

EXCLUSIVE: YAMAHA'S MONO-SHOCKING IT250

DIRT BIKE

IND

MAY 1977

\$1.00

34355

UK60p

125 MXers
SHOT OUT:

YAMAHA
vs. HONDA
vs. SUZUKI

CRASHIN'
IN FASHION:
GIANT COLOR
RIDING GEAR
SECTION

Retailers: See Page 85 for Special
Display Allowance Plan

HONDA'S MR175: TEST AND TIPS

DESERT BLASTIN' AND SHORT TRACKIN':
PARKER DAM 400 AND HOUSTON'S ASTRODOME



DIRT BIKE

VOLUME SEVEN NUMBER FIVE MAY 1977

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1977 RC250 Honda works racer



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ON THE COVER: Yamaha ISDT Gold Medalist John Fero baptizes the DIRT BIKE IT250. Woods got the wet lens.

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The time is late 1973 and the U.S. has just hosted its first-ever ISDT in Dalton, Massachusetts. All over the country, people are eagerly awaiting news of the trial.

One of the first reports to come out of the Six Day is found in Keeping Track, a newsletter published by the Penton PR department and distributed to Penton owners and dealers everywhere.

Reading through the newsletter, you come across a photo of a relatively unknown rider named Jim Hollander cornering his Penton at speed. What catches your attention is the fact that the headline and several inches of copy are apparently devoted to making the rider look like a crybaby. Or worse.

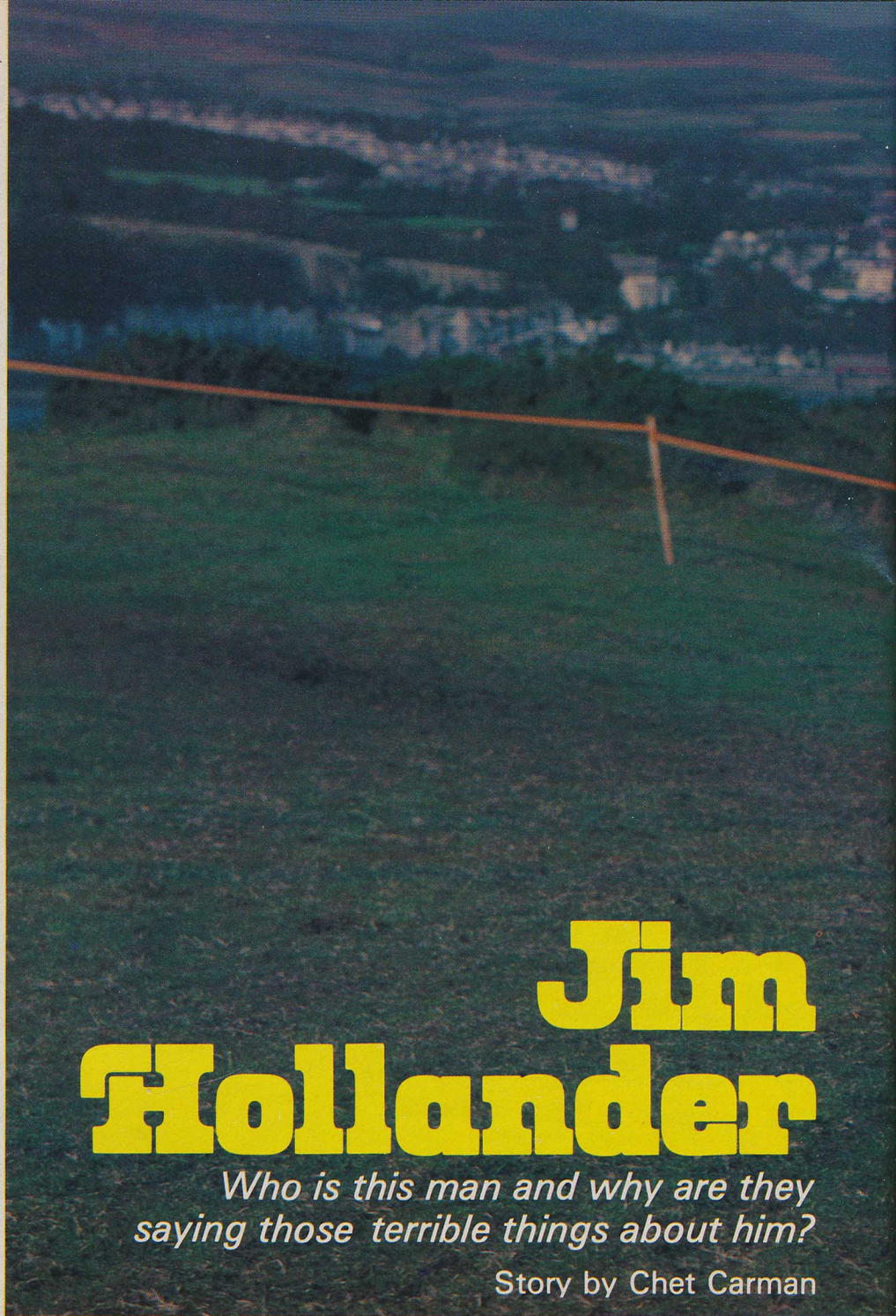
The article implies that Jim Hollander let down his teammates and his country by dropping out of the Six Day. Hollander had crashed hard and been taken to the hospital for stitches in his forehead. The implication is that if Hollander was well enough to ride the mile or so into the next check before blacking out, then he was well enough to continue the event. The man responsible for this article's appearance (who shall remain nameless, at his own request) claimed that it was written by a secretary who no longer works at Penton and that apologies had been tendered to everyone involved.

The newsletter made little mention of the fact that the entire Vase B team, which Hollander had supposedly let down, also failed to finish the event.

Fortunately, not many people read the Penton newsletter. Nevertheless, it was a rather inauspicious debut for a young man who hoped to make a name for himself in Six Days competition.

Although Jim claims that the Penton article had not changed his riding style, one can't help but wonder if the incident has affected his attitude toward his sport or toward himself.

I was coming into a checkpoint, I believe it was raining, and I was going downhill. I must have hit a very large rock in the trail and just was, ah...catapulted off the motorcycle. I was unconscious for a few minutes and was in pretty bad shape. It was about a mile up the



Jim Hollander

Who is this man and why are they saying those terrible things about him?

Story by Chet Carman

Photos by David Maltais and Bill Sacco

trail. I rode on into the check and started getting woozy, it started to get to me. I blacked out.

At the time I couldn't continue with the injury. You know, your body has some sort of mechanism that just blacks you out when you can't function. That's supposed to protect you.

That's the way I looked at it back then.

They claim the article was sort of a joke. That it was just a little point of humor. Maybe it was true to an extent...

I've been sorta sensitive about

injuries ever since then, and how I react to them.

I called John Penton on the phone after I read it and he denied having anything to do with it and he scolded the person who wrote it. We got it all straightened out on the phone and I accepted his apology. I'm still friendly with Penton. In fact, whenever I'm in Cleveland I make it a point to stop by and see how things are going.

It was sort of an embarrassing thing to read about yourself. Very few people have brought it up to me, although it has stayed in my



To be truthful about it, I was, ah...I felt very bad about dropping out of the Massachusetts Six Day. I sort of put myself into exile by leaving Penton as some sort of punishment for failing at the Six Day. I was on the Vase B team there and although the rest of the Vase B team also failed to finish, I felt pretty bad about my own withdrawal from the Six Day.

I was asked by the president of Rokon to see him before the Six Day began in '73. I approached him after the event and that's when I got associated with them. I was very much interested in the product because it was so unique and it really appealed to me. I worked with development on the motorcycle and I enjoyed that a great deal. The motorcycle slowly improved and it was very rewarding to work on a prototype level and then go out in the field and prove that your innovations worked — that you could compete directly with the



“
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 punishment for
 failing at
 the Six Day.***
 ”

mind, I must admit.

That's all in the past now, and Jim has proved himself many times in Six Day competition. He has picked up one Bronze, two Silver and one Gold Medal at the '72, '74, '75 and '76 events, and 16 Gold Medals in the Two Day Trials Qualifiers in this country.

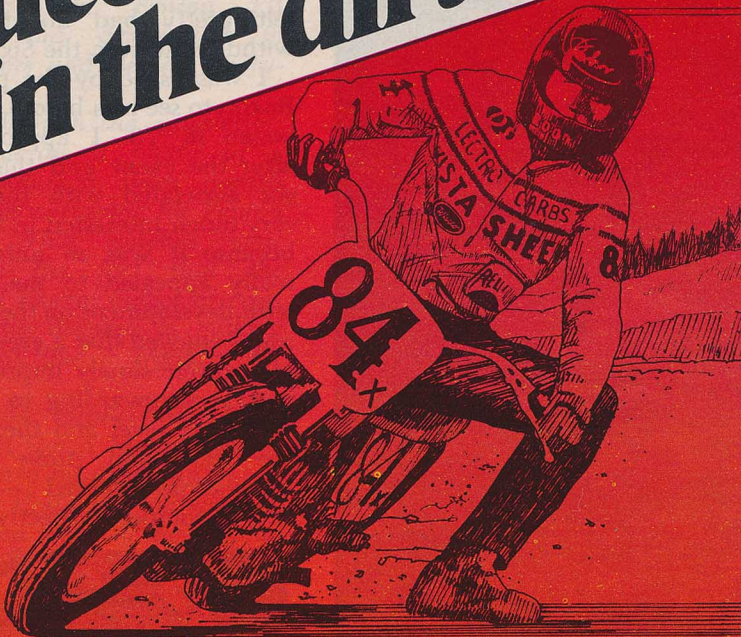
Jim's switch to Rokon came immediately after the '73 ISDT, and there were no hard feelings with Penton, although Jim was greatly concerned about the possibility that he might have let his teammates down.

Pentons or the factory Husqvarna riders or import riders.

Jim Hollander has a riding style that can best be described as flamboyant. The pictures that show him in action are among the best action shots from any event. You can always count on Hollander to provide excitement in a photograph, whether he's saving it in a turn with the front brake lever flipping in the air or cresting a rise with both feet off the pegs and the volume up full. Jim Hollander, a quiet man to talk with, likes to gas it.

It may look like my riding style

How to succeed in the dirt:



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True! Wiseco FMX forged pistons, combined with SuperStrength rings, give you more power. The rings fight power's worst enemies — heat and friction. You get the most efficient performance possible; FMX piston construction means minimum expansion, greater piston skirt control, best combustion chamber heat transfer to the cylinder walls. The SuperStrength rings have outstanding sealing capabilities; they fight power's worst enemies — heat and friction. Know some of the winners who depend on the Wiseco FMX? Ted Boody, Daryl Hurst, Garth Brow, and Bart Markel — to name a few. How about you?



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got more daring over the years, but actually I used to crash terribly back when I was riding for Penton. Since that accident, I've changed my style and contained myself to my limits, or just below. I've cut down quite a bit on even getting off at slow speeds, although it may look like I'm somewhat out of control.

I've adapted to the imprecise handling, and I use the automatic transmission and disc brake to make up for it. I usually ride working the rear brake against the transmission, sort of a power brake type of action, and it really is very fast — charging from turn to turn. It's incredibly quick in the woods and trails. You have to use silicone brake fluid in the rear brake so it will take the extra heat. The fluid is available through Rokon.

The bike I rode at Six Days I

I've cut down a bit on getting off, though it may look like I'm somewhat out of control.

built directly from a machine I took out of a crate that was sitting in the Rokon warehouse. I took it apart and made some modifications to the frame. Spent about a week on it. I lowered the engine about an inch and that was the major thing...just to lower the center of gravity a little bit. I spent very little time on it compared to other Rokons I've built. On the Qualifier bike, I turned it into a frame breather like the Penton, using the backbone tube to feed air from underneath the gas tank into the air box. It worked very well and the air ran a lot cleaner and a lot drier.

We never used the Cobra (Rokon's MXer...ed.) porting in the Qualifiers. It just had too much power and we didn't feel we needed it. It also used more gas.

The suspension stayed exactly stock.



Jim Hollander has gotten a reputation for being difficult to get along with. Stories abound regarding Jim's temper. He has been involved in several controversial incidents at the Qualifiers, one of which included a fight with his mechanic in the pits. When one of DB's freelancers approached Jim for an interview on the return flight from the '76 Six Day, the interview was cut short after only a few questions.

I guess I'm pretty quiet, pretty nervous before an event. It's sort of funny, once the event starts, I sort of change and really get along with people well. I guess it's just pre-race tension, nervousness. I'm quiet and maybe people take that the wrong

way, like I don't want to talk to them.

Last year, Rokon cut back quite a bit on support and I decided to qualify myself at my own expense, hoping that if I did super-well perhaps they would reimburse me my expenses. So I went up to two events in a row and did very well in both, fourth in Washington and first overall in Michigan. There was quite a bit of tension in Michigan because...well, with the mechanic and all... I don't know why we had trouble but we did.

I wanted to protest Rokon's lack of support of me and I sensed that I might win Michigan, so just prior to the finish, I stopped about a mile up the trail. I knew I had about ten minutes. I was going to take off both of my tires and come in on the rims in protest. I had a change of heart and just took the air out of both tires and rode in on two flats. People wrote it up and Rokon was a little bit upset about it. Largely because of that episode, they felt I wasn't giving them the kind of publicity they wanted. At the time, I thought it was funny. With Rokon and me, I guess there's been a lot of misunderstanding. It's unfortunate. It's very hard to clear up things like that. To explain why things happen and to get a really true understanding on both sides.

One of the things Rokon resents is . . . apparently they resent my getting so much publicity. I think they'd rather have the name Rokon up there in lights, rather than the rider's name.

Jim Hollander is totally dedicated to Six Days competition and is seriously concerned about the future of the sport. He is sensitive to the treatment Six Days receives in the motorcycling press. Perhaps this sensitivity is largely due to incidents in the past that have directly affected him. Perhaps not. In any case, Jim has very definite opinions as to the responsibility of the media with regard to Six Days.

I felt that the Six Day was rather easy over there in Austria. I feel that the future of the Americans involved in Six Days and the Qualifiers is really in the hands of people like yourselves who write stories about Six Days and the Six Days people. Because that's what really builds enthusiasm in this country . . . reading these stories, because there's no other source of

information for potential riders to get inspired. I was trying to convey this to the writer on the plane, that how she handled the Six Day story in Austria was crucial to its future for the Americans.

At this point, Jim Hollander is without a ride. Rokon lately has been willing to discuss the possibility of some form of support but it would probably still mean that Jim would have to come up with another sponsor to furnish expenses while he contests the Qualifiers. Finding a sponsor like that is almost impossible, as Jim is finding out. He's been having talks with a couple of companies but nothing definite has been decided as this story goes to press. He wants

**“
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”**

desperately to go to the Six Day this year but his chances of doing so seem iffy. Right now, Jim is torn between going back to college to take some engineering courses to help his design work with motorcycles, and pursuing the seemingly impossible dream of riding the Qualifier series.

It seems hard to believe that one of our best Six Days riders must go without a ride simply because no one can see their way to pay his gas and motel expenses for the qualifying rounds. But Jim Hollander is dedicated, and that dedication has helped him to overcome adversity in the past, and perhaps it will help him overcome the obstacles facing him now. We hope so.

Whatever the outcome of the present situation, of one thing you can be sure; you haven't heard the last of Jim Hollander. You see, Jim is not a quitter.