

MONSTER WXC350E

Mazzaferro-modified Husqvarna motors

By the oversize staff of DIRT BIKE

Ron Mazzaferro is a man on a mission. Operating out of his San Francisco Bay Area shop, Mazzaferro is the region's Michelangelo of Motors for Husqvarnas, and he specializes in hot-rod mods for the Italian thumpers. He will turn your WXC350 into a 420 or a 481, your 610 into a 481, and he is even working on a 720cc kit for the 610, for you Paul Bunyan types out there.

Some might think that downsizing a 610 to a 481 is sacrilege, but Mazzaferro has received a lot of orders for that particular kit. The 610 has a massive crank, one that feels like it was whacked off of the end of a Mack truck crankshaft. This accounts for much of the tendency to plow right into everything, and many can't come to grips with the freight-train handling. Others bought the 610 for its manly appeal, only to realize the 610 has too much power for them. They bring 610s to Ron, so he can lighten the crank and sleeve the mill down to 481cc.

If you think downsizing a 610 sounds bizarre, consider this—many people, including much of the *Dirt Bike* staff, like the old 510 motor better than the 610, because the 510 revs quicker and feels much lighter than the fast but lethargic 610 mill. The same with Husabergs—most like the 499/501 motors better than the 600s.

Husqvarna recognized this less-is-better sentiment and produced the WXC350 for those who want a midsized thumper, something that starts easily and revs like a Class C dirttracker. Trouble is, many feel this bike is too sedate as a 350, so Mazzaferro developed several kits to turn the 349cc motor into a 420cc or even 481cc fire-breather. These kits range from sleeve-and-piston basics to full-blown kits with bigger carbs and valves and cam lobes.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA MOTORS

Mazzaferro drove down from Sonoma, California, and met us at Sunrise Cycle Park with his personal 420cc and 481cc WXC3s. While we geared up and shot photos, Ron filled us in on his many mods and kits. There are actually four

420cc kits for 350s, A through D. The A kit consists of a 92mm, 10.5:1 forged piston and liner, along with all seals and gaskets, and head work. It costs \$420 in parts and \$200 in labor. The B kit is the A kit plus larger exhaust valves, for \$819.

Our test 420 boasts the C kit, which includes piston, liner, larger exhaust valves, head work and larger header pipes. This kit costs \$983 in parts and labor. The biggest difference between it and the full-blown D kit is that the D mods include a 40mm Dellorto 610 carb and the Husqvarna factory cam and valve springs. The D kit costs a staggering \$1545, but it makes your 350 faster than the 610!

Mazzaferro's 420 also sports the factory stainless steel MX pipe, which is a single-muffler unit that shaves 11 pounds off of the 350's weight. It costs \$285 and adds a lot of flow without being obscenely loud. Mazzaferro also lightens the stock ignition rotor, shaving two pounds off of the outer circumference. This \$90 wonder makes the WXC respond to clutch fans somewhat like a two-stroke, but it makes the bike a handful on slick surfaces. On a well-groomed, loamy motocross track, the lighter flywheel and performance mods make the WXC a real speed demon.

Ron only has one 350-to-481 kit, which includes a 97mm piston and special chromoly liner, intake and exhaust valves, head flow work, the Husky factory cam and valve springs, a rod, larger header pipes, the 40mm Dellorto carb and all gaskets. This kit costs \$1431 in parts and \$450 in labor, or \$1881, plus \$285 for the factory MX muffler kit. Mazzaferro also revalues the suspension and modifies the fork springs.

RIDING THE HOT-ROD HUSKYS

Amazing fact #1: We didn't think it was possible, but both the 420 and 481 start even easier than a stock WXC350! The 420 we rode retains the auto-decompression system, so you could just fall on the kickstarter like you would a two-stroke, and it fired on the first kick every time. The 481 had this system disconnected, so we had to use the manual lever to get the mill just past TDC, return the

kickstarter to the top of its stroke, then kick. It, too, lit every time on the first kick. Mazzaferro definitely has his jetting dialed.

Amazing fact #2: The factory MX pipe makes the WXC feel about 20 pounds lighter than stock. Losing 11 pounds of highly placed tonnage makes the Hoosk much easier to fling into turns and to lift out of them.

Amazing fact #3: The C-kitted 420 is almost as fast as a 610 in sheer acceleration, but it is much easier to ride. The 420 feels about a ton lighter than the 610, and it revs a lot quicker. Where the 610 feels tractor-like in technical terrain, the 420 is much more willing to rev, wheelie over obstacles and hook up in really slick conditions. This kit makes your 350 cost several hundred clams more than a 610, but the improved ride is well worth it. The Mazzaferro machine feels like a strong-running 510.

Amazing fact #4: It's only 61cc larger than the 420, but the 481 feels almost twice as strong. It doesn't accelerate twice as fast as the 420, but the stronger power pulses let you know you are dealing with a brute of a motor. The 481 snaps more off of the bottom and is more of a handful in rocky terrain or on slick surfaces. It's faster than the 610, without the tractor feel. The 420 feels fast and light, while the 481 feels fast and violent.

Amazing fact #5: Lightening the ignition flywheel lets the bike rev insanely quickly, allowing you to make quicker mid-flight attitude changes or fan out of corners, but we never stalled it.

ARE THEY WORTH THE CASH?

We are stoked with the Mazzaferro-modified Husqvarnas, which fill the gap between the hulk-like 610 and the sedate 350. The 420 is an awesome mount for woods work and technical terrain, as it provides more torque and quicker response than the 350 without demanding a price, physically. It's easy to ride and not so hard on the wallet.

Modifying the fork spring and revalving both ends make the WXC's suspension much more off-road race-worthy, but you'll definitely want heavy-duty fork springs for moto mania. ►



Although it's not that much different than the 420, the 481 is much more brutish. It will break the rear tire loose much easier, and it's more of a handful in tight terrain. The 481 is more at home on wide-open terrain, or on a motocross track. At just over \$7100, including the price of a WXC350, the 481 is approaching Husaberg territory, pricewise. It's definitely a fun bike, but not for the faint of heart or light of wallet.

PRICE LIST (AS TESTED)

Husqvarna 420

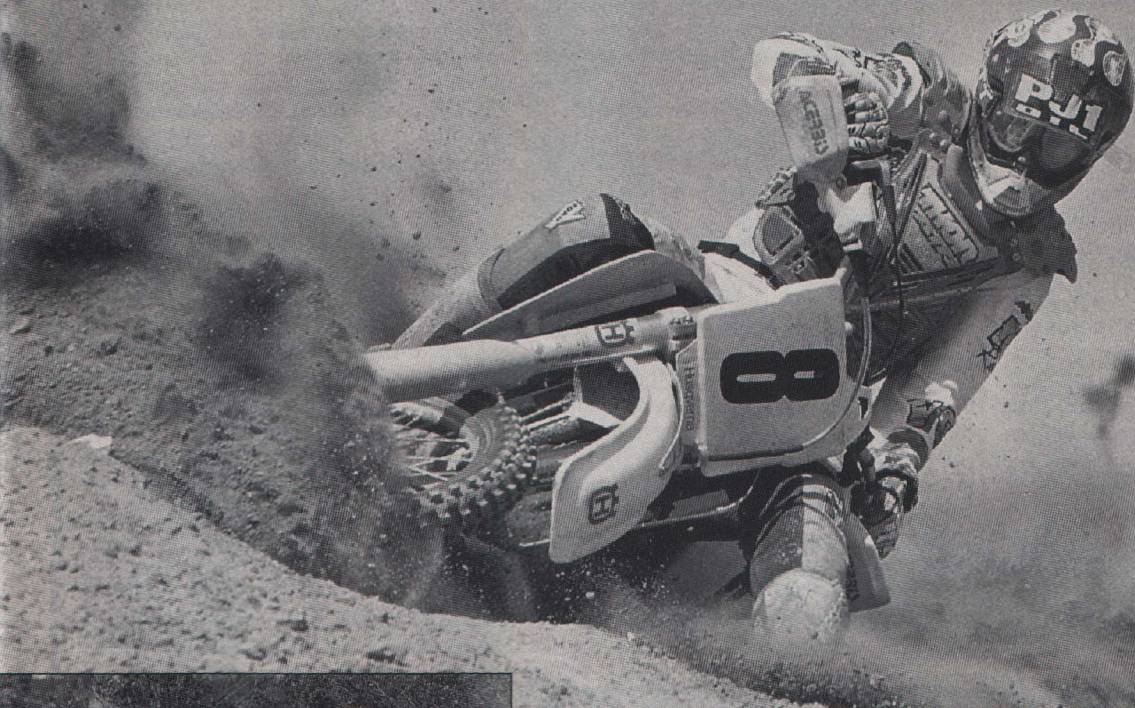
420cc C kit	\$983.00
Factory MX pipe	285.00
Fork revalve/spring mod	150.00
Shock revalve	150.00
48-tooth sprocket.....	48.95
Acerbis headlight.....	54.95
Acerbis front fender	32.95
DeVol seat cover	90.00
MXA sticker kit.....	59.95

Husqvarna 481

481cc kit	\$1881.00
Factory MX pipe	285.00
Fork revalve/mod	150.00
Shock revalve	150.00
Manufacturer/distributor:	
Mazzaferro Motorcycles	
19638 8th St. East	
Sonoma, CA 95476	
(707) 938-5744	
(800) 397-7250 □	

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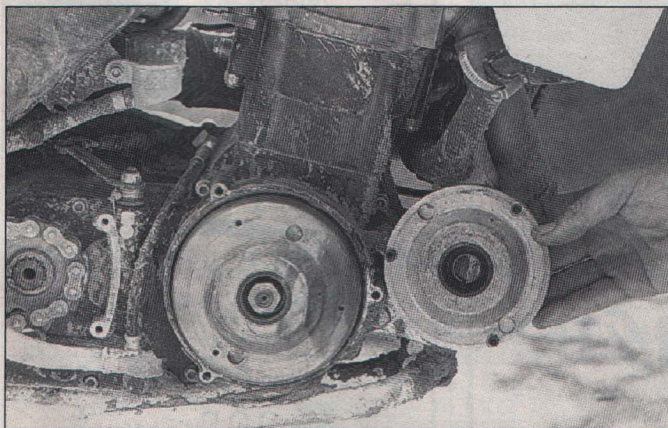
◀ Motocross/GP aficionados want lighter handling than the 610 delivers and a lot more power than the 350. Mazzaferro's 481cc kit will make the 350 breathe more fire than the 610, easily.



◀ Off-road racers want more torque and throttle response than the stock WXC350 can deliver, so Ron Mazzaferro steps up to the plate with several 420cc kits. His kits range from the basic bore-and-flow to a dirttrack-capable motor that will smoke off the 610!



Would you believe that the Mazzaferro WXC420 starts by hand? First kick, er, push? Believe it!



Surprisingly, slapping the ignition rotor on a lathe and turning 2 lb. of metal into shavings doesn't make the WXC any easier to stall. The difference in revability is astounding.