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# *Still...Keeping Track*

Penton Owners Group Newsletter \* \$5.00



Photo of Larry Walls (FLA), racing his 1973 Penton 250 Hare Scrambler at the AMA Vintage Days MX races at Mid-Ohio in 2000. Larry is our member profiled in this newsletter.

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## **STILL...KEEPING TRACK** Newsletter of the PENTON OWNERS GROUP

The Penton Owners Group is a not for profit corporation chartered in the State of Ohio and an AMA chartered club. Our Federal tax I.D. number is 34-1860635.

The Penton Owners Group was formed to preserve and share the memories and the equipment of a very special time in motorcycle history. The first Penton motorcycle was manufactured in 1967 and the last in 1977. This was a time when the enthusiasm, ambition and creativity of the original Penton group helped shape a new industry and a new generation of dirt bike enthusiasts. Sport and competition motorcycles played a significant role in this motorcycle history. Our aim is to make the Penton Owners Group a source of information about the history of the Penton motorcycle, the Penton Company and it's many dealers, riders and extended family.

The mission of the Penton Owners Group is to enjoy and share all the memories from the past and the events of the future, as Penton motorcycle enthusiasts.

Club officer names and contact information have been removed from this document.



Still...Keeping Track is published quarterly by the Penton Owners Group. Annual membership dues is \$20 per year for US residents (\$25 for foreign membership) and includes a subscription to the newsletter which is not available separately. Manuscripts, photos, drawings, etc. are welcome but no payment is made for material submitted, used, or retained. Please keep duplicates of your submissions, as we cannot be responsible for loss or damage. Submission of material will be considered as assignment of all rights therein. Check out our web site at: [www.PENTONUSA.ORG](http://www.PENTONUSA.ORG) Change of address: Give old and new address and notify us as least 6 weeks in advance. Send address changes to: The PENTON OWNERS GROUP - P.O. Box 756 - Amherst, Ohio 44001 All information furnished herein is provided by and for the members of the Penton Owners Group. The editor for this newsletter is Alan Buehner

### **PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

By Alan Buehner

As I was finishing up this newsletter, I took some time to try to clean up my desk area which gets piled high with all sorts of paperwork when writing articles and putting things together for the newsletter. In sorting through the piles, I rediscovered all sorts of treasures.

Buried under one pile was an October 1983 issue of "Dirt Rider" magazine which I bought at one of the swap meets last year. In it is a nine

page article titled "The Penton Family" by Suzi Mingo. The author interviewed John along with his sons Tom, Jeff, and Jack about their history of racing and developing and selling the "Penton" motorcycle. It is an excellent article that also captures John and his sons at that time period as to what they were doing and what they had accomplished. There are also a couple of interview articles of Jack Lehto and Larry Maiers who talk about their meeting and association with John Penton.

Under another pile was a small book that I purchased at a swap meet and never got around to reading. It is titled "Scrambles and Moto-Cross" and was published in 1962 in London. The English author, Leslie Archer, talks about all the aspects of racing (Clubs, Clothing, Machines, Racing, Hazards, etc.) to give someone new to the sport an idea of what to expect and be familiar with it. I bought the book because of the many photos of riders on all those old (vintage) British tanks. It is interesting seeing a Norton and Matchless with their front wheels in

the air just as they are landing a jump or a Velocette buried axle deep in mud with the rider struggling to keep going by trying to push it out. This was written in the same time period that John Penton was winning enduros on his NSU and BMW. Moto-Cross was still an unknown word in the U.S. but in Europe it was very popular because of the large crowds of people spectating at races shown in several of the photos. There are also photos of "modern" Moto-Cross bikes such as: 250 ESO - 250 Dot Scrambler - 250 MCS Greeves - 175 Maico - 250 Jawa - 125 Montesa. One of these days I'll take some time to read about what the author has to say about how to race MX on one of those bikes.

On top of one pile, was a photo copy of a newspaper article with a photo and interview of Matt Weisman from October 28, 1990. Matt worked for John Penton from the beginning of the "Penton" motorcycle, up to the end in 1977. The article talks about the company that Matt works for (Webb Stiles Co., a designer of material handling systems). Matt and his wife Barb, are both POG members. I filed that article in the "POG" box under my credenza on top of the photocopies of Pat Leimbach (John's sister) newspaper articles that Al Born has given me.

Under Matt's article was a photocopy of Jeff DeBell's article of the 5th annual Leroy Winters Memorial ISDT Reunion Ride that was published in Cycle News. This was an excellent article that talked about the celebrities who rode the event last year. There are also some excellent photos of Dave Mungenast,

Bully Uhl and Carl Crank. I filed that one in the POG box as well.

On the corner of my desk was a brown envelope that Ed Youngblood mailed to me last week. In it is an invoice for travel expenses for his trip to Albuquerque to make his presentation at the Pop Culture Conference. Also enclosed is a 16 page copy of his presentation titled "The Birth of the Dirt Bike: Technology and the Shift in Attitude Toward American Motorcyclists in the 1970." It is a well researched paper that identifies John Penton as one of the main forces of bringing about the evolution of the dirt bike. Ed has offered to deliver his "Power Point" presentation at one of our upcoming Penton meetings which he claims is far more interesting and entertaining than the paper alone. I will try to schedule this for our "Point of Discussion" at our May meeting at KTM. I am also going to see if this presentation can be filmed for future replication on VHS or DVD.

On the floor under my desk were some photos that I had set aside to use in the past couple of newsletters. There are six large black and white professional photos of the "new" KTM 175 prototype motor, it's clutch, gears, cylinder, and piston. There's another photo of the complete prototype 175 motorcycle taken in KTM's parking lot. There's another small black and white photo taken by someone at Penton's Research and Development of a redesigned kick starter lever for the 250 that is reformed to allow the kick starter to be kicked down without hitting the foot peg. All of these photos were filed back into the box of miscellaneous items that John Penton

donated to the club. I will pull them back out again some time in the future for use in an upcoming newsletter.

On my desk tray was a photocopy of an ISDT article from the December 1977 issue of Cycle Guide that Bob Neruda (Illinois) mailed to me. This article has photos of Ted Leimbach, Carl Cranke, Tom Penton, and Billy Uhl. It covers the 1977 ISDT in Czechoslovakia which was the last "Penton" team effort to try and win an ISDT and also one of the toughest ISDT events ever held. Of the 317 riders that started the event, only 94 finished it. Tom Penton and Dick Burleson were the only U.S. riders to earn gold medals. Out of the 37 U.S. riders to start only 12 managed to finish. I placed this four page article in my "future articles" folder for a possible reprint in a future newsletter.

There is a wealth of information around about the history and success of John Penton, his motorcycles and its' riders. Some of it is recorded in magazine articles as past history. Some is being currently made at vintage race tracks and at the ISDT reunion ride. Others yet, are unwritten history that is waiting to be recorded through interviews and articles in upcoming newsletters. Magazines and membership newsletters are a couple of the items that help drive the vintage motorcycle market. I am blessed to have much of this information of the Penton history at my fingertips and am committed to our mission statement to enjoy and share all the memories from the past and the events of the future.

# **PENTON**

## **WOODSMAN**



## MEMBER PROFILE FRANK L. WALLS

by Larry Walls

Frank L. Walls, better known as Larry, was born in Arizona in 1936.

My father was a working cowboy and did very well as a Rodeo Cowboy. I grew up on cattle ranches in the mountainous regions of Arizona. I never had a motorcycle as a youth, but did do a little rodeoing with my dad. We did some father and son team roping and some calf roping. I never rode bucking horses in an organized rodeo, but a few of the horses we rode in our work would and did buck the first thing in the morning when you climbed aboard. That frozen ground hurts a lot when it comes up real fast and smacks you in the face. My dad truly believed and insisted that I was born full-grown and could do anything. I grew up fast. I cannot think of a better place or a better way to grow up. (But there was no motorcycle)

I completed high school in 1954 and joined the U.S. Navy that summer. At the end of that first tour of duty I came to realize that I had found a home and I re-enlisted with a career in mind. (Still no motorcycle)

The next few years took me to many places. From Norfolk, Virginia to Great Lakes, Illinois to Kodiak, Alaska to Port Hueneme, California to Viet Nam (two 10 month tours) to San Diego, California and to Orlando, Florida. (Still no motorcycle)

By the time I landed in Orlando in 1968, I had acquired a wife and two daughters. We shopped around and found a house we could almost afford and one evening a guy literally jumped his bike out of the woods behind my house and introduced himself. He was another sailor who lived down the block and had seen me in uniform. About all he wanted to talk about was off-road riding. We became lifelong friends. Before too long, I had managed to get a used Kawasaki 175 Bushwhacker, an

on/off road, electric start thing that didn't do either job very well, but I didn't know any better and I loved it. My new buddy had a Yamaha DT1 and we would ride them back and forth to work all week and then into the woods and old mining pits on the weekend. Life was good.

I was transferred from Orlando to Norfolk, Virginia and then right away back to Charleston, SC. There I met a young man who had just bought a new steel tank Penton Six Day 125. This guy was a natural. He motocrossed it, he scrambled it, he short tracked it and he high pointed the Swamp Fox Enduro on that little bike. He also talked me into racing my Bushwhacker. We went to a Scramble and with his coaching and help, I was lined up for the start of the first qualifier. GO! I wheelied completely over backward, finally got going in the right direction, busted my butt two or three more times, and finished dead last. A STAR WAS BORN! I hadn't had so much fun since I was riding the broncos when I was 16. I was now 36 years old.

I started racing every weekend and before long managed to get my first real racing machine. A used 175 Ossa Stiletto. This also brought some trophies. I didn't realize how bad the Bushwhacker was, as it was all I had ever ridden.

I got transferred back to Orlando, FL. and started riding Enduros. I joined the Florida Trail Riders and helped form a local FTR club, The Central Florida Trail Riders, of which I am still a member today. A lot of the guys were riding Pentons then, but I just didn't feel I could afford one. I rode a variety of bikes, none of them new. One that I particularly liked was a 78 Bultaco 370 Frontera. In 1985 I got my first KTM, a barely used 1984 250. One day when I went past the KTM shop, one of the owners made me a deal. For \$40 I could have a 1976 Penton Jackpiner 175cc sportscycle! It was a rolling chassis with the engine cases split and all the

parts in two cardboard boxes. The cylinder had been bored far beyond any piston ever made for it. I also got a shop manual with most of the pages stuck together from being left out in the rain.

At that time L.A. Sleeve still made sleeves for it, so I found a stock piston and had it sleeved back to stock. IT took me a while to get it sorted out, but I did and the more I worked with it, the more I appreciated what a wonderful little machine it was. At first it was just my "show off" pit racer, but then I entered it in the Alligator Enduro and did well. I was smitten.

I started acquiring Pentons the way some people save matchbook covers. At one time I had 13 running Pentons. One Year, I entered six of them in the Alligator Enduro with 5 guys in my club riding for me. I had a 1973 Berkshire, a 1971 steel tank Six Day 125, a 1976 Jackpiner 175, a 1975 Hare Scrambler 250, and a 1976 Mint 400 all on the same row. I was on a 1974 250 one minute behind them. It was one of the really wet years and they did well. We got a couple of trophies and nobody had to leave their bike in the woods. John Penton was there that year and I have always been real disappointed that he didn't at least come by to look at them and say "Hey". Hell, I would have offered him a beer.

I started pressuring FTR to start a Vintage class and was finally successful. They said if I would submit rules and tech requirements, we could have a one season experimental class to see how it went. I took the Sportsman class section of the AHRMA rule book and massaged it to fit our situation and we went racing. It all worked out very well. It is now a full time class. Thus far it has been dominated with Penton riders, with me building some of the bikes and most of the engines. In one particular Hare Scramble event, three Penton 250's finished 1-2-3. I built the first place bike completely. I built

the second place bike's motor and I finished third on a Penton I had built for myself. When they awarded only 2 trophies, I raised cane with them, telling them I deserved a Manufacturer's award. They only laughed at me.

I campaigned two 1974 Penton 250's in the 1997 AHRMA National MX Championship. The first race of the season was in Ocala, Florida, about 2 hours from my home, but we left right from the track to go the next one, over 2,400 miles, to a track north west of Phoenix, AZ. I also raced Bremman, GA; Unadilla, NY; Mid Ohio; Honda Hills, Ohio; Steam Boat Springs, CO; and Hollister Hills, CA. I broke a couple of bones in my left foot at Honda Hills, blew up a motor at Steam Boat and broke my left shoulder at Hollister. I was 60 years old at the time and I entered the 40+ class and the 50+ class in each event. That year they did not have a 60+ class, but if you were 60 you could trophy both 50+ and 60+ by entering the 50+. At years end I ended up with three 3rd place plaques - 40+, 50+,

and 60+. At Bremman, GA that year it rained all night and all day. I am a "mudder" and I won every moto. Those 40-year-old guys really took a ribbing about "the old guy" beating them up.

Not long after I got serious about Pentons, I decided I needed a "company" name. I finally decided on PENTONS PERPETUATED, inferring that we could make this fine motorcycle last forever if we worked at it a little. It seems to have helped. There are a lot more of them running today than there were a few years ago. I also needed a motto. I toyed with different ways to say they needed to be taken out of the woodsheds and put back into the woods where they belong. I have never rescued an old Penton for the purpose of putting it on display or into a museum. These bikes were meant to be ridden through the woods, swamps, trails, etc., not polished and gazed upon in wonderment. I finally came up with, "RIDE 'UM, DON'T HIDE 'UM", a phrase which quite a few people apparently like. Rick at Vintage Iron

tried to use it in his catalog one year and I understand it was quite prominent at Mid-Ohio this past year. While I am in fact honored that people like it, I am just human enough to be angry that it is being used without giving me credit for it.

I retired from the City of Orlando, FL two years ago as an industrial mechanic and have been doing Pentons out of my garage since. I have restored 3 Pentons and one odd ball (76 Hercules 175 GS 7 speed) in that time. I have also built/rebuilt a half dozen or so racing motors for FTR Vintage racers, all KTM/Penton 250's and 400's.

I am 65 now and don't see a lot of racing in my future, but I had some torn cartilage repaired in my right knee last week and you never know. I might come back out and show some of those 40 and 50 year old youngsters how to ride a vintage Penton one of these days. I know I will always like and appreciate the Penton Sportscycle of yesteryear. There was and is no better.

Larry Walls and his latest project  
a 1974 Jackpiner  
Built completely from scrap





## LATEST NEWS

The POG 's February meeting was held at the AMA Museum in Pickerington, Ohio on Saturday Feb. 2nd. The meeting was a huge success with 39 people in attendance. The purpose of having the meeting there was twofold. The first was to give some of our members an opportunity to attend a meeting, the second was to give everyone an excuse to finally see the AMA facilities and Museum. For many who showed up, it was their first visit to the Museum.

Ed Youngblood was in charge of our "Point of Discussion" after the business part of the meeting. He gave an overview of the "Museum" and how it all started when he was still the President of the AMA, and how he "discovered" the present location when the AMA was considering looking for a new location to build on.

Ed and Mark Mederski, the director of the Museum, gave a guided tour of the museum at the close of the meeting.

Special thanks goes to Paul Danik for coming up with the idea to have the meeting at the Museum. Mark Mederski was so excited about this, that he would like for us to make it an annual event.

A few of the POG members drove north to Mansfield, Ohio, after the tour of the AMA Museum. They went to the Richfield County Fairgrounds to set up a POG display at the AMA Will Stoner Swap Meet. Kip Kern (IN) brought a 10x10 E-Z up and it was set up in our designated area. This also gave some of the guys a chance to check out some of the parts displays that were being set up.

At 7:30 pm videos were shown in one of the meeting rooms at the Comfort Inn until 11pm. What a great time it was watching the "Penton" movies of the 1973 & 74 ISDT events, and the "Badrock" qualifier. Paul Danic (PA) and Doug Wilford (OH) were on hand to give

commentary about the events and point out some of the riders.

Sunday morning came early for everyone who went to the swap meet. Doug Wilford (OH) brought along some of the framed Penton photos, and Penton banners which were used to decorate the display. Kip Kern (IN) brought one of his restored Penton steel tank bikes and displayed it next to the picture display.

Special thanks goes to Will Stoner for donating the space for the club and for Paul Danik for making all of the arrangements.

### Tour of KTM Factory.

Next year is KTM's 50th anniversary! Plans are underway by KTM in Austria to celebrate this event. Although there are no firm dates available at this time, plans are in the works to put together a guided tour of the KTM factory for POG members. We are hoping to have some dates and cost information available in the next newsletter. In the meantime, start thinking about going and socking away some money.

### Penton Bike Registry.

The web site has been updated with the addition of a "bike registry". This will enable POG members to list their Penton motorcycles by year, serial number, motor size, and motor type. This information over a period of time will be used to help identify how many bikes still exist and narrow down what year a steel tank bike is by serial number.

Special thanks goes to Doug Wilford who has been working with Dale of DS Webpages on getting this set up and operating.

### Another Penton Display.

The POG will be setting up a Penton display at the AMA Will Stoner Swap Meet at York, Pa. on April 7th. All POG members in the area are encouraged to attend, to meet their fellow POG members, to help man the display, and check out some

of the items being offered for sale by the vendors at the event.

Gary Brinton (PA) and Lee Buffenmyer (PA) will be in charge of setting up and operating the display.

### The Jack Pine Enduro

Ride your Penton at the Jack Pine Enduro! This is your chance to ride this historic event and see what fired up John Penton's passion to win.

Arrangements have been made with the Lansing Motorcycle Club to have all riders on Pentons start in a block, 4 to a minute, behind the other riders. The requirements are: current AMA membership, a street legal Penton with US Forestry approved spark arrester.

Notify Ted del Solar (IL) at 1-630-325-1859 prior to July 27th of your intent to ride. The Enduro will be on August 4, 2002 at Moorestown, Michigan. The course will cover approximately 100 miles of single track, two track, and who knows what! The cost for the ride will probably be \$30 to \$35 with a key time of 8 or 9 AM.

The reason for the above advance notice is to determine how many riding numbers to set up for. Camping is allowed on the club grounds during the event.

### AMA Vintage Days at Mid-Ohio

The dates for the AMA Vintage Days event at Mid-Ohio this year will be July 12-14. A Penton display will be set up again at the same spot as last year's event. Kip Kern (IN) is finishing up the last of his steel tank Pentons and will have 11 of them on display.

Al Buehner (OH) will have his newest parts on display and will again sponsor a cook-out on Saturday evening.

More information about this event will be in the next newsletter. If you have never been to this event, mark your calendar and plan on attending the largest vintage motorcycle event held in the U.S.!

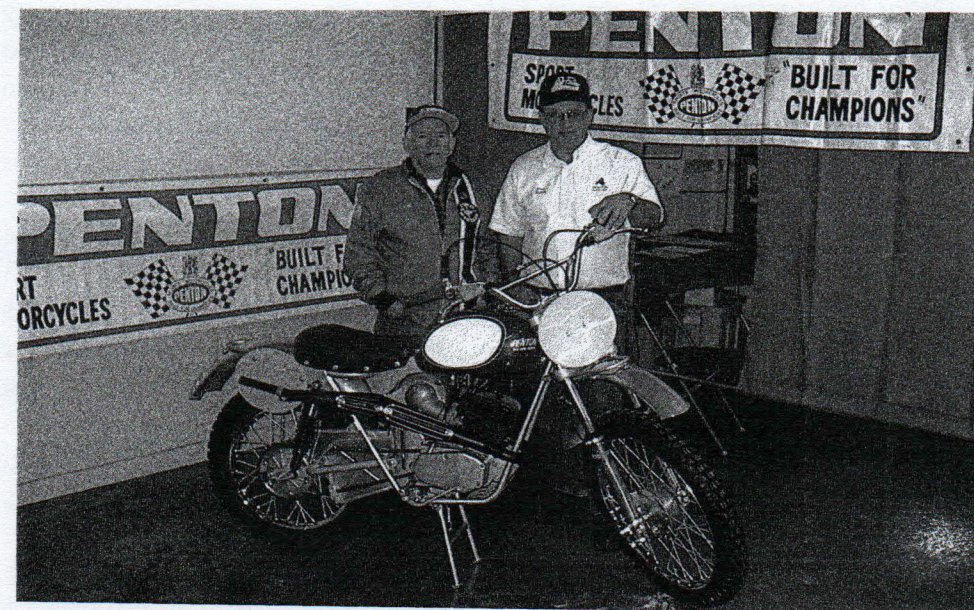
THE PENTON DISPLAY  
at the Will Stoner Swap Meet at  
Mansfield, Ohio on Feb. 3rd.

L to R: Brett Watson (PA), Doug Wilford (OH), and Paul Danik (PA).

Our club secretary, Al Born (OH) left, standing next to Paul Danik (PA).

They were:

- checking out Kip Kern's restored steel tank Penton 125.
- keeping an eye on Kip's bike to accept any reasonable offers.
- waiting for the coast to be clear to take Kip's bike out into the parking lot for a demo ride.
- all of the above.





**CORD RUN NUMBER 3**  
**or - I've been in the saddle for**  
**hours and hours**  
by "Sunset Strip"

*This is a re-print of an article from the Nov. 1968 issue of "Canadian Motorcycling". It will give those who never rode this event (or never heard of it), a little bit of an idea of what it was like. It also gives an idea of what riding Enduros was like in general and what one could expect when riding one.*

*Special thanks to Paul Danik (Pa) for loaning the magazine and suggesting this article for our newsletter.*

Last year, 1967, I had ridden the Cord on a stock 100cc Yamaha Trail bike and had come within a split gas tank of gaining a by now coveted "finishers award." Possibly for 1968 I might have a good enduro machine and after 2 DNF years (excluded for being over 8 hours late even though I rode every back breaking mile) maybe I would do it.

However, as the day grew closer, it became apparent that I would not have a Matador, or DT1, or what have you. Therefore, since I had sent in an entry, I began to prepare my fabulous little Sherpa T for the ordeal. The motor was in good shape, and I glued every nut and bolt together, checked all cables, borrowed good brake shoes from friend Bill Kavanaugh, and prepared to leave Friday evening. I loaded the bike on the trailer, gave a tug on the handlebars, and surprise, off they came in my hands complete with pieces of top fork yoke. Panic call to Bill Sharpless revealed Sonic has a

yoke and he will bring it to Gold Rock. Packed up Larry's DT1, and Bob Tier and his DT1 and headed for the hills.

Saturday morning and up bright and early. Breakfast and then to replace yoke and get ready to leave. Some problems with lining up forks - finally completed by strong man Larry - and as I ride up to the start, someone yelled "You're on the line!" Just shut the bike off, and my #7 flips over. Kick the bike twice, leap aboard, and take off to cross the line in the allotted 60 seconds. Everyone got a big charge out of Butch running along behind with my helmet and gloves and some smart guy even suggested that he didn't know who'd get to the corner first, her or me.

Well, at last I'm away. Had agreed to ride with pal Bob Tier, a comparative newcomer to enduros so I took my time until he caught up with me, and together we headed into the first bush trail. As I rode along in front, showing Bob how to do it (ha), suddenly I was bouncing off a tree into a rock, and flat on my you-know-what, on the trail. Murmuring sweet nothings, I picked myself up and looked at my bars which had assumed a distinct road racing set. Decided they must be tightened, schedule or not. We proceeded down the trail with my fender (brand new) wearing a rather unusual shape and rattling merrily. Arrived at check one without further incident to learn we were about 3 minutes late.

During the second section, I missed Bob. I had stopped and was waiting anxiously when another rider came by yelling "He's OK, he'll be along in a minute." I later learned he had

CRASHED into a huge boulder, was indeed all right and running again. A rather interesting mud hole found Bob crossways on a log in the middle of the water and required some manual lifting on his part to proceed again. The balance of the morning and part of the afternoon went by uneventfully, then halfway thru a powerline trail, Bob's throttle suddenly stuck open. Examination showed an almost broken throttle cable and although he managed to hook a socket on it and ride back to camp he was out of the event, his first Cord Run.

As the afternoon wore on, I began to feel my years and the fact that I had done very little "rough riding" this year. I spent a little more time on the trail - sans bike - and became a little later at each check. However, the end of the day saw me back at camp, through the checks all well inside the one hour disqualification limit, and I was looking forward to my first "finishers badge". Yah!!!

On Saturday evening the result sheets were posted, and I was amazed to find that over one half of the total entry was already DNF. Went back and patted my little T on the tank and set about to make some minor adjustments (chain) and check a few nuts and bolts.

Sunday morning, and to my surprise, I don't feel too badly for an old fella. Start out and am not doing too badly, although having some trouble today without the benefit of Bob's speedo keeping track of my route sheet. 6 miles out of Kinmount I realize I've missed my gas stop. Checking over the card indicates the next part of the run is 60 miles long, so, no choice but to go back. As I had

come off the trail before Kinmount there was a group of spectators at what I thought was a check. I was late, and everyone yelled "go" so I had not stopped for my receipt sheet.

During the noon stop we were discussing my missing the gas stop and suddenly we realized why. I had actually come into town from the wrong direction, lost on my route card, and had missed the real check. And if you don't think that knocks the starch out of you, try it sometime. I gassed up the bike, with the wonderful assistance of Carl Bastedo's crew (pretty girl, that Krista!), and rode wearily on my way to the start of the afternoon run. By this time, my hands and wrists and legs were starting to protest against the beating I was inflicting on them. Would I bother to go on? I was out anyway, after the missed check. Oh well, it will be good practice for next year, so guess I'll ride it.

And there it was, 20 plus miles of bush trail - at an average of 20 mph. Rough and tough cross country, rocks, logs, and upside down arrows. I got so tired of seeing danger arrows I felt like screaming. But on and on and on. I had to stop and rest my wrist and arms every few miles. Over two hours and one crash later, I arrived at check 1 outside my one hour allowance, though it didn't matter anyway. My front fender was bent now and as I hit the sandy side road which followed it, lay a beautiful pattern of stinging sand into my goggle-less, bloodshot eyes. I came over the top of a hill and there was a group of kids motioning me to turn left into the bush. A great hairy grabbing of brakes, gearbox and a huge

broadside into the bush brought a resounding roar of approval from the youngsters and I grinned happily to myself. The first damn thing I'd done well all weekend!

And finally, into what I knew was the last Hydro trail. Will I or won't I? Well, I guess I'd better. Now my arms are like two sticks of wood. It's actually pain to disengage the clutch and shift gears and I can just open the throttle far enough to keep moving. As I ride along this trail, I think that surely over the next hill will be the check point - with its group of friendly people smiling and telling me - that's the way back to camp. Surface the hill and there they are - the barren, desolate stands of bush and weeds and the narrow little trail leading down into the mud holes as far as I can see. Oh well, the next one will be - and then the same thing, again, and again. Some cruel individual tried to tell me that it was only 15 miles or so, but I think they left the 0 off the end. Fell off again and smacked my shin bone against my steel peg and got up to continue down the trail repeating Bob Wood's motto. "Pain Hurts" over and over. My front fender is broken now and bouncing against the wheel and I'm too tired to take it off - maybe it won't spin around and dump me. And just as I've given up all hope, there it is, the last check point.

I arrive back at camp, stagger off the bike, and my good wife helps me get out of my boots and mud caked Barbour suit. As I stumble weakly to the steam house, I hear my Dad-in-law mutter "and they do this for fun?". Sit and soak and listen to the chatter from the "supermen" (I

mean it) who are still full of pep after finishing the event.

I don't know how many finished the Cord. Someone said that less than 100 went thru the #2 check on Sunday morning. I do know this, Enduro riding is a rough, tough sport. Ask a couple of young fellows who have been scrambling all season about the conditioning required. Machinery has become specialized and a good enduro mount is a great asset to success. There is no more challenging event in the CMA calendar than the Cord run. I think I learned a lot this year - about preparation, the trails, riding required and the conditioning required, and, all being well - I guess next year, I'll be back to try again for my finishers award. Listen! What's that? Eeeeegad, have you ever heard a Sherpa T cry?

**Editor's note:**

The Corduroy International Trial described above was held on Sept. 7 & 8 at Coboconk, Ontario. The winner after two days and 332 miles of rugged cross country going was Leroy Winters with of score of 9 route points and 237 bonus points. He won it on his 125cc Penton. Out of 200 riders to start the event on Saturday, there were only 71 official finishers at the end of the run on Sunday.

Other Penton mounted 1st place winners of that event were:

Tom Penton (Amherst, OH) - 100 cc class

John Penton (Amherst, OH) -

Expert - Lightweight class

Lucy Stratton (Pittsford, MI) -

Powderpuff class, 313 miles on a 125

Penton Imports: Leroy Winters, John Penton, Tom Penton, Richard Towne - Gold rock Team Trophy



## MAILBOX

Since we did not have any letters to print for this newsletter, we have decided to use a couple of letters that were in the box of misc. items that John Penton donated to the club.

June 6, 1959  
Mr. Earl F. Flanders  
Flanders Co.  
Pasadena, CA

Dear Earl:

John Penton intends to establish a new record for East Coast to West Coast. Allegedly, the present record for everything except electricity and airplanes is 77 hours. John hopes to beat this record by 10 hours.

Very few people know about this attempt because he wants to avoid advance publicity for a feat which might not succeed. He himself is arranging with our dealers and his friends that they expect him at pre-arranged points at a certain time at the entrance of big cities, such as Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Wichita, Albuquerque, etc., and that these dealers and friends conduct him to the nearest Western Union office and then to the Westbound highway. Perhaps he has already approached you to assist him when he reaches the outskirts of Los Angeles.

His success could mean tremendous publicity for us, not only in the motorcycle magazines but everywhere. We would need as many photos as possible.

Needless to say that he will ride an R69. I would suggest that, as soon as you know the approximate arrival time, phone to the Associated Press and to the United Press advising them of the feat. I understand that these two

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organizations are very quick for the immediate dispatch of photographers and reporters. Of course, some other people will have to be considered for getting publicity.

Sincerely,  
Alfred Bondy  
Butler & Smith  
John Penton started his historical record run on June 8, 1959 in New York City and finished on June 10 in Los Angeles.

Aug. 16, 1973

Attn: Mr. John A. Penton

We Affirm the importation into France of KTM several months ago, and in the hope of launching the sales campaign as soon as possible, we are sending a Manufacturer's team to the 48th I.S.D.T.

Monsieur CSHE has advised us to make a request to you on the sport assistance, which we would, of course, extend to you if the situation should sometime be reversed.

The French Manufacturer's team will be composed of:

Alain Chaligne - 250cc

Denis Baillard - 175cc

J.P. Mathieu - 175cc

Gerard Levy - Manager

In the hope that our demand will not pose you too many problems, and in awaiting your written word I ask you to accept my best sporting salutations.

The Directeur,  
Phil Keller  
Keller Racing  
Levallois-Perret, France

August 27, 1973

Dear Mr. Keller:

Thank you for your letter and may we take this opportunity to

congratulate you on becoming a K.T.M. Penton distributor for France.

We will endeavor to offer you as much assistance as possible for us on such short notice. Please understand that there is some number over Fifty KTM/Penton riders participating in the 1973 I.S.D.T. and we wish to help all these riders as much as possible.

We are very happy and proud to learn that your representation will attend the I.S.D.T. and we want to welcome them to America and wish them a very good time and great success.

Yours truly,  
John A. Penton, President  
Penton Imports

Mr. John Penton:

How's the champ these days? You probably do not remember me, but I am an old rider from the twenties and thirties who rode the good old Jack Pine 13 years. Sure did have a lot of fun. Was a good friend of Oscar Lenz. We rode a lot of runs together. I am now 66 years old and quite alone now. I do miss the good old days. I do get lonesome sometimes and go through my old trunk of my early motorcycling days. I hope you don't mind writing to you. I have kept track of you and all your progress. I sure do admire you. I run across this old clipping I saved of you. Thought you might like to have it. I do get to ride some once in a while. I never can get over the great enjoyment of riding I guess no matter how old I get. I will never get over my feeling for the great sport of motorcycling. Tell Tom and Jack to keep up the good work, they are great. I take most of the

motorcycle magazines to keep up on all the latest. It is a great joy to me to see and read what is going on in the motorcycling world.

So long. The very best to you and the boys.

C.H. Emmett  
East Lansing, MI  
p.s. Sure wish I had one of your machines back in the twenties.

Feb. 24, 1975

Dear Mr. Emmett,

Thank you for the old clipping of myself.

Great to make your acquaintance again, however I'm sure you can forget the champ stuff.

Every dog has his day and my day has past, now it is up to the kids to carry the ball.

Your letter takes my memories back almost thirty years.

I'll be riding Jack Pine again this year and enjoying every minute of it. I'm not much in contention for the top dog (Cow Bell) but I still enjoy my share of the old mans class wins.

Judging from your letter, I believe you have some spare time and thought you might enjoy the enclosed book. "A Thread of Blue Denim" was written by my sister and is a collections of some of her many works.

As you have noted, our entire family is till real actively engaged in motorcycling and enjoying every minute of it.

Thanks again for your letter and news clipping., Have a good day and the best to you for the coming year.

An Old Jack Pine Buddy,  
John A. Penton  
Penton Imports



LIKES THE COW BELL WHERE IT IS—Johnny Penton proudly hangs the fabled Cow Bell, emblematic of the Jack Pine grand championship, around his neck as he awaits the start of today's 512-mile motorcycle endurance test.

The defending champion, a 13-year veteran of the Jack Pine, he has twice been a runnerup in the grand championship. In 1949 he was shaded for the title by a single point. (State Journal Photo)

## Defending Champ Eyes 'Two-Wheel Grand Slam'

By PLUMMER MIFFLIN  
(Journal Sports Writer)

They say it can't be done, but Johnny Penton of Lorain, O., defending Jack Pine grand champion and perhaps the "quickest man in the country" doesn't believe it.

Well back in the pack as the 435 motorcycle riders took off from Lansing this morning, Penton claimed he had a 50-50 chance to repeat in the two-day 512-mile classic.

If he can turn the trick it will give him a "double double." He won the one-day national run at Columbus, O., in 1958 and repeated this year. A victory in the Jack Pine would amount to a "two-wheeled grand slam."

The cycle shop owner from the Buckeye state has another distinction. He has crossed the country in a shorter period of time than any one man ever has on the ground, in car, train, or whatnot.

Starting from New York he covered the dis-

tance to Los Angeles in the accredited time of 52 hours, 11 minutes, and one second. The mark is a full two hours better than any other time in a solo effort.

The transcontinental jump was accomplished without a wink of sleep and was broken only by 14 gas stops limited to five minutes each. One stop of 30 minutes at Flagstaff, Ariz., because of eye fatigue kept the personable blonde rider from doing it even faster.

The whole trip was made without the use of drugs, and without a single traffic violation. What's the trick?

"The secret is to maintain forward motion at all times," he laughed.

While the riders are numbered from 1 to 435 for starting purposes, 101 is just as good as 1.

The field started four-at-a-time at one minute intervals with 1, 101, 201, 301, and 401 making up the first quartet, then came 2, 202, etc.



## Tech Tips

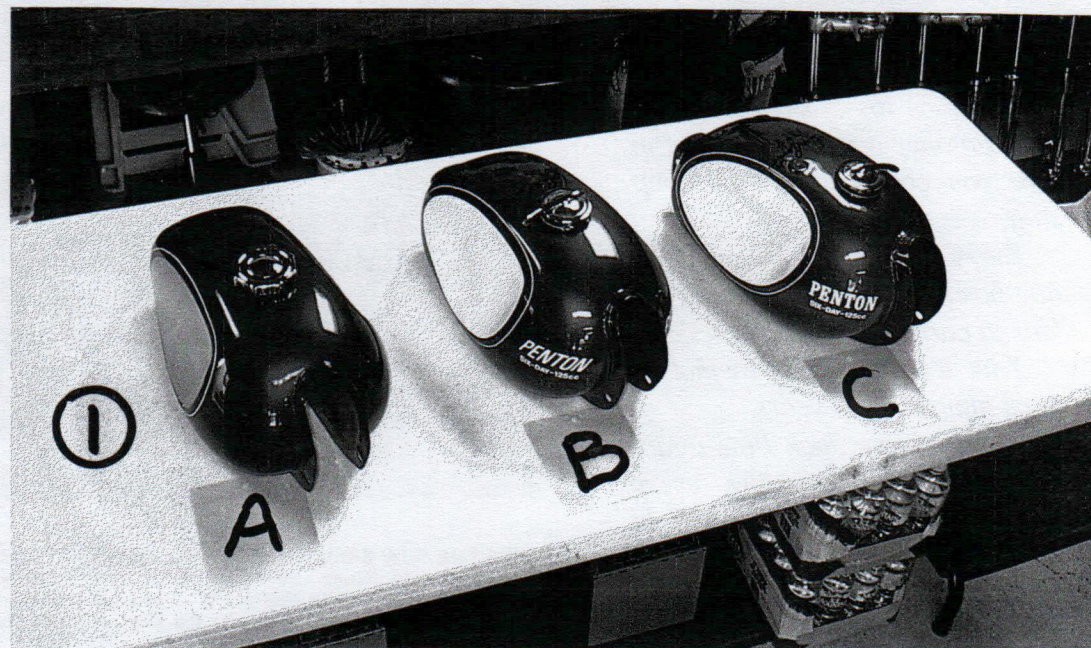
### What to Look For When Shopping

by Kip Kern

I was asked to provide an article pertaining to "what a person should look for when buying a Penton" whether for restoration, racing, or both.

What I have done is try to provide an article covering the "Steel Tank" years, 1968-1971, and show differences and rarities pertaining to each year of manufacture. Most of the information covers restoration and allows the reader/ restorer to decide

Picture 1 shows 3 styles of fuel tanks. "A" is the 68 with rare "screw off" cap; "B" is the 68-70 plain style with the "flip top" cap. "C" is the 70-71 tank bag mounted style with "flip top" cap. Note decals, both the angled and the vertical "Penton" were used from 69-71.

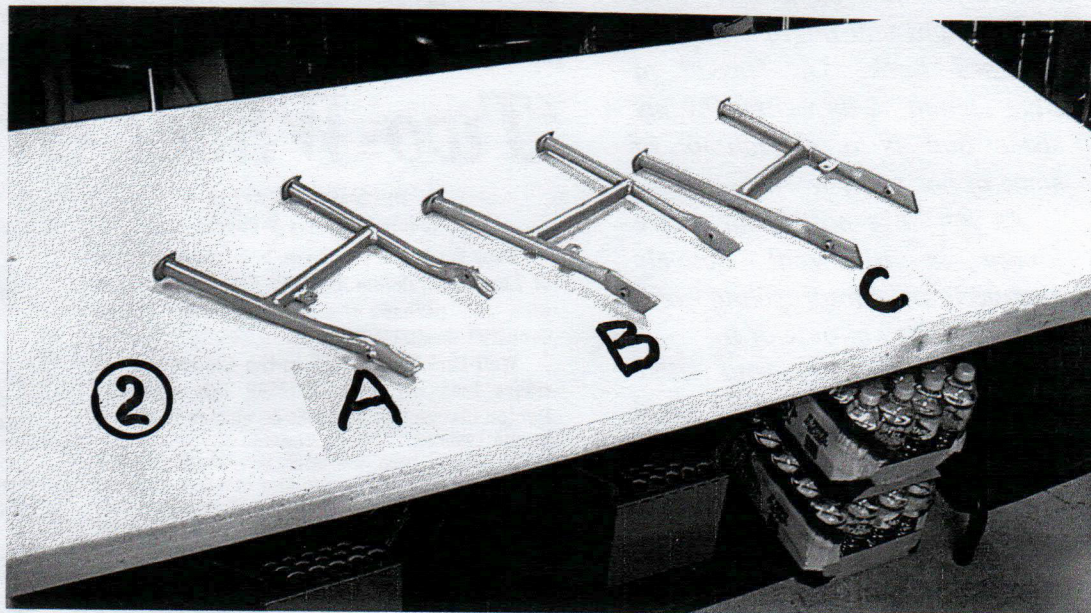


Picture 2 indicates 3 styles of center stands.

"A" represents the 68, a more tubular design greatly angled at the top mounting section.

"B" is the 69 style; less angled at the top and compressed flat towards the mounting area.

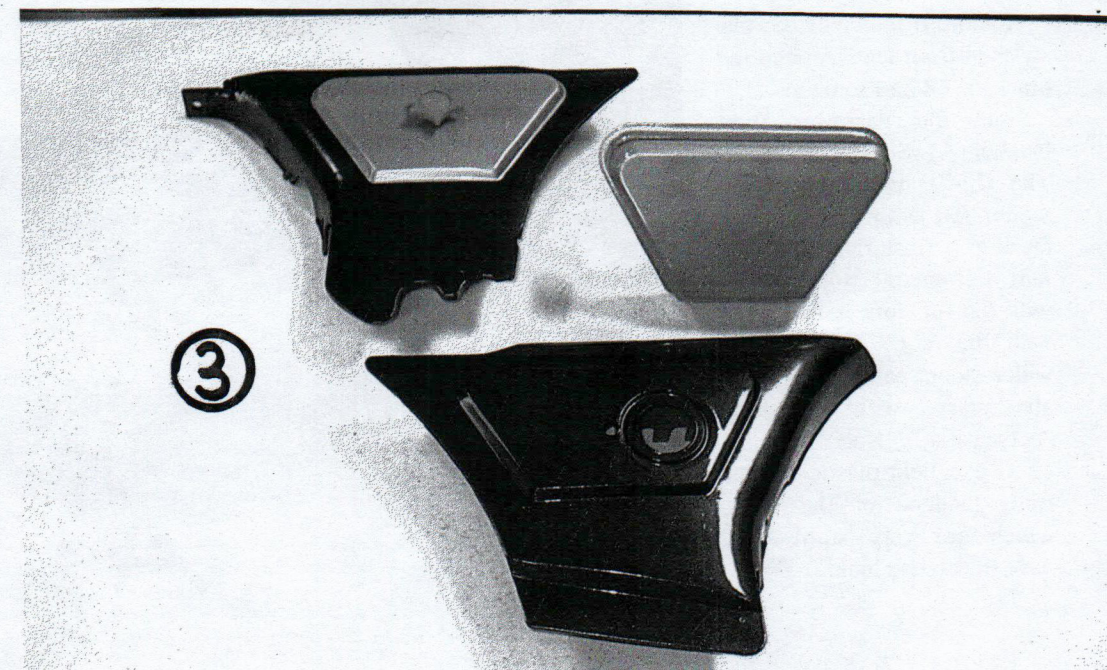
"C" is the 70-71 style; more straight overall for better contact at the frame to increase rigidity and stability.



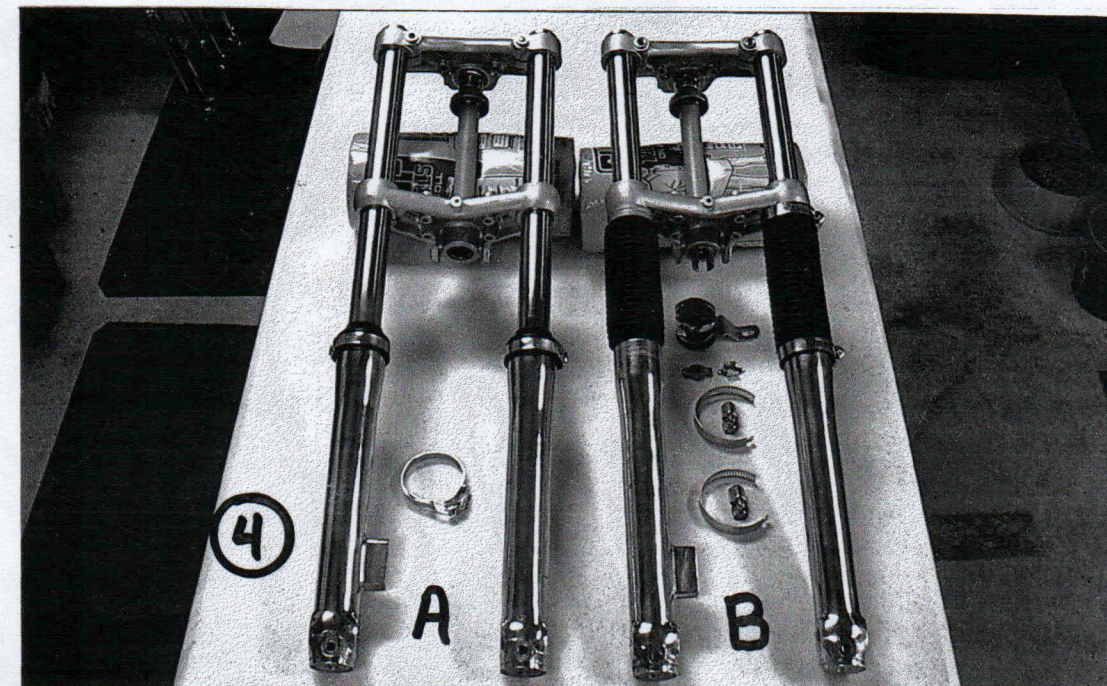
if they want to race the machine after their work is complete.

What I did not cover was the basic available knowledge items such as: seat size (68-69, some 70, short saddle vs 70-71 longer saddle), Rims (68 Borrani shouldered aluminum vs 69-71 Radaelli chrome steel), 68 chrome spokes vs 69-71 painted steel, controls (all years are identical), the short chain guard on the 69-71 bikes, and lastly, enduro/ lighting packages. Each of the above items can be viewed in the Penton parts manuals, 001 and 002.

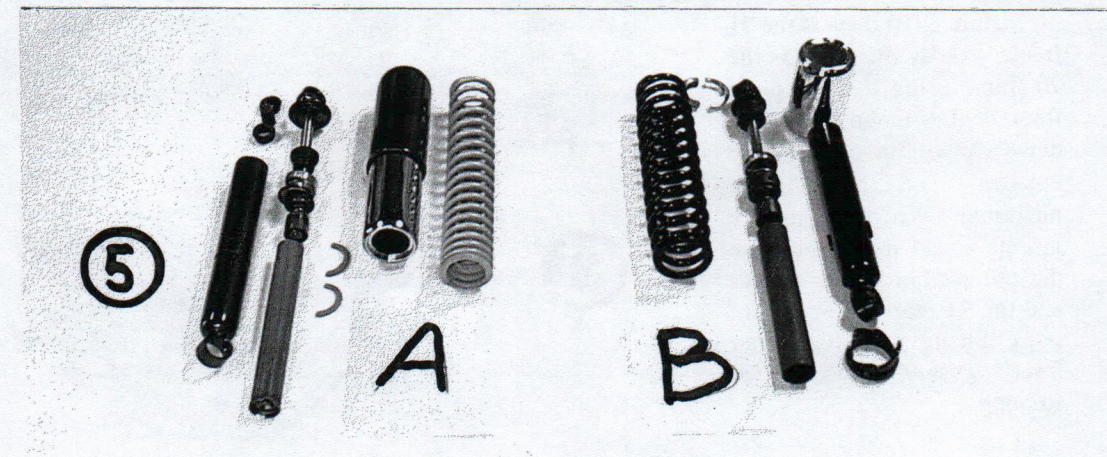
Picture 3 shows the rare 68 air box found on early machines. This design was soon replaced by the later more efficient "round" Husqvarna style most of us are familiar with.



Picture 4 covers the Ceriani front suspension. Virtually the exact same from 1968-1971 (35mm) with exceptions as noted: Some 68's ("B") incorporated a Ceriani steering damper knob at the steering stem nut. 68-69 had full length fork gaiters vs the short "wipers" on the 70-71 models ("A"). Clamping was different - note the 68-69 ("B") using the two piece hose clamp vs the 70-71 ("A") having a one piece clip style.



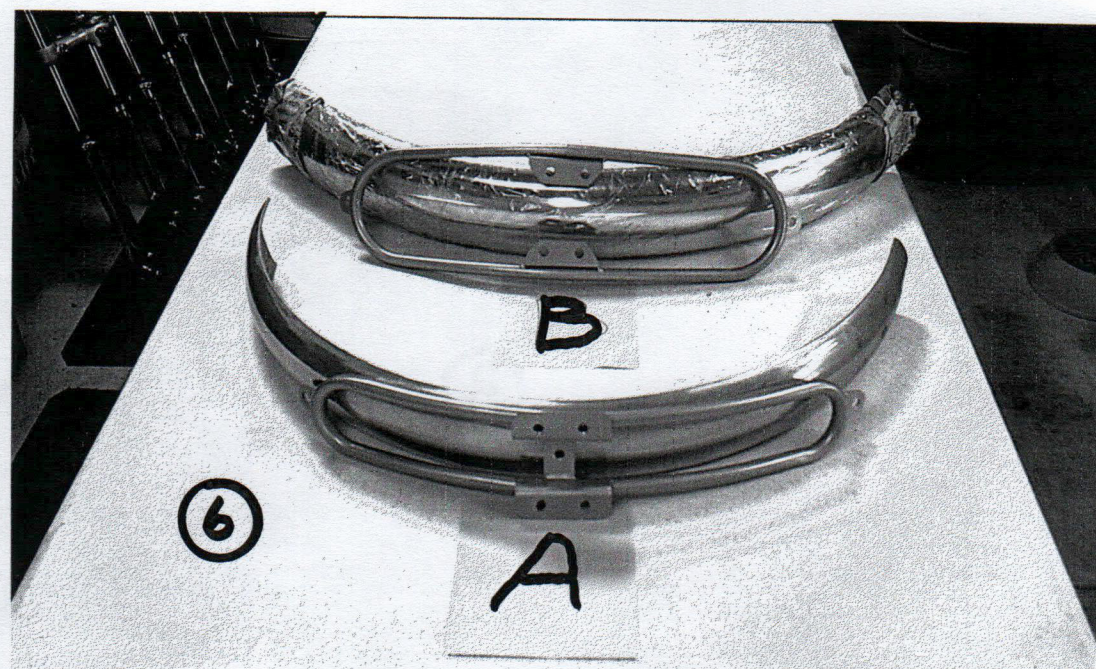
Picture 5 covers the Ceriani rear suspension. 68 had the fully covered shock ("A") and 69-71 used the Ceriani open style shock ("B") with the top chrome cover. Shock internals are identical; disassembling, cleaning, o-ring replacement, and 80cc of new 10 weight shock oil can rebuild each. As long as the shock shafts are in excellent condition (no bends or pitting), these shocks would be considered "keepers" for restorations.



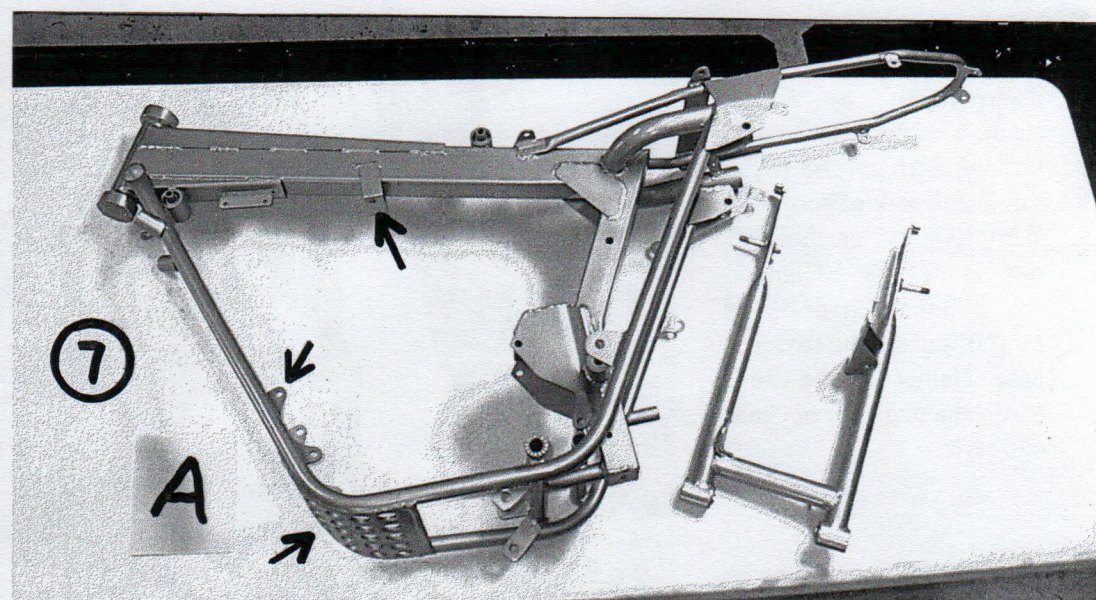


Picture 6 indicates the two styles of front fender mounting brackets. 68 and some 69's

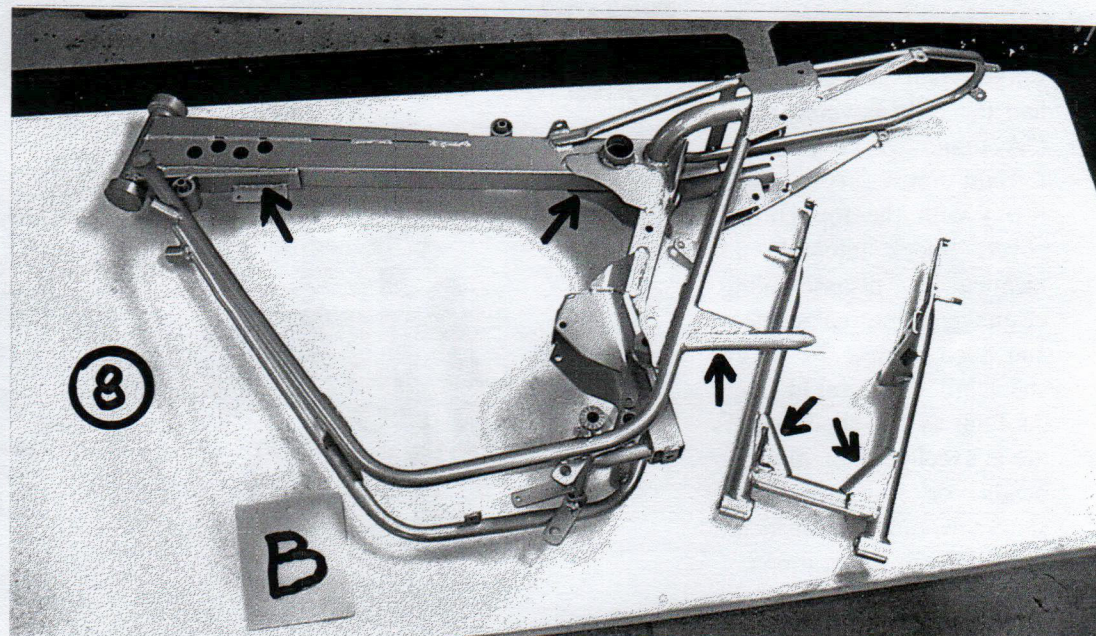
had the narrower front bracket (A) with the 3" fender. The 70-71 used the wider mount (B) with a 4" fender. During restoration, the narrower mount works easier with the full fork gaiters used with the 68-69 models. The wider mount can be used with all years with a little "persuasion." Note: Acerbis offers excellent plastic vintage trials fenders for the racer, which are very sturdy and have the classic look!



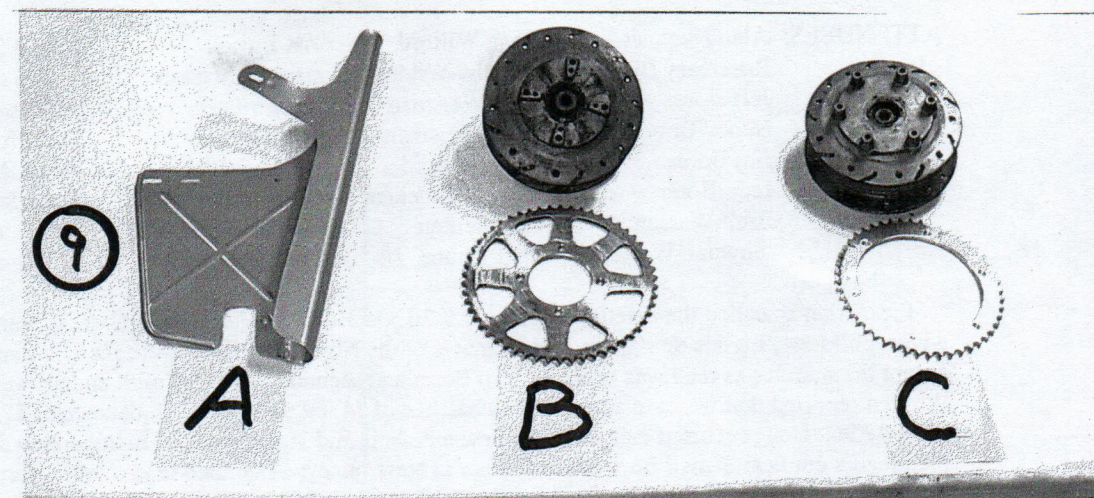
Pictures 7 & 8 cover the frame/ swing arm. Of course there are differences during each of the 4 years of Steel Tank manufacture, but I will use only two pictures to explain all 4 frames. Picture 7 (A) shows the 68 frame/ swing arm combination. This is identical to the 69 using the two piece front engine mount, welded on skid plate, and short seat mount. The major difference between the two years is that the 68 frame is a "non" frame breather (see picture 8 (B)). Also, the 68 has the older air box mount under the top rail. The early swing arm has no gusseting on the inner front portion.



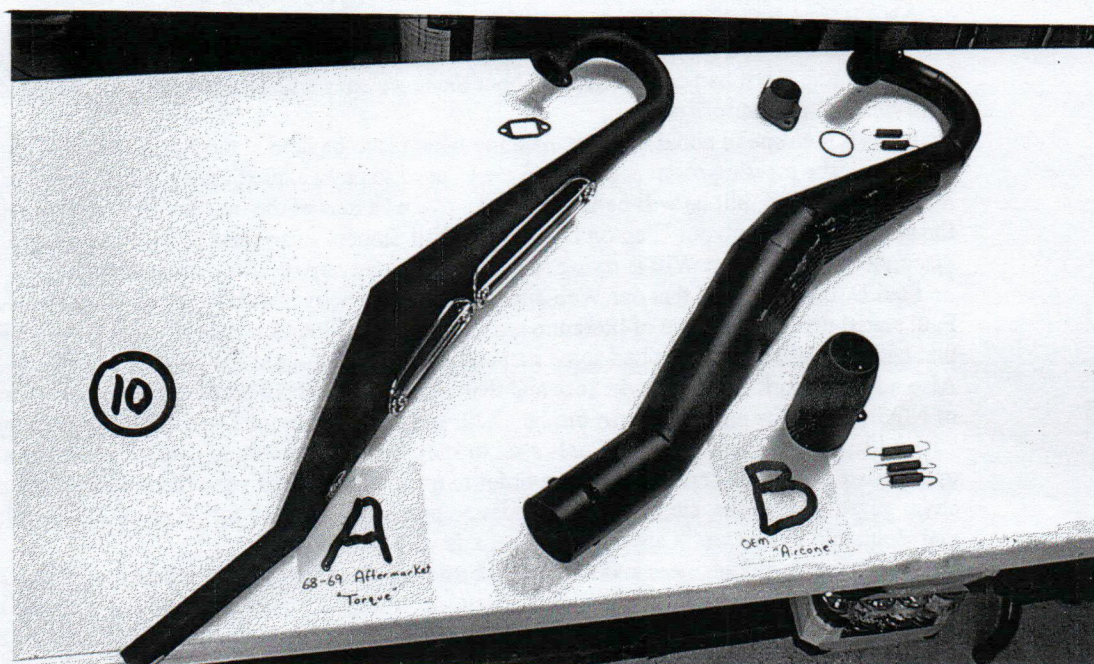
Picture 8 (B) depicts the 71 frame, exactly the same as the 70 frame using the one piece front engine mount, left side down pipe mount, frame breather, and longer seat mounting. We start to see gussets added for strength on the tail section of the frames and the 71 rear engine mount (top). Swing arm has inner front gussets added for strength.



Picture 9 (A) shows the early longer chain guard for the 68 and some 69 models. "B" and "C" indicate the differences between the 68 4-bolt rear hub and the stronger 69-71 6-bolt design, each incorporating its own style of rubber buffer assembly.



Lastly, picture 10 covers the 2 styles of exhausts. "A" (NOS "Torque") is the rectangular flanged design for the 68-69 "flat head", cast iron 5-speed engine. "B" (new manufacture "Aircone") is the round flange design for the radial head aluminum 70-71, 5/6 speed engines.



As I stated earlier, I did not cover every detail pertaining to the 68-71 Penton Sport Cycle, the majority that can be found in Penton parts manuals 001 & 002. I hope that I have provided some ideas of differences of each year Penton to aid the owner, restorer, and racer. Hopefully this will help you when deciding on a certain year Penton Steel Tank project!

This info is by no means written in stone. It is simply "neat" stuff I have come upon during my stint as a restorer. I do invite each of you to

visit my personal Penton display this year at the AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days at Mid-Ohio in July. I will offer a collection containing each year/ model Steel Tank machine including a prototype or two (a one of a kind collection)!

If I may be of further service, please feel free to contact me via e-mail at (captkip@comteck.com) and I will assist as needed.

### HOT TIP OF THE MONTH

Golden Spectro is the same two stroke oil that was made and sold as Hi-Point Deluxe 2-Cycle concentrate. It is a synthetic based engine oil that needs no pre-mixing. The recommended gas to oil ratio is 50:1.



Meeting minutes have been removed from this document.



**PENTON  
CLASSIFIED ADS**  
For members by members

Ads are for POG members to buy or sell Penton related parts, items, and services only. Members are allowed up to 3 items per newsletter (max. 30 words per item) at no charge. Ads must be received 2 weeks before publication of the newsletter. Please type or print clearly, and include your name, address, and phone number. Ads must be mailed or faxed to: Alan Buehner, 5818 Detroit Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio, 44102 Fax: 1-216-651-1620

**FOR SALE**

POG NAME BADGES, round 2-1/4” diam. pin style. Each badge personalized with your name. Cost \$3 each.  
Ted del Solar 1-630-325-1859

Reproduction Penton & KTM decals for tanks and side panels.

MC5 “world champion” decals.  
Skip Miller (TX) 817-798-KTM1

**SERVICES**

SACHS MOTOR REBUILDING  
100cc & 125cc  
Doug Wilford (OH) 440-988-2605

Cylinder Resleeving/ Boring - Crank Repairs for Sachs & KTM  
Forest Stahl (IN) 765-284-7653

Swap Meet - York, Pa - April 7  
Sell your unwanted Penton parts. Call Will Stoner (OH) for info - 1-614-856-1900 ext. 1227

KTM motor rebuilding - over 12 years experience on vintage bikes.  
Bobby Lucas (TX) 817-483-7346

MOTOPLAT testing  
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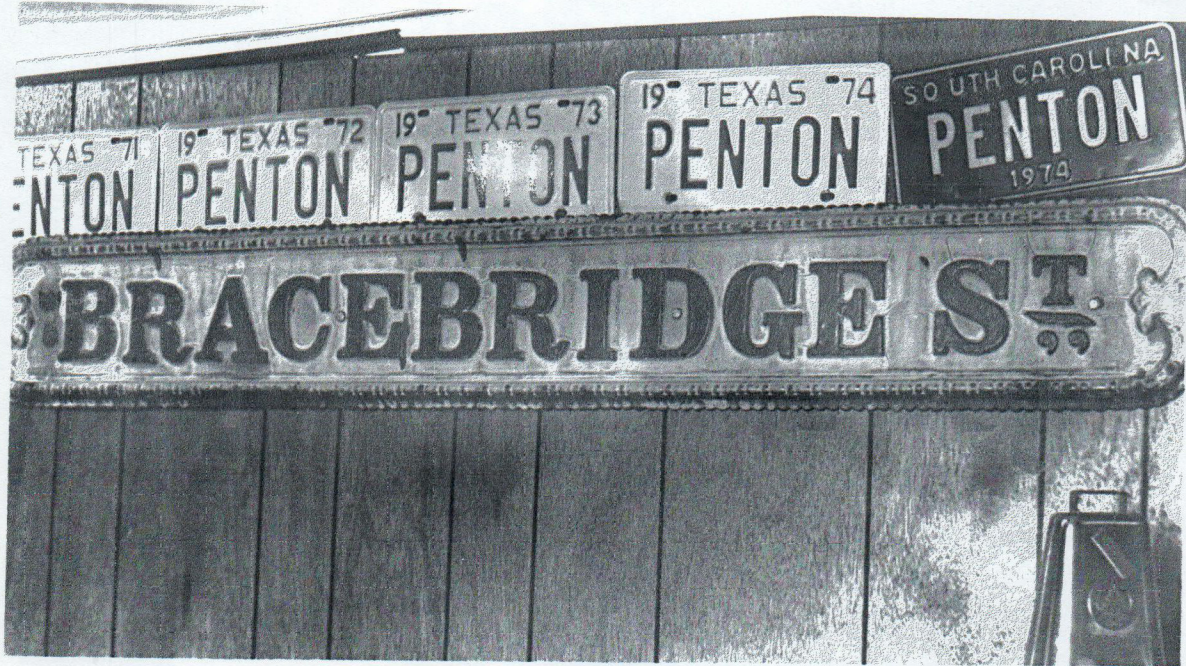
NOS Penton parts  
Jake Fischer (PA) 724-781-6309

**KTM DEALERS**

Dale Barris - (440) 282-5108  
Penton Honda - Amherst, OH

Denny Laidig - (330) 253-7455  
Holeshot KTM - Akron, OH

Jim Koenig - (913) 334-2410  
Letko Competition - Kansas City, KS



Bracebridge street sign from London, England. Missing one night in England ... traced back to the United States where it cost Penton Imports \$300. This street sign is significant in that this is the street where the Triumph/ BSA works used to be on. This photo was taken at an undisclosed location where the sign was hanging on the wall of someone’s office. This photo was found in a box of miscellaneous photos and correspondence that was donated to the club by John Penton. Hey, isn’t that a cow bell from a Jack Pine trophy? Where did those liscence plates come from? How did the perpetrator ever manage to remove and transport such a large sign? Who, how, and when is still an unsolved mystery.





Tom Penton at a check point during an Enduro in 1972? He is riding a 1972 Penton Six-Days with a custom made plastic headlight number plate that is held in place with 4 zip ties around the front forks. He used the Magura ISDT style levers and replaced the alloy fender with a wide plastic fender.

Photo by Boyd Reynolds - Action Sports.