

The International Six Days Trial has been termed "The Olympics of Motorcycling" and it is a well-earned comparison. Individual contestants' efforts are overshadowed by team results and, while it is a great honour indeed for a rider to earn a Gold Medal for an unpenalised performance, it is a greater honour yet for that rider to have assisted his national team to win the coveted ISDT Trophy.

Very few of the hundreds of riders in any ISDT are actually competing as individuals. They ride either on a six-man National squad in the prestigious ISDT Trophy category, on a four-man National team in the slightly less-important ISDT Vase competition or for various Club or Manufacturer's teams. Despite this, most of the riders in the contest are amateurs rather than factory-sponsored professionals. They may get support from certain manufacturers but none are on the lucrative contracts common in other branches of



Yamaha 760cc Enduro twin!

Photographs by Robert Poensgen.

# Enduros - German Style

our sport. They are riders who compete throughout the season, all over Europe, in Enduros (an American term now becoming popular in Europe) or, as the FIM term the sport, Off-Road Reliability Trials.

These trials cram up to 200 miles in a single day's off-road riding and sometimes cover an entire weekend. There is, in fact, a European Two Day Trials Championship covering seven countries - Czechoslovakia, France, Spain, Italy, Poland, Germany and Austria.

Not every enduro rider ever aspires to a ride in the European Championships or the ISDT but the sport gives pleasure to literally thousands of skilled, not-so-skilled and merely enthusiastic riders all over the world. It combines the techniques of trials, moto-cross and even fast road riding, with marks being lost for being late at certain control points along the route. Many enduros (though the ISDT is not one of them) also penalise riders who arrive too early at the controls. This places a great emphasis on timekeeping and sensible riding and has the effect of stopping the event merely

being a day-long race and a survival of the fittest - or craziest!

Enduros are really popular in Germany, and the German competition rules are fairly typical of the sport in Europe. Usually there is a single lap of about 75 kms, which riders cover three times. On each lap there are three or four time checks and an average speed set for these stages. Usual average is in the region of 40 km/h in normal weather conditions. Each minute early at a control means 60 marks lost.

The rider can be up to two minutes late without penalty but then every minute late

after that means another 60 marks lost.

Included with this reliability competition are two cross-country "special tests" where the essence is on flat-out riding. This gives the speed merchants a chance to make up anything they might of lost by not paying too much attention to timekeeping. Usually these tests are along a dirt road or across open country for up to 4 kms. Each 1/10th of a second of elapsed time taken by the rider means 1/10th of a mark lost. Thus the fastest rider loses the least marks.

Finally, machine preparation is taken into

account by the starting test. The machines have been impounded overnight in the open air in a special sealed area. When he is given his signal to start, a rider then has 60 seconds to kick his machine into life and ride across a line 20 metres away. Otherwise, that's another 50 marks gone!

With more and more off-road machines on the market, this branch of the sport is growing rapidly all over Europe. Take the German statistics, for example. In 1970 each event averaged about 150 starters. Last year that figure was more than doubled and in the opening events of 1978, many organisers have had to turn down entries as they cannot handle the great numbers of riders wishing to take part. For instance, the first German event of 1978 had 500 entries...with 144 of them having to be turned down by the organisers.

As far as spectators go, it is impossible to judge how many people watch the riders as they cover the 75 km lap, often passing through villages and farms. An indication, however, of the general interest is that German events average between 5000 and



Special XT500 Enduro

10,000 spectators at the special cross-country speed tests alone!

In Germany, as in most other countries, Yamaha machines are popular with the riders. The DT Enduro range gives riders a chance to compete in classes from 100 to 500cc while for the more serious competitors, the YZ motocross racers can be modified to ISDT-style specification by the adding of certain components.

The XT500 is another popular Enduro machine, although in Germany it is handicapped by being sold with a 27bhp engine (for favourable insurance rates). Additionally, its extra weight puts it at even more of a disadvantage against the lighter, more powerful two-strokes like Yamaha's DT and YZ400 models.

German four-stroke fans have evolved a novel way of making the XT500 a winner in enduros....which is to bore it out to over 502cc and thus put it into the 501-750cc class!

Yamaha dealer, Kurt Tweesman, has built a 502cc version with 11:1 piston and a racing camshaft. It puts out 40hp and, in the hands of Tweesman's chief mechanic, Herbert Forester, it has won the Championship for German B-class riders (those who don't hold International competition licences) both in 1976 and 1977.

Tweesman also modifies the chassis, using Marzocchi front forks with 240mm of travel and Bilstein rear shocks giving 180mm of rear wheel

movement. Obviously the machine is now perfectly-suited to off-road competition.

Forester's success with the big-bore XT500 in 1976 brought several more of the Yamaha "thumpers" into competition for 1977 and many riders remained in the 500cc class despite the advantages of the two-strokes. One of these riders, Reinhold Behringer, took seventh place in the B-rider National 500cc Championship.

For 1978, the German Federation (OMK) have included another capacity class...for bikes over 750cc! Yamaha enthusiast, Kurt Tweesman, was quick to build machines for this category....very novel machines indeed. Tweesman took the XS650 Yamaha power unit, bored it to 760cc and fitted it into the modified XT500 frame that Forester used in 1977.

Three of these beasts were built and ridden in the opening German event of the year, at Eschwege, by Forester, Behringer and Kurt Distler. At the end of the first cross-country test the team held 2nd 3rd and 4th places in the class but all three crashed while forcing on for the lead. Distler finally placed fourth, Foerster fifth and Behringer eighth.

Their performance, however, was enough to show enduro fans that Yamaha have yet another string to their off-road bow. And this one has two cylinders and 760cc!



## TWO WAYS ACROSS AMERICA (CONTINUED).

Twin towers of the World Trade Centre in New York.....tallest buildings in the known world!

around 11.4 seconds...a truly incredible time for a motorcycle weighing in excess of 600lbs (1320kgs)!

But there was no time for more than half a dozen runs. The bike was taken back to the Yamaha workshop and a new clutch installed (drag racing does tend to abuse the transmission!) and within a few hours the XS1100 was pointed East on the first stage of its trip to New York.

In the saddle was Rich Cox, whose stint was to take him 811 miles (1297kms) from Los Angeles to Grand Junction, Colorado...at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. Most of Rich's ride was across the vast Western Desert...interminable views of sand and sagebrush which, in Cox's case, were eerily lit by the moon for the most part. Starting at 11pm, he rode through the night before handing over to Feature Editor, Brad Zimmerman at 2.30pm the next day.

"Three hours into the ride, with Las Vegas ahead and the stars twinkling above me, my mind started settling down to the realisation of what this

superb machine is all about" wrote Cox. "It's a dream-mobile on two wheels. With ear-plugs installed to cut down wind-noise through my Bell helmet, the ride was incredibly quiet...to the point where it got a little spooky. The speedo showed 70mph and yet the bike feels like it's floating along six inches above the ground. There's no vibration, no rattles, no engine noise, no sense of time - it just eats up the road effortlessly".

From Grand Junction, Brad Zimmerman was to take the big four-cylinder up over the 10,000 ft mountain passes of the Rockies and out across the plains to Kansas City.

"The XS1100 was equally at home on twisting mountain roads as out on the wide, straight Interstate highways" says Brad. "It handled well at all speeds and only wobbled when there was a sudden change in the road surface. Otherwise it was rock-steady and pulled through corners nicely enough to deserve an occasional pat on the gas tank for a job well done".

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## Enduro Across France

Yamaha's French distributor, Sonauto, are one of the main forces behind a unique new off-road event in France. Sonauto have collaborated with BP petrol and the Moto Club des Sables to introduce "La Croisiere Verte"....or the "green crossing". As its name implies, the event is an off-road rally that completely traverses France...from Le Touquet to Nice!

The rally route will take competitors from Le Touquet on the north coast of France, through the champagne country to Reims, then down through the mountains to Dijon, Bourg en Bresse, Clermont-Ferrand, Aubenas-Vals les Bains, Manosque and into Nice on the Riviera.

The event (from May 27 to June 3rd) will incorporate some roads in its route but will mainly be through forest and mountain terrain.

A report on the event will appear in the autumn issue of Yamaha Circuit.

## NVT - Yamaha Police Bike Sales In Middle East

The NVT-Yamaha police bike that we featured in the last issue of Circuit is already selling well in various parts of the world. Latest order was for 24 machines for one of the Middle Eastern states while other orders have stemmed from Holland and Belgium.