

Jaw set like a bulldozer blade, Martin Lampkin blasts out of a section at the British Experts trial in 1978.



Mart plants a long, lingering dab on one of the Lead Mines sections at last year's Hurst Cup world round in Northern Ireland.



Delicacy where demanded . . . Lovely bit of lean over some Cumbrian rockery in the Grant Trial in September last year.



# MART LAMPKIN — THE BARON OF BASH!

**OF the many riders who have been connected with the Bultaco factory over the years, one man commands more respect from the company than all the others put together, and that man is Yorkshire's Martin Lampkin.**

In a sport where it is fashionable to change mounts, if not frequently then certainly every three years or so, Martin has been loyal to the marque since he first joined the Spanish company way back in 1970.

His first factory contract came a year later, and since then he hasn't ridden any other machine in trials. Not only that, he has managed to remain at the top for many years, on the same bike when others need a change of machine to retain their enthusiasm and will to win.

In the eyes of Oriol Bulto, the man most actively connected with trials and a nephew of the controlling family, Mart is regarded as one of the family. He has been with them so long that everything he has to say about the bikes or organisation is listened to, and his views are well respected.

Mart has now been around the trials scene so long that he is the most respected of riders. Never one to mince his words, he is a most likeable fellow and has an attitude to the sport that all listen to and respect.

Protests have been a bugbear that organisers have had to face in increasing numbers, and although Mart has been involved in some of these troubles, it genuinely distresses him to have to question officially an observers decision. But when money is involved it is farcical to expect anyone not to question any obvious mistake. Another of Mart's attitudes is with regard to time. He makes every attempt to finish an event within the specified time even when, as in a World trial, the extra marks for an hour late are only six. He believes that by doing his bit to keep on time he is setting an example that others will follow.

The sport of motorcycling was a natural progression for Martin with two elder brothers, Arthur and Alan (Sid) already at the top of the motocross and trials tree. He started in a small way on a 250 BSA in club trials, but before developing into trials proper, he together with his great friend Malcolm Rathmell, dabbled in both scrambles and grass tracks.

But Mart felt trials needed much greater concentration if he was to succeed, so it was in this direction that the youngest Lampkin concentrated his efforts.

It takes time for any rider to develop his full potential and Martin was no exception, but the crowning point of his early career was when Mart won the first World Championship in 1975. Not that he had been slow in winning major titles, as in 1973 Mart was the British Champion, and in 1972 he was second in both the British and European title series.

After that first world title, big trials came



Superstar at the Superstars Trial. Mart eases his Bult over a slimy rock step in the 1978 Yorkshire classic.

thick and fast and another highlight came when he was the first rider to win the Scott, Scottish and British Experts trials in the one year. And he has also been one of the few three time in succession winners of the Scottish.

More recently trials have developed further than Saturday and Sunday events in the countryside, and now the top men of the sport are riding in demonstration events with artificial sections. Mart has ridden in many of these events, principally on the continent in France, Holland and Spain but more recently he was among the entry for the BBC TV Kickstart series. The records show that Mart came fourth, but only a very unlucky five cost him a better placing.

It would be fair to say that these demonstration events aren't Mart's favourite contests, but when the world's best tackle indoor and stadium trials, then Lampkin just has to stay in the limelight and ride too. However they don't provide an accurate reflection of his ability especially when some of the Frenchmen ride. Many of the demo stars are nowhere near Lampkin's ability when it comes to trials proper, and big rocks in teeming rain are the hazards, so no wonder Mart is unhappy when he is beaten in a stadium trial.

All enthusiasts know where Lampkin's real love lies so to a certain extent the demo trials

can be written off, but even so Mart more than anybody would like to be a regular winner of these events.

One of the most thrilling aspects of Lampkin's career was last year at the Scottish. Mart was going for his fourth win on the trot, and the eventual decision rested on the final group of sections on the lower slopes of Ben Nevis. Everyone knows that Rathmell was the winner along with the adulation and financial aspects that go with it, but a measure of the true sportsman came when Mart shared his thoughts on the lines planned and later was the first to congratulate the new winner.

The number of riders who have really made their mark in the world of trials is small. They can even be counted on the fingers of one hand, but amongst those Lampkin must certainly be included. He has brought to the sport a refreshing riding style that is thrilling and much more entertaining than the path-picking lines of many of his rivals.

An expression has crept into the sport of the "Lampkin style." Everybody knows that this means hitting a hazard hard, forcefully and with great determination.

When spectators watch the man himself do it, it brings a shiver to the spine. Other riders copy the master, but he's still the best when it comes to bash.