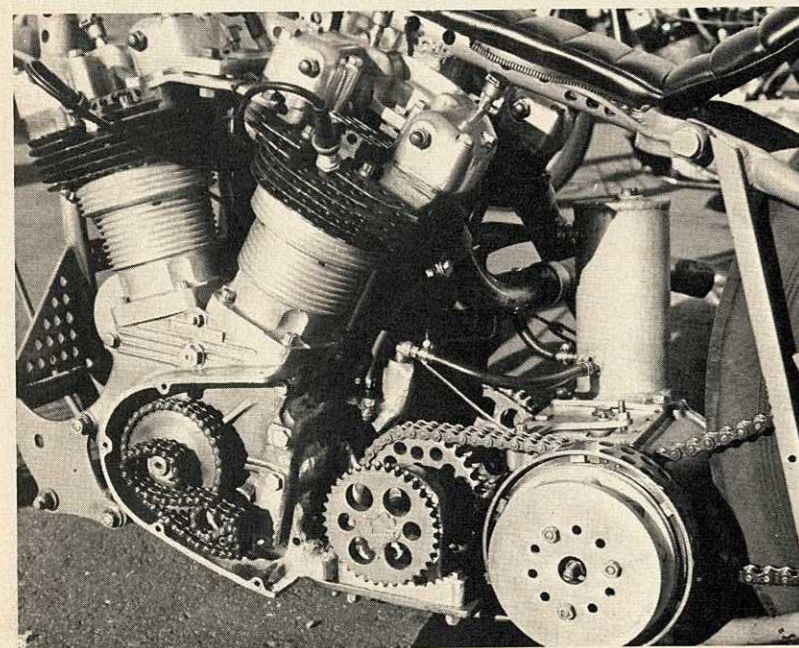
Besides having this growth potential, the Sportster engine comes equipped with a beefy ball-and-roller-bearing lower end and a transmission that's virtually bullet-proof. Plus hemispherical combustion chambers, big ports that can be made bigger, and superstrong valve springs that never wear out. ("Just what *are* those springs made out of, Mr. O'Brien?" "R-I-I-I-GHT," said Mr. O'Brien.)

After considerable prodding, Rudd finally consented to take us on a tour through a typical DS all-out fuel dragster motor. But first he expounded his theory of performance, which includes four factors: fuel, compression ratio, engine displacement, and flywheel weight.

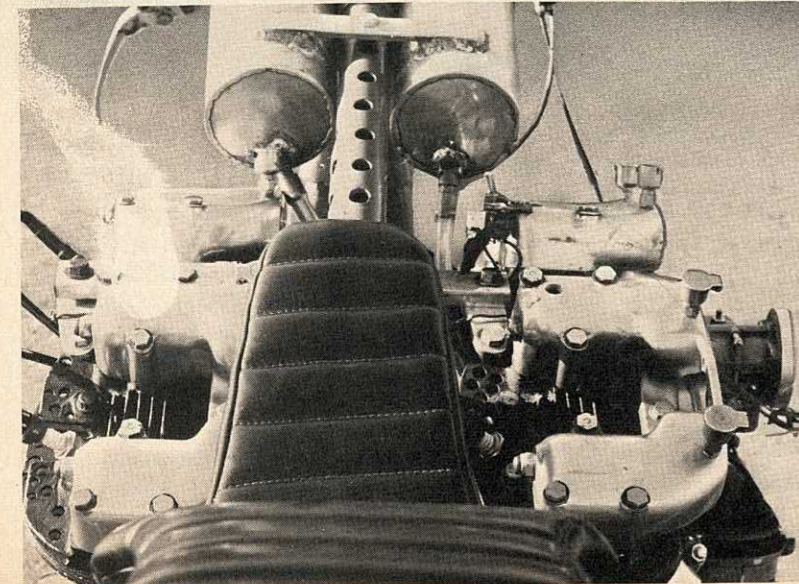
"Nitro, if properly mixed (with alcohol, benzol, propylene oxide, and a special East Coast anti-detonant known only as "soup"), gives a tremendous amount of horsepower to a not-overly-radical engine. A fuel engine is, in fact, cheaper to



Holes, holes everywhere—and a rigid aluminum fork setup bring weight down to a mere 440 pounds.



From any angle it's a super-beast. Upper end lubrication is handled by oiling cups in rocker boxes. Ignition is by reworked magnetos.



Engines are coupled by a jackshaft; they drive a reinforced "74" clutch and two-sp. automatic transmission.

build than a gas engine, because it doesn't have to be nearly as exotic. Just about all you have to do is get the fuel into the combustion chamber, compress it real tight, light it, and get it out."

With this in mind, then, the composition of a steamy Drag Specialties motor: "We use 1965 Chevrolet Corvette intake valves and 1957 Lincoln exhausts. They're a little heavier than stock valves, but they have very flat faces, and that helps improve compression. To counterbalance this increase in valve weight, we use Sifton pushrods (one alloy tip), collars, and keepers. We also use Sifton cams, just like everybody else.

"The ports are pretty much stock, with all sharp edges radiused. The rocker arms are lightened a little, and polished, but nothing radical.

"Just about the most exotic components we use in our engines are Ferrari 11.5-1 pistons, made by Forged True. They employ the use of step-seal compression rings and positive seal oil rings, but they're pretty expensive, which is a drawback.

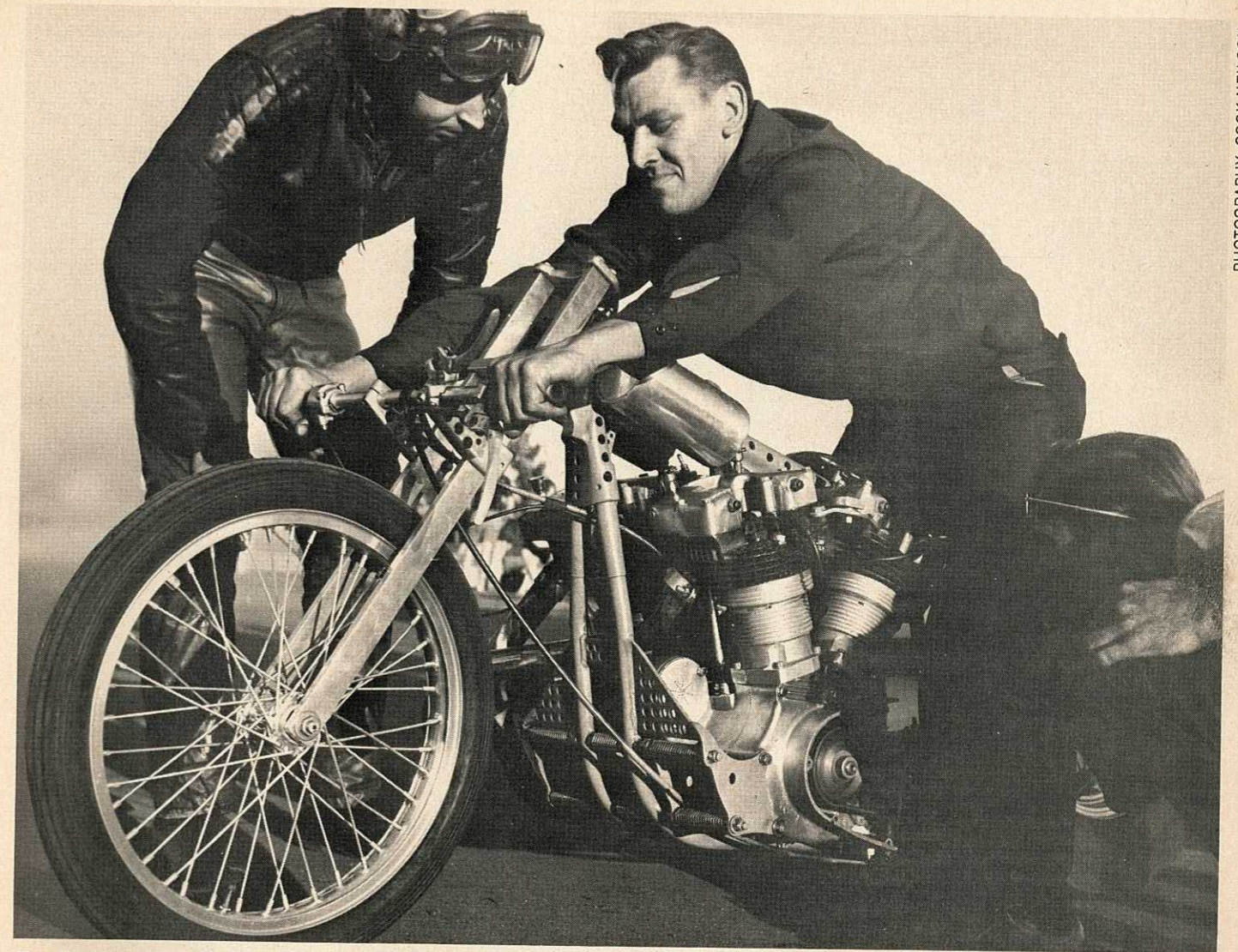
"We prefer to use S&S stoker flywheels to the KH wheels, because they're heavier and a little bit stronger—and they can be gotten with a longer stroke, 4-13/16" as opposed to 4-9/16".

"The transmission contains reinforced shaft inputs with our own strain-equalizers. For a drag job we use one long spacer and lock in high gear. The transmission is run dry, with sealed and pre-packed ball bearings at the shaft ends.

"Since nitro is a little tough to ignite, we use either a stock magneto with a special condenser, or a distributor with a double-tension spring arm in conjunction with a Honda 150 racing coil."

When asked about his special fuel carburetors, however, this open, friendly man did the Jeckel-Hyde bit and became tight-lipped and squinty-eyed. Originally manufactured by the brothers Linkert, the various components of these carburetors are modified by three different Minneapolis machinists and then assembled by Rudd (presumably by the light of a full moon) in such a manner that they cannot be disassembled without being destroyed. Co-developed by Rudd and Leo Payne, they contain a reworked needle and seat which increases the flow of fuel by 500%. And that's all he would tell us. Do they work? Bet your life on it. Rudd-equipped dragsters start easily, idle like stockers—and run like the wind. All significant carb modifications are internal—nothing is visible from the outside to betray the nature of the beast.

D.S. does not confine its super hop-up work to thoroughbred dragsters alone; there are a number of D.S. prepared 76- to 80-inchers prowling the streets of Minneapolis. It is the firm conviction of the D.S. clientele that they should be



Tom Rudd (left) and Elwood Sperr, builders of the 300hp Harley-Davidson Dragster, start the left engine going and bask in nitromethane fumes.

able to put a hurtin' on everything in sight, hot cars included, even with a passenger on the pillion. To make things even more entertaining, these monster engines are almost indistinguishable from stock, the only variation being in the way the cylinders are held down. D.S. replaces the base studs with Minneapolis-Moline tractor bolts, which makes the cylinders easier to remove and replace.

The success of Rudd and Sperr is due primarily to three factors: first, they are fanatically meticulous in their construction of engines; second, they aren't afraid of experimentation; and third, each innovation they produce is thoroughly tested before being made available to their customers. And herein lies the importance of the double-edged dragster.

"We feel that if a component can be made to survive on the double, it'll be strong enough for any bike in the country," Rudd said. We never test our own products on our customers' machines."

At the present time, the double is utilizing a pair of special aluminum cylinders on its left engine. They contain high-

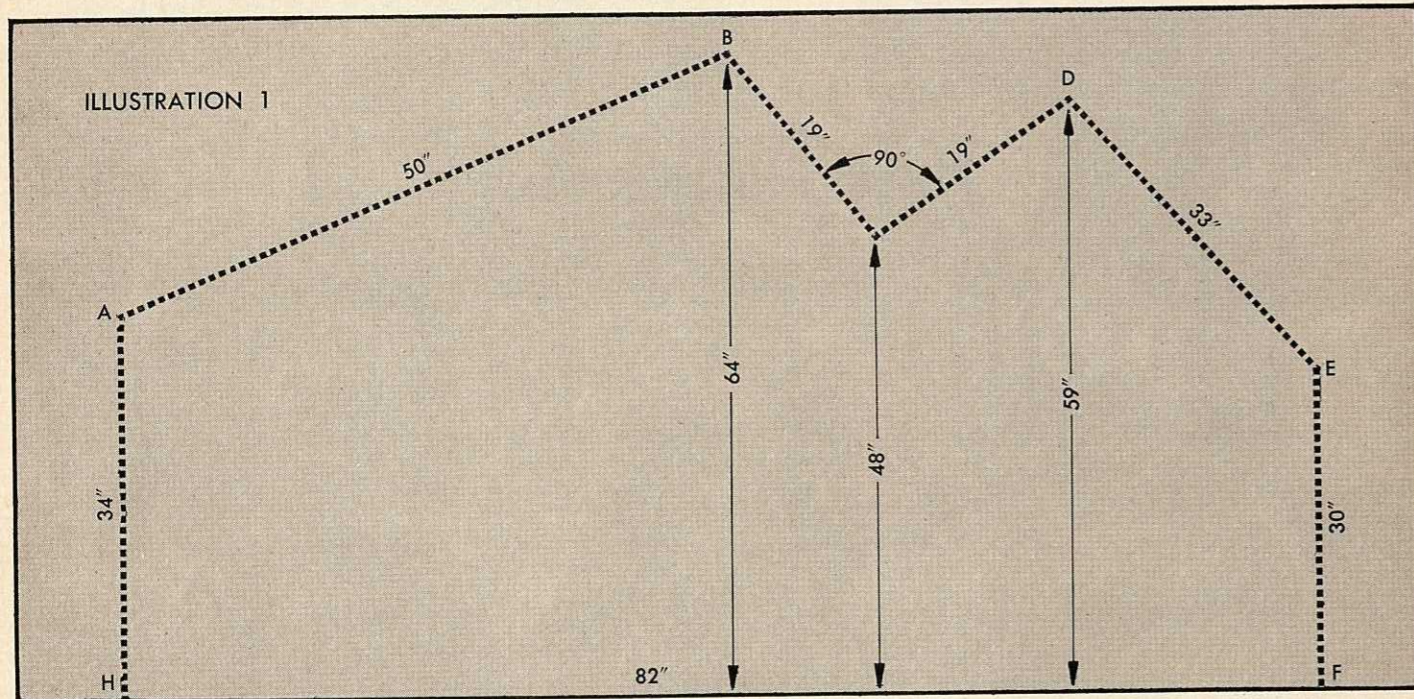
strength chrome-nickel liners, and, having withstood the strain of hard campaigning over a period of months, are now mass-produced and available for purchase.

Apart from its function as a test vehicle, the double has an interesting history of its own. Originally a 1961 vintage Sportster, Elwood lavished it in chrome, bored it, stroked it, raced it, and showed it. But Elwood is a big man, and figured in 1964 that he needed just a hair more horsepower. Zap, in went the second engine, identical to the first. Now sporting a shade over 148 cu. in., Elwood's contrivance was relieved of its twin transmissions, and a jackshaft-cum-"74"-clutch setup was installed, as well as a mysterious hand shifted two-speed automatic transmission.

To see the double sitting in the shop, at peace with the world, is in itself a rather impressive experience; to see it alive and growling over at the local digs is unforgettable. Picture this: in the eerie half-light provided by typically minimal dragstrip illumination, after most of the cars and all of the crowd have gone home, a

pickup eases onto the pavement, towing behind it Elwood on his double. Elwood has had his troubles today—the bike has been shedding chains like a dog does hair, and this will be his last shot. It's fairly quiet now, for a dragstrip. The towtruck goes halfway down the strip, turns, and gathers speed back to the starting lights. Elwood casts off, lets in the clutch, takes his thumb off the kill button, and fires up. The thing sounds every bit like a big blown hemi Chrysler. He goes back behind the starting line, turns, stages. The engines give a frenzied roar. Then he's off, twin stroker mills spitting great shafts of pure white fire out of its four stubby exhausts, smoke boiling from the six-inch slick. The noise diminishes in the distance but you can still hear it—oh, can you hear it. The automatic shifts into high and you can barely see them, Elwood and the bike, as they hit the traps. 10.04 et, not bad. A new strip record, in fact. The whole performance is somehow larger than life, filled as it is by sound and fury and the groan of the rear tire as it claws at the pavement. Of such stuff legends are made. ©

# The do-it-yourself guide to MOTORCYCLE RAIN COVERS



After cleaning, polishing and lavishing hours of TLC on your motorcycle, it is downright discouraging to see it soaked by a sudden rain storm. You can go out and get yourself one of those fancy ready-made cycle covers, or you can do it yourself—at a savings of somewhere (conservatively) around \$37.50.

The plans for this cover were made for a CA95, 150cc 1965 Honda with double mirrors on the standard handlebar unit. A slight alteration of measurements will make it suitable for any model machine.

Most lumber companies carry 6 mil. clear plastic sheeting. You will need a piece 6-foot wide by 14-foot long, which shouldn't set you back more than \$2.50. (But don't skimp. A trial run with 4-mil. sheeting revealed an error; it was simply too flimsy to work.) The 6-foot width reduces waste and makes one less

seam to sew. You will also need approximately 12 feet of 2-inch width masking tape to seal the seams. Use #50, white mercerized thread in your wife's sewing machine, and light pressure on the pedal. As you sew the seam, pull the plastic through. Use the largest stitch size because too close a stitch will weaken the seam.

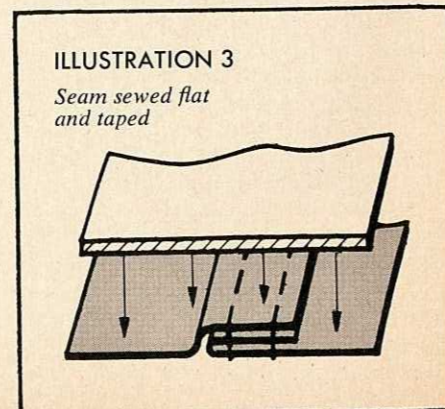
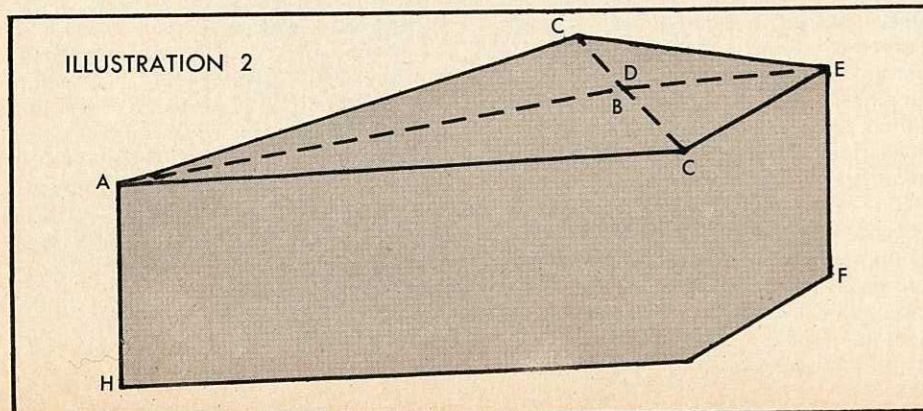
**Cutting:** Use two sheets of 3 by 8-foot brown wrapping paper, taped together and draw the pattern shown in the first illustration. The paper allows for error and protects the plastic while cutting. Unroll the sheet of plastic beginning at line AH and roll to line EF; then double back over the first sheet to line AH and cut the second sheet of plastic even with the bottom sheet at line AH. Do not cut where you folded it at EF. Now carefully cut along lines AB, BC, CD and

DE. Again, Do Not cut along EF.

**Sewing:** Begin stitching the two cut sheets together along line DE. Then along line BA and along line AH. Sew a regular one-half inch seam along these edges. DO NOT sew D to C or C to B yet. Now with the cover partially sewed (see illustration two), put point B even with D and sew across line CC. This completes the closure. Now lay all seams flat and sew these to the plastic (illustration 3).

After sewing, take the 2" masking tape and tape all sewed seams. Now turn the cover inside out and put it on your machine. To hold the cover down, cut the rim side and stem from an old 26" bicycle innertube. It works like a giant rubber band to slip under the tail light and over the front wheel with the middle of the band under the foot rests. And let it rain!

—Albert Rockel



# NEWS FROM EUROPE

**GP Games:** The 1967 international road racing season has developed into a "Honda-versus-the-rest" contest. Honda vs. Yamaha for the 250 title, Honda against MV in 350 and 500cc classes. True, Honda took on the world in the biggest possible manner, before quitting 50 and 125cc class racing. In 1966 they won all five solo manufacturer championships and three major titles. This is the first year, though, that Honda has campaigned with such a tiny team of riders—one championship chaser plus one backer-up. It's been up to Mike Hailwood to single-handedly freeze out Phil Read, Bill Ivy (Yamaha) and Giacomo Agostini (MV).

Following his Isle of Man triple-trouncing of the opposition, Mike repeated the dose at the Dutch TT. He took the 250 class away from Ivy and Read (the latter eventually retired with mechanical trouble) and won a great dice with his arch rival "Ago" for the 500cc top spot. Altogether Mike totaled up 273 victory miles in one day and three races.

The roles were reversed with a vengeance during the ultra-fast Belgian GP at Francorchamps. Agostini's 500 MV "three" shattered the Honda camp by outpacing Hailwood by 2 mph to win at



Hailwood takes a walk after engine trouble in E. Germany. Both his 250 and 500 broke.

123.95 mph. But Ivy's performance with the screaming Yamaha 250 "four" was really stunning. With a race average of 122.24 mph, little Bill almost succeeded in making the Honda look pedestrian. Read retired again—with a broken crankshaft—after setting a 125.61 mph two-fifty lap record; and Ralph Bryans, finishing third, led the World Championship table from level-pegging Hailwood and Read. Hailwood was also knotted with Agostini in the 500cc dispute, each having two wins and one second.

Moving over to East Germany's famous Sachsenring, Hailwood won his fourth-in-a-row 350cc race, and twice finished races on foot. Both the 500 "four" (running on three cylinders and one gear) and the 250 "six" (valve gear trouble) failed to last the course. Not so Agostini's MV and Read's Yamaha—they both won and consolidated their positions in the respective championship tables.

Czechoslovakia followed, with races for the vital 250 and 500cc classes in the program. This time the big Honda was mechanically reliable, and Hailwood took full advantage to put it across the Agostini/MV team—but only after he had seen his two-fifty championship

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**And you don't have to oil it  
when it rains.**

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**RETAIL PRICE: \$194.50**

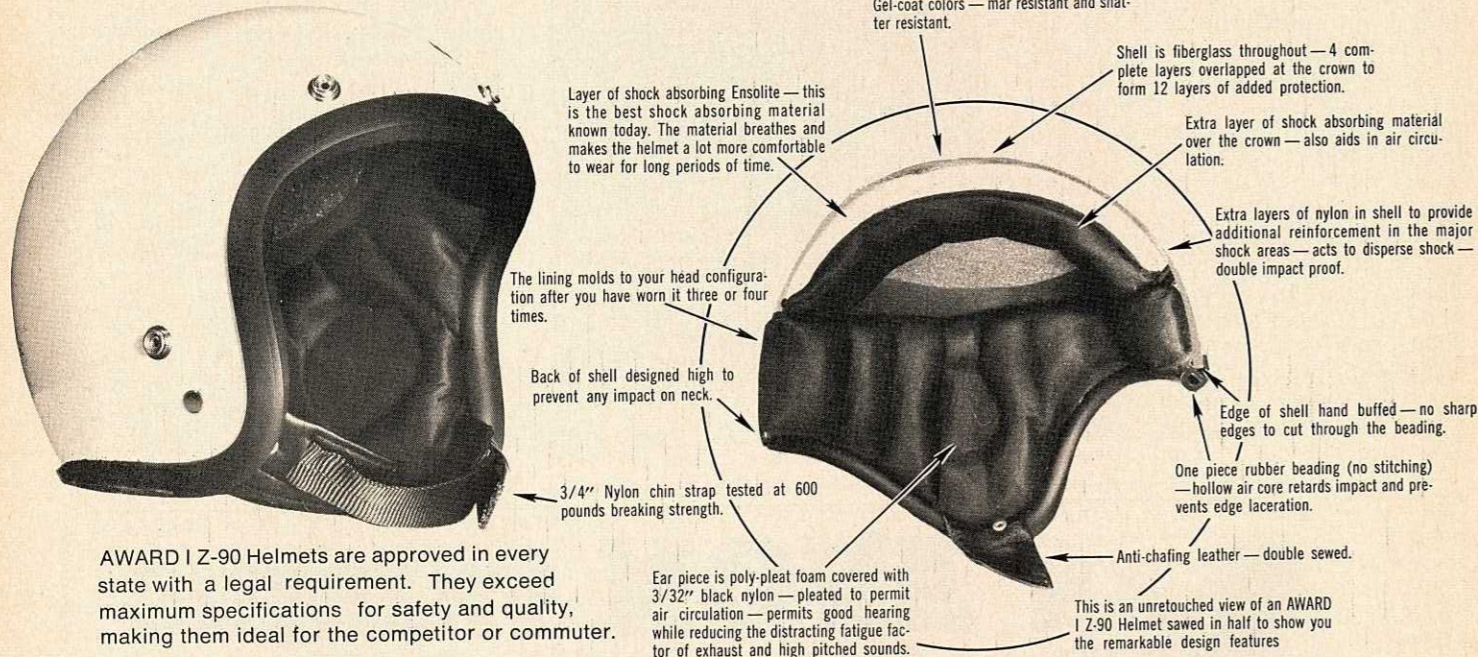
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# "AWARD" Winner...

## The AWARD I is the most comfortable Z-90 approved helmet you can buy—and at the price you can afford!

When we set out to design our maximum safety AWARD I helmet, we started on the premise that comfort need not be sacrificed for safety. We were remarkably successful. There is no safer or more comfortable helmet currently being manufactured — and we managed to keep the price within the range of every rider's pocket book.



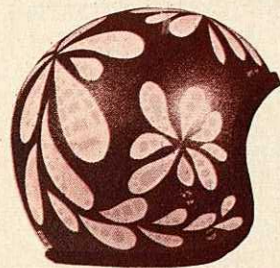
AWARD I Z-90 Helmets are approved in every state with a legal requirement. They exceed maximum specifications for safety and quality, making them ideal for the competitor or commuter.

## ...and your helmet can be individually different with GROOVEEES -the customizing vinyl decal from ASTRO!

Grooveees are the latest in instant customizing of your helmet, motorcycle, surf board, Rolls Royce, etc. They are waterproof and weatherproof — extremely easy to apply and can be instantly removed without marring the finish. They come in big 17 by 26 inch sheets and are silk screened in brilliant Dayglow colors (black light sensitive). There are ten different exciting designs. The

designs can be used as they exist on the sheets or you can create your own designs as we have done with the helmets shown below — just cut them out and stick them on.

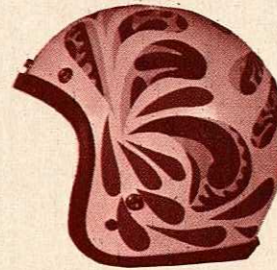
One sheet is enough to customize your helmet and your motorcycle, and the cost per sheet is only \$3.95.



The Insatiable Yellow pattern was used for this design.



This black helmet was decorated with the Passionate Love pattern.



The Liquid Geometrics pattern is fantastic for unusual effects.



Here, the Bird of Paradise pattern was used to create this startling effect.

Dealer inquiries invited —



**ASTRO ENGINEERING CORPORATION**  
9371 Kramer Ave., Westminster, California 92683  
Telephones (213) 625-3725, (714) 893-5011

If your motorcycle dealer does not carry Grooveees, write directly to ASTRO for further information.

chances receding in the mists created by Phil Read (Yamaha). So the iron curtain excursion left Read (42 points) the 250cc leader over Ivy (34) and Hailwood (33). Pace-setting five-hundred man Agostini had collected 36 points, compared with Hailwood's 30. Hailwood, though, emerged as 350cc World Champion again, thanks to his five victories on the trot.

Giacomo Agostini won the 500cc class of the Finnish GP, held in the most atrocious weather any rider could re-

Hailwood was so far ahead that the race became a mere formality.

Dramatic goings-on at the Dundrod hairpin sensationally transformed the 250cc World Championship placings. On lap two, Phil Read, just in the lead from Hailwood, tumbled off his Yamaha after hitting a patch of oil. Hailwood shot away to a record 104.31 mph win. And Ralph Bryans (Honda "six") helped himself to second place, wrecking Yamaha's hopes of finishing on level championship terms with Hailwood through



Hailwood demolished his 500 Honda here in Finnish GP. Conditions improved for 250s.

member. The conditions at the start were appalling, then a huge thunder storm turned the 3.75 mile Imatra circuit into a river. That the race should never have been started was obvious to all, except the organizers. Only the bravest (and luckiest) could make anything of the race. Others were crash victims as their bikes aqua-planed wildly out of control. Among them Mike Hailwood, who was trying to make up a 20-second deficit on Ago. The Honda shot off the track, smashing into a row of trees. Fortunately, Mike escaped with a shaking.

But Mike the irrepressible showed what champions are made of by swinging back to take the two-fifty race, after conditions improved (a very relative term). This time, Phil Read ran out of luck and out of a certain number of sparks, and retired. Team-mate Bill Ivy kept the Yamaha flag flying with a second place, which boosted his personal championship score to within two points of Read's.

When he travelled to Northern Ireland for the Ulster GP, Mike Hailwood needed victories in both the 250 and 500cc events to keep himself in the title contest. He took both in an Ulster which defied all conventions by being run in brilliant weather conditions. The hitherto super-reliable MV burned out its clutch, right on the starting line. While the MV crew frantically fitted new clutch plates, Hailwood reeled off more than two laps. Then Agostini joined in the fun, but

Bill Ivy. But Ivy could still afford to grin; his 125cc win gained him that World Championship — his first.

Monza witnessed the most sensational Grand Prix finish when Giacomo Agostini won the "Italian" 500cc class on an MV-Agusta "3". But, three laps from the finish, Ago couldn't have harbored the wildest hopes of victory. For, to that point, Mike Hailwood had led on his Honda "four", stretching his advantage to apparently invincible proportions. Then the Honda's gearbox refused to budge out of top, and Agostini was able to present the jubilant Italian crowds with a home victory.

Now, if Hailwood wins in Canada and Ago fails to finish, they will be absolutely level with five wins and one second place each. If this is the case, the aggregate time of every 500cc championship round that they had both finished would be taken into account.

Honda's 250 title hopes took a Monza knock when Hailwood's bike broke a crank. The result left Phil Read (Yamaha) sitting on top of the championship table with 50 points, six better than Hailwood, who also trails a couple of points behind second man Bill Ivy (Yamaha).

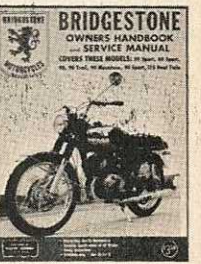
The 250 class with races to come in Canada and Japan looks likely to fiercely disputed by Hailwood, Read and Ivy to the bitter end.

**Factory Dicing:** Taking another cautious and welcome step into racing, BSA-

## Floyd Clymer's Latest!

### BRIDGESTONE OWNERS HANDBOOK AND SERVICE MANUAL

This is the official (and therefore accurate) shop manual of the Bridgestone factory. 171 excellent photos, charts, drawings. Covers all 50cc, 60cc, 90cc models as well as the fabulous 175cc Dual Twin. Complete specifications for all models, including speed and performance figures. Easily-understood how-to maintenance sections cover everything from major overhauls to simple tuning. Required tools are listed. All components are covered including: cylinders & pistons, starting systems, clutch, transmissions, carburetion, oil injection, electrical systems, forks, suspensions, wheels. Every owner, dealer, mechanic, enthusiast, collector and historian should have a copy of this informative book. Postpaid \$3.50



### HONDA SHOP MANUALS & HANDBOOKS

This series of three big (8 1/2 x 11 in.) Shop Manuals & Owners' Handbooks covers all Honda motorcycles. Step-by-step instructions for repair and maintenance are accompanied by detailed specifications, drawings, and photographs. Each manual is two books in one, suitable for professional mechanic and layman alike. 50cc models (210 pages) Postpaid \$4.00 125cc, 150cc models (176 pages) Postpaid \$4.00 250cc, 300cc models (192 pages) Postpaid \$5.00

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**NEWS FROM EUROPE** *Continued*

Triumph is going to enter factory teams in three 1968 production machine events: the International 500-Miler, the Hutchinson 100 and the Production TT (assuming there is one). Thus what was nominally unofficial backing, (when works bikes were ostensibly entered by motorcycle dealers) has become very official—and a very good thing too.

A seemingly not-so-inspired leak from Triumph's PR department is likely to spark off a Manx Grand Prix furor. Rumor has it that works Daytonas will contest the 500cc Manx GP (run over the Isle of Man TT course), an event fondly considered strictly amateur. After Greeves Silverstone won the 250cc class in 1964 and 1965, the Manx organizers solemnly declared that "works" machines would be barred in the future. At that time the whole affair assumed an air of unreality, because there were no works Greeves and the Manx people delivered their warning to the private tuner who prepared the winning Silverstones. Now the Daytona threat has everybody in a fair old tizzy; denials and qualifications concerning the works Triumphs are being issued daily. If it were not so serious, it would be funny. Admittedly, the Manx GP conception has always been firmly planted in the "no-factory" rule, despite the fact it was successfully ignored for



John Hartle (No. 20) urges his 650 Triumph through the pack to win the production race

years. Top tuners regularly beat a path to Bracebridge Street, emerging with better than average Norton bits; in fact, it was not unknown for private runners to have their engines serviced in works racing departments.

Undoubtedly, the organizers can always take refuge in the fact that Rules are Rules. But it's living in the past to sup-

pose that any British manufacturer will spring an exotic multi-cylinder device on the Manx GP. So the Triumph efforts should be encouraged, not condemned. After all, anyone familiar with the British racing story since 1957 knows the painfully slow business it has been getting the industry to even recognize there is such a thing as road racing. Another,

and very strong, argument for accepting the "AMA-type" Daytona (whether private or works prepared) is that Triumph would be morally obliged to build and market real Daytona racing replicas. If the Manx organizers fail to face up to the changing times, they could further delay the chances of riders ever getting those desperately-wanted new 500cc racing models.

**John Hartle:** At the age of 33, John Hartle is making a wonderful road-racing comeback after an enforced retirement of three years. Most people reckoned John was crazy to pick up the racing threads, especially when he had quit on medical orders following a serious crash testing Gilera in 1964. But earlier this year, John was given a clean bill of health and returned to the race tracks with a Triumph-Metisse—albeit not too impressively. It was only after the Isle of Man TT (6th in Senior and 7th in Junior) that Hartle really came into his own on the GP circuits, riding a Matchless G50. With five second places in East Germany, Finland and Ireland, Hartle has hoisted himself into third 500c championship place behind Agostini and Hailwood.

The record books will probably remember John best for his two seasons with MV-Agusta and his string of seconds to that other John—Surtees. Hartle's outing with MV culminated in a 1960 Junior (350) TT victory. Three years later he was back at the Island with more four-cylinder machines, this time as a member of the Geoff Duke-inspired Gilera come-back team. John finished second in the 350 and 500cc races.

Now Hartle's eye-catching riding has inevitably linked his name with Honda's (rumored) search for another 1968 team rider to take pressure off Mike Hailwood. Meanwhile, his skill with the single-cylinder is there for everyone to see; a skill that's something of a shaker for some tipped-for-the-top riders, and underlining the shortage of real first-class talent.

**Canadian Mike Duff** who has been racing overseas since 1960, has decided to pack up. Mike's magnificent performances in Europe on single-cylinder machines did as much as anything to make motorcycle sport respectable back home in Canada. In 1962, he joined the Isle of Man elite by lapping the TT course at over 100 mph on a "single". His fast, stylish racing eventually earned him a place in the Yamaha team which he helped to two World Championship titles.

Testing a Yamaha in Japan prior to the 1965 Japanese GP, Duff crashed heavily and was hospitalized for a lengthy period with a damaged hip. Since then, he has been struggling to regain full fitness. The final blow came in Finland this year, when his hip started giving trouble again.

—Jim Greening



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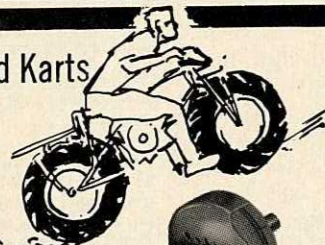
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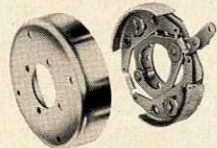
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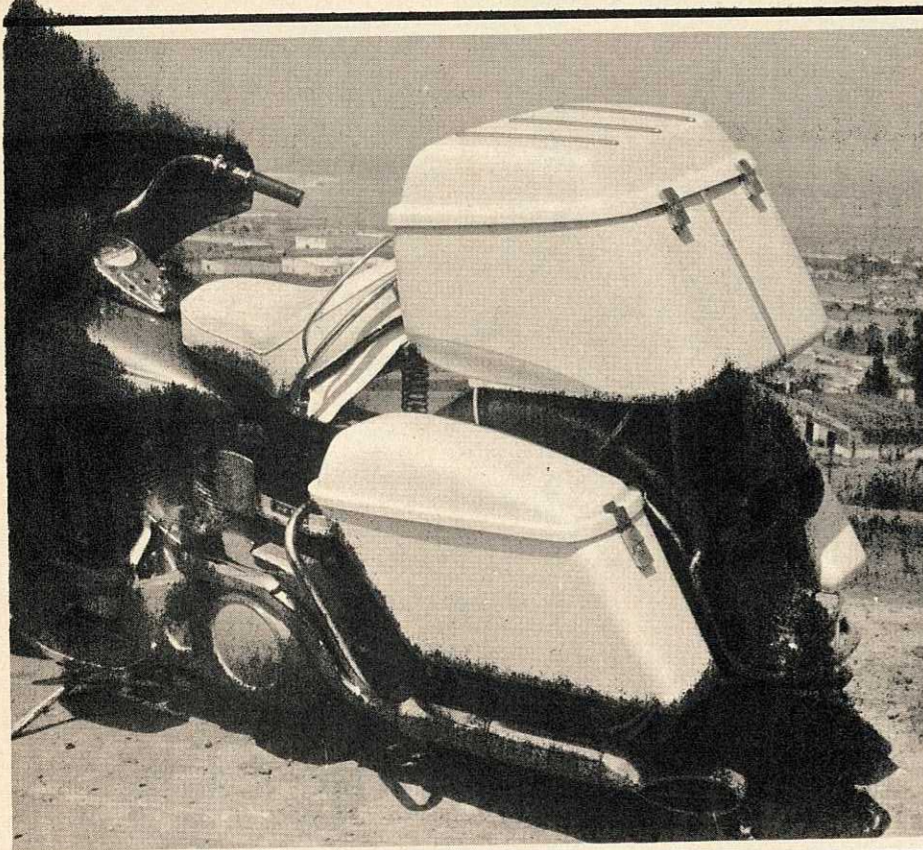
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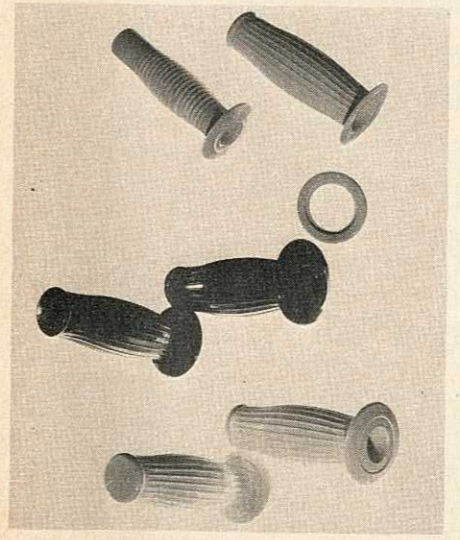
**ISLE OF MAN ON \$7 A DAY:** On a trip to the Diamond Jubilee TT races arranged by Hank Slegers, 28 well-fed, well-rested fans stayed at the Empress Hotel (with meals included) for a pittance. Roundtrip fare to Douglas and back was \$286. If you're interested in going next year, contact the amazing Mr. Slegers at Hank Slegers Company, Inc., 19 Ridgedale Avenue, Whippany, N.J. 07981.

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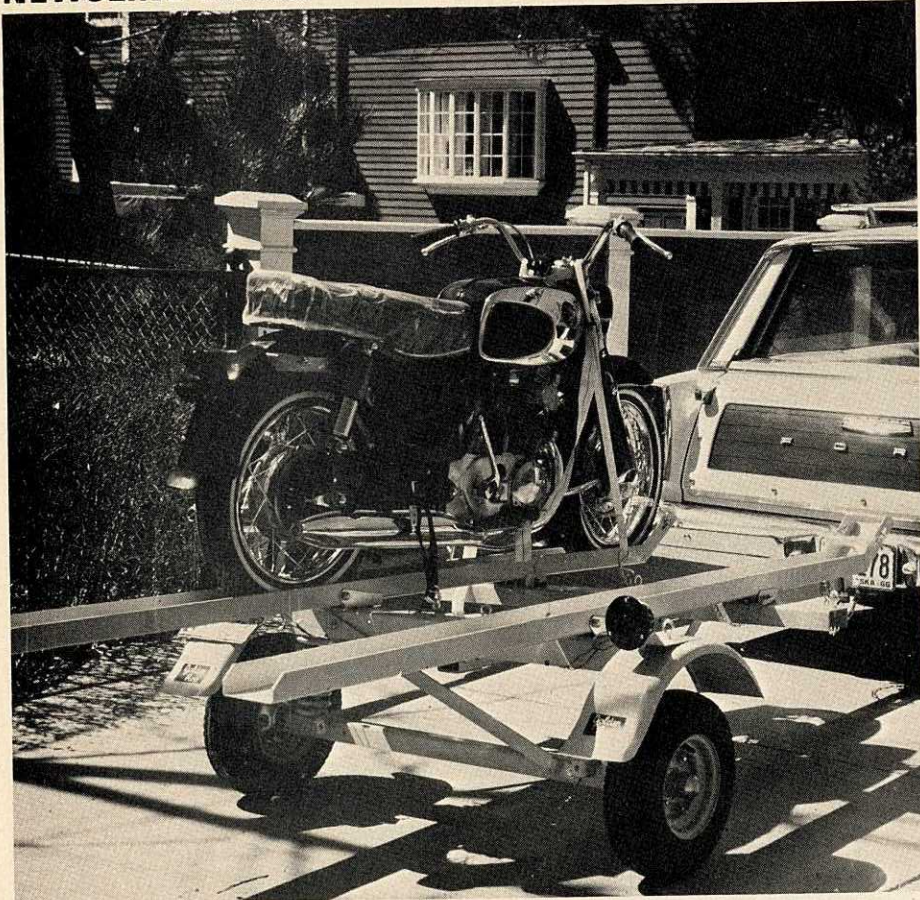
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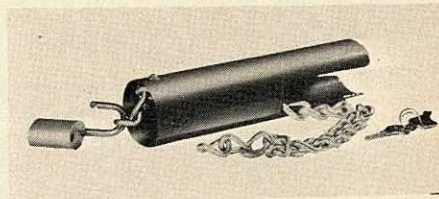
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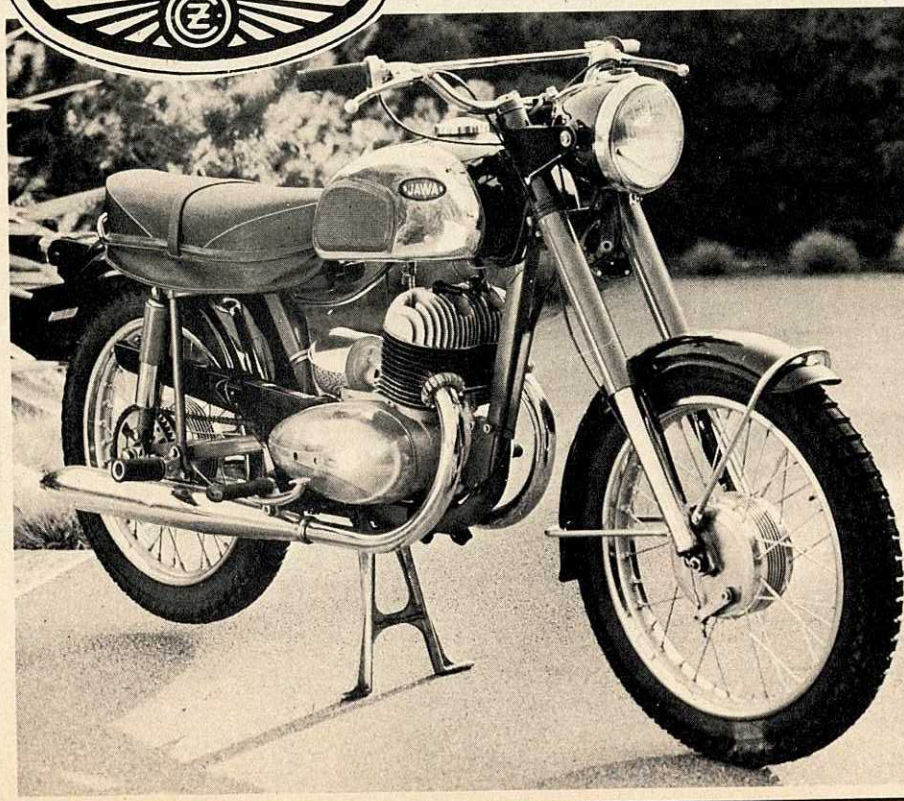
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### CANADIAN GP *Contd from p 59*

Now it was time for the 250cc race. The gas tank truck had arrived. Buy Ivy was so cold he asked that there be a short rest period for him to warm up. His request was granted. A half-hour delay was announced and everyone made a dash for hot coffee at the stands and for stronger anti-freeze from their glove compartments. The sky was still completely overcast and gray. At least it wasn't raining. And since it wasn't raining, the organizers were allowing the racers to take one practice lap before each race. All earlier practice had been held in the pouring rain, and this lap would give them some idea of what a dry track was like. The cold was turning out to be the organizer's bugaboo. It was announced that the 250 race would be cut to 25 laps, that the 500 would be cut to 40 laps and the sidecar event, to have been held between the two, would be held last.

Finally the quarter-liter bikes were bought off the false grid and up to the starting line. At a casual signal from the starter they went off around the course on their trial lap. Then when they got back on the grid, the two Honda Sixes of Hailwood and Ralph Bryans were pulled off to the side to have their fuel topped up. The mechanics tinkered about with them while everyone (the Yamaha two-strokes in particular) cooled off. When the Hondas were good and ready and back on the line the flag dropped and the pack bump-started and shot away. All except Ralph Bryans, that is. He pushed and shoved and bumped and jumped and after everyone, (and about forty seconds) had gone, he finally got underway. Well, as racing goes, the 250 event was the best of the day. Bill Ivy on the Yamaha four and Mike and Bike aboard his Honda six charged around the course changing the lead on every lap. After his bad start, Bryans was winding his Honda through the pack and going like blazes to make up the lost time. Phil Read's Yammy clung to third place. In the 31st lap (yeah, they ran the full distance after all), only one to go. Ivy pitted and was out of the race. Read took over second place. Bryans who had been doing some fair flying, worked his way up to third, one lap behind Hailwood and Read. Du Hamel, running a Yamaha came in 35 seconds later. Another course record was set, an absolute record for motorcycles at 1:36.8 (91.45 mph). Hailwood, of course, set it in his 17th lap.

All we can tell you about the sidecar demo race is that it was a procession, and it was over before it began. One photographer who didn't know that the event was back in its original place in the program, went to the washroom and missed the whole five laps. Lou Herrmann and his passenger John Davis drove to victory in Maurice Candy's old rig. Mau-

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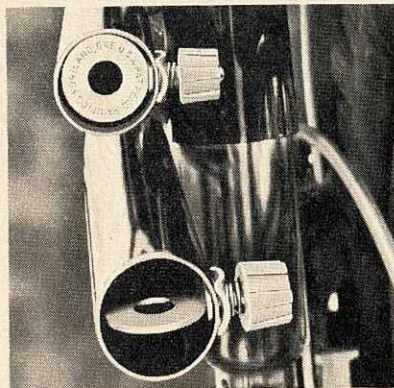


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## CANADIAN GP Continued

rice was there to watch. He has entered an outfit in the Isle of Man TT for many years without great success and I think he enjoyed seeing his chair win something.

The Senior, believe it or not, was a repeat of the earlier races. Another bore. Sure we saw Hailwood and Agostini and all those guys and their fantastically fast machinery, but for racing, well, it wasn't very interesting. And you have got to feel for the little guys because the Stars make everyone else look like they are out on a poker run. Again there was a delay for riders from the previous race to warm themselves. When they finally took off, it was Agostini first away followed by Hailwood. Mike just sat behind the MV three for twenty laps, within shouting distance all the time. Then he passed Agostini with ease and by the end of the race was thirty seconds ahead of him. Most interesting ride award goes to Canada's pride, Mike Duff. Before the start the announcer warned the crowd that Duff didn't have a chance to win because his machine, a Matchless G50, was not competitive. Be that as it may, he won a well-earned third place, on the same lap with Hailwood and Ago, and less than a minute behind the MV star. And he had started from the back of the grid! The Canadians swarmed over him. Mike Manley of Toronto, who has been having some success with his 450 Honda, ran out of luck. Lying third, he dropped back to sixth and then dropped the machine. He was hospitalized with a suspected broken leg. Ron Grant, perhaps the most noteworthy Yank present, fared well for a while until, when in the fourth place, he passed by Duff, and right after that dumped his Daytona Triumph. He scrambled back aboard unhurt but pitted out in the 24th lap. The two Oscar Liebmann BMW "Rennsport" Specials retired. Fred Simone retired in the next-to-the-last lap while in the seventh place. He broke a rocker arm. The other OL went out earlier after losing spark to one cylinder due to a loose wire. First American home was George Rockett on his Norton who took sixth place. The downright stubborn sentimentalist prize goes to Kurt Fisher for entering his Vincent.

Hailwood did the 40 laps in 73:28.5 with a fastest lap at 86.91 mph, about five mph slower than the best he did with the 250. The Honda four is not the best handling racer. Anyone who watched it run will agree that without a rider of Hailwood's caliber, Honda would not be able to race it.

So we saw the Stars and their machines. And some very dull racing. What we all would like to have seen was some of America's best running against the Stars. Then at least there would have been some competition going on. Downfield, at least.

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## EUROPE Continued

British Petroleum announced that it is dropping support for automobile and motorcycle sport after this season. BP has been very active in the two-wheeler field, especially with its assistance to private runners. Perhaps this is not the best method for mounting huge advertising campaigns, but the sport has benefited no end. BP has pulled out partly as an economy measure to lessen the effects of the Middle East oil crisis. More than most big oil companies, BP relies on supplies from the Arab countries, and is doubtless feeling a chilly financial breeze at this time. This decision means there is only Shell-Mex left to provide trade support with gas and oil, though Castrol often supplies oil (and finance) to the big Japanese teams.



New brake idea employs a centrally-mounted disc with built up flanges to accept spokes.

Lance Weil's struggles to stop his 883cc Harley-Davidson monster have ended with the fitting of a Colin Lyster twin-disc brake, and the combination proved a winning one at Lydden and Brands Hatch. Lyster has been so encouraged by the favorable reports from top riders that he is tooling up for full-scale production, to replace the present supply-to-order arrangement. Of course, one big advantage of the Lyster layout is that the disc assemblies will fit straight into Norton and Ceriani front forks. Perhaps this description is an over-simplification, for we have noticed that hydraulic disc brakes (of any make) must be very skillfully assembled to the machine. Any shortcuts and carelessness, resulting in misalignment, do disastrous things to the disc's reputation and the well-being of riders.

**Motor Racing Development**, which controls Brands Hatch, Snetterton, Mallory Park and Oulton Park, has decided to axe starting money at National road race meetings. The budget for 1968's motorcycle racing is \$280,000, and with the



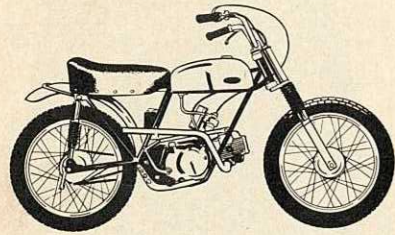
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### EUROPE Continued

end of starting "gold", total prize money per meeting will be \$4,200.

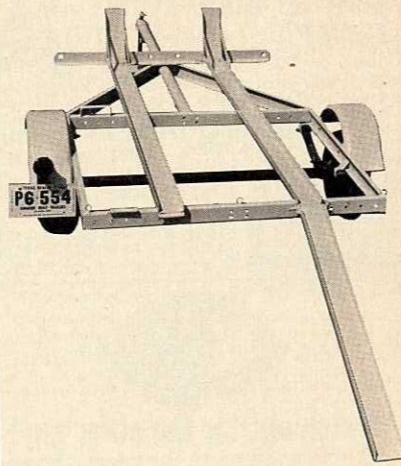
MRD also believes the racing season is too short. So the circuit bosses would like to see racing in the winter, "though not during January and February." With no expense money and racing in the winter, riders are not noticeably enthusiastic.

**Down and Out Racing:** If you want to crack a really sick joke, talk about "poor man's racing" to the average British short-circuit hopeful. Racing Manxes and Matchless is so shockingly expensive that the boys are all breadline racers. (And if you race every weekend on a 250cc two stroke that's also expensive). So it is natural to find people coming along regularly with ideas and "clubman" racing motorcycles aimed at reducing the financial burdens. The "GB" is one such advice. Produced by Green Brothers (Peter and Phillip) of London, the "GB" is powered by the rugged 497cc Matchless moto-cross engine equipped with 7R connecting rod and big-end assembly, giving 49 bhp at 7,000 rpm with a 9 to 1 compression ratio. The frame is a mixture of tubes (2" x .064" for the main structure) and plates, and is designed to combine adequate strength and low costs. Greens' main layout, consisting of single top and front down tubes and nothing under (or round) the engine, looks rather weird. But it does work well in practice and, with the engine and gearbox mounted in 1/4" thick light alloy plates, gives a feeling of security.

Front forks are Hipkin (Sprite) units shortened by four inches and carrying a 19-inch wheel equipped with an 8-inch twin-leading shoe brake by Jim Robinson. At the rear, there is a 6-inch British Hub brake and front and rear stoppers combine to give an unbalanced braking effort. The front is too powerful, while the rear is pretty hopeless, but this problem is far from being insurmountable. Nor was the original Albion four speed gearbox, fitted for reasons of low cost, up to racing standards. This has since been replaced by a BSA box, but the ultimate, albeit more expensive answer is a Norton unit.

The fact of there being no ready made national (let alone international) set-up catering to "formula" racing is naturally one big discouragement to Greens' type of project. In England, the "GB" racing novice would be pitched in against the Manxes, G50s and big-twin derivatives and may be so discouraged that he takes up fishing. But if you look for a reasonably priced, lively and handleable five-hundred to give the thrill and basis of road racing, the GB is well worth considering; and you have an engine suitable for other uses afterwards.

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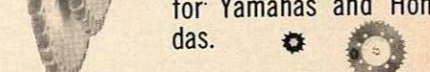
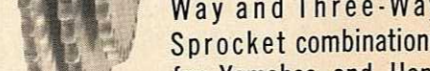
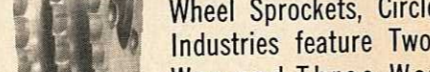
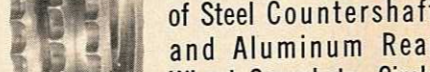
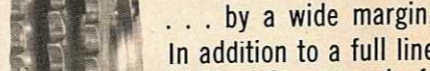
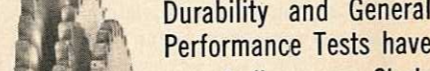
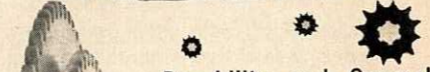
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### ASPEN Continued from page 65

shape of a stop sign.

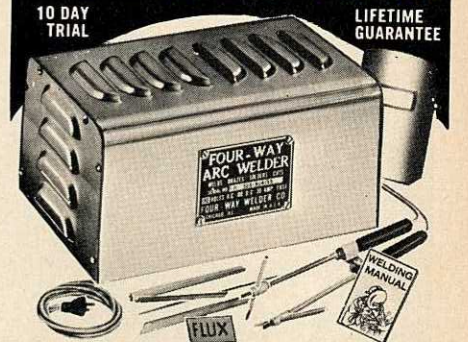
Aspen has a number of very good restaurants. The Copper Kettle has a unique menu each evening with an entire meal from some esoteric part of the globe. The food there is superb, but the place is worth visiting for the decor alone. Toklat is an Alaskan restaurant where you can occasionally get reindeer stroganoff. The Paragon is very French and very good. Strombergs and the Steak Pit are always a sure bet for a good steak dinner. And then there is the Chart House. A couple of surfers, Joey Cabell from Hawaii and Buzz Bent from California, built the place a few years ago, hired a few friends as waiters, started cooking steaks, and hoped that people would come. They did. Joey now spends most of the summer surfing in Hawaii and comes back to Aspen in the winter—to ski. When you walk into the Chart House it's sort of how you might imagine a Hawaiian Country club—nautical decor with lots of big, wild surfing and sailing photographs on the walls. Except they probably don't play Bob Dylan records in Hawaiian Country Clubs. The Chart House is a restaurant where you can get a teriyaki steak that will spoil you forever.

There are two ways of satisfying your appetite for Mexican food, one being a fine spot in town called Tico's. The other involves a superb ride, preferably around sunset, up over Independence Pass and down to a little town called Granite. With some searching you can find Maria's, where they serve about the same food as Tico's in a place that looks like a country square-dance hall. The owners' little kids (about four of them) will probably come up and stare at you while you eat dinner.

There is a lot of great touring to be done over the innumerable dirt-road passes and old mining roads that twist and wind up over the plateau of the Continental Divide. Most of these are open only from May through November, since no one takes on the Herculean task of plowing them in the winter. I could tell you a bit about where to go, but you'll be much better off to look up a girl named Pat Smith. Pat does about half the graphic design work in Aspen, but she and a girl called "Fast Marge" manage to find time to cover three or four hundred miles a week on their Montessas exploring the mountain roads and near-ghost towns that lace the Southern Rockies. These little towns don't get visited very often, least of all by a couple of girls on motorcycles. Pat and Marge manage to put everyone on a bit more by hustling pool for beer money at the local hall. They're both very good at it, and haven't even gotten their thumbs broken yet.

When I got to Aspen, a typical local

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## ASPEN Continued

phenomena had just lapsed—the mushroom hunting rage. There had been a period of wild mushroom parties—everyone who came had to bring a bag of mushrooms they picked in the woods. Don McKinnon told me, “The other day we were riding out by Woody Creek. We got to a fence and we all stopped to rest. Somebody said, ‘Hey there’s a mushroom.’ All of a sudden, man, everybody got off their bikes and started into the woods—guys just streaking about in their crash helmets looking for mushrooms.”

One of the good things about Aspen is that you can step into so many worlds so easily. What really makes this possible is the people there. Everyone comes from a different environment and brings a particular talent or knowledge to Aspen. I asked Don what we might do if we didn’t go riding the next day: “If you looked at my shotgun and said, ‘Let’s go shooting,’ in two minutes I’d be throwing a clay pigeon and you’d be pulling the trigger . . . of it you said, ‘What about that guy with the Soar Aspen sticker on his Porsche?’ I’d say, ‘Oh, he’s the soaring guy here,’ and right away you’d be up in a sailplane.”

And then there is the whole scene at the Aspen Institute—lectures, seminars, conferences, concerts and film festivals. But most people at Aspen do things in a very concentrated, almost compulsive way. Like if you’re into the motorcycle thing, then that’s it—you’re riding, or working on your bike, or reading Jeff Smith’s book on Moto-Cross all the time. Next year you may be soaring or sky diving. In fact, the day before I left, Don McKinnon and Vicky Colvard had formed an unusually acute interest in my cameras. My questions about motorcycling in Aspen now alternated with return queries about my Nikons.

The next day Don bought a camera and two of my lenses. When I stopped by the Chart House that evening just before leaving for New York, Don, with a Snoopy-like grin on his face, was holding seven rolls of film he had shot that afternoon. “Hey Paul, how do you process this stuff?” After dinner it began to rain. I was out front checking my trailer. I heard a laugh, looked up, and there was Vicky, standing in the rain with his newly acquired Nikon, taking pictures of me.

They are probably both good photographers by now. They may even look at prints of their takes during my stay at Aspen and remember those days. For me, it was all very sudden, very real, very big and now, very gone. I look at their images and try to recall the good times. The visit at Aspen must have been fantastic. But now it is past, I am in another world. Of Aspen and motorcycling I can only call it a trip. ©

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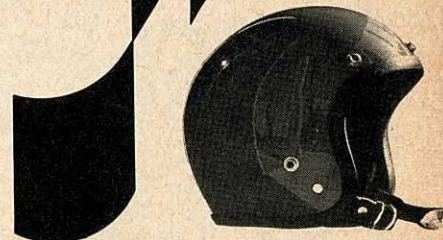
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