

**FAST WOMEN – FISH, COX, EVANS**

# **DIRT BIKE**

FEBRUARY 1977

34355

**\$1.00**  
UK60p

**“I DON'T LIKE TO  
COMPLAIN, BUT...”**

**GERRIT WOLSINK  
SPEAKS OUT**

**FIRST LOOKS**

**'77 YZ125D**

**CAN-AM**

**175MX**

**NATIONAL**

**ENDURO,**

**TRIALS**

**WRAP-UPS**



# DIRT BIKE

VOLUME SEVEN NUMBER TWO FEBRUARY 1977

## TESTS

- 33 **RIDING THE CHAMPS' BIKES**  
Weil Adolph is away . . .
- 36 **1977 YZ 125 YAMAHA**  
Pre-production peek!
- 50 **CAN-AM 175 MX 3**  
Can it or can't it?

## TECHNICAL

- 74 **STEERING HEAD CARE**  
Bearing up.
- 78 **ELECTRICAL SYSTEM MAINTENANCE**  
A volt of confidence.

## COMPETITION

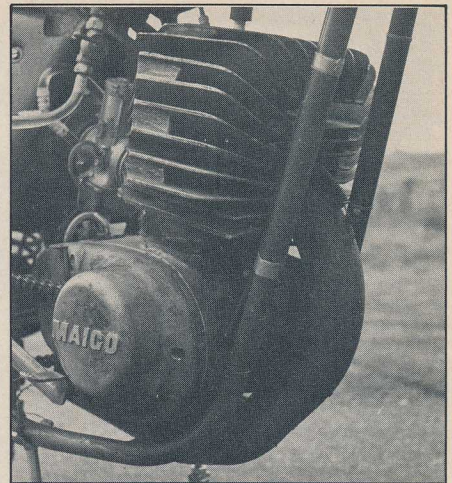
- 28 **NATIONAL ENDURO SEASON WRAP-UP**  
Richard reigns.
- 60 **NATIONAL TRIALS WRAP-UP**  
Whaley wins again.

## FEATURES

- 22 **MINI-STARS**  
Future champions?
- 40 **WOMEN IN ENDUROS**  
A few of the female clockwatchers.
- 42 **GERRIT WOLSINK SPEAKS OUT**  
Guaranteed to hit a nerve.
- 56 **TRAILBIKE CAMPING**  
Who needs mules?
- 65 **DIANE COX**  
Talking to our lady of San Jose.
- 72 **FISH TALES**  
About the Women's Motocross champ.
- 76 **DEBBIE EVANS**  
Observed trials's first lady

## DEPARTMENTS

- 4 **LINDSTROM**  
Girls, girls, girls!
- 6 **WOODS**  
Elmer the goat.
- 8 **BITS AND PIECES**  
Weeden your horizons.
- 10 **ASK THE EXPERT**  
Preston regardless.
- 12 **RIDERS WRITE**  
Introducing cod jokes.
- 18 **HOT SET-UPS**  
Would you believe lukewarm?
- 80 **NEW PRODUCTS**  
Something for everyone.
- 92 **CRASH AND BURN**  
Painfully funny.



Fulfilling fantasies. p. 33



Good clean fun. p. 28



A shocker! p. 36



Halloween highball. p. 50

ON THE COVER: Motocross's favorite dentist, Gerrit Wolsink, hams it up for the Weed camera.

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE FEBRUARY 17

# GERRIT WOLSINK

Do you swear to tell the tooth, the whole tooth, and nothing but the tooth?

*Three straight USGP wins at Carlsbad, a steady climb up the world points table — fourth in '74, third in '75, second in '76, a reputation for speaking his mind. And all the dentist jokes. Drilling off the line and extracting the lead. The Flying Dutch Dentist. Wolsink Matilda. Yep, Gerrit Wolsink, the second best 500cc rider in the world last year.*

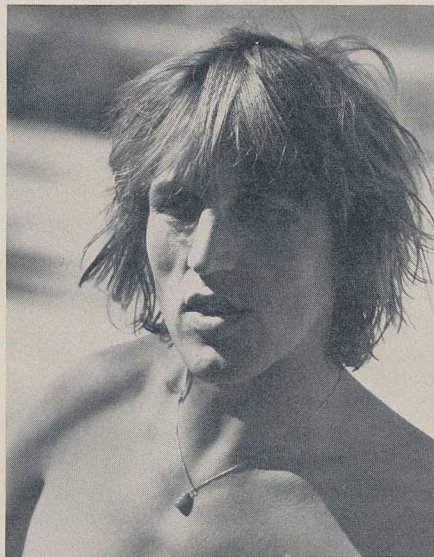
*Gerrit told us during his stay last fall for the Trans-AMA series that there were a lot of questions he'd like to answer that he had never been asked in the usual interviews. So, with a little coaching from our interviewee, we fired away. Here, for the first time in print — from the outspoken Dutchman who may risk banishment to the nether lands, some thoughts filled with conviction, from his cavity of untapped comments. Answers from ether side of the question, suggestions on gassing it without laughing, golden nuggets and intelligent inlays, replies that bridge the gap without falseness and clean-up, all capped with incisive statements. One final reminder. Remember to read each word 32 times before swallowing.*

*What question do you want us to ask you first, Gerrit?*

This thing with Sylvain and the axle.

*The aluminum axle at Texas and taking the win away from him and then giving it back to him. What is the status of aluminum in Europe?*

In Europe aluminum is approved, only titanium is banned. The U.S. requires steel. This was listed in the supplementary regula-



tions for the Trans-AM that Sylvain [Geboers] didn't know existed. Normally you get supplementary regs with your entry, but he didn't get them. I got them later from Suzuki. I don't have to worry. Suzuki reads them very closely and makes sure the bikes are legal. They never check things like axles in Europe. They weigh the bikes regularly, though. They've been weighed once in the Trans-AM so far. Weight limits aren't a problem anymore, you can't get down to the minimum. The suspension is heavy and the bikes need to be strong because of the longer travel. The only bike close to the 209 minimum is Watanabe's. It weighed 209.5 pounds. My bike is a kilo heavier than Roger's because of the seat and tires.

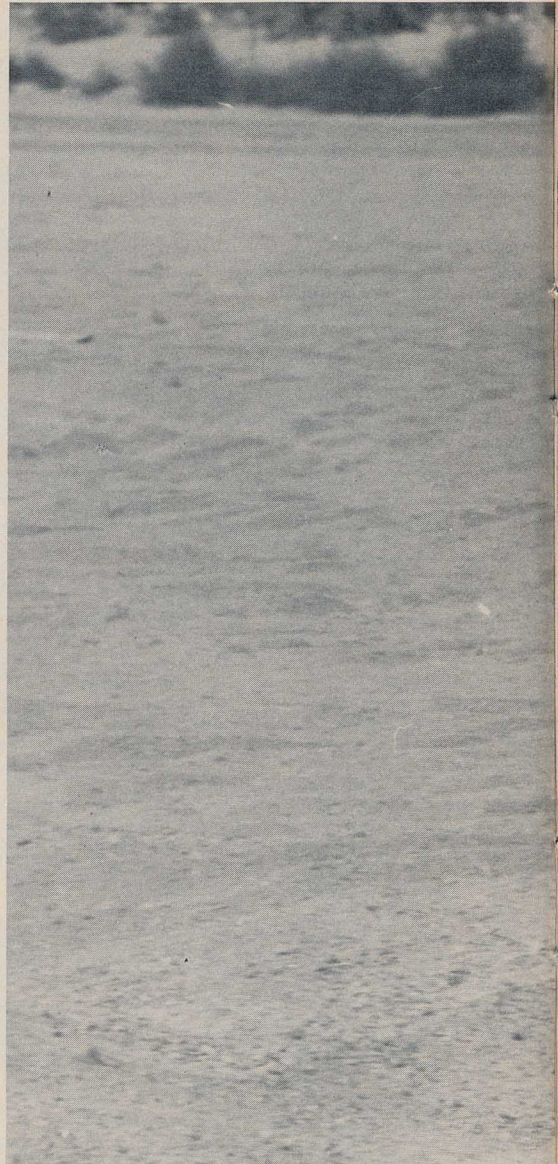
*What is the status of nylon pants now?*

Each national member organiza-

tion in the FIM must test them to prove they are safe. The AMA has approved them for national competition, the same as the Dutch federation. Here the AMA approves them for the Support class because it is national riders only, but not for the International class because the AMA fears the FIM. It has nothing to do with safety. It's not a matter of protecting riders or they would forbid them nationally.

What bothers me the most is nylon jerseys. They are a real fire hazard. They are too dangerous if you wind up under an engine or against the pipe. When they burn, they burn like hell. The Dutch federation bans them, and England too. And in England you must have a metal gas tank.

I myself prefer leather for different reasons, but I think they should not contradict themselves on different occasions. I think that when





---

“**That’s why titanium got banned. The little factories like Husky and Maico pushed it through the tech committee in the FIM.**”

---

the question of nylon fire danger came up they should have made a decision to approve or disapprove nylon anywhere on the body — jerseys, pants or as a lining in regular leathers. How can nylon be safe in the Support class and yet barred in the International class?

*How did titanium get banned?*

The little factories like Husky and Maico pushed it through the tech committee in the FIM. They saw that factories like Suzuki and Yamaha could afford the titanium. Suzuki has never used titanium axles or frames as long as they have been racing. Titanium is, in fact, a better material than steel. If it’s good enough to send to the moon it can’t be dangerous. The weight limit is sufficient to control the bikes.

*How do all these rules come into being?*

FIM rule-making is like politics.

It’s a hobbyism with some guys who think they are strong enough to play with pushing rules through. Like the nylon pants and the maximum handlebar width. Like helmets. Somebody wants national colors on helmets and no stickers and he gets it made a rule. All that kind of bullshit. You can’t have sponsor stickers because they aren’t safe, they can affect the helmet surface, and then they give you five-inch numbers to put on the helmet. There are constant contradictions within the rules and that’s what upsets me.

*Let’s talk about riders, sanctioning organizations and promoters.*

They have a good system with riders in the AMA congress, but the riders don’t use their power. The rider rep doesn’t open his mouth. In Europe the FIM doesn’t recognize rider reps. We’ve really given some of the promoters a scare because we



have had strikes over track preparation and dangerous conditions. In Belgium motocross safety actually became an election issue. It was that important to the local economy, keeping the event in Namur. The FIM wasn't going to give them the race, but the politicians stepped in and promised to cut down trees and make any necessary safety changes.

This whole safety approval thing got started because of rider protests. Now the promoters talk to us on Saturday. It's slowly growing, this trend of being recognized. Right now it's track safety, we don't even talk about money. Like in France, they couldn't use water and the top guys said: we don't start. And they didn't. The sidecars raced in the dust and got a guy killed.

They put so many regulations on the bikes and riders, but they don't seem to care about whether it is dusty. They always pick on us and as soon as we say something we are the bastards, the complainers, but they never really look in the mirror and realize what needs to be corrected.

The FIM is not there to help the riders, they are only there to protect the clubs [promoters]. There are enough riders and they change every year. The FIM delegates get elected every year and they are just worried about their position. They don't want to get others in the

Congress unhappy with them and lose election votes.

It's just a big political thing. The riders are the victims, the necessary spare parts. We can't even sit in and listen at the FIM congress. Once they let us in we have one vote. That's why they don't want to let us in.

Rider recognition has to happen at an event when you have everybody together. You have leverage and the promoter is on the hot seat to put on a show. Like last year in Belgium it was really dusty. Ake, Heikki and Roger, despite the fact that it was his home race, stayed out. The Russians came up and said: what are you doing? And we

---

“  
**There are  
 constant  
 contradictions  
 within the  
 rules and  
 that's what  
 upsets me.**  
 ”

---

said: we think we don't ride. The Russians said: OK, we do what you do. We waited two and a half hours before we fired the bikes. They prepared the track a lot better this year as a result. It is possible. When you have 50,000 spectators you can do that.

As long as they keep you out they can do what they want. Even the jury meeting on race day is a farce. Usually the jury man is a promoter in his own country and they always protect each other. You can talk about it for days, but you'll never come out of it. It's just a big wheel.

*What is winning a GP worth?*

You may get \$500 to \$700 for winning a world GP in Europe. You have to ride. It's like the Trans-AM, you are paid to ride. They don't have to pay appearance money; they know the manufacturers will pay their riders to come over. The promoters rely on the importers to foot some of the bill, same as the GPs. They don't pay that much because you have to come anyhow.

I think they should change the money system and pay for each moto — divide it just two ways to pay the two motos rather than three ways to pay both motos and overall.

*What do you think of the new FIM scoring rule?*

Now [1977] all the heats count, so you will have more chances to make your boss happy. This year if you won one heat and did bad in the other you had a good Sunday, but this new system [no throw-outs] is only made to protect the promoter, not to protect the rider or make a better race. It's only there for the promoters. Now you have to go to every race and you can't pull out if you start bad to rest for the next moto. In a mechanical sport you should not count all races — there are too many DNFs. I start thinking, even in sixth or seventh, to avoid taking the risk of crashing trying to move up. The everything-counts rule makes you cautious. The Trans-AM now is like it will be next year in the FIM.

*How does the rider representation here in the States seem to be working?*

Even though you have the functioning AMA and can talk to people, even then the rider reps talk one way to the riders, a different way to the promoters. Here it is the national champion automatically. That's a bad situation, having a big

factory racer. The champions are young, they don't say that much and they're not experienced enough and battle-scarred to be strong with the AMA. You don't need a top rider. You need a rider who will stand up, maybe a rider who isn't coasting along on a fat contract.

I feel sometimes that people think I am just complaining, but I've been around for long enough that when the same bad things happen repeatedly I begin to lose faith. Motocross in the U.S. is such a young sport and they [the riders and the AMA] should learn from the problems of the European situation rather than make the same mistakes the FIM and its riders have.

*Do you notice a difference between attitudes of American and European riders?*

In Europe the riders respect themselves much more. The top riders respect the lesser riders. They are very aware of the fact that they need each other to make a living racing. They don't respect each other here in the States. That disappoints me. They think only of the number one system where the winner gets all. Second doesn't get anything. The younger riders, 19, 20, are blindfolded by the big bonuses and factory rides. They hope the other guy breaks his legs so they can get it all. And between some of the riders and their mechanics there is such tension. They are constantly fighting against each other on the track, off the track.

*How important is it to have a factory ride?*

One of the nice things about motocross is that a good rider or mechanic can always catch the eye of the factory. The U.S. riders think they have to have a factory bike and flying to the races before they can do anything. It's not like that. A good rider just shines. In Europe everybody used to work hard; it's getting easier now. I see it in Holland. They get two or three bikes and a van now. But still to go to GPs you have to be good and able to do your own stuff, even if you have all the support.

The U.S. riders fly every week, they are recognized as superstars. The private rider thinks he needs the same thing to win. He doesn't. You saw Kessler there in Texas. Savitski, Mosier and the entire



Maico team are their own mechanics and drivers. Flying is better than driving, but you don't need it to win. Sylvain [Geboers] wins and he's his own mechanic and chauffeur. He can handle the pressure.

A good rider can win on a stock bike. He can set it up, but the kids don't accept that and they don't know how. The speed of the bike is about ten percent, the preparation is around 40 percent, the rider is around 60 percent.

Danny LaPorte is very interested in working on the bikes. And Marty Smith has a good feeling for the bike. But these guys, they really haven't made it, they're right on the bottom of the big hill.

---

“  
**The FIM is  
not there to  
help the  
riders, they  
are only  
there to  
protect the  
promoters.**  
”

---

*The bottom of the hill? You mean in relation to world competition, don't you?*

Yes, the big mistake many American riders are making is thinking that winning the Trans-AM puts them nearly up there. It's nothing compared to winning a GP or a moto of a GP. When you win in your country you're still on the bottom of the big hill when you see the world championship as the biggest thing in motocross, and it is. This was the first year that I felt I was really ready to go for number one. Before it was impossible to say it because I wasn't ripe enough yet.

What's nice about a world championship is that it is held in different countries. You have to learn to anticipate the difficulties — the money, food, the different languages. You have to put in years on the circuit. That's the difficult thing of it. You have to learn to travel. Travel in the U.S. is nothing. You all have it easy over here. Everything is the same. The menus, the language and the money are all the same. No customs.

It's more challenging on the other side — to race your GPs and be good at it. You can be a hero in the national races in Holland and Belgium. Like California riders on their home tracks are really kings. When it comes to different tracks and world championships, that's a different story. I'd rather be second



good production racer for everybody. Like Roger's mechanic of two years ago is working on RM development now, and Watanabe, Masuda and Ikeda, who used to test GP bikes only, are now RM testers too.

This old communication problem also affected parts. It used to be that the people in the parts department didn't appreciate how many parts motocross bikes used because they weren't in touch with the racing department. That's because they weren't talking to the racing department. That's different now. Suzuki is very flexible. They took



Photo by Jim Gianatsis

or third in the world championship table than number one around my house. You have to look further on and make a long-term investment. Adolf Weil stayed national for a long time. He was really good in his home country, but he didn't like it outside. Then he thought: OK, it's time now and I have to do it, and he did it. He's tired now, he's 36-37, but it is still amazing how he keeps up.

*What do you see in bike development over the next few years?*

Development will be two-stroke for a while. I think we'll get back to the four-stroke one of these days if it is the only solution to meeting all these standards. You already see Suzuki turning out the GS750. They have a small engineering department. The same people who built the GS750 built our championship motocross bikes.

The slow development of the TM bikes was the result of a communication problem between different

departments. The racing and production departments were completely separated. The production department did their own development on the TM until they realized that they needed to use the basic concepts of the GP bikes — frame geometry, flywheel weight, suspension setup, etc. — to make a

“  
**The FIM  
 never really  
 looks in the  
 mirror and  
 realizes what  
 needs to be  
 corrected.**  
 ”

the same people who made the RM so successful and put them in the four-stroke department and they built a fantastic 750.

I think ten inches is the practical limit of suspension travel. We tried more, others did too. We had an edge this year because we worked on suspension more. Suzuki rejected the monoshock four or five years ago, before it was offered to Yamaha. It proved to be more a disadvantage than advantage. They anticipated running into problems. I believe Suzuki has a very smart little engineering department.

*Are all you big-name racers as well off financially as we hear you are?*

I don't think you can make enough money in motocross to retire on it. When you see how much they really make and what they claim to, there's a big difference. It's not really that much money. Someone like Roger, look how many years it took him to get those promotional



contracts and big salary. We have such tremendous expenses. Tack on all the years you don't make any money.

You have to have something in mind for after you retire. I have finished my studies and am ready to go into dental practice anytime I choose. A lot of people don't realize this was only my fourth year as a full-time professional. I had opportunities, but I wanted to finish my schooling.

*You have bad eyes. Just how important is vision in racing?*

I was always throwing my glasses away and the mechanics went running after them. I need to know what's exactly in front of me. When I cannot see I am lost. I slow down. I ride a lot on my front wheel and have to see where it's going. I sweat a lot and when I jump or hit a berm and all the water drops down from the helmet I'm lost.

I think contacts, the soft type, are so much better than glasses. Try

any optic company. Tell them the problem and they can help you. I did a lot of development back home. There are still problems. I lost the lenses in Sweden. It got so hot inside my goggles they fell out and bounced around inside the goggles. Like last year I had a half season of red eyes. You certainly learn to use

---

“**You're used to glasses or lenses and you live with it, but it really is a problem.**”

---

long fenders. Roger still has them short, but plenty of riders are switching even though they don't wear glasses. The dry air in Texas dried out my lenses. Once I got a stone through my goggles, straight in the eye. The lens protected my eye. You're used to glasses or lenses, and you live with it, but it really is a problem.

All the top riders have very good vision — you have to make split-second decisions so quickly. Vision is the most important thing. That's why I hate dusty tracks. The guy ahead of you is so advantaged. And the guy behind has to take all the risks.

*What's that? Oh, you don't have any more questions for us to ask you. Well, that about wraps up the interview. Thanks, Gerrit. Here, sit back, relax, light up this Dutch Masters . . . Say, did we ever tell you the one about the dentist from Pacoima and the handicapped flamingo?*