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HERBERT T. LEAVY Publishing and Advertising Director 257 Park Avenue South New York, New York 10010 (212) 777-4200

> RON RENZULLI Assistant Publisher

DOLORES RANKIN Assistant Advertising Manager

ALBERT D. SHONK
West Coast Representative
3156 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, California 90010
(213) 388-2981
681 Market Street
San Francisco, California 94105

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CYCLE ILLUSTRATED is published bi monthly by Modern Day Periodicals, Inc., 257 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10010. Individual copy price: \$1.00. Submission of manuscripts, photographs and, or illustrations must be accompanied by stamped, self addressed envelopes. The publisher assumes no responsibility for unsolicited material. Copyright © 1975 by Modern Day Periodicals, Inc. All rights reserved under International and Pan American Copyright Conventions. Reproduction inwhole or in part without written permission from the publisher is strictly prohibited. Subscription rate in U.S.A. and Canada: \$6.00 per year. Printed in U.S.A.

CYCLE

MARCH 1975

VOL. 8 NO. 5





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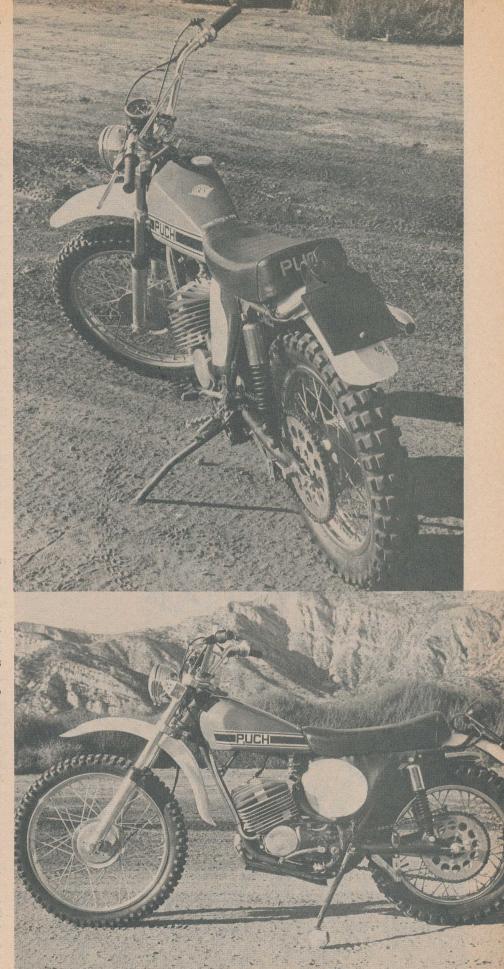
"Endure, to harden, hold out, last, 2) to stand, bear, undergo." That's how Webster's defines the word endure. Now the trick is to find a motorcycle that will meet these characterisitics. We may have found one, and then again, maybe not.

The Puch factory, known for its small bore motorcycles and its expertise in development of never-stop super-quick engines, has developed quite a reputation for itself as a top builder of such mechanisms. For 1975, Puch features in its line two basic engine units, around which they have designed a number of extras for any application the racer or road rider may have in mind. Both their 125cc and 175cc machines this year can be bought from the factory as motocross racers, enduro machines or plain street machines with turn signals and all the other legal paraphernalia.

We visited the Indian Dunes Motor Park in Valencia, California, recently for a close look at two of the new Puchs, the 125 MX and the 175 Enduro. With us on the jaunt was Jeff Wright, the young California hotshoe who has been taking the small cc categories by storm on his semitrick 125 MXer. Wright also knows good machinery when he rides it, and he came along to tell us about the 175 Enduro bike and answer any questions we might have.

The 175 resembles one of two things (we could not quite decide which: 1) a street motorcycle that was saved from becoming a racer, or 2) a racing machine that was adapted to do some street riding. The 175 is only an unbelievably 10 pounds heavier than the 125 MX machine. In these 10 pounds Puch has managed to include a tail light, a head light, and a speedometer with a trip meter, along with reflectors on the front forks. The machine retains the same frame as the 125cc MX model, yet packs a bigger wallop with a 50cc larger four engine producing extra horsepower.

Puch does not have a world famous reputation as far as enduro riding goes. However, in the past few months even Maico has developed a serious enduro machine (at least the factory claims it is serious about it) so it was only natural for Puch to attempt to climb on the bandwagon, albeit in a big way. However, we are not sure, after our first glimpse at the new bikes, exactly how big the Puch enduro will go over with



American riders.

Enduro riders are a diffierent breed from the motocross people, and they demand different types of machinery. They have no pit crews close by, and often enduro courses are just as demanding if not more so, than a regular motocross course. We were impressed by some of the equipment on this Puch. We simply do not feel that American enduroists will take the machine seriously, but it is a matter of time and testing until we know for sure.

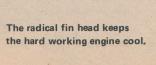
All good enduro bikes need a speedometer and a tripmeter up front. The people at Puch figured this one out, and installed a VDO speedometer on top of the forks in a rubber bracketed casing affair. The general idea was good, but then somebody at the factory had to go out and buy a bunch of speedometers that went all the way up to 140 (yes, 140!) miles per hour. Now, what good is that going to be on a 175? I mean, let's be reasonable, guys. The high speed that can be covered on the speedo does not allow the rider to make about low determinations situations. There is not enough detailing between marked mph listings. The speedo also incorporates an odometer and a resettable tripmeter. As we said, the entire affair (which lights up with the headlight) is mounted in rubber brackets, and took quite a beating on the day we ran it.

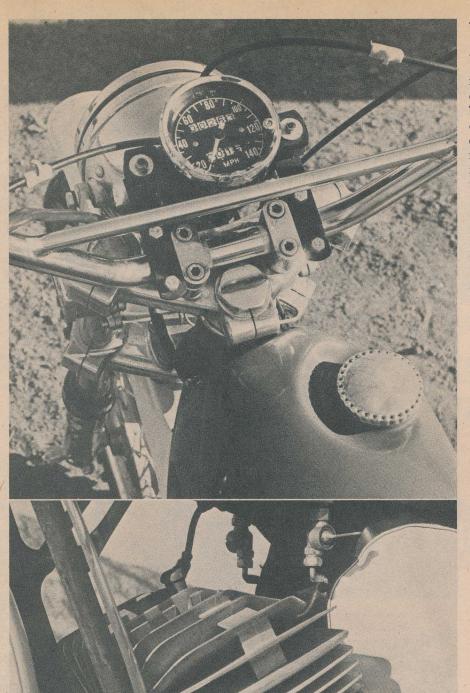
The headlight incorporates both low and high beams, and the headlight lens is also rubber mounted, keeping both water and heavy shocks away from the bulb.

The rear stop light is mounted, again on rubber, but this mounting also becomes a license plate or number plate holder. Remember the old days when an old cut out inner tube had to suffice? Well, Puch has cut the inner tube for you. Now you pay for it, but it is guaranteed. In fact, the rear lamp took quite a beating during our test, and it never gave a hint of quitting on us.

The entire electrical system runs off the magneto. The spark for the machine is provided by a 35-watt Bosch transistorized ignition system, which is standard this year on all the Puch models we've seen and is one of their finer points. The Puch's, especially this 175cc model, always did well and were a pleasure to start.

The single cylinder two stroke engine







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The front end is superb, possibly the bike's best feature.

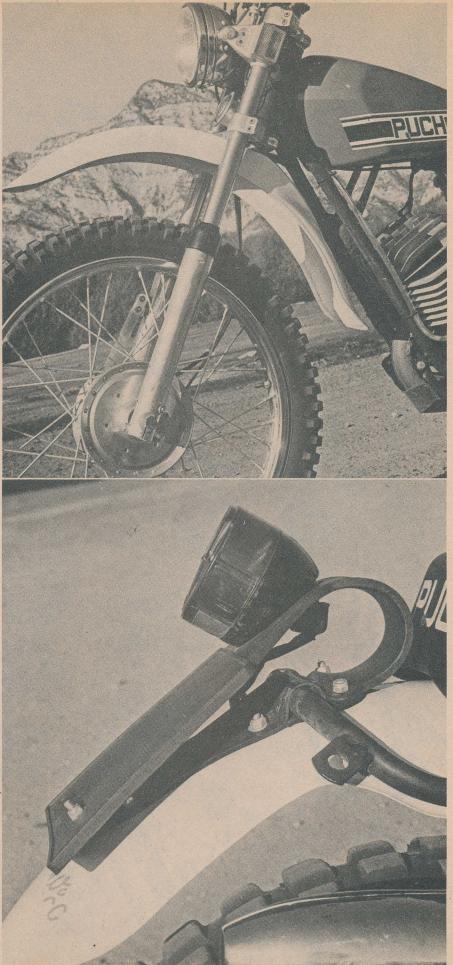
is completely similar to the 125cc in all design characteristics. From the radial fin, sunburst design head to the five-speed gearbox, the Puch 175 and the 125 are one and the same. This 175 produces 27 horsepower at 9,000 rpm.

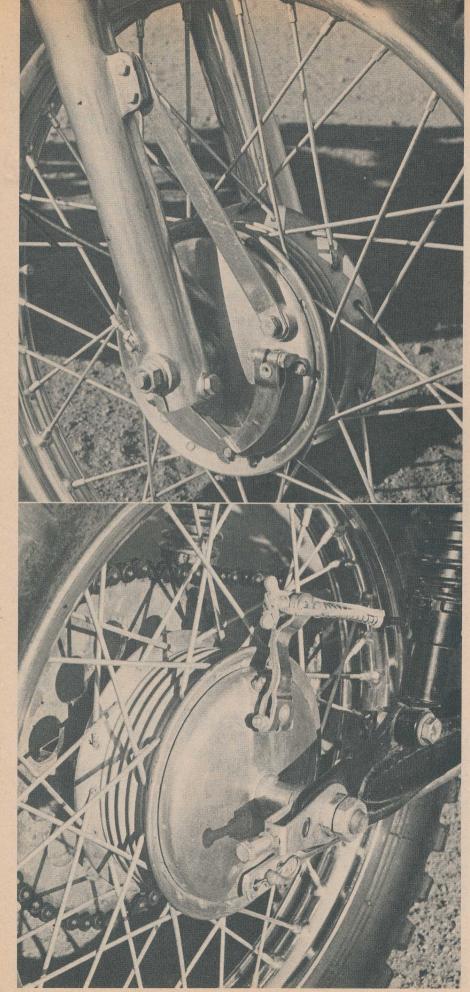
As we have found with other Puchs, the secret, if it can be called that, comes in riding with the throttle wide open and in controlling speed with the gearbox. The 125 Puch MXer we have ridden was specially prepared for Grand Prix racing, and this was even more so with the 125 than with this enduro bike. Yet we still found that with this 175 the "WFO" style of riding seems to apply. The engine is a bit more responsive than we expected at the low end, yet we doubt if it has torque enough to compete with serious enduro machines.

Suspension on the machine seems to fit the bill. Up front, Betor telescopic shocks do the job. Betors are, if not the best, then among the top five, of all suspension systems made. They are strong, durable and dependable. In the rear, the 175 enduro relies on Girling shocks, which are rebuildable, with a spring weight of approximately 70 pounds. Although the Girlings may fade after a hard day, we would recommend they be left on. Any additions to a motorcycle, unless done by professional tuner for strict racing purposes, generally tend to slow down a machine. If you are not enduro riding for money (and I haven't met anyone yet who does) it is better to leave the suspension and engine alone. It makes a pretty good combination the way it is.

Among a few other unnecessary things on the machine are twin fuel petcocks. Power is supplied to the engine in the form of fuel and air mixed in a Bing 32mm carburetor. The Bing uses the archaic "tickler" method for starting cold engines. We always liked a good old fashioned choke, but perhaps we have been spoiled by our Japanese friends and their carburetors. Whatever the case, a little experimentation could prove a Mikuni of the same size to be both more practical and cheaper in the long run of competition.

The horn, lights and kill buttons are all controlled on the left side of the machine's handlebars. All grips and controls are from the Magura company, and the cables are equipped with openings to allow lubrication from the





Front forks are Betors and work fine; so does the brake.

new aerosol can cable lube devices.

The fenders and the tank are both made of ABS tough plastic, the kind that normally refuses to break. The fuel tank holds 2.1 gallons of fuel. Oil is measured by removing a pin on the right side of the crankcase. It is a simple enough operation. Remove the pin, and if any oil comes out, you are doing all right. We wondered whatever happened to the dip stick?

The carburetor is hidden behind leather coverings that are fairly easy to unsnap and remove. They seem to provide adequate moisture protection for the carb. The airbox can only be reached by removing two seat bolts and the entire seat. However, this is a little too complicated and tiring for the rider engaged in a race event, so we were sorry to see Puch include this in their machine design.

The wheels are of the Akront variety, so they are guaranteed to stay clean through the mud. Tires are Metzler trialers.

A nice touch is the chain adjuster. Instead of removing cotter pins, and messing with the entire rear wheel, one merely has to pull open a bolt and the chain can be adjusted with a hammer or pair of pliars. It is a quick, simple and efficient way of doing the job.

Many questions came to mind after riding and examining closely this Austrian motorcycle. For instance, why does a company like Puch NOT include an adequate tool kit, extra spark plugs, or even a decent speedometer for an enduro machine? Why leave the airbox and carburetor so hard to get to?

There were other questions we had, but the true answer is that this Puch is by no means a serious enduro machine. It is a fun bike; quick, responsive and ready to let you show off. For the average rider (or slightly better than average) who wants a play bike with an impressive name, he should consider buying this Puch. For the serious enduroist, however, he might want to skip the 175 this year and wait to see what 1976 may have to offer.

Rear brake adjuster is held on by rubber band. Why?

A slider, this Puch loves to play in the dirt (but don't get serious).

Getting off is not uncommon, so here is a picture of a rider doing just that after meeting a rock in the water.

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PUCH 175 ENDURO TECHNICAL DATA

Price	\$1198.00
Warranty	
Distributoor	
	Chatsworth, California
	Chatsworth, California
ENGINE	
Type	
Displacement	
bore and stroke	
BHP @ rpm	
Overall gear ratios	NA at this time
RUNNING GEAR Frame	double loop steel with
C	hrome molly swing arm
Suspension	
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SUMMARY

Not a serious enduro bike, but a fun trails bike. Fine engine and good suspension make it a good addition to any stable of dirt machines.

