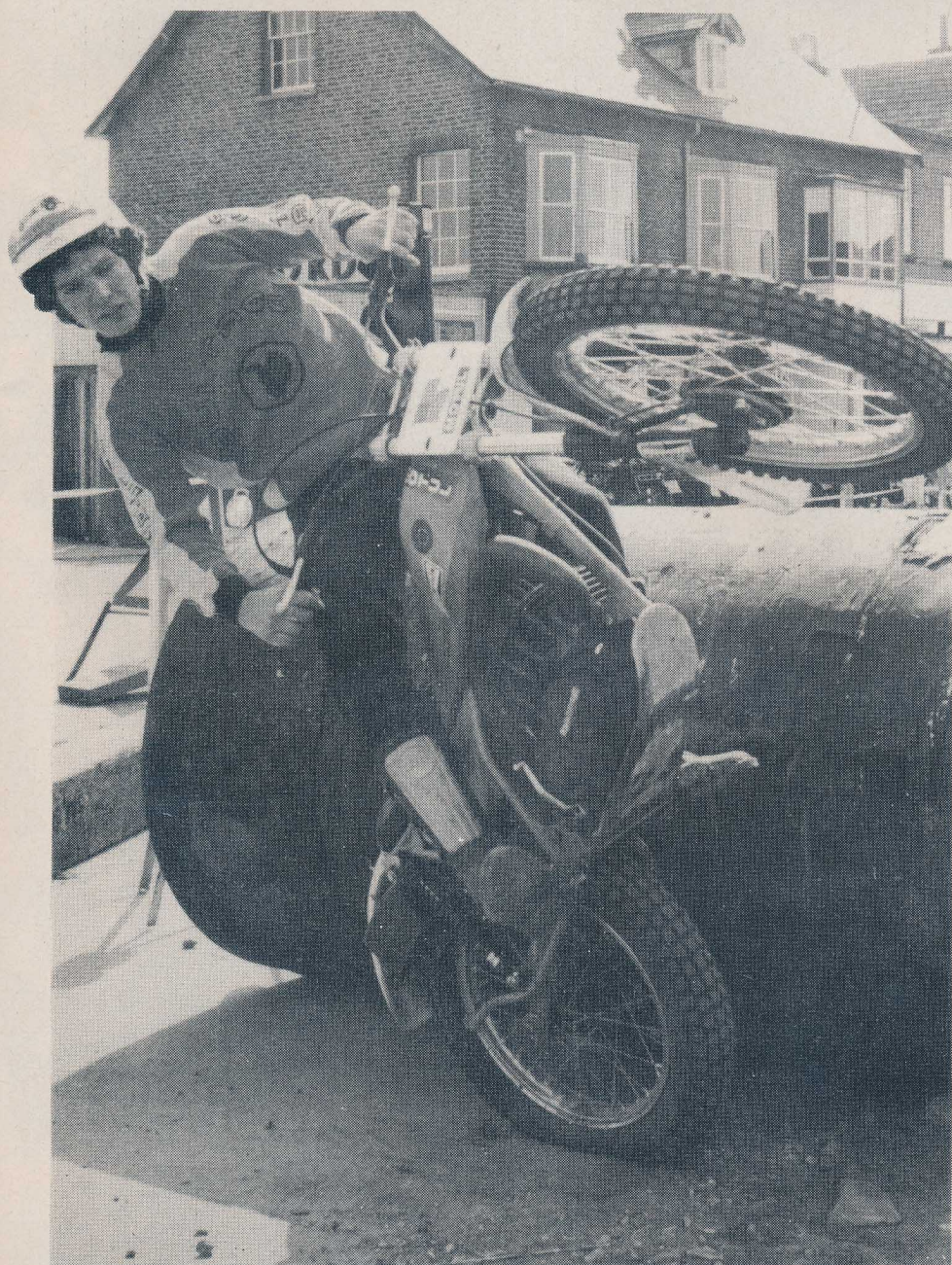




AMERICA'S FIRST!

**Put your feet up and laugh at the opposition . . .
World Trials Champion, Bernie Schreiber talks
exclusively to Don Morley about the trials scene.**



TWENTY Years of riding Trials at club, centre and national level against many of the top competitors of the day have taught Don Morley that to succeed as a trials' rider takes sheer dedication, more than a modicum of skill, guts and stamina, but most of all true natural talent.

Over the past twenty years, a look at the form book or results sheets will also suggest that apart from the legendary Sammy Miller, Hugh Viney, or even Gordon Jackson, it would have helped to have been born in Yorkshire.

Bye and large the best trials, organisers and competitors seem to have been rooted with the white rose, yet in 1979 an American called Bernie Schreiber, who admits that trials are not popular at home, took the World and Yorkshire by storm to win the World Trials Championship.

Schreiber, a big soft-spoken Californian and as unlike the popular 'Yank' image as one could imagine, won for America on a Spanish Bultaco riding for British importers Commerfords and in a climate as alien to him as to an Eskimo on the Equator.

How did this twenty-year-old, who was too young to be allowed to ride when he first came over to Europe in 1975, become the first non-European to win the Trials Championship and in his first full season?

Bernie explained that he has been messing around with bikes since he was seven, just desert riding for fun. Sammy Miller and Mick Andrews had both run Trials schools in his home area and he had attended both.

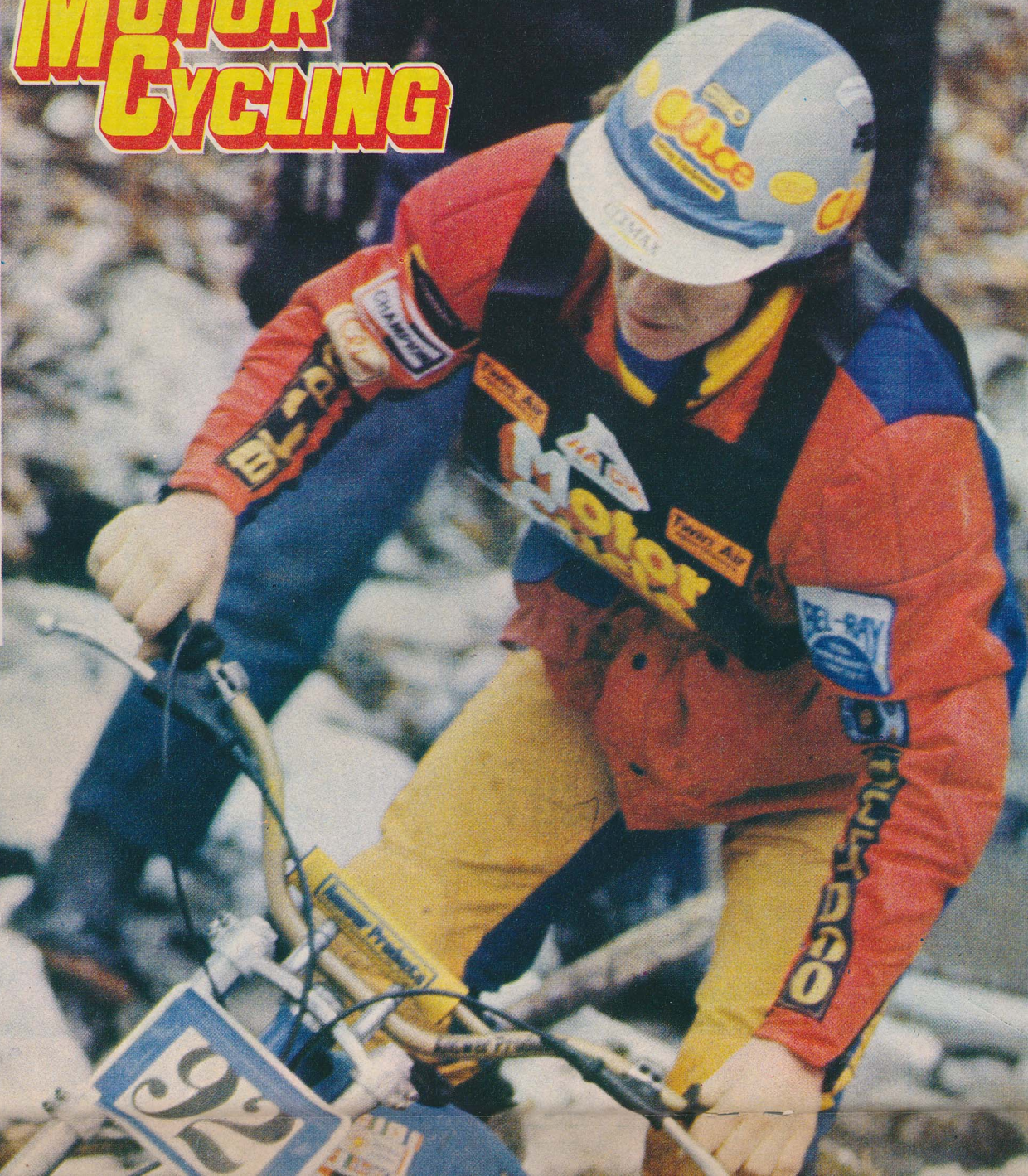
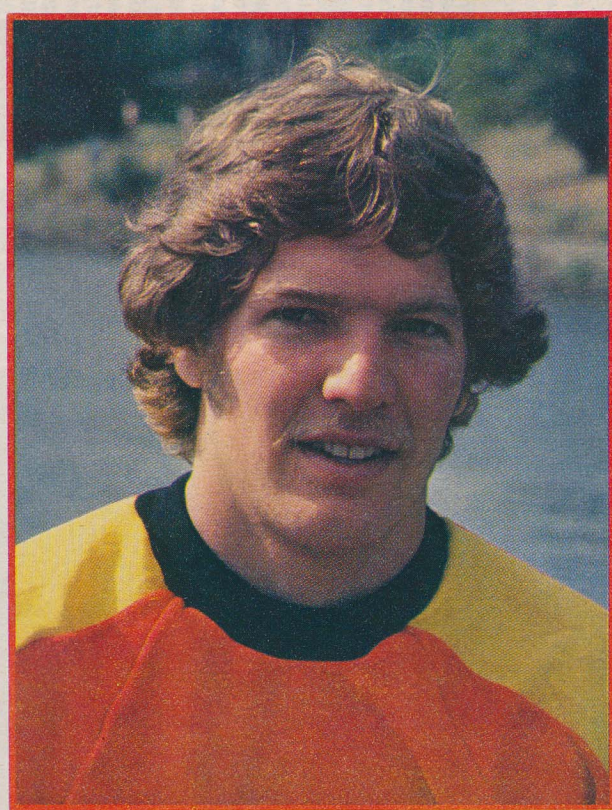
"They didn't look that much better than I was. Mick Andrews came over as European Champion and even though he looked fantastic, it didn't look an impossible standard to reach," said Bernie.

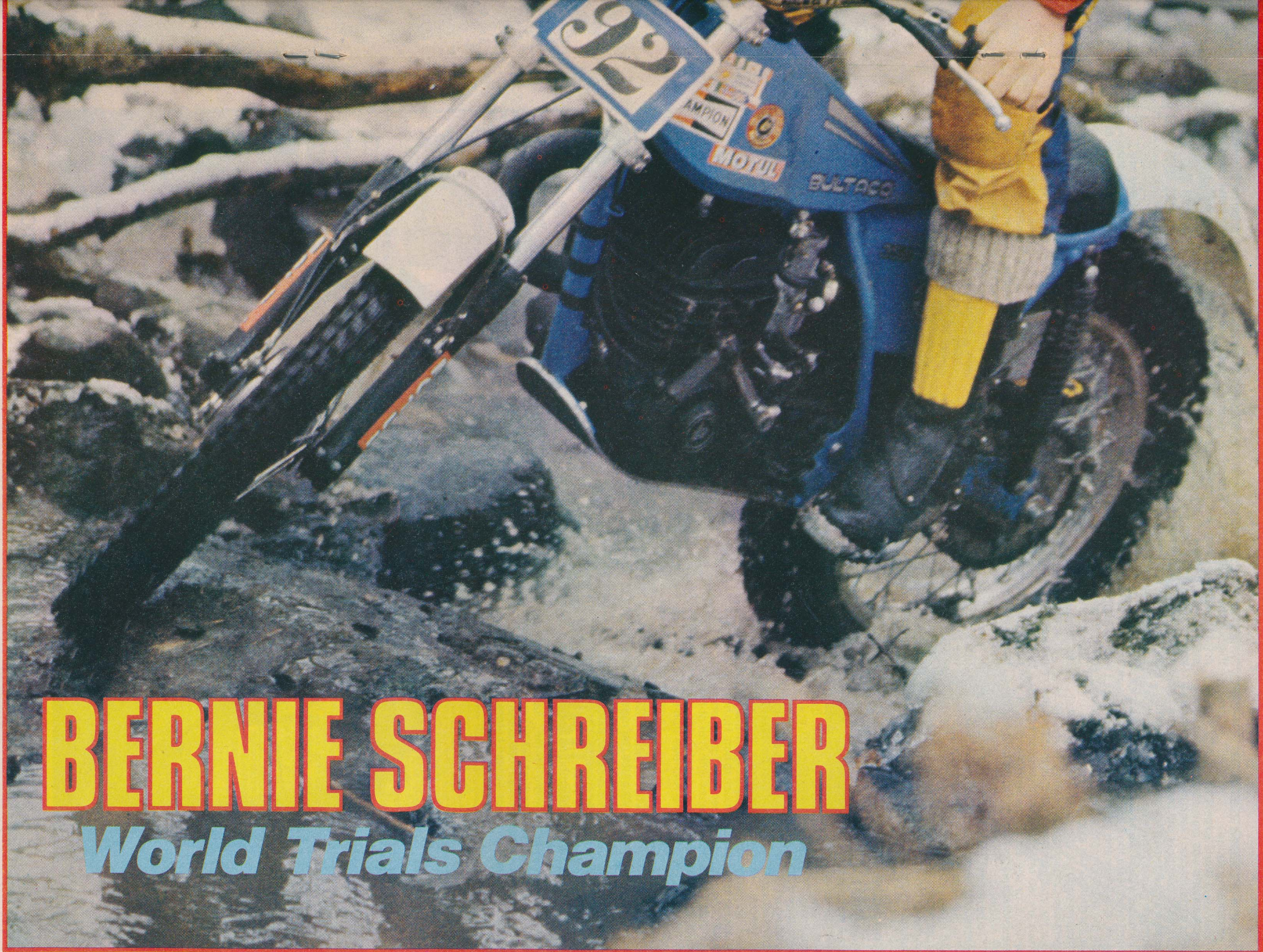
In 1975, Bernie Schreiber was the second best trials rider in Southern California, behind Marland Whaley and he won a trip to visit a European Trials round. They both chose Spain because Bultaco and Montesa were there. Marland rode, but as Bernie wasn't yet eighteen, they wouldn't let him ride.

However, the following year, when he 'came of age' he persuaded his High School teachers to let him finish a whole term early so that he could come to Europe and get into the World Trials scene. "The one thing I was not prepared for was the cold, it really put me off," smiled Bernie. "I was seventh overall in 1977, but did not contest every round and third in 1978 having won four rounds. But I still hadn't

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MOTOR CYCLING





BERNIE SCHREIBER

World Trials Champion

been able to compete in all of the championship rounds.

"Frankly, I didn't expect to win this year. What I wanted was consistency; more wins, more good places. I reckoned that as I was still under twenty at the beginning of the season, time was on my side, and yet I am still young enough to come back and win it again.

"I would like to do more TV trials like 'Kick Start' to educate the public and promote our sport. It is becoming accepted, but there are still too many people who don't even know what a trial is," he said.

Bernie believes the reason why so few world class riders are emerging from this country, apart from the cold, is that British Trials are too remote. Spectators can't get to sections, or see enough when they do and television cameras can't get to them to record the action.

"To be honest, I don't think British trials are spectacular enough anyhow," said Bernie. "The gulf between the World Championship and club and centre trials is growing, especially in England and America, because you have too many, what I would call, Rathmell Sections.

World class trials

"Rocks and mud maybe okay, but your trials are just not spectacular enough. There are not enough tight turns similar to those in world class trials. The kids in Belgium, Italy and France, people of my age 19 or 20, are so keen they would jump off a second storey building on their bikes, if that were a section. Now that's spectacular and not necessarily dangerous," continued the American trials ace. "It's all about confidence. Vesterinen taught me a lot and I owe much to him. He has looked after me as it were. Two foreigners together. I have spent weeks with him at his home and riding the sort of spectacular sections that Rathmell and Andrews don't really want to tackle.

"I think the future trials riding generation will depend on who does what for whom. Just as Vesterinen taught me so much, so must I take hold of a youngster, maybe in California, especially as the gulf widens, and say, 'Hey, I am going to take you under my wing — make you a champ.'

"Providing he has lots of ambition and latent talent and really wants to ride, maybe I can do for him what Vesty did for me," said Bernie. "In the weeks I spent at Vesterinen's home, he certainly taught me more about trials riding than I have ever learned before in my life.

"When I won in Czechoslovakia and clinched the title, he was the first one to come up and congratulate me, with 'well done, the best man won,' and that's what I call sportsmanship."

Don asked what it was like and what it means to be World Trials Champion?

"It's just like everything I ever worked for has finally paid off, especially for my parents and two sisters. My dad has always pushed me hard at something. It will change my method of attack for next season in the Championship. I still feel I am young enough not to have anything to lose," smiled Bernie.

"I started disastrously in 1979, crashing in Ireland and not scoring a point. Next time I shall know that if I start badly, I can still hope to win overall. What is important is to score points in every round, especially the first three rounds.

"I want to be more consistent, always in the first five in each trial. Confidence is definitely the key to success."

Bernie has signed with Bultaco for another year as he considers it the best bike for the job. He has had other offers, but with Bultaco having won every single World Title since 1973, he wants to stay with the winner.

Bernie also admits that being with

Commerfords has been good for him over the past year. He has lived with Peter Hudson and his family and will be doing so again next season. He reckons it gives him a stable background.

Temperature problems

"The European temperature was my greatest problem," said Bernie. "I shall never forget my first Scottish, I was so cold. Mind you, everything was a big problem coming over here and doing the whole series, I am only just coming round to liking it."

When Don Morley suggested that bikes have improved in leaps and bounds, Schreiber firmly disagreed. "No, it's the riders who have improved," he said. "I could still win on my 1966 Bultaco Sherpa 'T'. I find the greatest problem is the organisers. They have not kept up with the vast improvements in riding standards.

"Organisers underestimate the riders' ability. I like the English riders and officials, but we have to get away from the Yorkshire mentality that even Londoners are foreigners. They just don't seem to want to change."

"This is why Mart Lampkin was so stale last season. A change would do him good. This is another reason why I welcome these TV things like 'Kick Start' at Donington. They are spectacular and that is the way we must go."

Perhaps the fresh approach by new generation riders like Schreiber will blow kindly on our sport. As a rider of the older generation Don Morley isn't sure, but says it will be a sad day when it will take a circus rider to enter a national event and the clubman can no longer compete.



A roll on the drum with his Bultaco demonstrates Bernie Schreiber's remarkable trials riding ability which gave him and America the World Trials' Championship.