

NAT'L MX OPENER / WHAT'S WORKS FOR '77

DIRT BIKE

JULY 1977

34355

\$1.00
UK60p

175cc ENDUROS

YAMAHA

CAN-AM

PENTON

**WHICH
IS KING?**

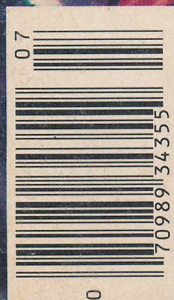
CAN-AM 250

MX3-

WONDER IN

ELLIS

LAND?



DIRT BIKE

JULY 1977 VOLUME SEVEN NUMBER SEVEN

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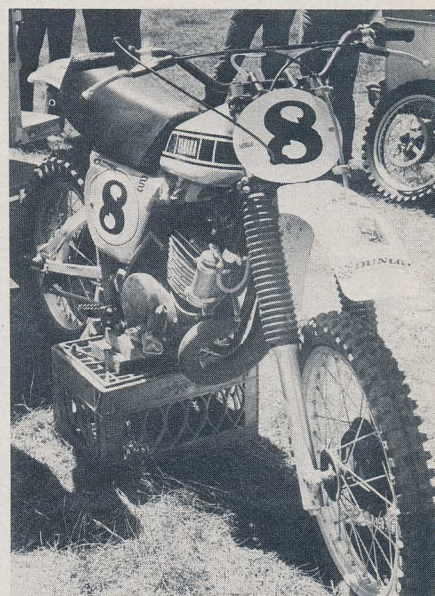
The misfortune of our friends does not displease us ...



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ON THE COVER:

Pomeroy is back! Wegner shot the Hangtown photo.

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE JULY 19



ALABAMA



Tom Penton grass tracks while Dick Bureson looks on.

Being generally opposed to the concept and execution of fads, I have avoided for the most part their encroachment into my life. I have shunned motocross and bell-bottom jeans, mag wheels and filter cigarettes, Johnny-come-lately tequila brands and other than oiled cotton riding jackets, hula hoops and Japanese motorcycles. For a 27-year-old longhair, I am a staunch anarchy-conservative — sometimes blind to the future and admittedly intolerant. Occasionally I eat my words.

Over the last week I have eaten some words I have been uttering about CB radios. Not all of them, mind you, but enough to admit that I was wrong. It started here in Los Angeles and ended likewise. In between lay 4000 miles of U.S.A., the boredom of 55 mph and the ranks of America's finest black-and-whites.

Normally I am a law-abiding citizen, in action if not in spirit. I pilot my underpowered, four-cylinder, economical vehicles around the 55 mph mark and eat dust. I do my bit for fuel shortages secondarily, but primarily I back it down for the preservation of my own sanity. A person can become a paranoid nervous wreck breaking the law.

Anyway, providence (in all my passivity) led me to be traveling to Alabama for the Two Day ISDT Qualifier. Mike Hannon happened to be going and his wife Theresa couldn't

attend. He needed someone to copilot and I needed to get out of town. Having traveled numerous miles to numerous events numerous times before together, I knew well what our pace would be. These fast guys are all alike, you see — WFO all the time.

On the Tuesday before, we pitched our gear in the Bultaco Maxi-van, loaded Mike's 350 Frontera, Ben Bower's 370 and my own 370. Ben would fly out on Friday, and as for my own scooter, if I was going all the way to Alabama I sure as hell wasn't going to stand around and watch. By 2:00 Tuesday afternoon we had picked up some chain from Vic Wilson at the Chain Gang in San Diego and had her pointed East on I-8.

Mike took the first shift and for the first time I was traveling under CB power. Down into the Imperial Valley the van thumped and shook and we swooped most everyone in light eastbound traffic. The CB crackled and popped and every suspicion I ever had about it was confirmed. I couldn't understand word one of the incoherent, static-ridden garble — it merely hurt my ears.

Mike seemed to gain something from it, as we occasionally braked frantically and then sped on again. As we went, Mike gave a running commentary on CB lingo — a language unto itself. California sped past and we topped all the tanks in Yuma, Arizona. Up ahead lay notorious Gila Bend, the true test of the good buddy ethology. Just two years ago on the way back from Fort Hood Mike's wife Theresa netted one for 85. Conversations piled atop each other as we neared speed trap city, and my comprehension deteriorated even further. On to the Big Junction we continued unheaded, and I finally began to catch parts of a conversation. It seemed that the Dirty Old Man had a water bed in the cab of his Peterbilt and he was doing his best to lure a Sweet Pea into a rest area. By the time we bedded down in Lordsburg, New Mexico, what fragments I picked up were entirely X-rated.

New Mexico was uneventful and gave my stomach time to play with the huevos rancheros I gave it for breakfast. At the Texas line I lined up for my first stint. Eight hundred and sixty miles of the if-not-great-at-least-large state of Texas lay before me. By now I already knew that "I ain't no good buddy" and that smokey might get a copy on my high-performance vehicle if you call me Bultaco instead of String Bean. That's a full roger.

"We got a bear takin' pitchers at seven and a half, you be doin' the double nickel." Whenever anyone

Two Days a Week

by Dave Schoonmaker

photos by Ann and Brian Palarmo,
and Schoon

10/4

talked about bears I slowed down. Not able to differentiate between a 20 and 36, the CB was making me more nervous than I would have been without it. Mike was back sleeping, so when I didn't see anything I ran about 90 and kicked her back to 60 whenever I got nervous.

Texas is endless. A day comes and goes while crossing it. We waved at Don Sanford as we passed Odessa and some trucker informed me my rubber band was gonna break if I didn't back her down. Not the blue Bul van by golly. We runner at 230 all day — that's degrees mind you. Who looks at the speedo? With 111,000 showing you don't want to know about it.

Fort Worth, Six Flags and Dallas. I always wondered what it was like where all of Colorado's money came



from. I'll bet they invented deodorant in Dallas. Enchiladas and coffee outside of town and I throw out a line to 18-wheeler eastbound. Finally my nerves calm slightly and I try to keep Memphis Furniture Company in sight. The dash lights are 10/7, who knows how fast we're going? As Louisiana looms I can think just slightly about sleep even though the 36 is well after midnight.

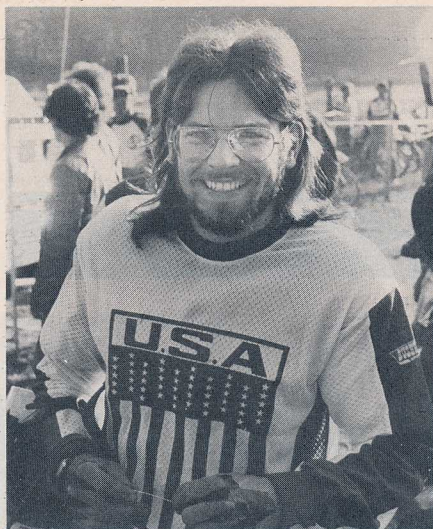
Then, just across the border, the CB pays me its first homage. My truck has pulled into the scales and the speaker emits a quiet crackle. Suddenly bigger than life I'm hearing about a bear in the median takin' snapshots at the 6½. I'm past the six and I nail the brakes and immediately he's there. I slide past going some speed and the bogey stays put. Thank you, I'm a good 50 dollars



richer.

When we shake ourselves out of the Motel 6 in the morning Team Army is all around. As they sleep we roll quickly across the tiny states of Louisiana and Mississippi. Near Vicksburg we gain a whole complement of beaver jokes, none of which I can repeat in this fine family magazine. Know what the difference between a toad and a horny toad is? By the time we hit Selma we've come 2100 miles in just about 30 hours of driving. You can do the division.

Now, the event in a couple of quick paragraphs. Ben arrived too early Friday morning and was disgustingly cheerful. Mike stuck his head under his pillow and we ordered coffee from room service which never came. By ten we arrived at the sight of Two Days in



Dane Leimbach.



Alabama. A lush, grassy field complete with a ribbon of a stream, big shade trees and a chicken wire impound. I netted one of the last three available entries and set to work on my bike. It remained as I had left it at the conclusion of the Tecate 500 three weeks before. Familiar faces filtered around. Mike McGowen set up camp next door and put the last touches on his Hercules. Jim Hollander sported a disc brake on his Herc. Word was that the Pentons were stuck somewhere with locked-up brakes on the Cycliner. Bill Stewart and his Team Yamaha boys didn't seem to understand that you're supposed to overhaul your motorcycle the day before a Two Day.

The Two Day was divided into two loops which were ridden in different orders and directions. Out in the woods



Larry Thompson.

was a terrain test, and a grass track concluded each day. Ben and I walked the grass track and he pointed out hot lines to me. Unfortunately, grazing cows had run amok in the ribbons and it was just a bit hard to find. Sleep wasn't hard to come by Friday night, since we'd been on the road for three days.

Saturday morning, 5:30 a.m. Dew hung from Alabama's thick plant life and coffee kicked my nervous system into gear once again. During the night Bill and Phyllis Friend had driven in from Monroeville to help Merit Moore's and Skip Olson's girlfriends pit for Mike, Ben, Merit, Pat Fretwell, Skip, Kevin Snapp and myself. I warned them not to worry when I was late. Cheryl and Debbie didn't

Continued on page 82

ALABAMA 10/4

Continued from page 65

understand that just because I drove around with Mike and Ben didn't mean I wasn't a turkey. Later I proved it.

Dirt roads, logging roads, fast (ohmygawd fast!) trail and a small portion of tight woods and mud greeted us as we followed arrows around Alabama. To check one was easy trail past houses, churches and whatnot and the instructions said to take it easy. I arrived two minutes early and got my first hint of what easy meant. From there on it was smoke it all the way. I managed to see all the trail, one mudhole particularly intimately, before a couple of flat tires brought my ride to a halt. Now I can tell everyone else's story.

Dick Burleson smoked the troops both days but most significantly on Saturday. He was 29 seconds up on Jack Penton at the end of that first day. Afternoon speeds were kicked up and even the best trail pacers had no more than four minutes at the tight checkpoints. B riders fell by the wayside by the droves. Dust was heavy, particularly for letter-of-intent riders, since they were grouped together on early minutes. As they repeated the loops, the bumps became beaten in to a suspension-testing peak.

Saturday night saw many tired bods and our crew in mixed condition. Mike was leading the 350 class and third overall and Ben was fourth in the 500.

Skip got lost in the special test and was down 15 minutes. Kevin was in good shape in the 175 and enjoying his first endurance trial. Pat was on the edge of Gold but hanging in there and Merit and I were watching. Tom Penton was of course leading the 125 and Yamaha's Fred Bellman hung onto the 175.

Sunday's course was shorter and I couldn't find a person who was unhappy about it. I headed out in the toolies to be a gas bush for a little bit and got back in time for the grass track. Mike came through fine, slid out in the grass track but was happy to be done anyway. Ben came in on his grace. Seems that there was a terrible back-up at the terrain test and that lots of guys were late at the next check. Also seems that Dick Burleson had misread the flags and smoked into the check six minutes early. Eventually the check was thrown out, so Dick retained his win and lots of other people retained their Gold medals.

Pat was late too, and headed out to



Mike Hannon.



Kevin Snapp.

the grass track in a rather frazzled state but otherwise on Gold. Three corners in his Motoplat took a nap and he had to push his bike through the test and to the last control. To see your Gold medal turn to Bronze in the last five minutes of two days is heartbreak.

Meanwhile, there were some folks missing. Fred Bellman and Gary Edmonds had nasty interactions with trees a few hundred yards from each other in the terrain test. Fred broke his leg and Gary his foot, both seriously enough to be retained in an Alabama hospital for a week. Ted Leimbach and his brother Dane (as someone put it) retired within a hundred yards of each other out on the trail. Dane lost a crank seal and Ted a Motoplat.

In the end it was Dick Burleson winning his class and with the fast time overall. Jack Penton took the 250, 38 seconds behind Dick. Mike Hannon got the 350 a few seconds behind Jack. Tom Penton took the 125 and Rod Bush the 175. It was a heck of a qualifier. A true test. Far from fun but a fine event



Max Markowitz.



Dennis Vandecar.

nonetheless.

Now I was faced with getting home and growing troubles. Ben was to fly out Sunday night and John Grace of Bultaco had called to inform Mike that he had to meet Spaniards in L.A. on Monday. I had deadline for this story on Wednesday, which gave me two days to drive the 2000 miles back to L.A. Not even the heaviest 10/4ing would get me there by myself, so my cohort flew in from L.A. while I dropped Mike at the airport so he could go the other way. Now I was on my own with THE DEVICE.

You see, up to this point I had listened but not talked. I still suffered from a fear that I wouldn't be able to understand what they were saying to me. As we rolled out of Birmingham to the north to take some route other than Texas, I pondered the nuances of CB language. It was after midnight and I'd been running hard for over a week. Suddenly I realized how sleepy I'd be if I didn't have this squeaking, crackling device to play with. It's like a home entertainment center in your car.

Across the 2000 miles of America between George's place and Jerry's place we slept some on and off and listened. The entertainment poured out in a never-ending flow. Truck drivers made fun of good buddies and talked about country western music. Occasionally we turned on the regular radio, but it wasn't nearly as entertaining. By the time we slept in Tucumcari, New Mexico, on Monday night, I was talking in brief spurts, seeking out bear reports and providing what I could. It was fun to be a part of one of the largest civil disobedience conspiracies ever found in America. People from all walks of life were conspiring together to break the law. It couldn't help but make me wonder about our system and how long it can survive inconsistencies such as this.

A half a dozen radar traps went by and we could see them before we arrived. We were getting home quickly. Out of Flagstaff, Arizona, the road takes a dive to Kingman. Trucks run wild on the downhills, "OOOO-EEE, look at that there hill, you got the forty ton climax bringin' it on." I used my sweetie's handle, Swamp Gas, but it seemed to be beyond most people's imagination. Various I became Swamp Cat and other deviations on the UFO theme. It was all in fun and we were making ground.

Drug our tails into L.A. at 3:00 a.m. which, despite its many disadvantages, is probably the most civil time to come to Los Angeles. At the Bul pen in Anaheim I clicked off the CB and climbed in my own meager truck with only AM/FM. It was almost lonely. Mind you, I'm still not sure I approve of the things, but maybe we'll catch you on the flip flop.

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