

Riding Buddy Antunez's 500 Pro title bike

Rob Barnum loves four-strokes and the desert, which go together like steak and 'tators. Trouble is, most midsized thumpers are about as bland in the desert as the steak and 'tators served on the airlines. Barnum worked for four-stroke ace Al Baker for many years, and he helped Baker develop the prototype DR350/250 for

Suzuki. When Al tragically died in a plane crash, Rob helped XRs Only through the transition of ownership, then split off to do his own thing.

His own thing is racing big thumpers in the desert and developing off-road racing products for popular thumpers like the DR350 and XR600R. Barnum's Cross-Country Racing builds steel pipes (aluminum pipes crack too easily in long-distance events), skid plates and trick oil lines for thumpers. He is also importing trick thumpers, like the KLX250, and trick parts into America.

Stiffer suspension helps the Barnum DR track much straighter through turns, and the added power makes sure you don't stick it in soft soil. This motor rips!

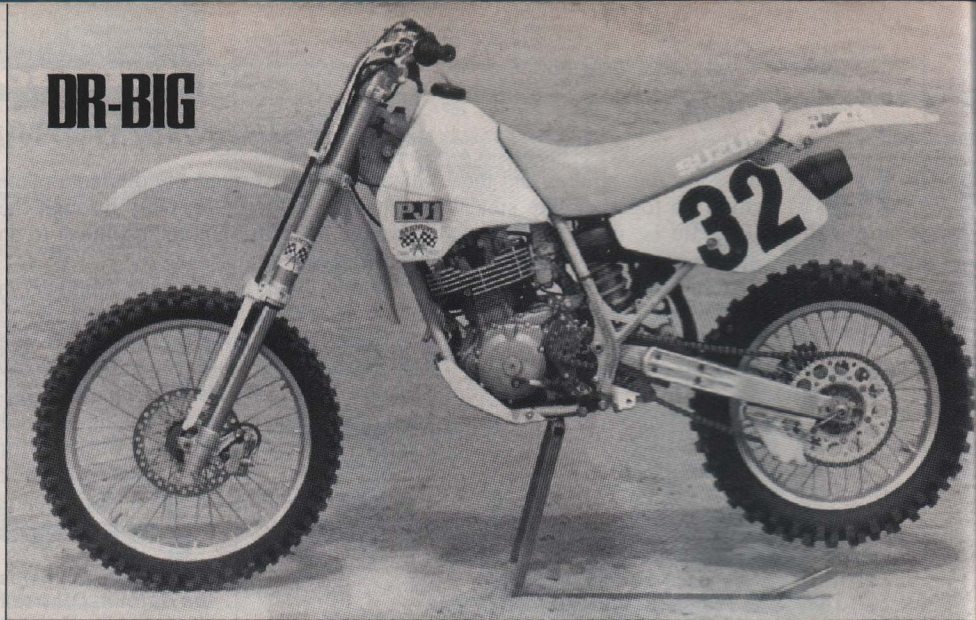
Barnum also develops big-bore kits for thumpers, to provide the spice of life to desert racers, who prefer their steak and 'tators smothered in salsa and jalapeños. ("This piston was made in New York City!" "New York City? Get a rope!") We got to sample one of Barnum's recipes to speed, a DR385 he built for Buddy Antunez to ride at the Four-Stroke Nationals.

Budman rode the wheels off of the Barnum DR, taking the win in the 500 Pros and third in the Open Pros. Antunez fried the clutch and got the motor so hot that the crankcase vent hose melted, but it held together. Rob replaced the fried plates with new RM250 plates, hosed the 385 off, then met us at CMC headquarters at Adelanto, California, for testing.

INSIDE THE ANTUNEZ DR385

Barnum goes to the dragstrip to find his big-bore DR piston, a Wiseco 81mm

BARNUM'S DR-BIG



The stiffer RM fork and shock make the Barnum DR-Big a real leaper. Where the stocker wallows and bottoms hard enough to deflect off-line, the RM-ized DR feels rock-solid from take-off to landing.

GSXR1100 dragster unit with 13:1 compression. He bores the stock sleeve and goes to a stronger Stellite rod and Megacycle cam. Megacycle builds two versions of cams for Barnum Cross-Country Racing—a desert mid-to-top-end screamer and a motocross midrange torque grind. Barnum prefers the Megacycle cam over others because it tests at 60 Rockwell and doesn't flatten when abused.

Rob has two versions of head work to go with the two cams. The desert version has a new intake manifold that allows the motor to pull longer on top, while the MX version utilizes the standard intake. Barnum welds additional cooling fins onto the head and installs R&D medium valve springs. He has trouble with the stock springs breaking, so he goes to the middle springs, which don't provide as much rolling resistance as heavy-duty ones, and the relatively mild cam grind doesn't require heavy-duty springs. When Barnum buttons the motor back together, he installs his own top-end oil line, as the stock line gets hot and breaks in grueling races. Barnum lost two motors before developing the special, stronger banjo fittings for the braided oil line.

Barnum bores the stock carb and sells Mikuni TMs for DRs. He spent several months developing jetting for the RM's 38mm flatslide Mikuni TM carb, and he has found that the 60H41 needle and Q6 nozzle work best with the 385 kit. On the other end of the air pump, Barnum has two pipes for the DR, along with an oversized exhaust header. The Antunez bike uses the stock sized header with an obscenely loud reverse cone megaphone, but his off-road pipe is a steel canister with SuperTrapp spark arrester discs. Barnum's header pipe is designed to fit around the piggyback RM250 shock, too.

RM250 shocks from '89 on bolt right up to the DR350/250 and provide an inch

more rear-wheel travel, along with more consistent damping. Barnum modified the steering stem on a set of '90 RM250 triple-clamps and bolted the complete fork assembly on the Antunez DR385. He also went to a three-tooth-larger rear sprocket (a 51T) to provide more grunt out of corners.

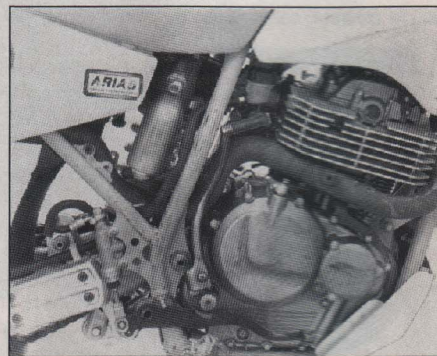
RIDING THE BUDMAN BIKE

Antunez really thrashed the Barnum XC DR385, and the motor had gotten so hot that the oil ring actually lost its "set" and let oil blow by and into the chamber. The bike smoked pretty badly when cold and felt like it had gone through two Baja 1000s (remember, we just had time to slap a clutch in it). It was so loud that some riders refused to test it.

Despite all that, we are impressed with the motocross-version DR385. It carburets perfectly, with no sputtering on top or hesitation off of the corners. It doesn't cough or do anything but go the instant you tweak the throttle. The DR385 pulls harder off of the bottom than the 350, then really starts to crank through the midrange. It pulls much, much longer on top and hits harder out of corners. Amazingly, the oversized Barnum bike starts first or second kick and is much more predictable to start than a stocker.

Where the stock DR wallows and bucks in whoops, the Barnum DR feels rock-solid. The inverted fork adds a stiffness to the DR that no amount of revalving will take out of the stock conventional fork. The DR385 gobbles whoops without flinching at all. It also corners much more precisely. Of course, the bike was still set up for Antunez, which means it's stiffer than a coil spring off of a '68 Buick station wagon. Lighter guys hated it, but the Lumpster felt right at home on it.

What we have here is the bike that Al Baker and Barnum designed for Suzuki several years ago. The two tested all available four-strokes, then chopped the best parts off of each bike and ended up with a machine very similar to the one you see here. They handed the prototype over to Suzuki's Charles Halcomb and Drew Smith, who fine-tuned the package. Then the bike was shipped to Japan, where cost-



Oversized fins are the only obvious indication that all is not stock inside the Barnum DR385. The header pipe is designed to accommodate the piggyback RM shock, should you decide to spring for one.

Blowing up berms isn't what Rob Barnum built his DR385 for, but the bike will poof 'em like a full-on motocrosser. Buddy Antunez said this creation to first 500 Pro and third Open Pro at the White Bros. Four-Stroke Nationals. ▶

cutting measures were taken, hence the econo fork and remote-reservoir shock. Barnum's DR385 is what the DR350 is supposed to be—a full-on racing thumper with no holds barred. You gotta love it, if you're a thumper fan, like us.

PRICE LIST

81mm piston kit.....	\$170.00
Head porting.....	180.00
Head fins/dowels.....	180.00
Barnum Racing cam.....	95.00
Silicon valve springs	
w/chromoly retainers.....	69.00
Uni air filter.....	19.95
Barnum Pro exhaust w/header.....	245.00
Braided oil line.....	69.95
Mikuni 38mm carb kit.....	248.75
Rental handlebars.....	65.00
Barnum Kevlar seat cover.....	54.95
Cal-Fab aluminum skidplate.....	69.95
RM250 fork assembly.....	N/A
RM250 shock.....	N/A

Manufacturer/distributor:

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