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# DIRT BIKE

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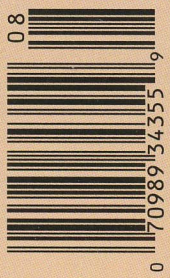
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# HILL CLIMBING

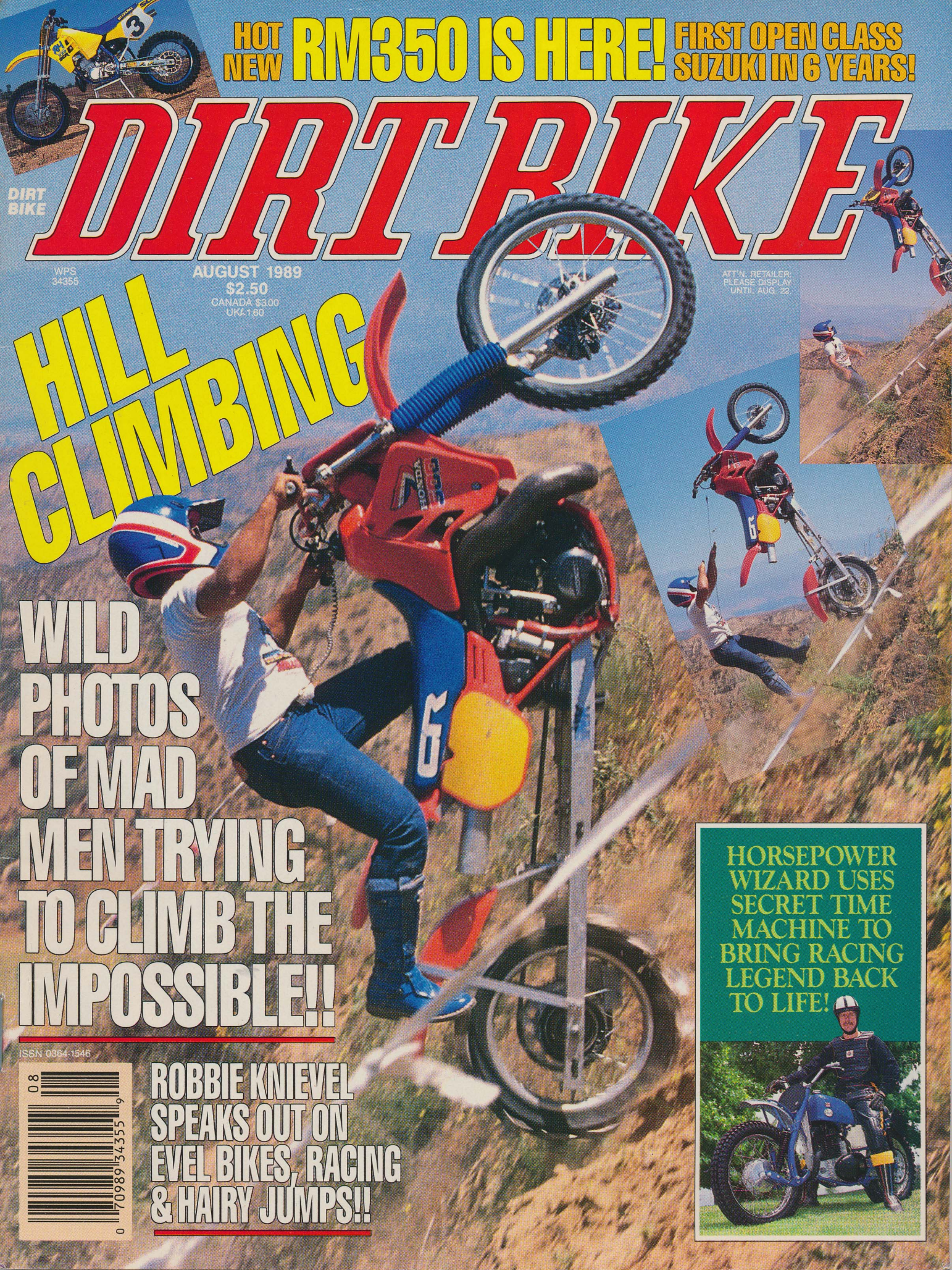
# WILD PHOTOS OF MAD MEN TRYING TO CLIMB THE IMPOSSIBLE!!

ISSN 0864-1546



## ROBBIE KNEIVEL SPEAKS OUT ON EVEL BIKES, RACING & HAIRY JUMPS!!

**HORSEPOWER WIZARD USES SECRET TIME MACHINE TO BRING RACING LEGEND BACK TO LIFE!**



AUGUST 1989

# DIRT BIKE

VOLUME 19, NO. 8

**WARNING:** Much of the action depicted in this magazine is potentially dangerous. Virtually all of the riders seen in our photos are experienced experts or professionals. Do not attempt to duplicate any stunts that are beyond your own capabilities. Always wear the appropriate safety gear. *Dirt Bike* does all of its testing and photography legally on public land, or private land with permission from the owner(s), and we abide by the local laws concerning vehicle registration and muffler/spark arrester requirements. We are not responsible for quality of aftermarket accessories we use.

**ON THE COVER:**—Dave Gestoso loops his exhibition CR500R into the stratosphere for the lens of Torquin' Tim, while Tom White travels through time with his '67 Greeves Challenger and the Suzuki Country Racing RM350 awaits the 500 Nationals. In the Table of Contents, Karl Ockert snapped the photo of Jeff Ward wailing at Southwick, MA. Tasteful cover design by DeWest; color separations by Valley Film.

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TEETERING ON THE EDGE

# DIRT BIKE GOES HILLCLIMBING

There's more to it than pinning the throttle  
By Tim Tolleson



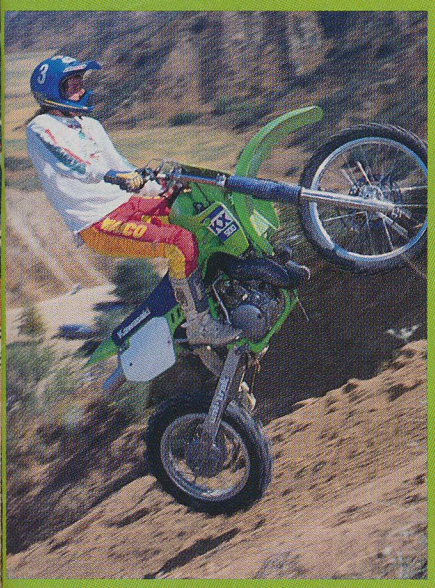
More talented hillclimbers can competitively run with the altered-stock classes on a stock-class machine.



Eastern events have an 800cc displacement limit, while Westerners can go as big as their wallets allow. Check out this alcohol-injected, 1125cc Honda hillclimber.



*Close to the top, this rider would rather be dragged over the crest by his tether cord than chop the throttle.*



**Stock classes provide the beginning hillclimber a chance at the hill without spending a lot of money. They also provide photographers with a chance of getting some photos in CRASH & BURN.**

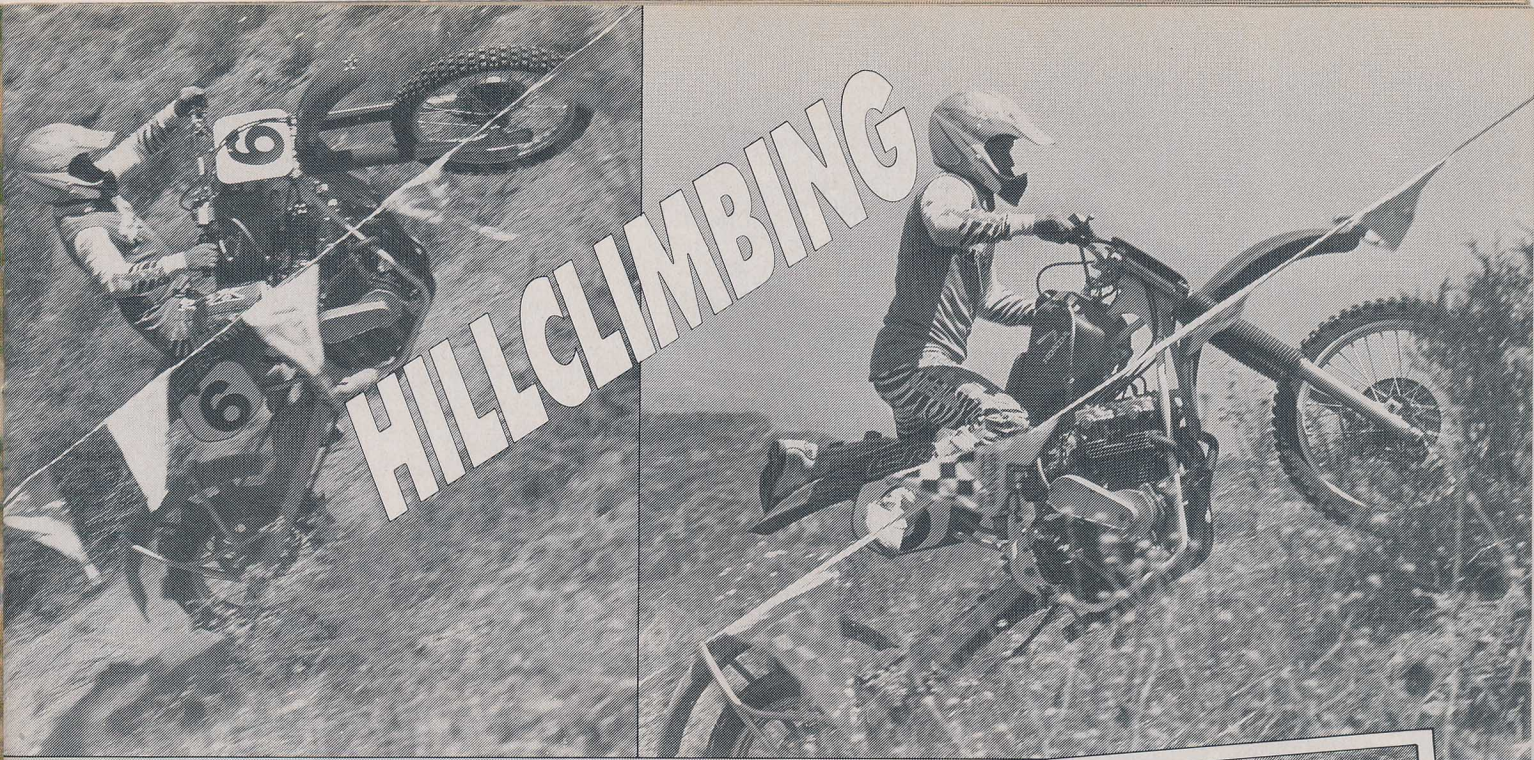
**Open-class two-stroke motocrossers are the favored machines for pro altered-stock and 0-600cc exhibition classes.**



*This M-Star may have outlived its usefulness as a motocrosser, but it has many more years left as a hillclimber. ▶*







*Jumps in Eastern events and rock ledges in Western hillclimbs keep exhibition-classers flailing for control.*

◀ *Tom Johnson demonstrates the classic impending doom of exhibition-class gone bad; he won the 600 class with his second run.*

*Proper setup and throttle/clutch control are the key to successful climbs in the stock class. ▶*

*Stock-class competition provides lots of action, so bring along your motorwind camera. ▼*



**A**s a rule, man won't accept defeat. Challenge him with a hill that he can't climb and he'll modify his bike and riding style to claw his way over the top. By then the hillclimbing bug has worked its way firmly into the rider's system, so he'll attack the hill over and over until he's achieved the perfect climb or the fastest time over the top. That's what competitive hillclimbing is all about: conquering the hill and beating the competition, or at least crashing further up than your opponents.

*Dirt Bike* was bitten by the hillclimbing bug, hard. The plan was to take a 500cc motocrosser, hop and set it up to meet stock-class rules (see sidebar) and attack Utah's infamous Widowmaker hillclimb. Unfortunately, Widowmaker was postponed until this fall, so we were left with this itch and no hill to scratch it on. Others faced the same emptiness, so the Southern California Hillclimbers Association filled the void with an event at DeAnza Cycle Park. Sort of a baby Widowmaker, if you will. Anyway, here's how we went about it.



### PROJECT HILLCLIMB KTM 500

KTM's '89 500 was the weapon of choice because it boasts the motor of doom among the big-bore motocross bikes. Rules allow engine mods, so we took it to Z-Racing for some extra horsepower, as well as some fork work. First, Z-Racing (330 E. Orangethorpe, Unit K, Placentia, CA 92670; [714] 524-5441) installed a Keihin 38mm PJ flatslide carb kit (\$175). Advantages over the Dellor-to include more low- to midrange power, easier jetting and idle adjustment and a slight increase in gas mileage.

With the Keihin the hit was so brutal that the bike wanted to loop out, so Z-Racing installed their high-rpm power pipe (\$160) to soften the hit in the lower revs yet give the bike two more ponies on top, for a total of 51hp. Flatlanders find that the pipe allows them to get on the gas harder without tiring as quickly. On hills the softer delivery reduces the tendency to wheelie and makes for better hookup. Z-Racing also repacked our silencer for a slight increase in overall power.

Our forks were soft to the point of affecting stability (we have an early 500; later units come with stiffer springs), so Z-Racing installed 23-pound ATK fork springs and revalved the White Power forks for more rebound and low-speed compression damping. This helped balance the front action to the rear and increased stability, especially in rocky terrain. Total cost of the springs, valving, labor and Spectro 125/150 cartridge fork oil was \$165.

When we got the bike back from Z-Racing, we raised the forks in the triple clamps as high as they would go. The rebound adjusters on the cap just cleared the handlebars when the legs were raised a half-inch in the clamps. Metzeler Multi-cross tires are the hardpack choice of hillclimbers, while Dick Cepek Tera Flex knobbies are the soft-terrain choice, but we went with a 120/100-18 Pirelli MT37 Lagunacross sand tire (\$85) for DeAnza. Pressure was set at 14 psi. With this the bike was ready, but were we?

*Tether switches keep the modified bikes from chewing people up when the rider steps off on the hill.*

### A RIDE UP THE WILD SIDE

With *Crash & Burn* photographers poised at the ledges to record the possible carnage, the moment of truth came. The mighty Katoom was snicked into third gear and serious clutch fanning got it underway at the short run before the hill went ballistic. The Lagunacross spit a huge roost as the ledge approached. Backing off for the ledge cost some momentum, so more fanning was in order to get the revs back. It was a flawed run but *Dirt Bike* cleared the top on its first run. A lesson was also learned—never forget to bring a collection of countershaft sprockets to a hillclimb. Third gear was too high for the technical sections, but second was too low.


On the next run, second gear was used out of the chute and the ledges were attacked with more throttle. Slipping the clutch a tad helped keep the front wheel down on the ledges and revs up in the deep silt near the top. This run had a low enough time to net second place in the 500 stock class, so we were stoked!

### EXTENDING THE THRILL

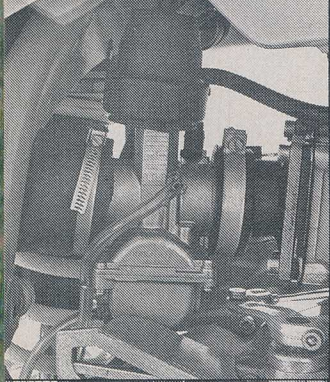
After the meet was over, we had the chance to do a couple of runs on a full-on 500 exhibition-class CR500R. The bike featured steel paddles and a wildly extended swingarm, no rear brake, an FMF pipe and reed cage and "secret sauce" fuel. Traction in soft dirt was awesome, but the ride on the rock ledges was way rough with the metal paddles. Also, the extended swingarm takes some initiation time. It absolutely did not want to wheelie, but backing off a bit was required on the ledges. We soon found you have to get back on the throttle sooner or the rear would kick up violently when it hit the ledge. Talk about a rush! Riding this bike was bizarre but its ability to claw up loose hills was amazing! Widowmaker here we come. □




◀ We added a Z-Racing pipe for more top-end power and a smoother midrange hit.



◀ Raise the forks as high as they'll go, but watch out for tapered forks on Japanese bikes!



◀ Z-Racing's Keihin carb kit adds gobs of low-end to the KTM motor and eases jetting the bike.



◀ Stretched bikes require serious chain-guides to keep the long chain in place and these guards do the job well.

# HILLCLIMBING



Tom Johnson of Hollister, California, let Torquin' Tim ride his Exhibition CR500R. Tim's knees are still shaking!

## GETTING INTO HILLCLIMBING

• Most eastern hillclimbs are AMA-sanctioned, while western events are run by non-AMA-sanctioned clubs, so rules vary a bit across the country. Let's take a look at the available classes, what modifications are allowed to the machinery and who to contact for hillclimb event info.

• **STOCK:** Bikes in this category must have a stock-length swingarm and unshaved knob-by tire. Engine modifications are allowed but gasoline must be used. The seat can be cut down for a lower seat height; some riders install a 125 seat on their 250 or 500. Many clubs don't require a tether kill switch on stock bikes, but it's a good idea in case your throttle ever sticks. Also, you want to move the rear wheel back as far as possible, since raising the forks in the clamps shortens wheelbase. Stock classes are broken down into displacement classes just like motocross.

• **ALTERED STOCK:** This class allows extension of the swingarm to 10 percent of the overall wheelbase (about six inches). This is usually done with bolt-on swingarm extensions, and shock revalving is required. Shaving off every other row of knobs on the rear wheel is allowed, but you can't run paddles or chains. Gasoline and a tether switch are mandatory. Like the stock class, Metzeler Multi-cross and Tera Flex tires are preferred, but pressures drop to as low as eight psi. Displacement classes are usually limited to 500 and Open.

• **EXHIBITION:** Almost anything goes in this class. Wildly stretched swingarms and miles of chain are the norm here, and nitro, nitrous or alcohol are the fuels of choice. Street tires are used on the back with traction devices either bolted to or wrapped around the tire like a car snowchain. Eastern associations only allow chain across the tire, while Western clubs allow full-on steel pad-

dles. Also, displacement is unlimited out West, while back East the limit is 800cc.

### HOW EVENTS ARE RUN

Each entrant is allowed two runs. The rider who gets the furthest up the hill wins, or if two people make it over the top, the fastest elapsed time wins. Times start when the rider breaks a beam on the device at the base of the hill and end when he breaks the electric eye beam at the top, much like in drag racing. Stock classes usually get a decent run at the base of the hill, while exhibition class-

es start at the very base. Some clubs run the stock and altered stock classes on less brutal hills and throw the nasty stuff at the exhibition classes. So, no matter your skill level or degree of involvement, you're practically guaranteed a good time! •

### WHO TO CONTACT

Organization	State	Telephone
Bedford County MC	PA	(814) 535-5002
Black River County MC	WI	(715) 284-4725
Bushkill Valley MC	PA	(215) 258-3208
Challenge Hillclimb Club	WV	(304) 756-3551
Dayton MC	OH	(513) 263-9321
Galesburg MC	IL	(309) 344-1714
Hoosier Hillclimbers MC	IN	(317) 898-3661
Hornell MC	NY	(607) 698-2811
Indianhead Cycle Club	MN	(612) 388-6625
Kato Cycle Club	MN	(507) 388-5778
Kettle Moraine Sports Riders	WI	(414) 334-1743
Keystone Sportsmen	PA	(717) 729-7458
Midstate Dirt Riders MC	IL	(217) 999-7114
Midwest Hillclimbers Association	IA	(319) 489-2361
Muskegon MC	MI	(616) 728-4153
Peoria Dirt Riders MC	IL	(309) 674-7860
Pleasure Riders MC	IL	(217) 446-4555
Quaboag Riders MC	MA	(413) 267-4414
Rapid Angels MC	WI	(715) 325-3013
Rib Mountain Riders MC	WI	(715) 675-6396
Ridge Runners MC	NH	(603) 523-4865
Rock River Riders MC	IL	(815) 946-2595
Salt Lake City Bees MC	UT	(801) 374-1126
Southern California Hillclimb Association	CA	(714) 545-7084
Valley Springs MC	WI	(715) 594-3534
Variety Riders MC	IL	(815) 433-3554
White Rose MC	PA	(717) 938-2556