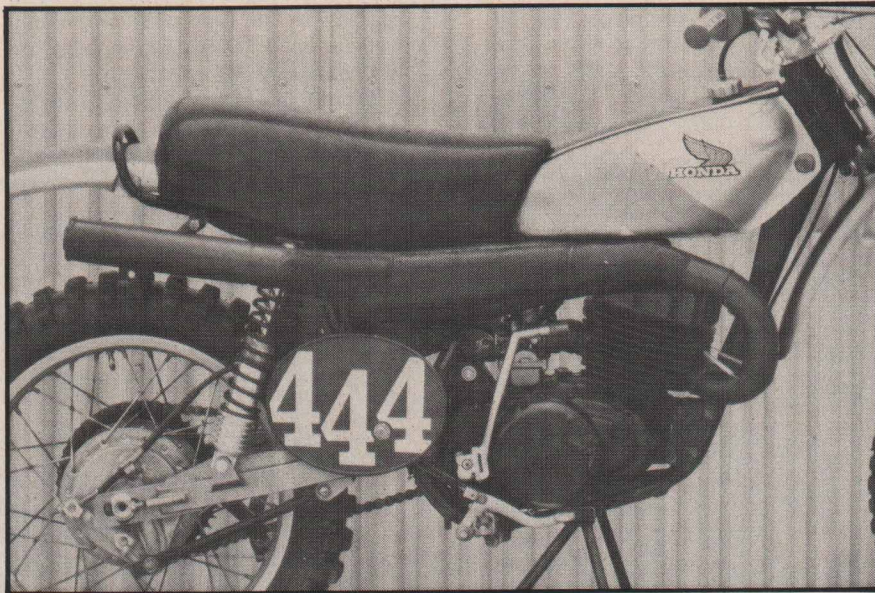


suddenly it's '76



Investing In Your Elsinore

Approach your motor work in two stages. Or do it all at once the next time you lose your top end.

You say you don't have the \$1200 you'll need for a brand-new CR250 Elsinore. Then why not update your old machine?

Not only can you make your old CR perform like a new one, but you can do it in easy stages that won't lay waste



Your basic 1974, 1975, 1976 Elsinore.

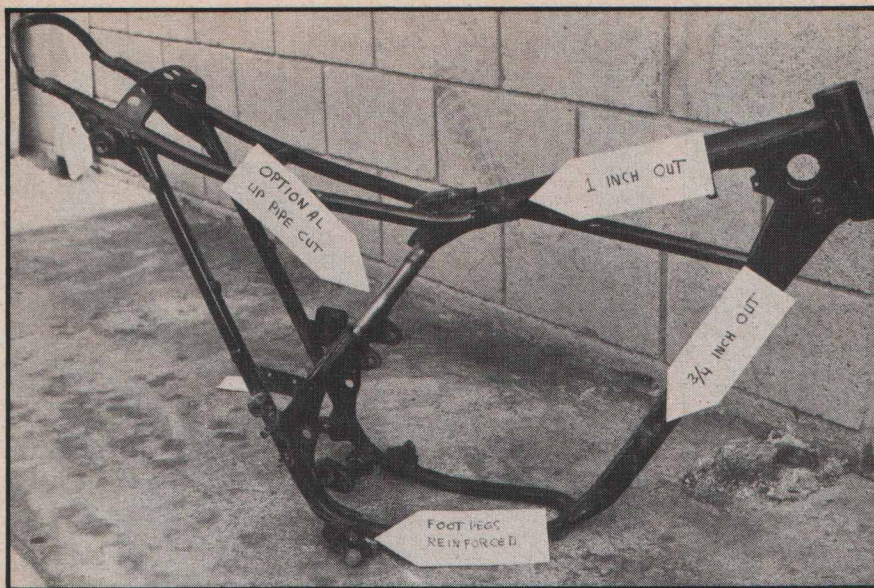
By Chet Heyberger

UPDATING GREEN HONDAS

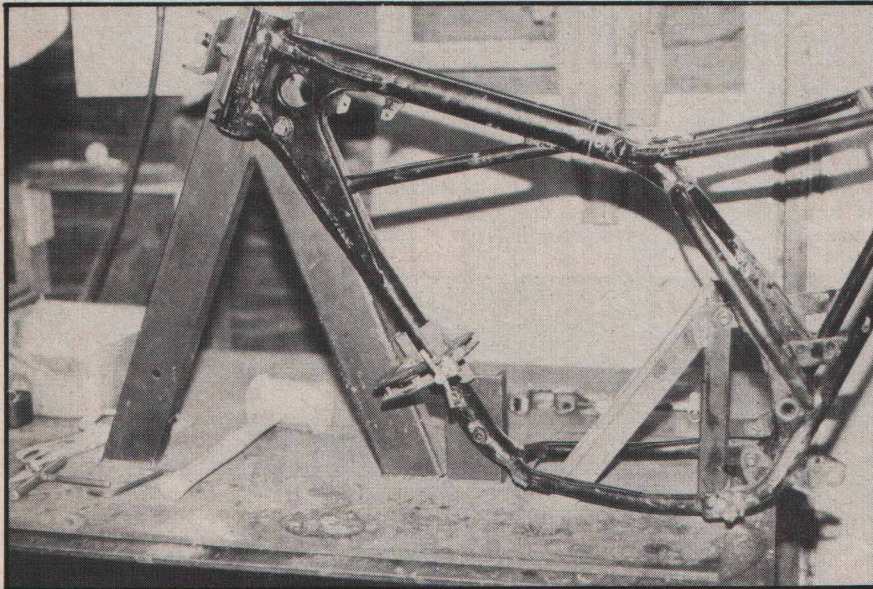
to your savings account. Jim Brennan did it that way to his '74 greenie, changing things as he could afford them. Check the improvements he's made, decide on your plan, and get a new scoot at the end of it all.

GEOMETRY

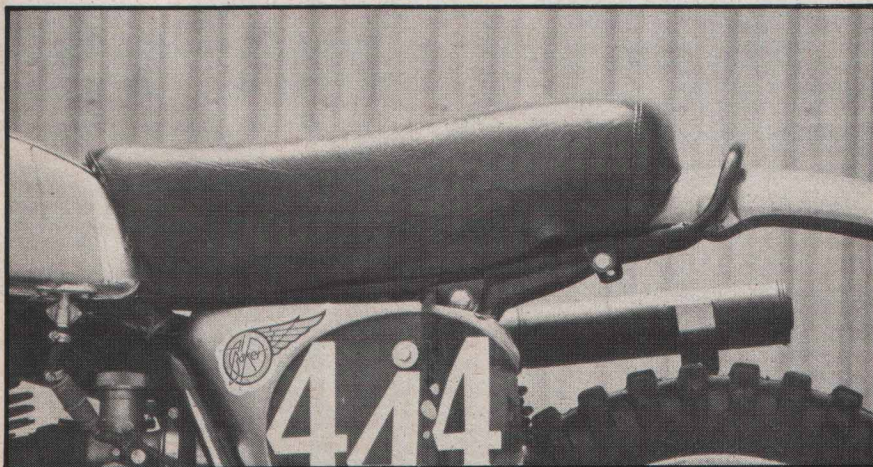
The first Elsinore—contrary to the introductory magazine tests—didn't exactly handle. Well, that's not completely true; it handled, but in a way of its own. Lots of people liked the first CR's because they slid so neat. It seemed like the long wheelbase Honda



Frame cut includes major surgery indicated by arrows. Optional cut allows up-pipe installation.



Jig is essential to correct frame mods; it holds steering head in line and prevents sideways mistakes. This jig is so secret that it's kept at Rob Waters', an infamous Checkers M.C. member.



Any good bike shop should be able to turn you on to an upholsterer to pad out your seat. Saddle work ought to run about \$30.

had some Greeves in its background somewhere along the line.

But along with the sliding you got a lot of understeer and a bit of hop down the straights. Once the first blush of enthusiasm was over, Honda's rookie of the year in '73 was the roach of the year in '74. People discovered that as much fun as skidding is, it still isn't the fast way around.

Honda knew it, too. Zap, along comes a red-striped, up-pipe Elsinore called the CR250M1 and everything has changed.

The difference was a new chassis. And you can whip a fix on your old style frame for a mere \$80. By taking an inch out of the backbone and 3/4-inches out of the downtube, and keeping the steering head angle at 31.75 degrees, you can perform miracles. Lo and behold, turns become possible, the front bites, and the infamous front end watch-out is banished.

Jim Brennan got his work done by the Honda specialist at Al Baker Racing and Development, 15174 Raymer Street, Van Nuys, CA 91405. There may be someone in your neighborhood with the necessary jig and sufficient talent. Ask around.

SUSPENSION

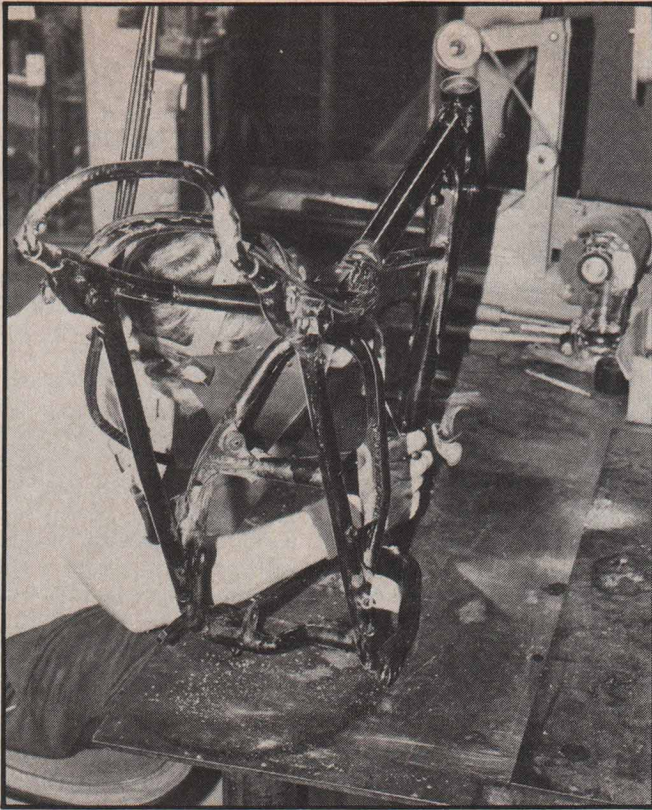
Once you've got the frame fixed, you can move on to nobler things, like suspension. Jim went all out on the front end, laying in an S&W Reed Valve fork conversion and S&W XL250 fork springs. He went for the XL250's, a little stronger than those for the CR250, because of the frame cut he'd had done. The fork kit ran about \$45 and the springs were \$15, from any dealer who handles S&W products.

Brennan topped off his fork work with a pair of inner tube valves that he uses to release any air pressure that builds up inside the fork tubes. High class chrome versions of these should cost about \$4 at the local discount bazaar.

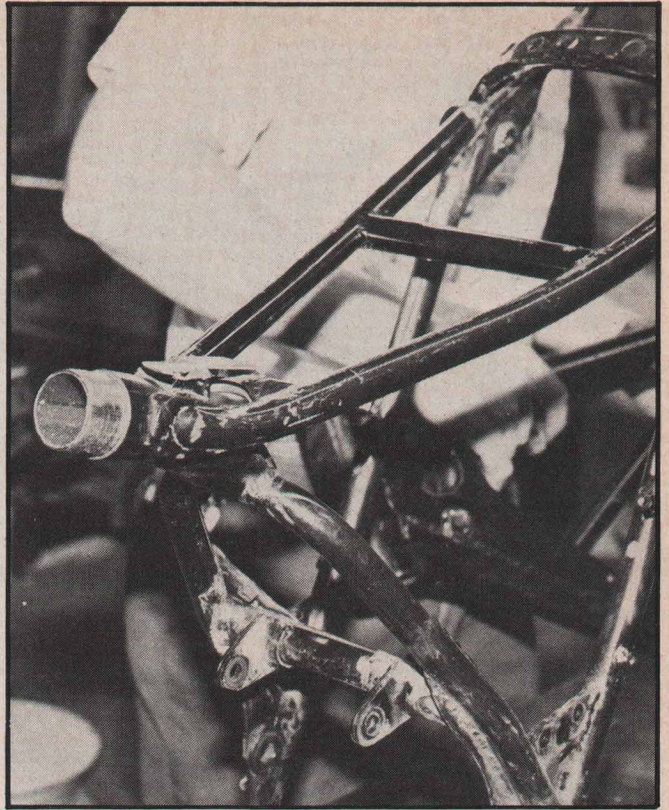
Then he covered everything with a pair of long travel fork boots. Don't laugh; "long travel" isn't BS here. The old short fork boots will actually interfere with the stroking of the new long forks. Such things shouldn't cost more than \$9.

The way to approach your suspension changes is simple. Consider that fork springs and shocks wear out. If you've got to replace them anyway, go for it and do it right.

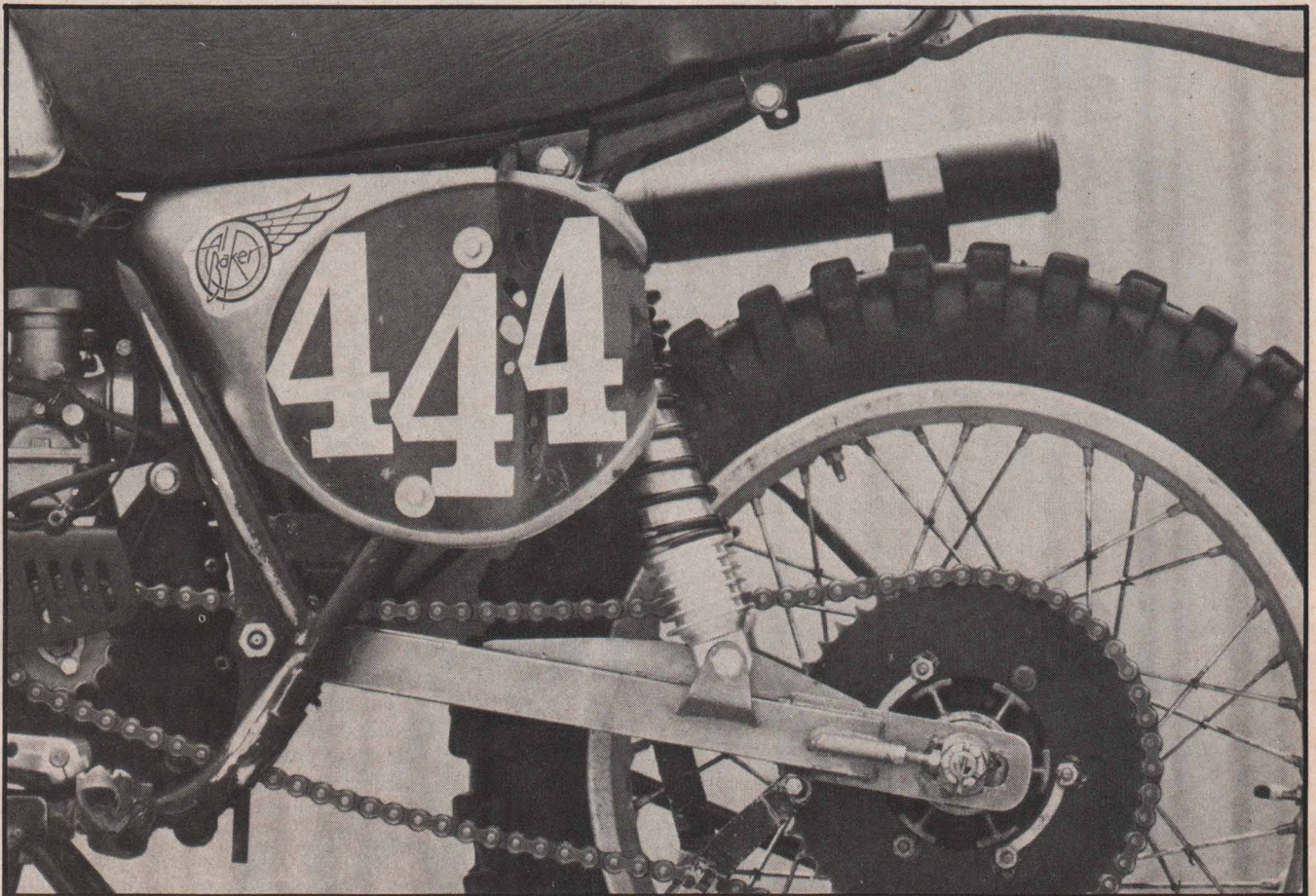
That goes for the back end of your Elsie too, where you have about as many choices for shocks and swingarms as there are halter tops at the motocross nationals. Lots of shocks are available, everything from gas Girlings (\$90) to Works Performance (\$115), and there are many swingarms in production for



Extras on the frame job include a brace at the bottom of the downtube, a reinforced pipe mount, and the solution to the drooping footpeg problem. Heli-arc specialist Rob Walters is better known for converting Cadillacs into pick-up trucks.



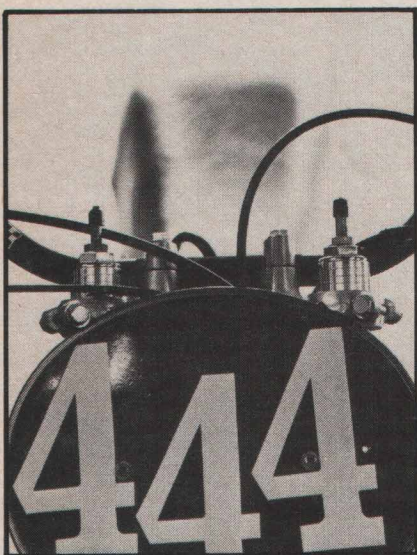
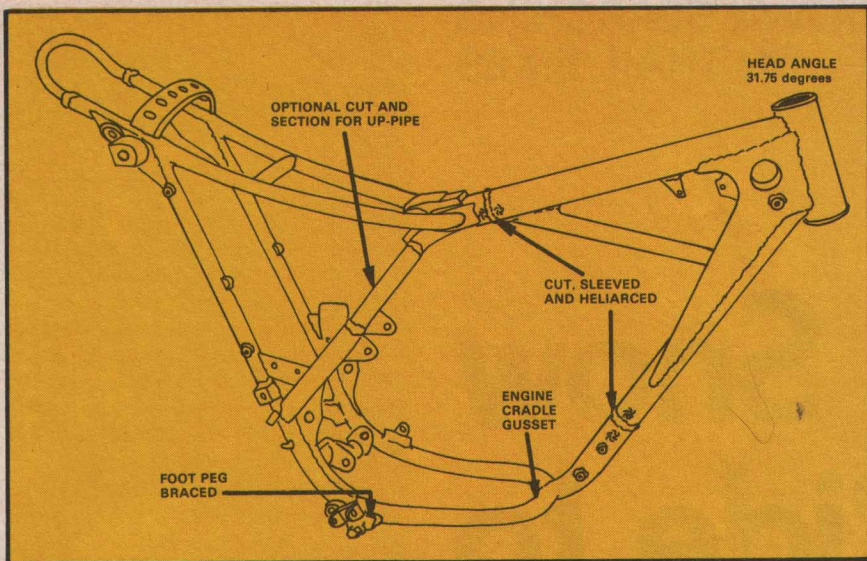
Filler tubes strengthen frame where tubes are rejoined. This is the 107th frame Rob has done and this one was wratched out from crashing. Get a frame job if you do that to yours; it's a good excuse.



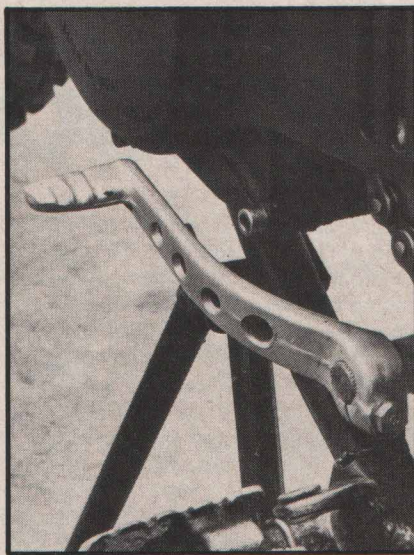
If you go to forward mounted shocks, you get to make fancy number plates so that everyone knows you did it.

the CR250. Jim Brennan picked S&W Stokers (about \$80) mounted on an Al Baker R&D Traveller swingarm (\$90). Those aren't the only choices; browse through the ads in this issue.

MOTOR



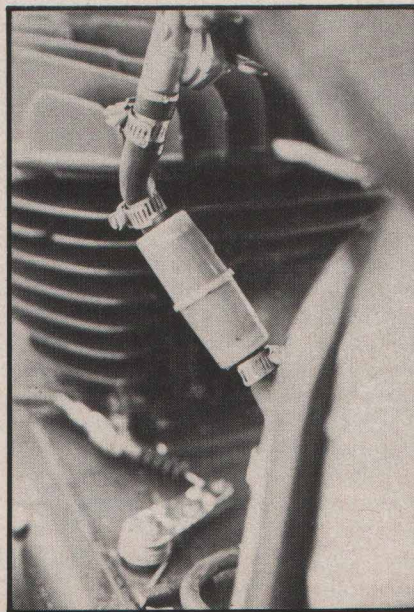
Bars and controls can be replaced as you go along; trick valves on fork tubes are essential for psychological warfare.



If you're going beserk on your Elsie, don't forget this fine-looking item.



Fork boots protect the tubes; Preston Petty fork garters do it for the sliders.



A.C. fuel filters are available everywhere except massage parlors.

At some point in the life of your Honda, you're going to lynch the engine—or at least need a top end. This is another opportunity to exercise the mental magic known as rationalization. It goes like this: "Since I've got to spend the money to rebuild this turkey anyway, why not make it hot?" The process starts with wanting and moves right into needing. In a few short days you'll have yourself convinced; then you have to decide which way to go.

First choice is probably a new pipe. Especially if you went to a LTR, because all your new up-and-down motions are more than likely going to result in a lot of pipe bashing. You can spend from \$60 to \$100 on a pipe and the best way to buy one is to try it out on your bike. Short of that, borrow other Elsinores and check them out against yours if they're in tune. Most people will let you take a ride if you ask them for advice and don't come across as a squid.

If you can't get that together, buy from someone with a good reputation in the press and among your friends.

Second choice in the motor department is a little grinding. Grinding comes in three flavors. First is basic cleaning and matching, also known as porting and polishing, or blueprinting. The process, essentially, is restoring your engine to stock specifications. You'd be surprised how well that works. After that come various modifications and enlargements that shops will call anything from "race tuning" to "Stage II". This, plus the right pipe, will give you more across the whole powerband.

There is also a third stage, consisting of gouging instead of mere enlarging. This radical state of tune is rarely stable.

Take your pick here, but remember that labor costs are what the price reflects. If you're going to Stage II eventually, skip the first trip and only pay for the teardown once. You can pay \$45 for the first tune (not counting replacement parts) and then \$65 for Stage II later—or just \$65 the first time. Make your permanent choice before you start.

SPENDING MONEY

Spending money can be the third most fun thing in the world if you do it right. Spending money the right way on your bike combines the second and third most fun things in the world. Keep that in mind.