

Fall 2002  
Issue No. 16

# *Still...Keeping Track*

**Penton Owners Group Newsletter** \* \$5.00



Ted del Solar of Illinois on his 1977 Penton 250 at the Moorestown enduro on July 30, 2000.  
*photo by Bob De Volder of Kingsley, Michigan*

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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 of this newsletter is Alan Buehner

### **PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

By Alan Buehner

"Where would you be today if there had been no Penton Owners Group?" This is the question that I asked a couple of people at the AMA Vintage Days event at Mid-Ohio.

When the group was in the process of being organized we came up with a mission statement to keep the group steered in the right direction in our purpose for being. At the time we had no idea of the positive impact this

motorcycle group would have on the personal lives of it's members.

On Saturday at Mid-Ohio, after our POG meeting had ended, I approached Ed Youngblood with this question. His response was that he would not be involved with anything having to do with motorcycles. At the time the group was being formed, Ed stepped down as President of the AMA. He would have done so a couple of years earlier, but he was having self doubts about what he would do after leaving the AMA. He was burned out with the pressures involved with running such a

large organization and wanted nothing to do with motorcycles when he left. His researching and writing of the John Penton book helped to reinstall his confidence in himself and sent him in a new direction of being a writer and making use of the knowledge of the people that he came to know during his many years with the AMA. This has resulted in the publishing of his latest book about Dick Mann.

Ted Landers joined the group in 2000 just before the Mid-Ohio event. He resurrected a couple of his old Pentons to show off at our Feature

Marque display. Since then he has restored his bikes, purchased a couple more, and has been having a blast racing them at modern and vintage MX races. Not only is Ted reliving the fun that he buried in his barn 30 years ago, his wife Rosemary can also be found at these events supporting him and sharing the excitement.

Karl Schneider is someone that many of us can relate to. He sold his 100cc Penton over 10 years ago when he was raising a family and had just became co-owner of a fabricating business that left him with all work and no time for play. At the time he didn't see any need to keep his old racing bike anymore. Owning and operating a business can be very stressful. Karl managed his business for the past 10 years, to make it grow and pay off the debts which left him in the predicament of the company owning him instead of him owning the company. Last year he joined the

group and started attending the monthly meetings whenever he could. Although he couldn't locate his old bike, he wasted no time in acquiring some other Pentons which has brought some happiness back into his life by restoring and riding them. This has given him (his mind) time away from the stress of his business.

My own response to this question is that I would not have gotten to know the officers of this club and had the opportunity to hear their stories. The appeal of the Penton motorcycle would not be where it is now, with people looking for them to own and ride and the demand for them pushing selling prices up every year.

I get chills down my body when thinking about this question. I know the positive impact it has made on John Penton's life. The formation of the group, the writing of the book, and "Penton" being feature marque in 2000 were all divinely guided. It

doesn't take a rocket scientist to realize this when you look back at our short history and look at the timing and the way everything fell into place. Confirmation for the reason for all of this happening is looking at the positive changes that resulted in the lives of those involved. The changes do not end with the person affected, but fans out to all the people that they know and meet.

The changes that this group is generating are still going on. There is no telling at this point in time what is in store for the future. It is the responsibility of every club member to focus on the good points of everyone involved and keep the fun happening..

Think about this question and at the next POG get together, share your thoughts with your fellow members and discover the impact that this group is having on the world.

### **Mailbox and Web Page**

Aug. 7, 2002

There were 3 Penton riders at the Jack Pine enduro. Don Kube of Kingsford, MI on a '74 Jackpiner - also a POG member. I don't believe he made the 1st check at 6.4 miles. Del Woodward of Deford, MI, with a '74 125 frame and a 250 engine - hit a tree and bent both forks before the 1st gas at 25 miles. Myself on my '77 250 - lost 15 minutes from mile 5 to 6 with fuel flow problems and holed out at 36 mile point. Not a real good day, but we tried anyway.

Ted del Solar, IL

August 1, 2002

On July 28th my son Chad and I traveled down to Honda Hills, Ohio to ride AHRMA's Cross Country series. It was a good layout with the course being about 3 miles long. There was a rain storm on Saturday and there was a lot of mud along the track on Sunday's run.

Enclosed is a photo of Chad on his 1974 Jackpiner taken at the event. He won the 0-200 Sportsman Intermediate class on this bike.

Paul Danik, PA

PHOTO - Chad Danik (PA) on his Penton Jackpiner





## MEMBER PROFILE

### Ted del Solar

#### "THE BUTTON MAN"

*With each copy of our last newsletter, a Penton Owners Group "button" was enclosed as a member benefit. Ted del Solar was the person who came up with the idea of these buttons several months ago. He makes them and has been advertising them in our newsletter classified section and at motorcycle events that he attends. Ted has also been involved in getting other POG members to ride with him in the Jack Pine Enduro. He prefers not riding alone at events and is willing to show new riders how to have fun riding enduros on vintage Penton motorcycles. His wife Connie travels with him and serves as his support crew.*

*This past year, he has been attending our monthly POG meetings to enjoy the companionship of fellow POG members and soak in the hot topic of each "Point of Discussion" held at each meeting. Who is this man who thinks nothing of driving 8 hours one way to attend a 3 hour meeting and is always willing to give a hand to help out?*

#### A Late Bloomer

"My first interest in motorcycles was in 1940 when I was 12. While walking in the neighborhood, there were 3 street bikes parked at an angle by the curb and I was fascinated by the fringed saddle bags, the big seat and the openness of everything else. Since then it has always been that you park backing in to the curb at an angle. Not always backing though, because for some unknown reason the rear wheel sometimes slid in to the curb. When the rear wheel hit too hard, the result was an embarrassing getting up because the bike stopped and you didn't."

"It was years later before this initial interest took the next step, - a ride given to me by another student at Michigan State. The following year I became acquainted with, and later roomed with a fellow who had a civilianized 1942-45 Harley. In the spring of 1949, he informed me of a similar bike that was for sale. After buying it, riding it home was the first time I'd ever operated any kind of motorized 2 wheeled vehicle. You can say a late bloomer applies."

"That 1942-45 Harley (to me the Model A of motorcycles) was my friend, companion, teacher, transportation, and everything else a bike is. A three week trip in the summer of 1951 (which is a separate story in itself) was perhaps it's crowning glory. That winter I moved up to a 1951 - 74" Harley for trips and used the 45" for work only."

"When Uncle Sam called for a 2 year stint, I bought a new 1953 - 74 Harley and started another long association with a two wheeled pal. Being the outdoor type, assigned to Denver, Colorado was a gift. With an onionskin overlay of trails and roads from a topographical map, I'd set off exploring, trying to get from point A to point B. Sometimes there was success and other times it was turn around. The trail disappeared or a road bike could just go no further. The most memorable of these day trips was a ride up the Longs Peak Trail in Rocky Mountain National Park the first weekend in November. Here again, a short story in itself."

"Back as a civilian again, motorcycles took a rest while family matters were front stage. This lasted only until my son Bruce picked up the interest in motorcycles from his friends and magazines. At 13 he bought his first bike and guess who became his mechanic, teacher, helper and so forth? Another 3 years of dirt bike discussions and related events finally resulted in my wife Connie saying 'if you are going to talk about riding enduros, do so before it's too

late.' We bought a 125 and a 250 and got ready for a Sunday cruise in the woods. So in 1975, with 47 years gone by, I started 'official' dirt riding at Jack Pine on rider number 2. That was my education to enduro riding. Now Connie says she will still be running gas with help from a cane or wheelchair."

"Up to now I've put 282 enduros and 9 hare scrambles plus various other rides behind me while riding up to 19 enduros in one season. During this time, I've earned 74 trophies and 3 AMA Regional awards, with the highlight being a 2nd in the Old Timers class at the 2 day 1978 Jack Pine. I had a 250 Penton by then and that is my primary enduro bike now and will be as long as it starts and I can get a leg over the seat."

"Over the years a variety of parts have come my way, enough that in 1999 I assembled a second Penton for hare scrambles duty. It would be easier to maintain and ride only one bike, but there was a challenge and I wouldn't want to hurt my enduro bike or anything else. None of this would have been possible without the effort and dedication of those who work so hard so that we may enjoy a Sunday cruise through the woods."

"Since becoming a member of the Penton Owners Group, it has done much for what I call fuel for my engine of life. One example of many incidents or occasions would have to be the awards at the 4th ISDT Reunion Ride. The eyes still become moist just thinking about that short moment. There is nothing that can take the place of association with good people, doing things in a common interest environment, enjoying laughs and having mutual respect. The fact that I still ride enduros and hare scrambles regularly shakes some people up a little. When they find out I now also trail ride for 3 or 4 days with a group in their 40's there are two reactions - good for you or you're crazy. What counts is that I'm having a good time riding my

Pentons and being a part of the Penton Owners Group."

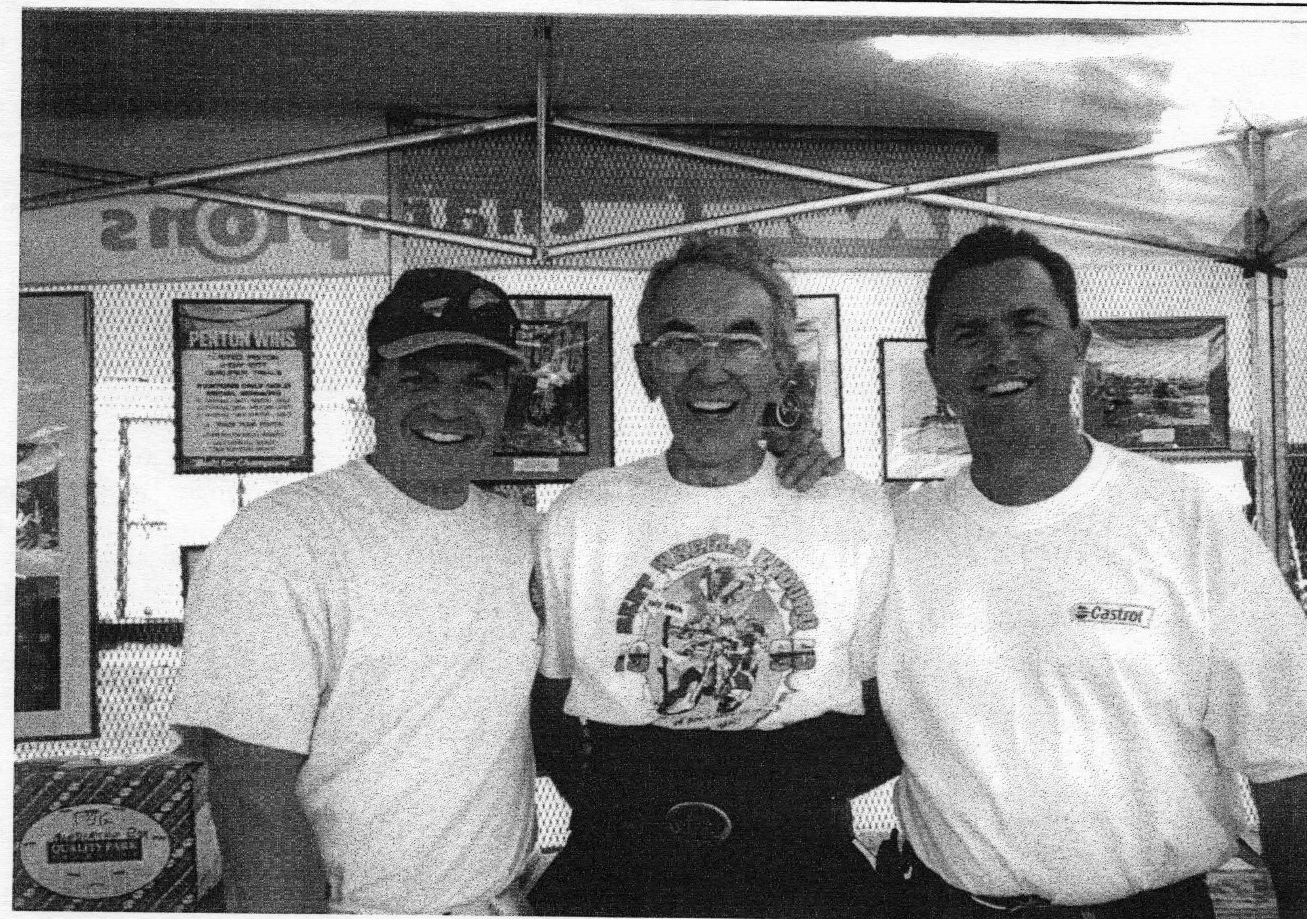
#### Why Pentons?

"The base for my interest in Penton motorcycles no doubt started when I was on the farm in my high school years. That was when I first got closely acquainted with equipment and machinery only to find no room for wrenches and things that just didn't work right. So my conclusion was that whoever dreamed up the design just didn't know what it was to actually work with the equipment. Years later while working as a test engineer on earth moving equipment, my conclusion was proven. The design engineers saw what was being done with a bulldozer and said 'We didn't know you would do that with it, no wonder the final drive keeps breaking.' This made it simple to figure that with John Penton riding

and working on a bike, what he came up with had to be right all the way around."

"When it came time to get a better bike for enduros and a used 1977 Penton 250 was available, I made the move and became a better rider also. Of course there were minor problems at times but we became partners and have had many good times. Later on when only KTM's were available and the subject of a new bike came up, the answer was 'finances don't allow trips to go riding and a new bike also.' There is no point in just having a new bike sitting in the garage with the 'new couch' look. In 1983, I was able to get a 1977 250 GS6 with 2 years of use on it and also acquired some 'gifts' people wanted to get rid of. It wasn't long before I was settled in as the only Penton rider at District 14 enduros (a distinction I take pride in)."

"So now there is such a reputation that when I do ride another bike the questions about the Penton fly. I also have many riders that had Pentons tell me how well they like them, but now they ride something else. At Jack Pine one year, John Penton stopped by my bike and made the comment that they're only good for 2 years. That frame is the one I use for hare scrambles and the engine could be either one of the two still in use. My Penton also has a reputation for not breaking down all the time. Out of 247 enduros on my Pentons, I have not been able to get back on my own a total of 7 times. One of these times was when I was towing another rider in and my mud loaded engine lost compression. My Pentons are good for, and to me, so it was a delight when I found out about the Penton Owners Group."



Ted del Solar (center) with Ray Mungenast (left - son of Dave Mungenast) and Ron Ribolzi (right) at the Penton display at Mid-Ohio in July.  
photo by Connie del Solar



## AMA VINTAGE DAYS at MID-OHIO

by Al Born

On Friday July 19th, after an eleven and a half hour day at Ford in Brook Park, Ohio, I motored hurriedly down I-71 to the Ashland County Fairgrounds where the Vintage Flat Track races were being held. As I entered the grandstand area, I stopped and ordered a Buffalo Burger and a Sprite. As I was waiting on my "burger", I noticed that Mr. Ed Youngblood had chosen a prime spot to park his van in order to sell his latest book which is about Dick Mann. We talked briefly and I told him I would get my book at Mid-Ohio as I didn't want to carry it all evening. In my opinion, Ed is a man of many talents and I considered it a privilege and a pleasure to have been on the "Book Committee" when he was writing the John Penton book.

I got up in the stands in time to see the last four or five heat races. I kept my eyes open for any POG members and finally about the time the feature races started, I spotted Paul and Chad Danik (from PA) and Ollie and Al Martin (from Ohio) just over from where I was sitting, so I joined them. Ted and Rosemary Landers (from MO) were just down in front of us and they were soon joined by Scott and Belinda Brogan (from Ohio).

As usual, it was a pleasure to see Ronnie Rall "take care of business" in his feature race. I think it was during the third feature race when they had a terrible accident at the exit of turn #4. I'm not sure how many bikes were involved, but I know there was at least four and maybe five. I didn't see it all start, but I did see riders and bikes flying in all directions. There were three riders lying on the track for quite a while and finally one was able to get up and he was able to ride back to the pit area on a flat-bed cart. The other two were down for a good while longer before they were able to

put them in the ambulances. On Sunday, I heard that there were some broken bones, but that they were doing O.K. It surely was a horrendous looking crash and one bike had the front end practically torn off it and it burned also.

They had been having some transformer problems at the track all evening and by the time the accident was cleared, it was too dark to race without the lights. They were able to get some lights, but not all of them burning by around 9:30 p.m. and around 9:45 p.m., they announced that they were postponing the races until Saturday evening. At this time I hurried down to Mr. Youngblood's van and got my copy of the Dick Mann book and headed northward for home.

On Saturday morning I loaded my Yamaha Dual-Sport in the F-150 pick up truck and headed for Mid-Ohio. This was the first time I ever had my bike down there for transportation and it sure saved a lot of wear and tear on my shoes for the next two days. As usual, I was mistaken for being John Penton at least four times on Saturday and twice on Sunday. It must have been the shirts and cap that I was wearing.

I spent some of the day watching the Road Races from various points on the track thanks to my Yamaha. I looked over the bikes that were to be auctioned off that evening in the auction tent and spent some time in the "Big Top" where all the Spanish bikes were. I had the privilege to get to talk to Jim Pomeroy in the tent while he was preparing to ride his "Lap of Honor". He told me about the auto accident that he was in a few years ago that just about did him in. I rode over to the back side of the track by the cross-over walkway and when Jim came around, he did a real nice long power wheelie for me.

Most of the afternoon was spent around the Penton display area talking with old and some new friends. The highlight of our area

seemed to be the 9 bike collection of Pentons that Kip Kern had recently sold to Bob Andersohn, who I got to meet and converse with for quite a while. I think Kips collection is in good hands. I also spent time with John Penton, Pat Mickevicius and his son and his two brothers from Michigan, Bob Neruda from Chicago, Richard Sanders from Texas, Dave Mungenast from Missouri, and several other local POG members.

It seemed as if Alan and Dale Buehner had a Kroger food store in their vans as Dale and the boys cooked all day long, which was topped off around 5:30 p.m. with a full course meal, just before our POG meeting. They also furnished lunch on Sunday which I missed due to watching the moto-cross races. I sure want to thank Alan, Dale and the boys for furnishing and preparing all the food. We had our monthly meeting at 6:45 p.m. which had several surprises (see the July meeting minutes in this newsletter for more details on that).

The bikes that were being raced in the moto-cross on Sunday were removed from our area on Saturday evening, so I parked my truck in that space and sacked out in it around 11:00 p.m. even though Kip had offered to let me sleep in his tent. It was a little noisy for about an hour but it either quieted down or I just fell asleep and I didn't hear anything else until around 6:30 a.m.

After returning from the shower house, Kip invited me over to his van and trailer for pancakes. Let me tell you that Forest Stahl (from Indiana) sure can make some "mean" pancakes. They were very good and they even had butter and syrup to go on them. I then rode over to the main concession stand for a cup of hot tea while sitting on the veranda area watching the road race practice session. As I sat relaxing with my tea, I noticed just how nice and clean they keep things at Mid-Ohio.

## AMA VINTAGE DAYS at MID-OHIO

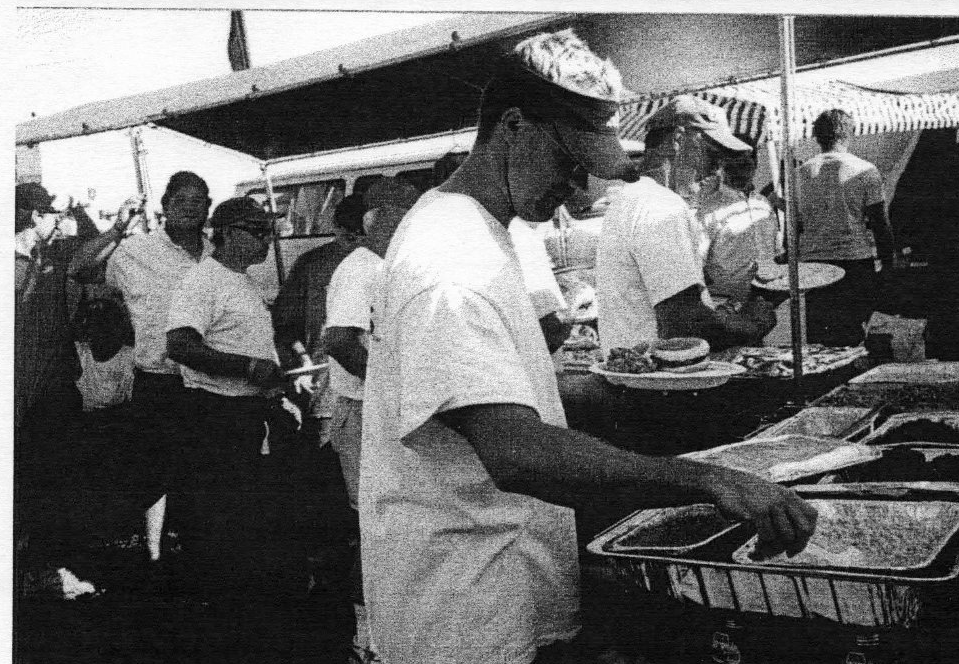
There were plenty of Penton motorcycles to be seen at the "Penton" display. Paul Danik, the "Man from Mars (PA)" is shown here repositioning a 125 Six Days bike for better viewing.



One of the best ways to enjoy this year's event was to get out of the hot sun and under the shade of one of the E-Z ups in the POG display. L to R - Barbara Weisman of Ohio listening to a conversation while Jack Penton has Helmut Clausen's interest in another conversation. Helmut is an ISDT rider who won his first gold medal in 1962. Prior to 1967 when he moved from Europe to Canada to become a KTM dealer, he was a factory rider for Sachs and Hercules.



The chow line on Saturday received a heavy work out before the POG meeting. Even though everyone tried their best to clean up, there was still plenty of good food for everyone.



photos by Connie del Solar



I rode throughout the swap meet area about three times looking for the vendor from Walbridge Motors whom Kip recommended that I see about getting spokes for my #26 Penton. I guess he is a late sleeper as he finally showed up around 10:00 a.m. After talking to him for a short time and getting one of his catalogues, I went and watched Tommy do his trials exhibition. Even though I have seen him many times, he seems to get better and better. Jeremiah Brogan (Scott and Belinda's nephew) was there and he rode over to the moto-cross track with me. When we got to their camper, Belinda gave me a peach flavored ice tea that really hit the spot because it was really getting warm by then, even though there was an occasional breeze on that side of the hill.

It looked to me like the track had some pretty fast spots on it. It looked like Kevin Brown (on a Penton) had his work cut out for him in his moto, but he really went for it and ended up

winning as usual. Ted Landers, of Missouri (on a Penton) looked like he was taking candy from a little child the way he ran away from his competition on his 400 that he recently got running. Ted's wife, Rosemary, was also cooking "Brats" over in the pit area and it seemed like she was cooking for just about anyone who came by, but I declined as my pancakes were sticking with me very well.

I came back to the Penton display area around 2:30 p.m. and the group had already started to pack up. We finished dis-assembling the easy-ups, packed up the vans and most everyone headed either for the moto-cross track or for home. Ollie Martin and I sat around for a while until Scott Brogan (of Ohio) came to pick up his Berkshire which he had on display. I guess Scott got so carried away with the moto-cross that he almost forgot his Penton.

All in all, it was a very enjoyable weekend for me, getting to relax some

and to visit with a lot of old friends, including Jim McCabe of Indiana who I raced against (both on Maicos) back in the late fifties. I hadn't talked to him since in the early sixties. Jim is still riding Vintage Flat Track.

I did miss seeing Ron Carbaugh of Texas and Bob Gilman of Maryland, who are both having some health problems at this time. The POG get-togethers has come to seem like a family affair and I sure did appreciate the time to talk about old times as well as the present and the future.

The only real down side to the whole weekend was a remark the announcer made at the flat track races after the "Big Crash" about people getting their moneys worth even if the races were postponed. I hope that he didn't really mean it the way it sounded. In my opinion, someone from the AMA and the AHRMA should talk to him about what he said.

I hope to see all of you at Mid-Ohio next year or even before.

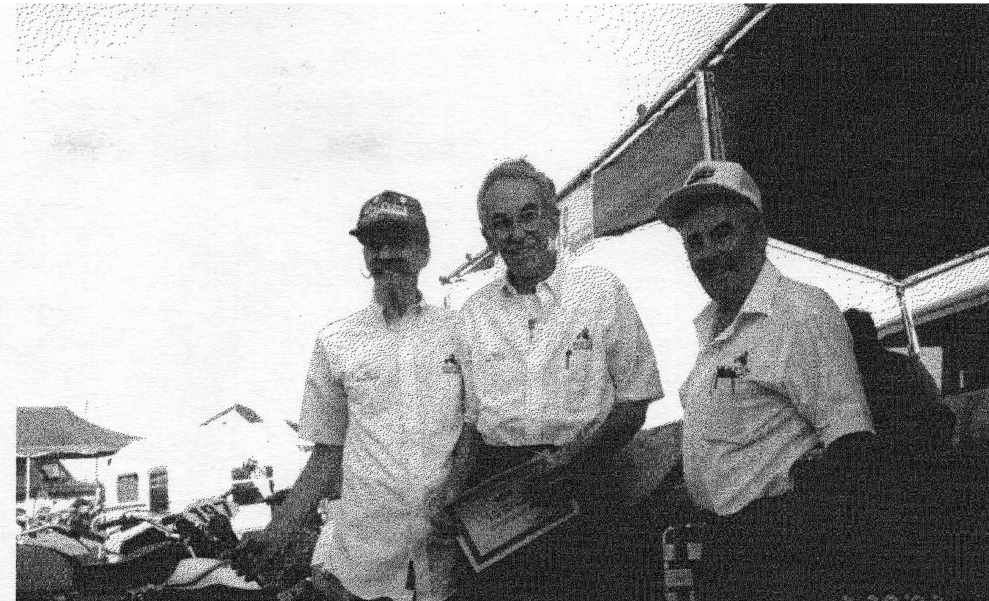
Bob Wardlow (from Michigan) couldn't get his 175 motor together and running in time for Mid-Ohio. Being a firm believer in Frank Wall's philosophy of "ride em .... don't hide em", he made some quick modifications to the Jackpiners frame just in time for Mid-Ohio so that he could at least show his bike.

Additional modifications will be added after he received many comments from people in the swap meet area and at the moto-cross track. He intends to install a "KTM umbrella" in the steering head to provide more shade from the hot sun. To make the fuel tank a functional item, new "fuel" lines will be added to allow the wearer to quench their thirst with some iced tea (or other preferred beverage) by turning on the petcocks when needed.

photo by Connie del Solar



L to R - Alan Buehner, Ted del Solar (of Illinois), and John Penton. Ted received the "John Penton extra mile" award during the POG meeting on Saturday for his involvement in attending many of the monthly POG meetings during the last year, but also his continued participation in Enduro events on his 1977 Hare Scrambler.



L to R - Alan Buehner, Jeff Borer (of Ohio) and John Penton. Jeff received the "Best of Show" certificate for his "Maxpiners" motorcycle (a NSU motor in a Penton frame). This bike was kept away from the POG display in order to surprise John Penton during the early part of the meeting. See page 16 for photos of unique motorcycle.



L to R - Paul Danik, Alan Buehner, Ted del Solar, and John Penton. Paul is the club's "idea man" and likes to "pull people's chain" at meetings. He managed to pull Ted's chain at a couple of meetings. Ted likes to build lamps, and during one of his long rides home after a POG meeting, he got the idea to make a "lamp" for Paul. This photo is after Ted presented Paul with his "lamp" which has a plaque attached which reads "come pull my chain"



photos by Connie del Solar



## LATEST NEWS

### KTM's 50th ANNIVERSARY

You should have received a mailing by now with an itinerary of the upcoming POG European Tour on May 1-9, 2003. This is being put together by Jack Penton's wife, Gigi through her travel agency.

Highlights of the tour will include: 3 night stay in Munich; tour of KTM factory; KTM Festival; tour of Acerbis Factory; 2 night stay in Venice; tour of Alpine Stars & Sidi Boots factories

The \$200 per person deposit along with the registration form is needed before September 15th, 2002 to confirm your reservation if you are planning on going. This tour package is for POG members and their immediate family only.

### AMA HALL OF FAME INDUCTION.

The annual AMA Hall of Fame Induction ceremony will be held on Saturday October 19th at the Motorcycle Hall of Fame museum in Pickerington, OH. The museum will be open in the morning at 9 a.m. to allow a look at the current displays and an opportunity to meet this years inductees who will be on hand for autographs.

If you have not been to the museum this is good time to check it out and meet some of the people that played a part in the history of motorcycling. The induction ceremony is generally held in the afternoon and lasts no more than 2 hours. During the ceremony, the inductees are called to the stage, a profile of their motorcycling accomplishments is read, they are awarded their medal, and are allowed to make some comments.

Pickerington, OH is just east of Columbus, OH along I-70.

For more information check out the museum web site:

[www.motorcyclemuseum.org](http://www.motorcyclemuseum.org) or call: 1-614-856-2222



Why is Debbie and Dwight Rudder (of Mississippi) smiling in this photo? They are having a great time at the AMA Vintage Days event held at Mid-Ohio in July. Dwight is a former ISDT(E) veteran of the 1981/ 82/ 88/ 89 & 94 events.

### ISDT REUNION

The 6th annual ISDT reunion ride will be held October 26-28 at Park Hills, Missouri in St. Joe State Park. This is the same site as last year's event which is south of St. Louis off I-67 and Hwy 32. It is being sponsored again by the Missouri Mudders and will be bigger and better than last year's very successful event. There will be a Bar-B-Que dinner on Friday night and a Banquet on Saturday Night. If you are planning on riding this event:

- \* You must have an AMA membership
- \* Impound of bikes is on Friday
- \* Saturday's ride will be 50 miles with 2 terrain tests, a brake/ acceleration test, and a grass track
- \* Sunday's ride will be 30 miles with 1 terrain test and a motocross.

If you are not riding, this event offers great spectating and an

opportunity to meet the ISDT heroes of the 60's and 70's. The Banquet on Saturday is always worth the trip with the stories that are told and an opportunity to meet more of the ISDT riders that you didn't recognize during the day.

This event is being coordinated by Ron Ribolzi

phone: 1-314-288-2833 - or - e-mail: [ronribolzi@hotmail.com](mailto:ronribolzi@hotmail.com)

Info with maps, entry form, and camping/ motels available at [www.momudders.com](http://www.momudders.com)

Pre-entry deadline is October 14

### Dick Mann Book

POG member, Ed Youngblood, has completed his latest book - "Mann Of His Time". It was available for sale at the AMA Vintage Days event at Mid-Ohio.

Ed did an outstanding job of researching, organizing, and writing about the history of this amazing "Mann". Most motorcyclists are familiar with Dick Mann because of his being featured in the film "On Any Sunday". AHRMA members know him and have met him because of his involvement as an AHRMA board member, his hands on expertise in laying out courses for National vintage MX races and Observed Trials and also competing in these events on one of his British bikes.

You may know of him, but very few people really know him. This book reveals the motorcycling history of Dick Mann that spans 50 years and goes beyond his professional racing career. It is a remarkable story that makes the reader realize that he is what Ed describes "a living national treasure".

This book can be obtained through AHRMA or at the upcoming ISDT reunion where Ed and Dick will be on hand to autograph your copy.

## The Penton Maxpiner

What do you get when you take an NSU Max 175cc motor and put it into a steel tank model Penton frame? You get a Penton Maxpiner 175. Which was one of John Penton's ideas over 30 years ago that never came to be. It is now a reality due to the technical skills and ambition of Jeff Borer of Ohio.

Jeff is an avid NSU collector and is the current owner of John Penton's enduro winning NSU that was restored and on display at the Penton feature marque display at Mid-Ohio in 2000.

### TOP PHOTO

Jeff Borer on his Maxpiner. Yes it does run. Jeff was riding it on Friday and Saturday at Mid-Ohio in the Swap meet area.

### CENTER PHOTO

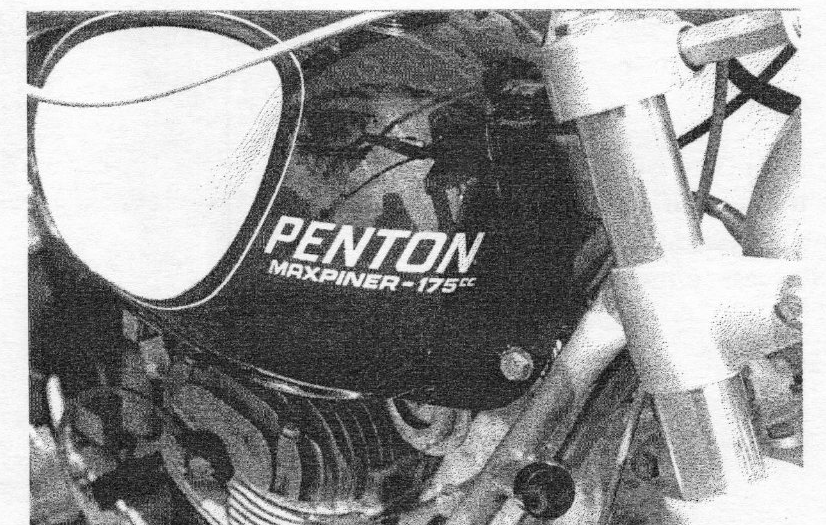
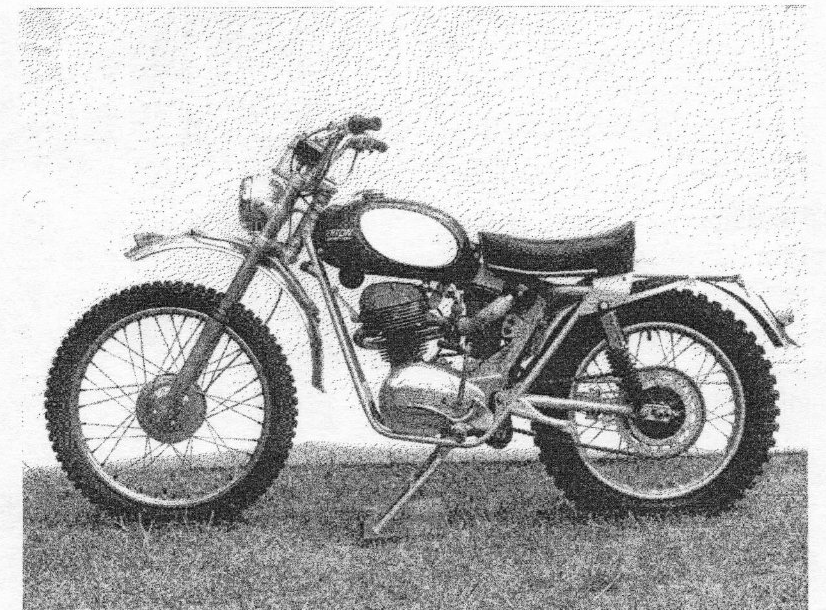
Left side view of the Maxpiner. The motor fit right into the frame with only a few modifications needed for the mounting bolt placements. The sprockets lined up perfectly for the chain.

### BOTTOM PHOTO

A close-up view of the gas tank. Jeff had it professionally painted. The lettering and pinstriping were hand painted. The color of the tank is NSU dark blue.

Keep an eye out for more photos of this one of a kind "Penton" on the Penton web site where it will be a future "bike of the month".

photos by Jeff Borer





(the area where the rear loop for the tank strap is located) instead of transferring the force to the frame (yes, I threw that frame away!). We remedied this problem by adding triangular gussets that tie the backbone directly to the frame (see photo 1).

The coil mount can crack and eventually break where it makes a 90 degree bend to attach to the frame. As long as you have the frame at the welder's you might as well have him run a bead over this area (see photo 1).

Many of the other miscellaneous mounts and brackets on the frame are prone to breakage because they are attached to the frame with a weld on just one edge. This allows a "hinge" effect that can, over time, fatigue the weld to the point of breakage. We "wrap" the welds around the sides of the bracket to eliminate the

"hinge" effect (see photo 2).

I also highly recommend using the struts that tie the engine to the frame, as they triangulate what is otherwise a square area surrounding the engine. Unfortunately, these struts make carb work very difficult. By using less bulky '77 right side struts and relieving the fins on the back of the cylinder, I was able to get the struts to rotate enough to allow adequate access to the carb (see photo 3).

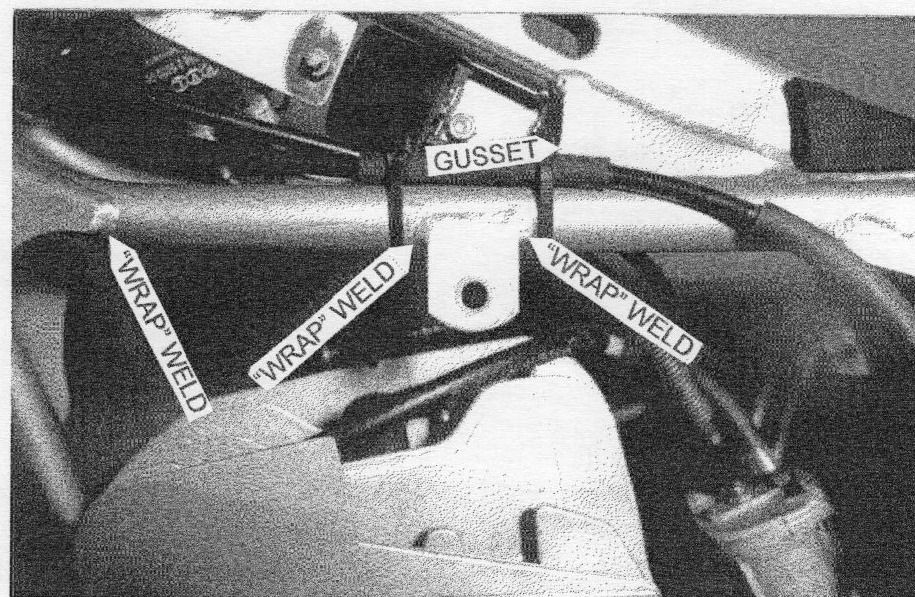
**SWINGARM** - The swingarm will bend fairly easily when the rear suspension is bottomed and, even with the proper shock setup, bottoming will occur. After bending several swingarms beyond repair (see photo 4), we decided to make some modifications to improve their durability. First, we cut out 1/8" steel plates and weld them into the back side of the factory gusset (see photo

5). Then, we make a chain slider out of 1/4" Teflon (see photo 6). Then, we use a jigsaw and a heat gun to fabricate the new Teflon slider. Attach the new slider using the oil filler bolt on the front and a small bracket to connect the rear to the back of the chain guide mount.

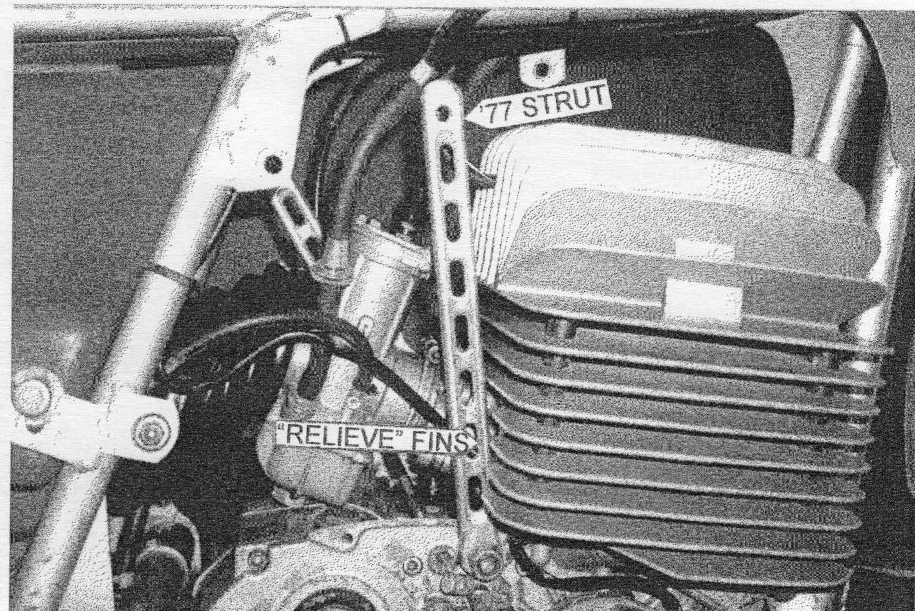
**PAINT** - First, I have the frame and swingarm sandblasted with fine "Black Beauty", a media derived from coal slag. Then the parts are primed with a urethane primer to fill minor imperfections and promote adhesion of the top coat. Finally, the parts are painted with "Martin Senour Tec/ One Stage Acrylic Urethane", which is extremely durable. I chose this system over powdercoating because I can easily touch up areas that get worn or welded throughout the race season. Dave Smith of Dave's Auto Body (740) 696-1210 in Shade, Ohio does all of my blasting and painting.

**FORKS** - The stock 35mm Ceriani's are excellent forks and require very little work to be race ready. We use stock internals with heavy springs from Barry Higgins of H & H KTM (770) 920-1371. The springs should have 10-20mm of preload. The fork caps will provide some of the preload and the rest can be achieved with washers for spacers. Use 15 or 20 weight fork oil (depending on your weight and riding style) filled to 6-1/4" from the top with the forks compressed and springs removed. Finally, disassemble your fork caps and make sure the check ball and spring are in good condition. I should also mention that we have used "Franks" replacement fork tubes in the past and, although the fit and finish was excellent, they bent under the extreme stresses of MX use. On the other hand, I wouldn't hesitate to use them for a show or play bike.

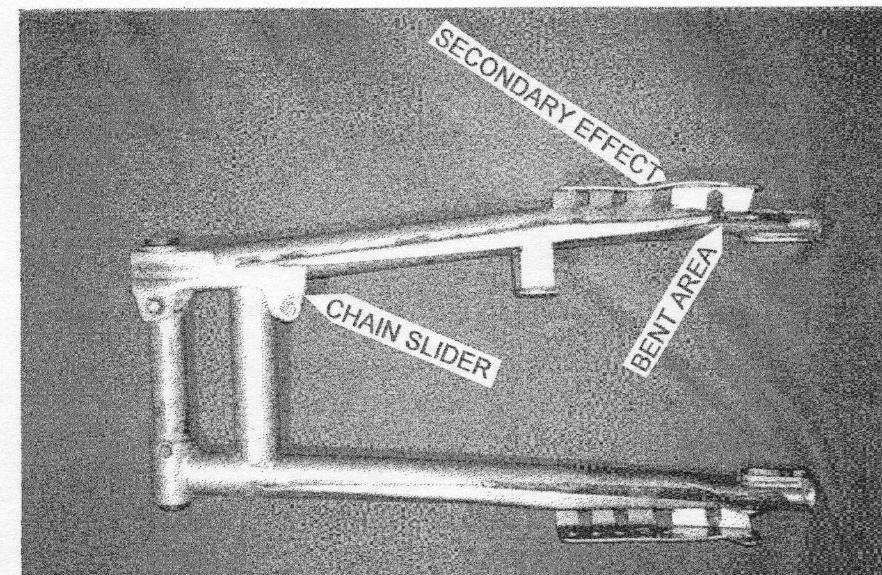
**Photo 2**  
Wrap welding was added to the factory welds to add strength. A gusset was added between the high breather backbone and horizontal tubing to add strength.



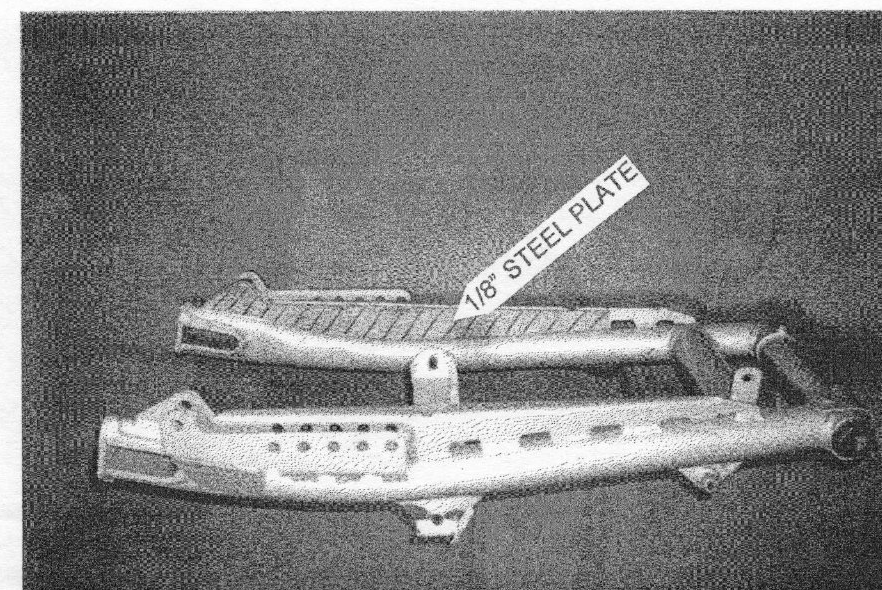
**Photo 3**  
The lower fins of the cylinder were trimmed to allow the strut to rotate vertically. This allows easier access to the carb.



**Photo 4**  
Top view of a bent swingarm.



**Photo 5**  
A steel plate is shown, ready to be welded into backside of swingarm gusset. This is done to strengthen the swingarm along the factory gussets and prevent it from bending under stress.



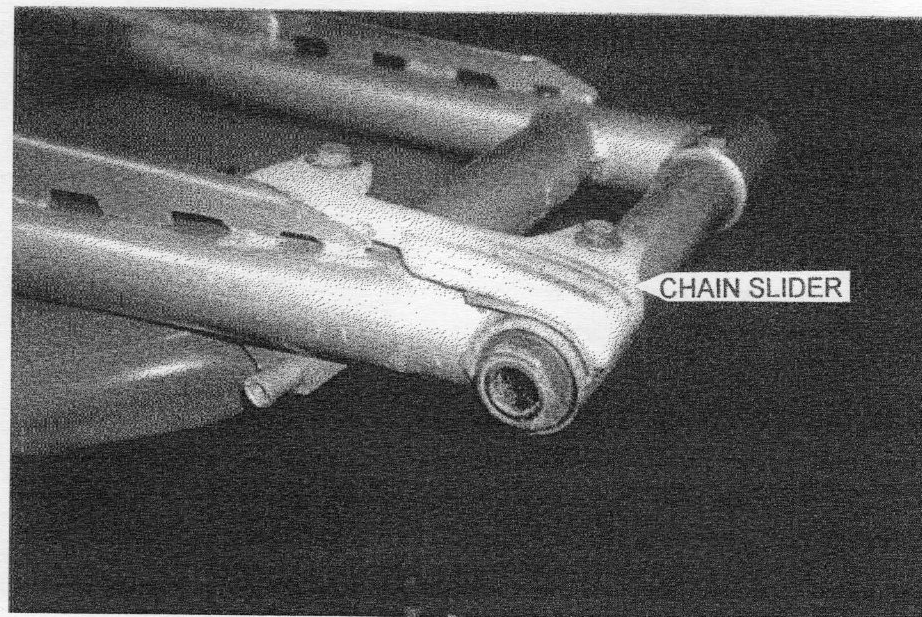


**SHOCKS** - We use "Ohlins Classic MX" shocks because they offer the highest quality, most advanced valving system on the market. Although the stock shocks for this frame were 13.5" long, I recommend using 14" - 14.5" shocks to bring in the rake and help the bike turn. Ohlins offers both 14.2" shocks or 15" shocks. We are currently using the 15" shocks with an internal spacer to make them 14.75", but I think the 14.2" shocks would be ideal for most riders. We mount them upright in the 4th hole back on the swing arm (see photo 7) and use "Eibach" 70, 80, and 90 lb. single rate springs (part numbers 1000.188.070; 1000.188.080; & 1000.188.090) to adjust for different rider weights and riding styles. Our experience is that single rate springs are better for vintage MX use because, with only 4" of wheel travel, using the first several inches for plushness doesn't leave enough travel to resist bottoming.

Regardless of shock length, AHRMA allows a maximum of 4" of actual rear wheel travel. AHRMA has a Shock Length Guide which outlines "maximum visible shaft length" for most brands of bikes, allowing the tech inspectors to estimate rear wheel travel without having to perform any calculations or remove the springs and take an actual measurement. Because Pentons had 2 different swingarms in 1974, as well as many different mounting positions, the listing for Penton just says "check"! We set up our shocks with 2-3/4" of visible shaft and always pass inspection. To help you meet these requirements, both Ohlins and AHRMA offer clip-on spacers that fit under your shock bumper and allow you to easily configure the visible shock shaft length at the track if necessary.

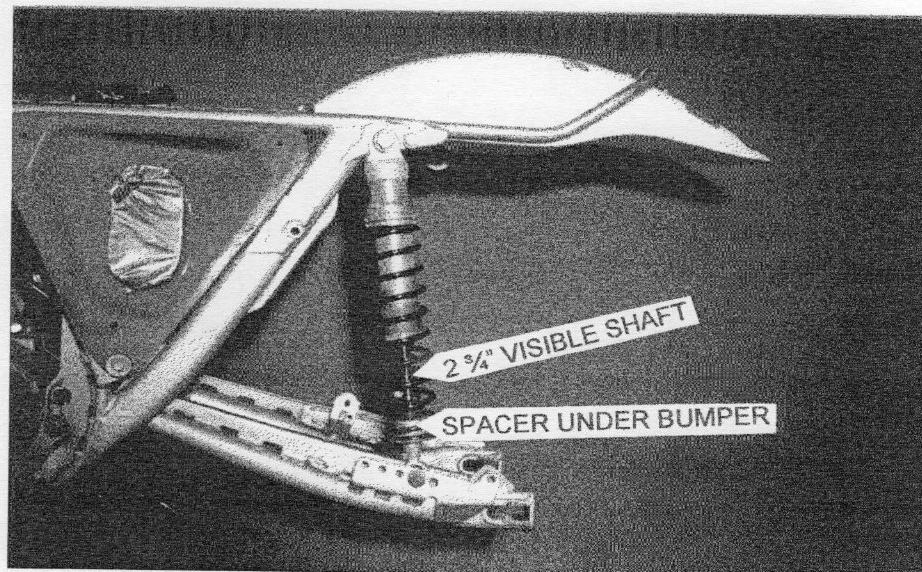
**Photo 6**

A teflon chain slider was added to this side of the swingarm to prevent wearing of the swingarm by the drive chain.



**Photo 7**

Ohlins shocks are mounted upright in the 4th hole of the swingarm.



## Tech Tips

### How to Set Up a Winning Penton (Part II) Chassis and Suspension

by Kent Knudson

The following outlines the chassis and suspension components/ modifications used to build the Pentons that Kevin Brown and Gary Roach rode to their AHRMA National Championships. I would like to thank Larry Smith of Precise Welding, Jeff Reid and Joey Israel of Ohlins USA, Barry Higgins of H & H KTM and, of course, Kevin Brown and Gary Roach for their input and assistance.

First, I would like to say that we have tried very hard to retain the original components and overall appearance of the Penton motorcycle. Because the Penton already possesses an excellent design and top shelf components, virtually all of our modifications were made for the sake of greater strength and reliability. No consideration was given to weight savings due to the expense and potential for failure. If you want to reduce weight, it's usually least expensive to start with the vintage rider!

**FRAME** - I start with a late 1974 style frame and swingarm, which is the strongest AHRMA legal setup possible. First, strip the motorcycle down to the bare frame and check for cracks and bends. Then install the engine, pipe, and airbox, and closely inspect their fit. It is very important that all of the mounts for these items line up correctly and are not stressed! If a mount or bracket is not quite right, cut it off and set it up in the correct location.

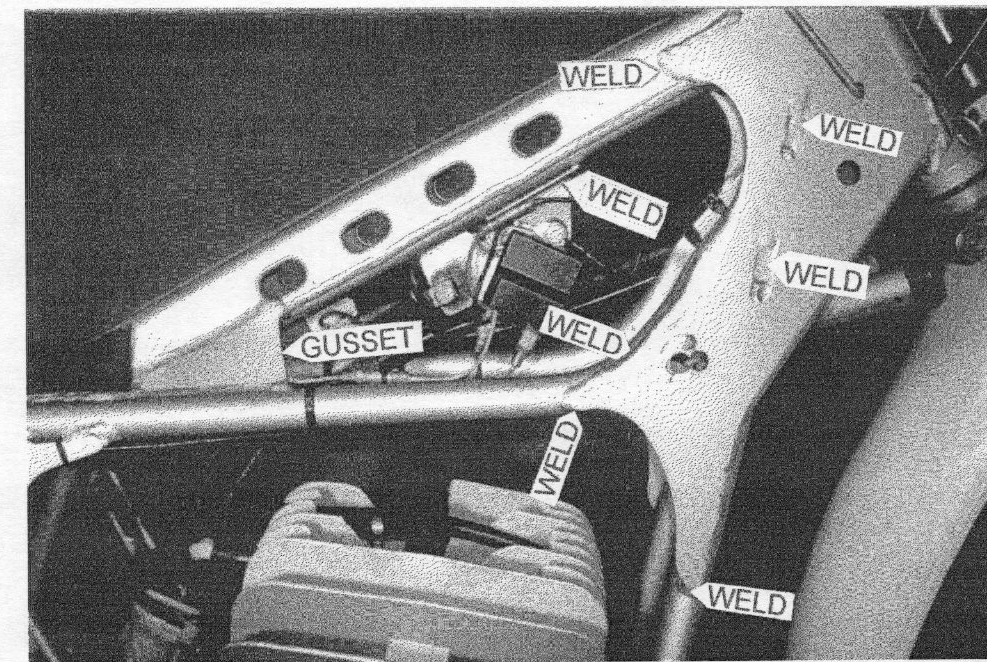
Next, I take the frame/engine/pipe/airbox assembly to the welder, Larry Smith of Precise Welding (740) 654-2215 in Lancaster, Ohio. Any important frame work should be done with a TIG welder and the appropriate rod for the chrome-moly frame. First, fix the obvious cracks and bends and weld the aforementioned mounts or brackets back on. Then you can begin reinforcing the weak parts of the frame: the steering stem gussets, the breather backbone, the coil mount, and all of the other mounting tabs and brackets.

The steering stem gussets are lightly welded where they attach to the frame and can flex and bend. Tie them into the frame better with additional welds (see photo 1). The steering stem itself has held up very well for us, although by early 1975 the factory was reinforcing this area by adding a strap around the lower bearing race and welding it to the frame gussets. We use the stock ball bearing and race setup and keep them adjusted fairly tight.

The breather backbone is, in part, designed to hold the top of the steering stem in place. When landing from a jump, the forks transfer a tremendous amount of force to the steering stem. This force tries to pull the bottom of the steering stem forward and, when it can't, it tries to push the top of the steering stem back. Ultimately, this force is transferred down the length of the backbone and into the frame. Unfortunately, the rear of the backbone stamping is bent 90 degrees and extends horizontally to the left and right to attach to the frame. As a result, the backbone can actually collapse this horizontal section

**PHOTO 1**

Gussets were added to the frame and welds were added to strengthen the frame.





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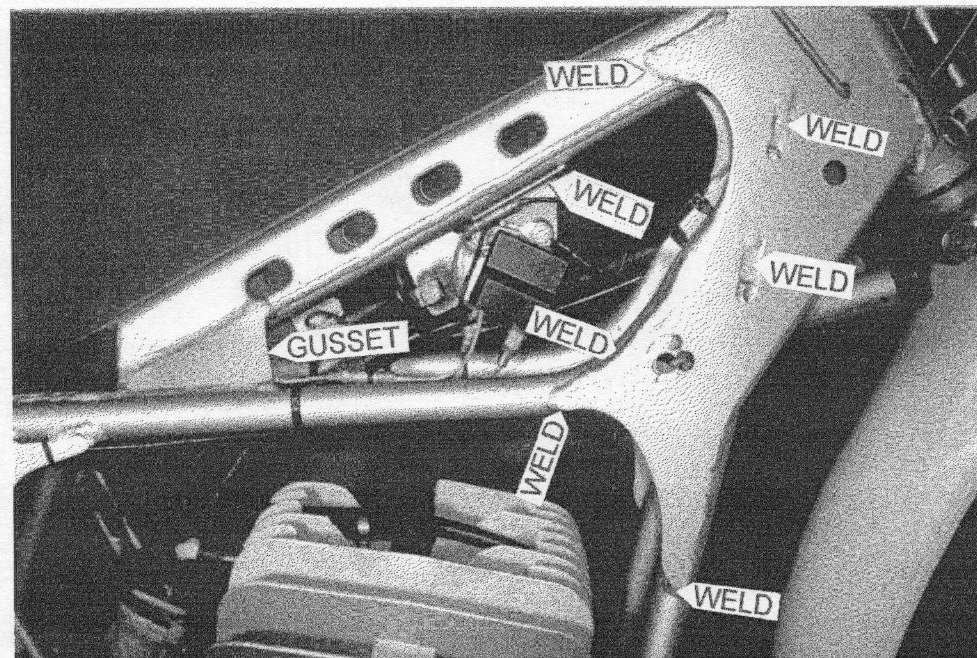
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**PHOTO 1**

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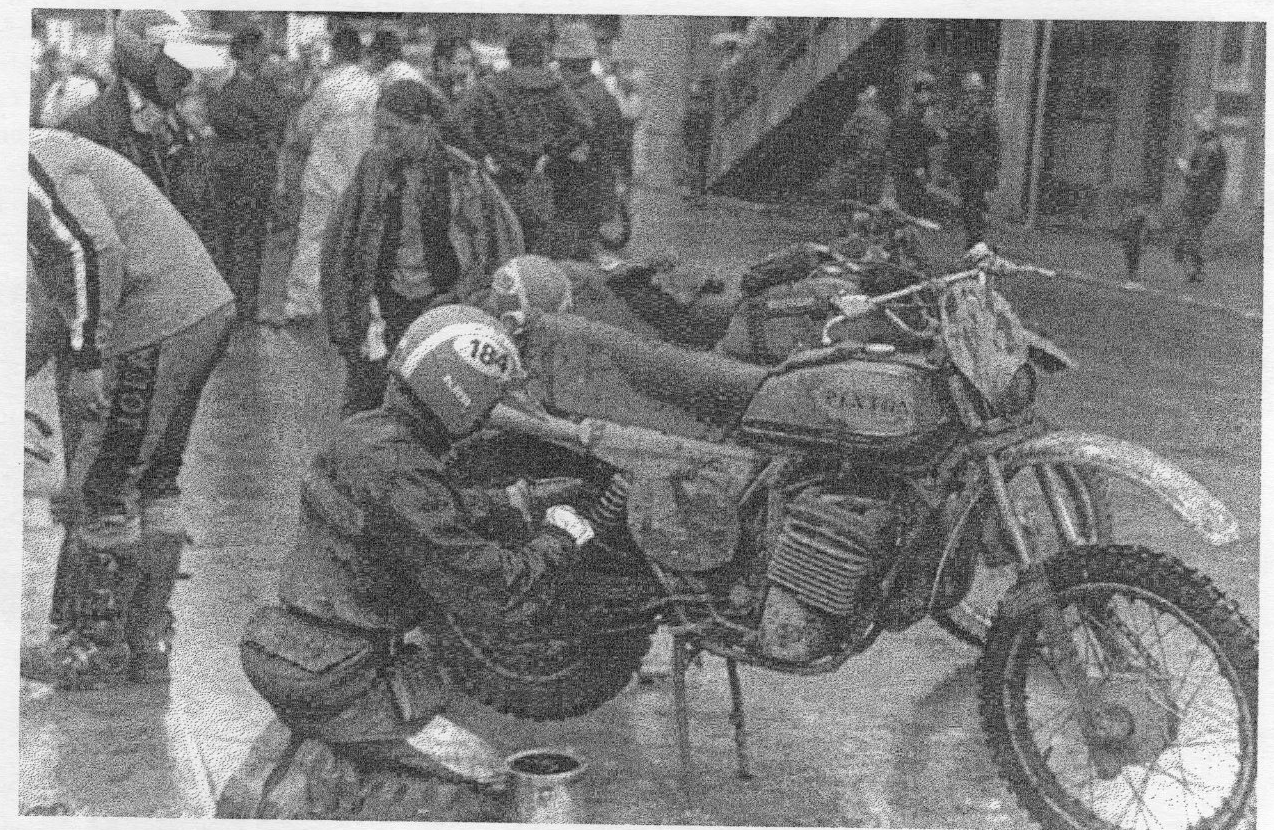
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Jim Koenig - (913) 334-2410

Letko Competition - Kansas City, KS



A scene from the 1976 I.S.D.T. in Czechoslovakia. One of the American Team riders (possibly Jack Penton) taking time at a gas stop to make some adjustments to his bike.  
photo by Boyd Reynolds



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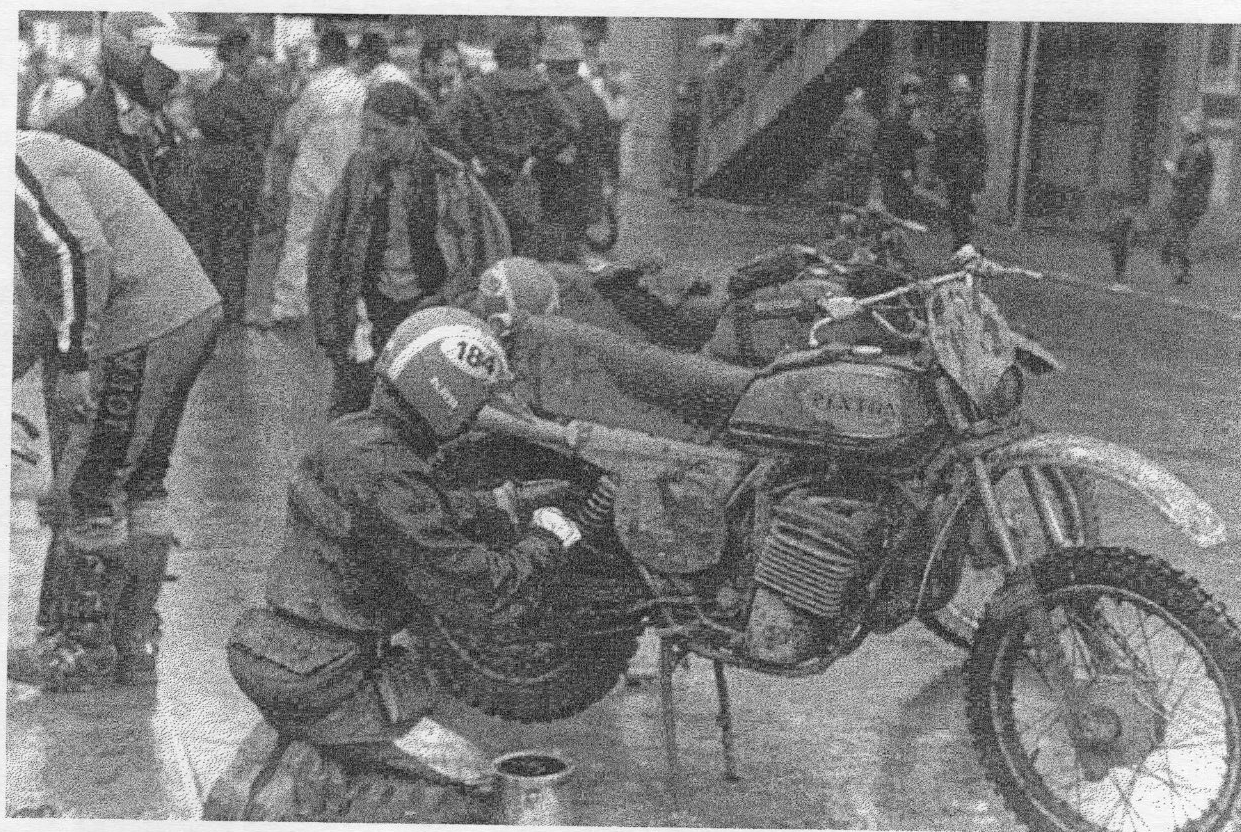
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A scene from the 1976 I.S.D.T. in Czechoslovakia. One of the American Team riders (possibly Jack Penton) taking time at a gas stop to make some adjustments to his bike.  
photo by Boyd Reynolds







"Behind every successful enduro rider is a pit crew". This photo was taken at the Jack Pine Enduro on 8/18/1985 during the noon control. That is Connie del Solar muscling a gas can while Ted del Solor checks out his 1977 Penton 250.

photo by Robert De Volder