

skinned knuckle department:

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Photos by Paul Dino



ON-THE- TRAIL TIRE REPAIR

Both normal changes and four-minute jobs can be done if the right steps are followed.

So there you are, 47 miles from the nearest lizard, who is 12 days away from the nearest rock. You're so far out in the boonies that you could set up your own missile sight and nobody would ever find it.

And then it happens. You get a flat tire. There isn't anything more frustrating than getting a flat tire. Blowing up your engine is justifiable. You know then that there's no hope of riding back to the truck and finally the safety of your own garage. But a flat tire is just a pain in the rear end. The bike still runs perfectly. It's just lacking a little air in the proper places.

Quite often we've seen riders come back to their trucks, tongues hanging down around their knees, perspiration almost drowning them, when a rear or front flat tire is the cause. It's a real pity, because it takes only about four or five minutes to fix.

The problem of a flat tire can always be traced. The air got out because the tube got a hole in it. Unless your tire was hit with a spear thrown by a Bantu warrior, there's a chance that you can repair it. All you need are two tire irons, some tire fittings, a little air, and you can be on your merry way.

Here's how it works. Most flats occur in only one place. When you get a hole in the tire, you can usually pinpoint the problem by just looking. There's usually a nail or a piece of cactus sticking through the tire and into the tube. If you want to do it the quick and dirty way, you merely throw the bike over on its side, locate the hole and have at it.

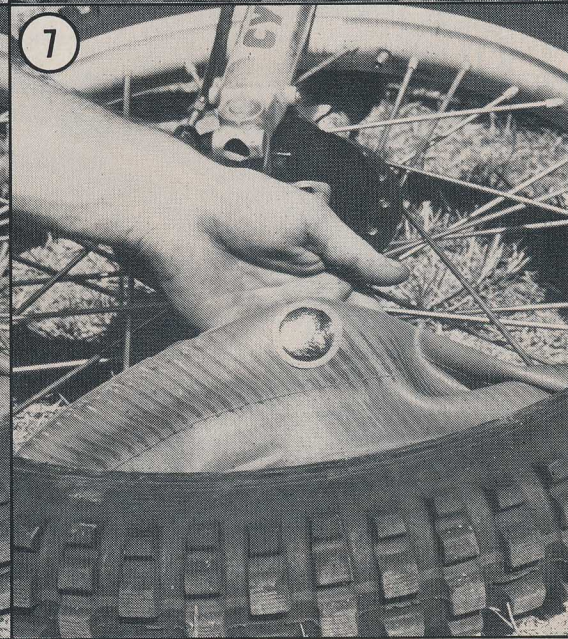
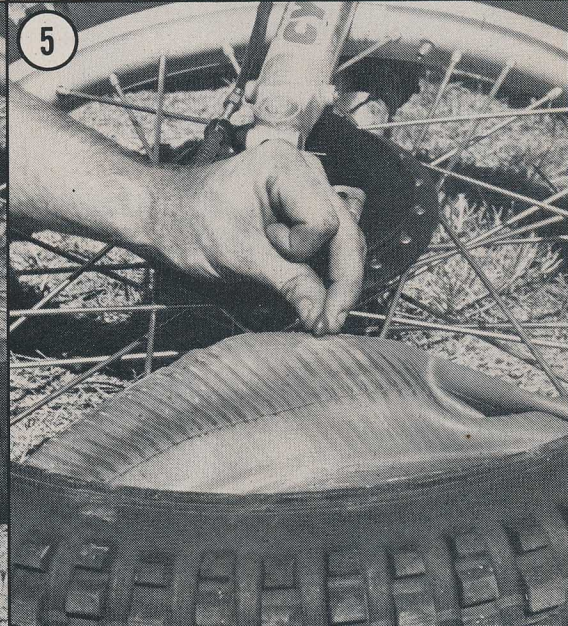
With this method you can leave the wheel on the bike and still fix the tube. Just locate the hole, rotate the tire until it's in a spot where you can work on it, and then taking your trusty tire iron, break the head loose and pop the tire open.

Now feel the inside of the tire and make sure that the obstruction is cleared.

Using your trusty Webco air bottle kit, which you wisely bought from your local dealer, you can buff up the punctured area, apply a little glue, stick on the patch, let it dry and stuff the whole thing back together again. When the tire is re-situated, use the accompanying air bottle to put about 22 pounds of air back into the tube.

Changing a tire or tube in four minutes is a little trickier, and should only be attempted if you're really bored, or trying out for the Six Day team. There is a set method for doing this, and if you blow it in just one step, you're going to lose valuable time.

If you've decided to change both the tire and the tube, or even just the tube itself, always remember that you want to start and finish at the valve stem. Always start taking the tire off the rim at the valve stem. When you're putting it back together again, you want to finish up in the same area.



1
Once you've located the puncture point, take your tire iron and break the bead loose from the rim. The Webco tire irons and Webco air bottle kit are both highly recommended.

2
If you've got the Sun rims, you only have to use one tire iron because the internal darts hold the tire in place.

3
You need to open up only about one-third of the tire in order to get the tube far enough out so that you can patch it.

4
With the supplied scuffing piece, rough up the section that needs to be patched, making sure that it is smooth and free of grease.

5
Now take one of the small plastic eggs and break it open, spreading the enclosed glue around the hole.

6
Peel the back off of the patch, apply it and then roll the CO2 cartridge over the patch to insure a good seating.

7
The patch should look like this when done. All edges should be firmly pressed down and the glue allowed to dry thoroughly.

If you read the article we did with Malcolm Smith a few issues ago, you'll already know the trick to getting the tire off. The whole secret is in the rim. Once you've gotten the tire partially off, you can put your knee down on the top of it at the opposite side, making sure that the bead section of the tire is centered down inside the lowest point in the rim. This way, while you're prying at the opposite end, you have more tire to work with, thus you can slip it off of the rim easier. Another tip is to use the Sun rims. Because of the small darts inside the rim

that hold the tire in place, you need to use only one tire iron. The darts hold the rest of the tire in place, making it a one-tool operation for both assembly and disassembly of a tire unit.

If these helpful hints *don't* do it for you, look at the accompanying photos for a while. Modify the methods if you like, to suit your particular style and bike. But remember—if you're out in the boonies and get a flat tire, take your time to repair it. You're not going to fall off Gold if you're not competing.

If you are riding under a time

schedule, and speed is of the essence, keep your head. Planned out, deliberate moves, smooth actions and organization will allow you to get the old mess off and a new tire and tube on in less than four minutes. Just ask Billy Uhl. During the Two Day Qualifier series this year, he repeatedly changed both tires and tubes at the events. Not because he needed to—but because he felt the practice under pressure was good for him. Happy skinned knuckles!



8

Now reinstall the tube and put the tire back inside the rim, being careful not to pinch the tube.

9

When you get down to the last couple of inches, you can pop the tire on by simply pressing against the sidewall.

10

With everything together, use the CO₂ cartridge to put the air back into the tube.

11

The best place to carry your tire irons and a spare tube is on the forward side of the crossbar, facing away from the rider.

12

If you're into really quick tire changes, you can have a setup like this waiting for you at the checkpoint. With this you have to take both the tire and tube off and put the new ones on as a complete unit. Put about 6 pounds of air in the tire before installation.

