

# *Still...Keeping Track*

Penton Owners Group Newsletter \* \$5.00



John Penton and his I.S.D.T. escort riders at Mid-Ohio just before taking the Grand Marshal parade lap on Saturday.  
Left to Right - Kevin LaVoie, Paul Danik, Dane Leimbach, Tom Penton, Doug Wilford,  
Jack Penton, John Penton, Dave Mungenast, and Carl Cranke.

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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.



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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.

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### **PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

**By Alan Buehner**

It is almost hard to believe that the AMA Vintage Days events are both over and that "Penton" as feature marque is now a page in the history of the "vintage" biking world. The whole event is like a dream come true. You see, back in November of 1997 when Jack Penton, Dane Leimbach, Norm Miller, Dale Barris, Paul Danik, and I were holding one of our meetings at Penton Honda to put the Penton Owners Group together, a couple of ideas were brought out by Paul Danik. One was to have someone write a book about John Penton while he is still alive. The other idea was to petition the AMA to line up "Penton" as feature marque with a target date of the year 2000.

Looking back, I knew that we could pull off doing the Penton display, but we had no idea who would write the book at the time. It is almost a miracle, I call it magic, that all of this came together and happened when it did. Timing is everything and with the printing of the book happening just before the Sears Point Vintage Days event enabled us to advertise the book and our being feature marque which led up to the Mid-Ohio event being a huge success. The main reason for all of this which was discussed at our meeting in November of 1997 was to pay honor and recognition to John Penton while he is still alive and in good health. Mission accomplished!

Now that all of the hard work that was involved with the feature marque display is over, the fun is beginning. The August board meeting was spent looking at photos and

videos shot at Sears Point and Mid-Ohio. I had the opportunity to go to the Jackpine Enduro in Michigan (see Jackpine Enduro article in this issue) for the first time and am looking forward to attending the Six-Days Reunion in Arkansas in September. Events for the club to be involved with next year will be discussed and planned for during the next two meetings and will be announced in the next newsletter and on our web page. If you know of any events being held next year that are vintage friendly and would be a good place for Penton riders to attend, let us know about them so that we can include them in our planning.

## MORE PENTON RIDERS NAMED TO MOTORCYCLE HALL OF FAME

By Ed Youngblood

John Penton was among the several hundred who attended a festive ceremony at the Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum in Pickerington, Ohio on Saturday, July 8th to celebrate the induction of new members, including his son Tom and two other famous Penton-riding ISDT medalists.

Among those inducted for 2000 were Penton riders Tom Penton, Carl Cranke, and Dave Mungenast. Penton-riding ISDT medalists previously inducted into the Motorcycle hall of Fame include John Penton, Jack Penton, and Dick Burlson. Mike Kidd, who once competed in AMA Grand National Championship competition aboard a Penton-built short tracker, is also a member of the Motorcycle Hall of Fame.

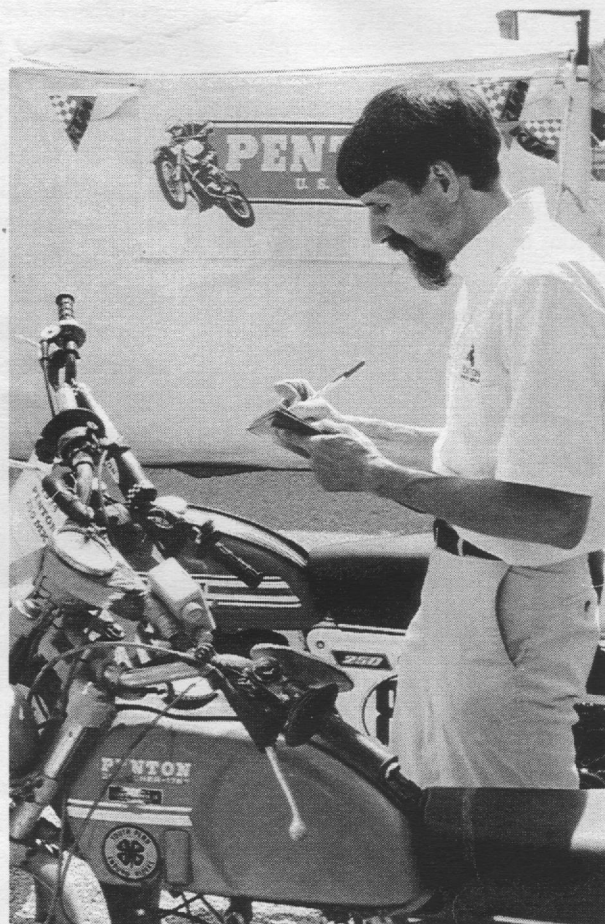


Photo above is of Alan Buehner checking his list of the more than 75 Penton motorcycles that were displayed at Mid-Ohio.

## THE JACKPINE ENDURO

By Alan Buehner

The possible last running of the Jackpine Enduro was held in Michigan on July 29 and 30th. The Penton Owners Group was on hand and set up an impressive mini-display under two 10 x 10 E-Z ups to bring an awareness of John Pentons involvement with the event and to sell his book.

Jeff Borer brought up his restored NSU to display in the tent which attracted a lot of attention. This is the one and original bike that John rode from 1958 thru 1962 and won many National enduros on.

Besides having a Penton display, thanks to several of our members, there was a Penton presence on the starting line for the Sunday run.

Jeff Borer from Ohio started on a steel tank 125 but only covered a couple of miles when he encountered ignition problems. His father, Jim Borer of Ohio signed up to ride his 1958 NSU, but although it was running on Saturday, it would not start on Sunday due to a dead battery, and he wound up pushing it over the start line just so that he could say that he at least stared the event.

Ted Landers of Missouri, spent several weeks working on his steel tank Penton 125 getting it ready to ride. In fact he worked on it at the campground until one in the morning Sunday to finish it. At the starting line he was all set to go until one of the officials asked for his time card. He had left it in his van and had to leave the line to get it. Somehow, he only lost one minute on his start by the time he got back.

Depending upon how you look at it, he was lucky that his brand new shocks locked up on him and he had to leave the course after going only 12 miles. The first thing we noticed was his missing head light bulb. The second thing was the cap on the carb had unscrewed and was open which would have allowed sand to get sucked in.

Ted DeSolar of Illinois brought out his 1977 Penton 250 GS6 to ride. Unfortunately he ran into trouble about 70 miles into the ride and wound up seizing his motor. Fortunately for Ted who is in his 70's, he was not hurt.

Everyone had a good time, especially John who not only did a lot of autographing, but it was his opportunity to see many of his old friends that he has met over the past 52 years since his first Jackpine in 1948.

## Mail box and Web Page

July 26, 2000

Dear POG members,

Greetings from Australia. My subscription is due so I thought I would like to add a few words as well. I guess my family thinks I've been active but that has been at home. By that I mean I haven't been doing a lot of riding of late. I've been spending my time and money of trying to get a "73" 125 into operation. It's been interesting and at this time is about 50% complete. I started with a rolling chassis that had been lying in a wreckers yard for some years. An advertisement in an Australia-wide publication realized a brand new DKW engine - too good an opportunity to pass up. From the same ad I have also bought another rolling chassis that gave me an enduro tank and a slightly butchered side cover and an exhaust pipe that needs a fair bit of work.

I posted a question on the web page about stinger lengths but I now realize I hid it under the "front brake" title. If anyone can give me stinger/ silencer details for a 73 125 MX pipe I would be very grateful. All I need now is a few more dollars to get chain, filter, tyres, etc. and she should be going.

From the two chassis I bought it looks as though the bottom right (I think that's it) engine mount was a bit suspect as both frames did not have one. Similarly the top of both air boxes appear to have fractured. I don't get to hear of problems with various models - were these? Just a thought.

By advertising and adding to the web page, I have been in contact with a few KTM owners. Maybe one day we can organize a get together but in the reality there are probably not enough owners close enough for it to come off.

I'd like to pass on my thanks to the guys who produce the magazine. Its great to get the articles and information from each edition. Fantastic to see Carl Cranke is alive and thinking - can't wait for the update article.

When I get back to riding maybe I can mail a few reports next year. Please find enclosed a money order for my next year's subscription and for a copy of the John Penton Book. I'm happy for it to come with the next POG newsletter if that is the best way to do it. Would it also be possible for John Penton to sign it. I would appreciate that greatly. Enclosed is an order form.

Kindest regards, Bill Campbell -  
Higgins, Australia  
p.s. KTM = Kawasaki Test Machine

July 9, 2000

Just returned from Mid-Ohio and wish to thank all who participated in the Penton display. I feel a great "thanks" is due the POG staff, and their families, who put a lot of time and effort into an outstanding display. My hat is off to all who "pitched in" and helped make this the most memorable motorcycle event for myself and others who were lucky enough to attend!

Kip Kern - Indiana

July 10, 2000

I would like to thank all of the POG officers and members who volunteered their time on the Penton display. It was an experience that I and hopefully my son will not forget. It is not very often that you get to meet a living legend. I am sure Mr. Penton feels very proud by the way the POG has chosen to honor him. Thanks again for the great time. Hopefully I will have my Pentons ready for the next POG ride.

Penton-KTM riders Phil & Garrett  
Peterson

July 11, 2000

Now that the event has wrapped and all of us are recounting our experiences at VMD 2000, I'd like to thank all of the Penton Owners Group members and others who had a hand in making the Penton display a rousing success. It certainly makes me proud to have been involved in the short history of the Penton motorcycle and it's accomplishments. The comments I

personally heard on the display, indicated that it was well done and well received, and everyone who helped should feel proud. Thanks also to all those Penton motorcycle owners who brought their machines to the event to display around the tent. It was truly rewarding to see so many Pentons in one place after all these years. Thanks to those of you who allowed the ISDT veterans to borrow machines for the Grand Marshal's Lap of Honor. The experience to me, felt like I had exited the woods for the last time at a Qualifier and was on the way to the final impound. Strange maybe, but good never the less. It's going to take a lot of work to top the efforts of all those who participated. The whole experience will go into my personal memory banks as one of the best. Thanks to all who attended and I hope to see you again, down the tail somewhere.

Dane Leimbach - Ohio

July 11, 2000

I would like to say thanks to all the members of POG for turning out to make the Penton display a huge success. It is also worth mentioning that Mid-Ohio's sales of Penton shirts, posters, and books were exceptional, much higher than the same items from previous years. I myself had a great time racing MX and hanging out with the guys from POG Texas who drove 1100 miles and brought 9 Pentons to show/ride. Bobby Lucas ended up doing some last minute tuning on my bike that enabled me to ride on Sunday. Greatly appreciated. All in all it was the best. Thanks to all

Barry Ely - Ohio

*Sales of the shirts, posters, and pins by the AMA and Mid-Ohio were not just exceptional, they were all sold out. Mid-Ohio had to have more of the program books printed up for the bike races held on the following weekend.*

July 12, 2000

Thanks to Mr. Penton, Al, and Kip for looking at my 1970 Penton 125. My

son and I had a wonderful time. My only regret is I was too late to buy a Penton T-shirt. Anybody know where I can find one?

Doug Wortman

July 12, 2000

What a great time Rosemary and I had last weekend. Thank you all for putting on such a wonderful event for Penton owners.

Ted Landers - Missouri

July 18, 2000

Ohio 2000 - With my first approach to the POG tent there was a smiling John Penton with an outreached hand welcoming us boys up from Texas. Pointing to the exhibit he said "Look at this, I can't believe the job they have done." Laughing he told me that he didn't remember these guys working as hard when they worked for him as employees! As he signed a pair of 77 MC5 side covers for me, he said that it was interesting, you could go back 30 years and his autograph still looked the same. Later I thought with all the change he brought about that some things remained constant. Somehow he knew which ones to change to make better. This was my pinnacle of events with meeting with the famed Penton riders of the past. Every one was just like an old buddy with just a moment's introduction. Carl Cranke pointing out places he broke frames, and parts he designed for the Sachs engine instead of raising a family, but now he does. Jack Penton telling me of his son who is now living and working in Texas near me. If that didn't remind me of that we had lived through a generation, he next told me he has recently, from the same son, become a grandparent! Later at the AMA dinner he asked if they could use my bikes in the show for the parade laps (like there could be two answers). Imagine how an old dirt biker from Texas felt when asked if Gold medal ISDT riders can ride my Pentons. Paul Danik, who persuaded Mid-Ohio security to escort two trucks to the POG campground an hour after

closing on Thursday at 10pm, bought one of my exhibit Penton tanks for the Jackpiner he is restoring. Once again Kip Kern exemplified a perfectly restored Penton. My socks aren't that clean brand new! Dane Leimbach explaining the rudiments of ignition and explaining to a friend with me why PVL had no adapters for CZ's. Doug Wilford telling stories of his hosting of the European riders while they were in the USA. Al Buehner patiently but intently administrating it all. Al joined Bob, Bob's son Brandon, and I to the Ashland County Flat Track and bought the whole carload a ticket at the gate. I saw a sunburned Ron Carbaugh loan Ron Munson his sun hat to help protect him from any more pain. After 4 days they looked the same to me. Seeing John Penton 100 yards ahead of everybody on the parade lap WFO. I wasn't disappointed that John didn't ride the MX exhibition lap. Motorcycles had a way of disappearing out from under you. I had a couple of close calls, but Bob Lucas never saw his leave him in the Penton Only Moto and still doesn't know what happened to put him on the ground on a short rocky straight. He is a 10 year expert in vintage racing. Having Jack and GiGi Penton help pack and load our final items, including 5 Pentons at the POG tent. This was 6:00 pm Sunday afternoon! The crowning moment was to see John, upon my request with no assistance climb onto our flatbed trailer to sign the tanks of the last motorcycles to leave. I told him I felt guilty about asking him now. For four days John had been standing and signing anything put before him. He just said "that's Okay, you boys were busy all day." John didn't jump down off the trailer like the time at our Texas banquets where he hopped off the 3 foot stage, but unassisted he climbed down extending his hand to wish us farewell. The character of all these men is still something to be admired and live up to. The reality and excitement of being with these men and as many Penton fans, riders, owners,

and admirers was more than was planned, expected, or envisioned by anyone. Driving off going in different directions, Jack and I waved a high five, our arms too short to connect, I heard "bye Skip." I didn't look back looking forward to a next time, but I don't think ever a better time. Thanks to Bob Lucas a President of the Texas Vintage Racing Club nine years ago for regenerating my enthusiasm for restoring riding and racing. I enjoy and appreciate all the work of the Penton Owners Group. It still exhibits the pride and professionalism of Penton. Oh yeah, My 1974 250 Hare Scrambler ran practice and 7 motos with only adding gas. I did get a bum start on my first O/50 moto when she loaded up on the line. It was probably the riders fault, like Penton Central told me when I broke my first, but only one in two years racing my 125 Six Days, Sachs Penton shift key. Thanks for the exhibit, the dinners, the help, the hospitality and the friendships.

Skip Miller - Texas

August 15, 2000

We had a very good national at Aztec Raceway in Colorado Springs. Brad Lackey was there and it was good to see Jeff Smith give a very good accounting of himself. I hope my body is in as good a shape when as old as he.

I'm in 1st in the Novice 250 sportsman and 2nd in novice 500 sportsman (Suzuki TM400), sorry! Dave Lindemann absolutely spanked everybody except Lakey at Aztec on a Penton 250 that I think Carl Cranke did porting on. I rode this same engine powered unit about 3 years ago and was absolutely linear and explosive when called for!!!

Long live the Penton dream!

Tom Brosius - Colorado



## The Penton Feature Marque Display at Mid-Ohio

by Alan Buehner

The Penton feature marque display at Mid-Ohio for the AMA Vintage Days event in July was spectacular. This was a big undertaking that required filling up a big tent. A 40 foot by 80 foot tent to be exact, as shown in the photo on the right. Thanks to the talent, support, and dedication of some of our members, the end result was a professional display of Penton items that knocked everybody's socks off.

There were over 75 Penton motorcycles that were brought to Mid-Ohio by our members to display. Not all of these bikes were put on display inside the tent. There just wasn't enough room. So the overflow were put on display outside the tent as shown in the two bottom photos on the right. They were lined up by year and displacement size.

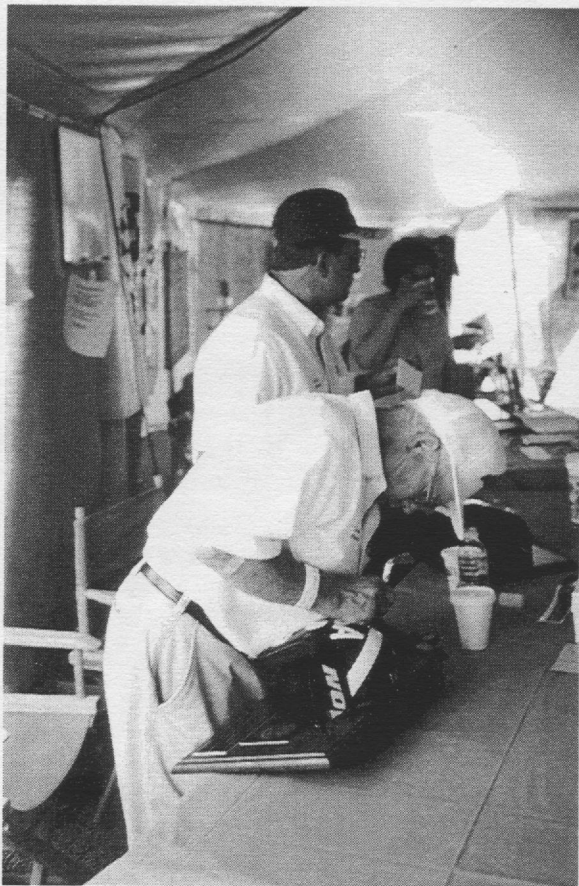
KTM helped us out by loaning us the two E-Z ups at the front entrance and yards of small pennant flags that were used to decorate the outside fence and outside sides of the tent, and were used inside the tent to rope off the bikes on display. They also loaned us their "Rallye guy" poster shown in the photo on the next page.

Paul Danik, our man from Mars and two time ISDT medal winner, was on hand during the event and is shown on the next page standing next to his framed ISDT medals.

John Penton spent a lot of time inside the tent doing what he now does best - signing autographs. He signs almost anything. On the next page, bottom left, he is signing half of a helmet that was mounted on a plaque by the AMA for their bike judging.

The display case in the bottom right photo contained many unique items. There were John's cowbells (from the Jackpine enduros), a model KTM motorcycle, Penton hats, shirts, miniature Hi-Point "clog" shoes, and other miscellaneous Hi-Point items.

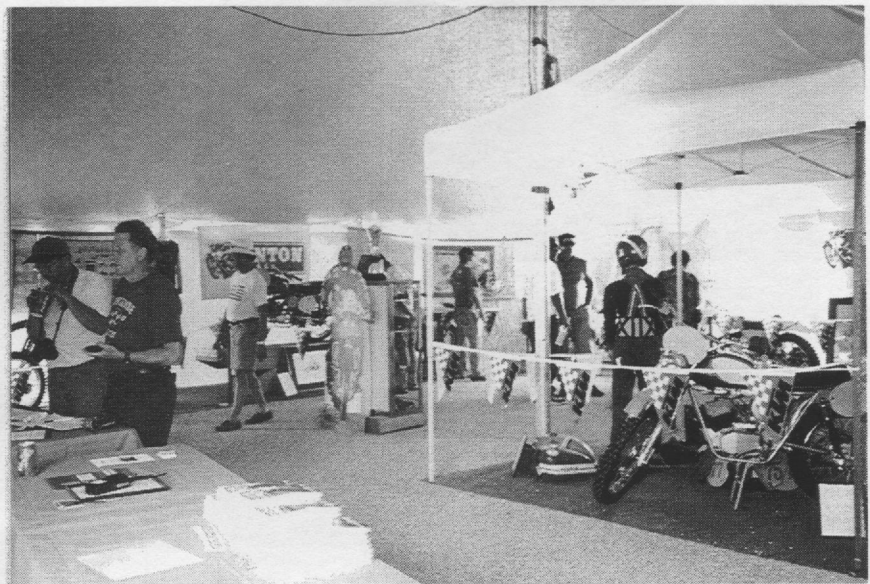




Setting up and taking down the display took a lot of help and a team effort. The photo on the top right shows some of the many volunteers who helped out. From left to right: Al Buehner, Rosemary Buehner, Barbara Weisman, Matt Weisman, Doug Wilford, Ollie Martin, John Penton, Al Born, Jack Penton, GiGi Penton, Paul Danik, Tom Penton, John Borer, Jeff Borer, and Tom Penton's son.



The middle photo on the right shows what the inside of the display looked like to the far right just as you walked inside the tent. Two of John Penton's 10 x 10 E-Z ups were set up inside the tent, in the center, to break up the huge expanse of space and help keep the viewer's eyesight at ground level.

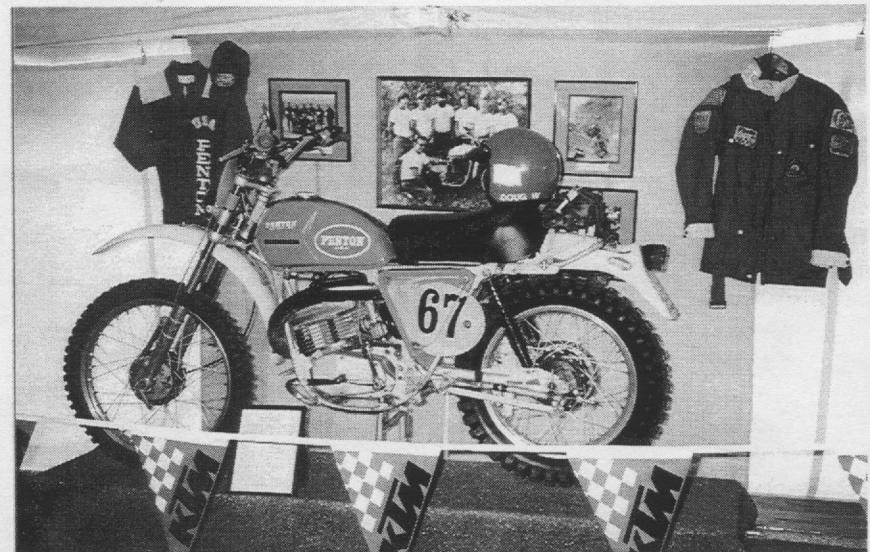


A couple of tables were set up immediately on the right as you entered the tent. It was at these tables that John did his autographing and the club sold the books, hats, and t-shirts.

The display was set up to tell a story as you entered the tent and walked to the right around the back of the tent to the entrance which then became the exit.

The isles were wide and unobstructed which allowed for smooth easy traffic flow.

The bottom photo is the display set up with Doug Wilford's original 125cc ISDT bike which he rode in the qualifiers and Six-Days event in 1973. The bike is currently owned by Joe Barker of California and was picked up by John Penton on his way to Sears Point in April. In the background are some framed ISDT team photos, and a couple of ISDT team jackets.



To help dress up the inside of the tent and section off the display areas, artificial grass carpeting was laid down over the graveled ground.

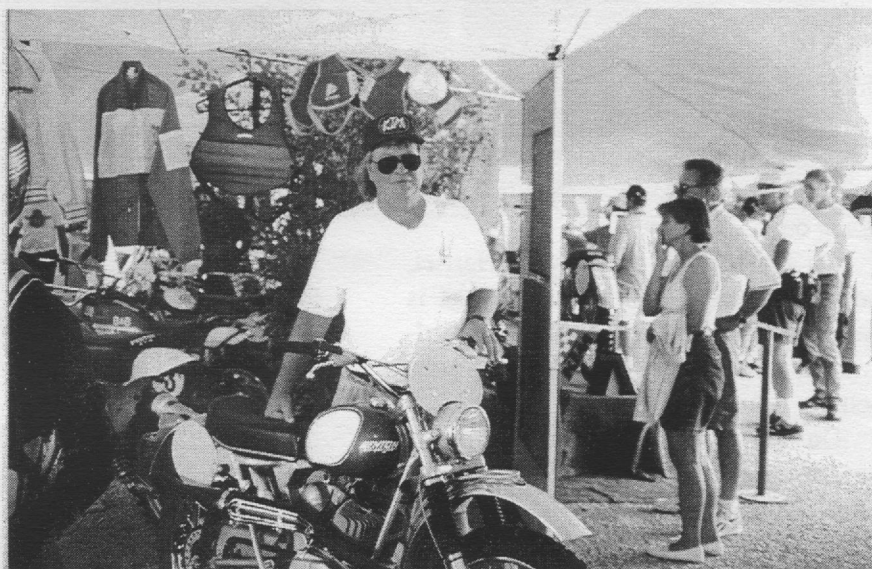
The photos used in this issue of "Still . . . Keeping Track" were provided by:  
Debbie Houghton of Ohio,  
Rosemary Landers of Missouri,  
and Ollie Martin of Ohio.

The dummy in the top photo on the right came all the way from Texas to be in our display. He was found by Bobby Lucas just standing around doing nothing, so Bobby worked out a deal for Skip Miller to give him a ride up to Mid-Ohio. When Bobby and Skip arrived at Mid-Ohio on Thursday evening, they threw him out of the van at their "Pentonville" campsite and put him to work standing guard over their stuff all night wearing just a windbreaker jacket and his Texas smile. The next day, Bobby brought him over to the Penton display tent. Barbara Weisman felt sorry for him and found some old Hi-Point riding gear for him to wear. She put him to work watching over the gas tanks and bikes on display on the left side of the tent.



Richard Sanders of Texas is standing next to his meticulously restored Steel Tank 125cc Penton that was set up inside the display.

The bottom photo is of one of those one-of-a-kind bikes that you seldom get to see and never knew existed. This bike came from John Penton's collection and is the "Penton Junior Crosser" that was shown in our Spring newsletter, issue number 6. It was one of two prototypes built by KTM and sent to John to check out for selling in the U.S. market as beginner bikes. They featured a 50cc Sachs motor and were mounted in two different frames - this is the one with the old style 1971 frame.



There were many bikes on display in the tent. They were arranged in order according to year around the walls of the tent. The steel tank Pentons were first with a sample of 100 and 125.

The CMF bikes were next with a sample of 125, 175, and 250. The last two bikes were one of the Limited Edition 1998 KTM 125cc 30th anniversary bikes (only 5 of these were produced and sold in the U.S.), and a Penton/ KTM/ Kenny Roberts 250cc short tracker bike (less than 40 of these were built and sold in the U.S.).



The photo on the top right shows the framed ISDT medals of Doug Wilford and Carl Crank that were on display in the back middle part of the tent.

Al Born and his wife posed in front of their bike that Al bought from John Penton in 1968. Al was the first person to buy a Penton Motorcycle. Al's bike, serial no. V003, was restored by Kip Kern in time to take center stage for the Mid-Ohio event.

The bottom photo is Barry Ely's restored Penton 250 Hare Scrambler. It took the spot of a 250cc BMW R27 that was moved inside the tent that day to be in the John Penton section.

Behind and to the right of Barry's bike are some of the many bushes and trees that Paul Danik brought in to help dress up the display.

The photo's on the next page show some of the outdoor activities that were going on.

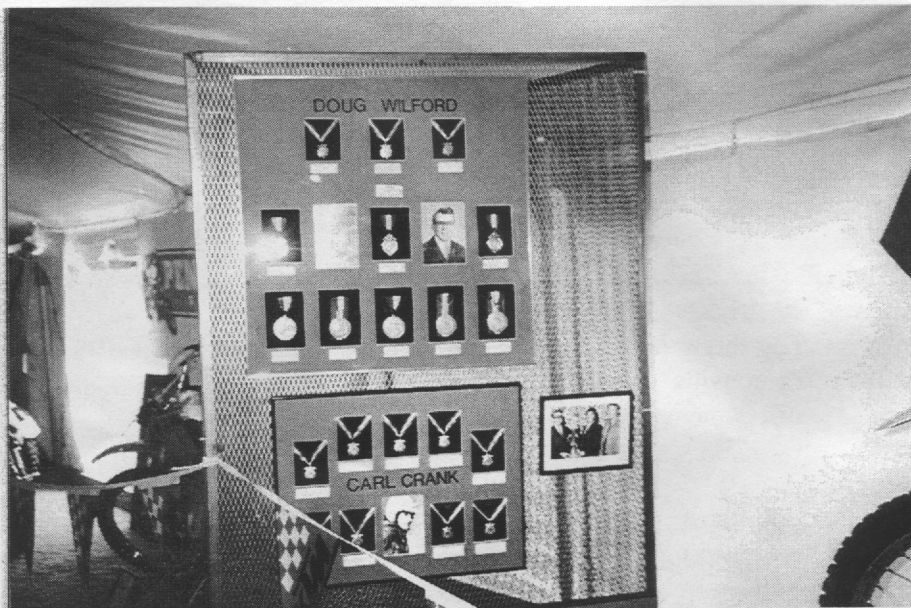
On the top left is Wayne, Harriet, and Lee Buffenmeyer of Pa. Harriet is wearing one of the coveted, limited-edition, "Penton" t-shirts that we were selling.

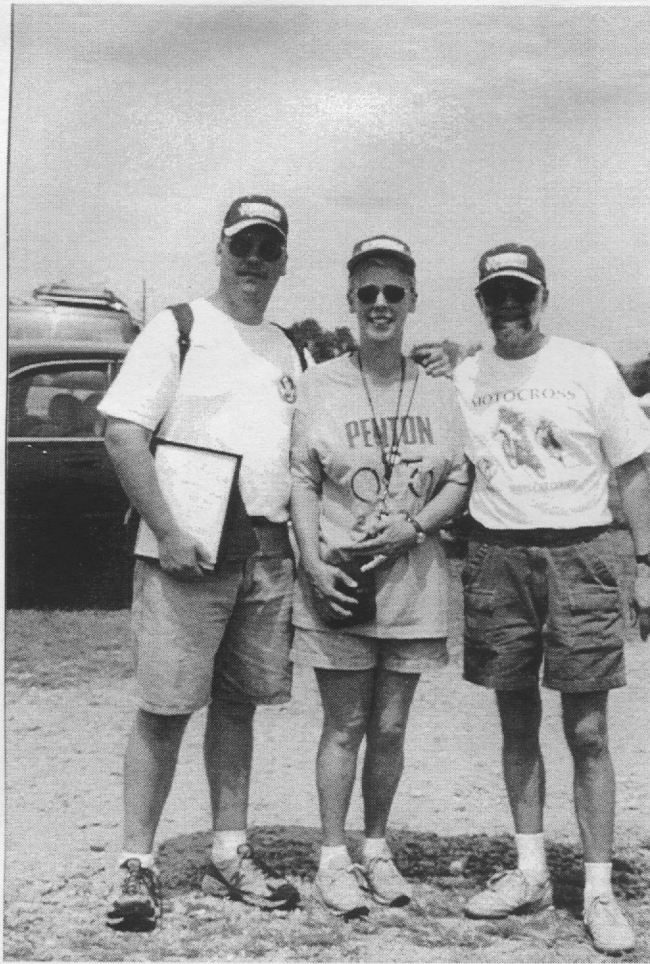
On the top right, John Penton is handing over one of the special plaques after judging one of the AMA's bike shows.

The bottom left is a photo of (left to right) Elmer Towne of Ohio, Barbara Weisman and her husband Matt of Ohio, and Don Rosene of Alaska. Elmer, Matt, and Don worked for Penton Imports and took some time outside the display to share some memories.

Barb worked on mapping out the interior arrangement of the "Penton" display tent.

The bottom right photo is of Scott Brogan and his son (left) and Dane Leimbach (right). Scott loaned Dane his Penton to ride as one of the escorts with John Penton on Saturday and Sunday.





The time at Mid-Oho was an opportunity to meet some of our hero's. on the right is a photo of Kevin LaVoie autographing a gas tank.

On Sunday, some of the ISDT riders posed for the cameras as they were getting ready to take the parade lap around the Mid-Ohio race track. L to R - Dave Mungenast of Missouri, Paul Danik of Pennsylvania, John Penton, and Tom Penton of Oregon.

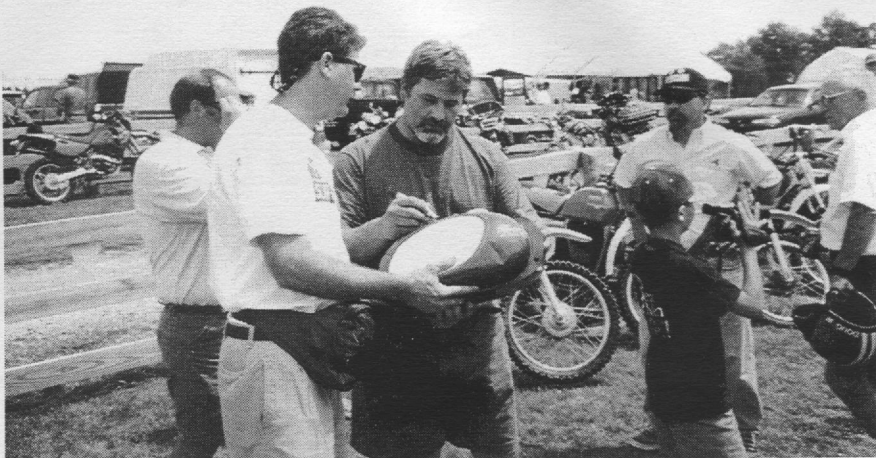
After their parade lap, some of the riders lined up for a group shot with their spouses. L to R - Paul Danik, Don Rosene, Donna and John Penton, Dave and Barbara Mungenast, Tom Penton, and GiGi and Jack Penton.

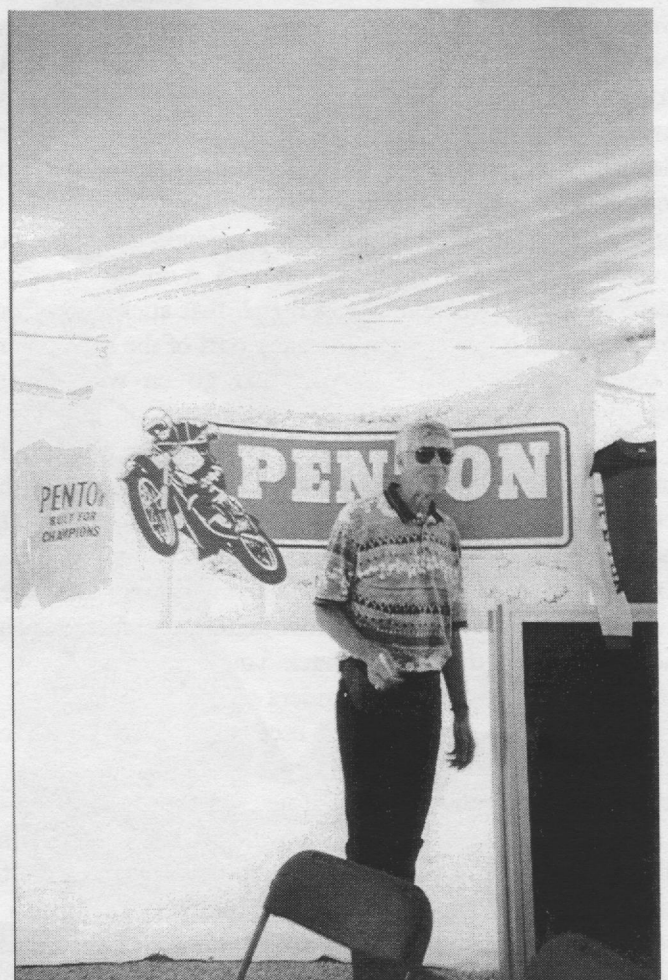
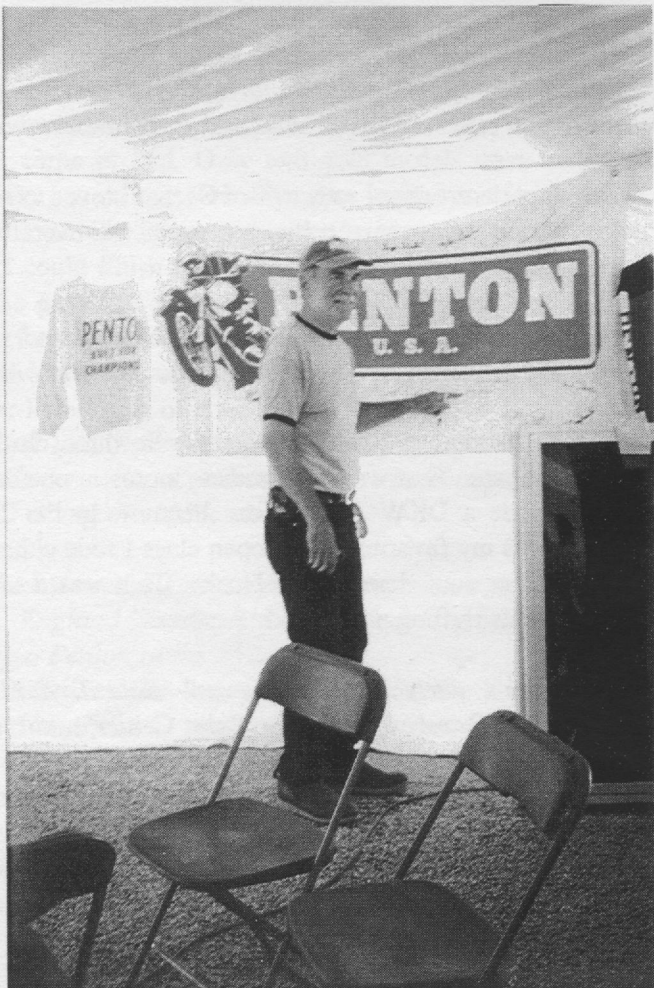
The top two photos on the next page were taken at the race track as the riders were waiting their time to ride. On the left, John Penton proudly holds the steel tank 125cc Penton that he rode. On the right, Dan Leimbach stands with his favorite Penton to ride, a 100cc Berkshire.

Don Rosene came to Mid-Ohio all the way from Anchorage, Alaska to be at the event. The bottom left photo shows him pointing to his autograph on the Penton banner. Don started working for the Penton organization in March of 1973.

Elmer Towne and his wife Kathie worked with John at Penton Imports until 1984. The bottom right photo shows Elmer after he signed his name on the Penton banner.

The Mid-Ohio event was a dream that came true. It was the Penton Owners Group's way of paying recognition to the man, John Penton, while he is still alive and well. It was done professionally thanks to the dedication, hard work, careful planning, and cooperation of it's members.





## CARL CRANKE

by Alan Buchner

*In my conversation with Penton owners for the past several years, most people would ask about John Penton during the conversation. For some strange reason, during many conversations I would have with West Coast Penton owners the name Carl Cranke would be the first name asked about. During some of the monthly meetings, I had heard about Carl and what a talented rider he was, but I never expected him to have the following that he does. I met Carl for the first time in April at the AMA Vintage Days event at Sears Point where "Penton" was the feature marque and he took time off, away from his family to join us at the event. The following is a little background on Carl and some of the stories that he shared with us.*

*Carl Cranke was born in Lake Charles, Louisiana and raised in northern California. He was a quiet kind of kid while growing up but that all changed when he discovered motorcycles.*

### **My first bike.**

"While I was going to high school in 1964 there was a motorcycle shop along the way to and from school. It was Orangevale Motorcycle Shop that sold Suzuki, Triumph, Greeves and Maico motorcycles. In order to hang around the shop and get to know more about these wonderful machines I offered my services to help out in doing anything. The owner, Marion Pyle, gave me the job of cleaning the cosmoline off of the new bikes. This was coated on the bikes to protect them from the elements during shipment. No one at the shop enjoyed this chore but I eagerly jumped in to do it. It was a messy job that required using a solvent to remove all that sticky goo from the bikes, but it got me into the back part of the shop where I could see all of that things that go on with fixing, repairing, and building bikes."

"After a few months they put together a specially tuned 50cc Suzuki for me to ride at 3 Star Raceway, the local dirt track which was a 1/10 mile oval flat track. In those days, the novice riders were lined up on the front line. As riders would show their skills by winning races, they were moved back to the next row behind the novices. The more you won, the further back you were placed for a starting position with the best riders on the back row."

"So there I was at my first race on my very own race bike and I never told any of the guys at the bike shop that I never even rode a motorcycle before.

"At the next race I was put on the second row because of my win at the last race. This meant that I would have to pass the riders on the front row and I told Bob Taylor that I did not know how to pass and I asked him what I should do. He took me out onto the track with my bike and placed it on

the outside berm. "This is where you ride your bike. Keep it wide open until you pass everyone" he told me. So, that is what I did. I put the bike on the outside cushion and rode it all the way around the track. I had a couple of tight squeezes when I passed some riders who were also riding the outside edge and I somehow managed to get between them and the fence."

"I always rode the cushion and I did it with the throttle wide open. My bike was so fast that I won every race for the rest of the season. The more races I went to however, I did notice that the bike was becoming a little harder to control if I would let up on the throttle and I would have to make sure that it was kept wide open to prevent that small bike from bogging down. I found out later that Bob was gradually upping the gear ratio on the bike for each race I went to. This is how I learned how to race dirt tracks"

*Carl, you won many dirt track races, what brand of bikes did you ride.*

"I was riding Suzukis, Triumph, Bultaco, & Jawa. My favorite bike was a special Triumph Cub short tracker. I liked Bultaco for TT and scrambles."

*Where did you do your short track racing?*

"I raced all over northern California and southern California. In my pro novice year, 1968, I was the HiPoint novice shorttracker in the nation."

*You competed in desert races. What brand and sizes of bikes did you ride and which was your favorite brand and size?*

"My first desert race I rode a 73cc Sachs. I loved to ride Pentons later on in my career. It was great to win overall on a 125cc bike."

*You then moved into riding MX. What brand and size of bikes did you ride and which was your favorite brand and size?*

"I rode motocross because I could ride three classes (125, 250, open). That was 9 20 minute motos in one day! At first I rode a DKW 125 (before Penton). In the 250 class, CZ was my favorite! In the open class I rode either a 360/380 CZ or sometimes a 400 Husky. That was a trick switching sides shifting as you rode 9 motos."

*It was Carl's early experience with Bob Taylor, a mechanic at Orangevale Motorcycle Center, that he learned not only how to ride but how to repair motorcycles and make them go faster. Bob taught him the tricks of how to port the cylinders of motors. Carl was always known for never leaving home without his grinder. He was the master at taming the KTM 250 motors to make them more powerful and controllable.*

### The Penton experience

"In 1971 the West Coast Distributor was after me to ride a Bultaco at the local tracks. I did not like Bultacos and I turned him down. I had my eye on riding a Penton. I went to the local dealership and asked them to sponsor me with one of the new Pentons to race at the local MX tracks. They turned me down because they were sponsoring another rider. I was upset with being turned down and decided that I would have to prove myself by beating their Penton rider. I took advantage of the Bultaco dealer by accepting his offer to ride the Bultaco. I raced it once at the next MX race and won. I went back to the Penton dealer and they gave me a Penton to ride. That was the last time I ever rode a Bultaco."

"In early 1972 I read about the I.S.D.T. events and had a desire to compete in it. Fred Moxley of Penton West contacted John Penton about my desire to ride the qualifiers for the upcoming ISDT event and what a talented rider I was. John had doubts about me because I was one of those California riders. John knew California riders could ride in the desert but that they did not have the skills to ride the woods, water, and mud of the Enduros in the east. Fred persisted and John agreed to meet me and check out my riding skills. When I met John for the first time, John knew that he was wasting his time and I became known as that long haired hippie from California."

"I was given a new 175cc Puch by John to ride in the last 2 day qualifier of the season in southern Ohio. It was a nasty event with lots of mud holes. Out of 200 starters, only very few riders finished the course. I was one of them and I came in 2nd. Only two gold medals were awarded. Carl Bergen on a 250 Husky came in first and I on my 175 Puch. John was impressed (since he knew that there was no way I could finish the event let alone win, riding that bike) and he gave me a place on the 1972 Trophy Team. That Puch was a piece of junk. Before I rode it in the event, I pulled the motor apart and ported it out to obtain all the power I could out of it."

*Carl qualified and went to his first I.S.D.T. event in Spindleruv Mlyn, Czechoslovakia where he won a Gold medal riding the 125cc class.*

*Carl shared a story about his experience at the Isle of Man, England event held in 1975 during which he was riding a Penton in the 350cc class.*

"1975 was the last year where on the sixth day the special test was a road race run on the city streets and riders rode their bikes equipped with knobby tires. All of the following Six Day events had their special test run on a natural terrain course and run as a MX race."

"Jack Penton rode the special test first. I asked him how the course was. He said that it was OK and that I should have no problem taking the corners because the knobby

tires would slide around the turns just like dirt track racing."

"I grabbed the lead in my race. At the first turn I set the bike up and gassed it to slide around the turn. The bike kept sliding and I wound up going up and over the curb. Behind me were two CZ riders on their Jawas. As I jumped the curb, I remember them riding by, you know their riding style, sitting straight up even in the turns, riding side by side. As they negotiated the turn, They turned their heads to watch me hit the curb, then turn their heads back to continue on their way. When I saw them the way that they looked at me, I could sense what they were thinking (typical American rider, careless and rash with no sense of consistency). This embarrassment motivated me to turn this road race into a flat track and catch up to these guys. I pored it on and soon caught up with them at another turn in the course. They were riding side by side when I went around them on the outside, tucked in, sideways, Freddie Nix style."

*Carl was the only American rider to win that special test. He took home a Gold medal.*

*On July 8, 2000 Carl Crank was inducted into the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum in Pickerington, Ohio.*



Carl Cranke and the Penton 250 that he borrowed to ride around the Mid-Ohio track as one of John Penton's honor guard on July 8.

**Tech Tips**  
**Carl Cranke 250 porting**  
 by Alan Buehner

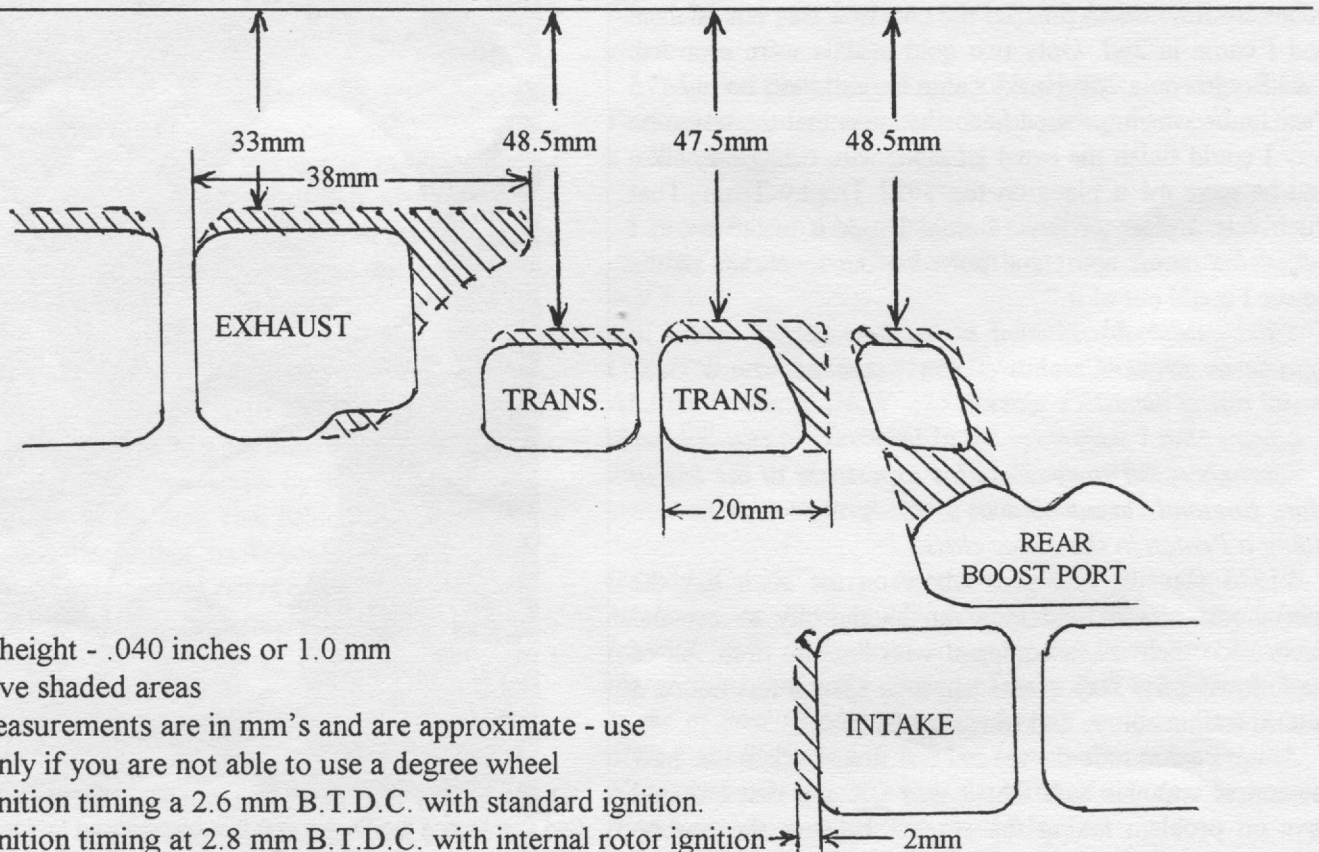
In January, I contacted Greg Johnson of West Virginia who faxed me a copy of a Penton West Dealer Service Bulletin (no. 7) issued by Carl Cranke who was the Service Manager at the time. In my conversation with Carl at Sears Point in April, I asked him if his porting is just for enduro riding. His response was that it was good for any kind of riding. In talking to people who have hidden one of Carl's bikes, their response was that the power was available anywhere on the throttle and that it was controllable and predictable. The following is his porting specs:

1. Set the deck height (distance from top of cylinder to top of the top ring) at 1.0 mm or .040 inches.
2. Install a degree wheel and find top dead center
3. Rotate engine clockwise 86 degrees and scribe a line above the exhaust port.
4. Rotate engine 114 degrees A.T.D.C. and scribe a line above second set of transfer ports.
5. Rotate engine 116 degrees A.T.D.C. and scribe a line above the front transfer and rear boost ports.

6. Rotate engine 80 degrees A.T.D.C. and scribe a line on the piston along the bottom of the inlet port.
7. Raise and widen all ports to the scribe lines according to the diagram supplied. (NOTE: be sure to radius exhaust port to top edge).
8. Match and blend transfer port passages at bottom of cylinder to match crank cases.
9. Match inlet manifold to inlet port. (Use gasket as a guide).
10. Use an expansion chamber with the dimensions supplied.
11. For tight race tracks, use an internal rotor ignition (timing 2.8mm B.T.D.C.)
12. Carburation will remain basically the same, but will vary according to local track conditions.
13. Port timing in degrees of total duration:

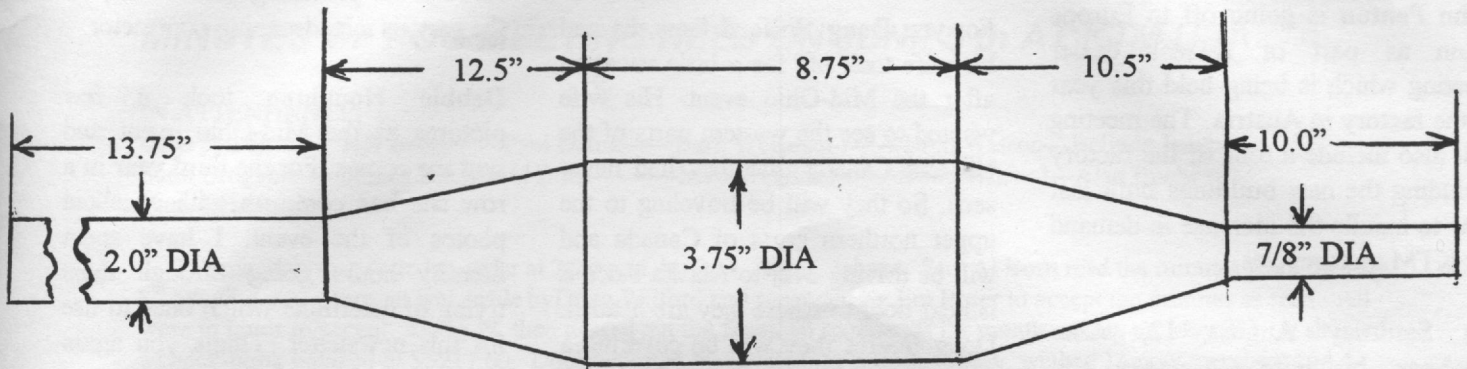
	Standard Cylinder	Modified Cylinder
Inlet Port	160 degree	160 degree
Second Transfers	124-125 degree	132 degree
First Transfer and Boost Port	121-122 degree	128 degree
Exhaust Port	184-185 degree	188-190 degree

**TOP OF CYLINDER**



1. Deck height - .040 inches or 1.0 mm
2. Remove shaded areas
3. All measurements are in mm's and are approximate - use only if you are not able to use a degree wheel
4. Set ignition timing a 2.6 mm B.T.D.C. with standard ignition. Set ignition timing at 2.8 mm B.T.D.C. with internal rotor ignition

## 250 EXPANSION CHAMBER



NOTE: Head pipe length taken from cylinder flange - measured through center line of pipe.

### Fashions

Bobby Lucas is one of our regular contributors to the Tech Tips section and is our technical expert when it comes to the KTM motors and MC5 bikes. For this issue he is bringing us up to date on the latest styles. For those of you who missed him at Mid-Ohio, we have included a photo of him on the right. That is him standing in the center, and his son Brandon on the right. They were both dressed up in the latest fashions that are the rage this year down in Texas. For our foreign members who still have a stereotype of what Texans should look like, the cowboy boots, jeans, and hats are now out of vogue. The sneakers and white socks that Bobby is wearing is the standard fare for the 30 and over crowd. The loafers, baggy pants, and wide brim hat that Brandon is wearing is the typical choice for the younger crowd. If you are planning on traveling to Texas you now know what to pack and wear.

### Lost and Found

Barbara Weisman reported that an unclaimed item was left behind from the Mid-Ohio display. If you are missing an item that was loaned out to display and did not get it back, call Barb and describe what it was to reclaim it. Her phone number is (440) 356-4523.

Please be sure to compliment her on a nice job she did in planning and setting up the display.



## Latest News

**John Penton** is going off to Europe again as part of KTM's dealer meeting which is being held this year at the factory in Austria. The meeting will also include a tour of the factory including the new buildings built last year to handle the increase in demand for KTM motorcycles.

On Saturday August 12, **Alan Buehner**, his wife **Rosemary** and **Matt Weisman** and his wife **Barbara** attended a concert performed by **Lyle Lovett** in Lakewood, Ohio. After the concert, they were treated to a backstage meeting with Lyle along with a group of KTM employees including an enthusiastic **Elaine Cobb**.

**Lyle Lovett** owns a KTM dealership in Texas and is a Penton fan. He used to ride a steel tank Penton when he was younger. Last year he became the proud owner of a 1972 Six Days that was restored by **Kip Kern** which is now part of his growing collection of bikes.

It is too early to be certain, but there is a possibility that **Lyle Lovett** may attend the ISDT reunion in Arkansas Sept 30 - Oct. 1st.

**Glenn Leach** get the "where's my bike" award for his generosity in loaning his bike for one of the ISDT riders to use for the parade lap with **John Penton** at Mid-Ohio on Sunday. Glenn was standing around the tent in his MX pants and boots waiting for his bike to come back so that he could ride it over to the MX track in time to ride in the Penton Exhibition Ride. Unfortunately he had no idea that **John** and his ISDT contingent were riding over to the MX track after their parade lap to try and make it into the Penton Exhibition Ride also. They were about 5 minutes too late. The

good news is that **Glenn** did get his bike back.

For you **Doug Wilford** Fans, he and his wife took off for a little vacation after the Mid-Ohio event. His wife wanted to see the western parts of the US and Canada that they had never seen. So they will be traveling to the upper northern parts of Canada and will be driving over to Alaska since it is next door to where they are headed. **Doug** figures they will be covering a couple of zillion miles of driving which should take a couple of months.

Of all of the millions of people that went through the display tent at Mid-Ohio, there were many celebrities to show up. **Mayor Randall Huches** of Pickerington, Ohio (the new home of the AMA) along with one of his councilmen stopped in on Sunday to check things out and were overwhelmed with the fine quality of bikes and items on display.

**Jeff Borer** gets the "Just in Time" award for his restoration of the beautiful NSU that was owned and ridden by **John Penton** from 1958 thru 1962. **Jeff** pulled an all-niter on Friday night and did not finish until late Saturday morning so that it could be put on display in the Penton display tent on Saturday afternoon at Mid-Ohio.

**Paul Danik** gets the "Green Thumb" award for providing the bushes and trees that were part of the display at Mid-Ohio. We didn't ask him where he got them because they sure looked nice inside the tent and we didn't want to lie to the Mid-Ohio officials if they came around asking questions. I sure hope that he put them back where he got them.

It was **Barbara Wiesman's** idea to have the bushes and trees in the tent. She had them drawn on her scale drawing of the tent set-up months before the event. I had no idea that

she was serious about having them. I am glad that **Paul Danik** came through for providing them. **Paul**, by the way, is a landscaping contractor.

**Debbie Houghton** took a few pictures at the Mid-Ohio event and sent me copies. For the third year in a row she has come up with excellent photos of the event. I have spent literally hours going through them trying to determine which ones to use for this newsletter. Thank you again for sharing your gift.

In talking to **Carl Cranke** just before the printing of this newsletter, he informed me that he was part of a Puch team that included **Dick Burleson** and **Bob Bruzinski** for the 2 day qualifier run in 1972 in southern Ohio. **Dick** won a silver medal and they won the Team Trophy.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**September 9-10** The **John Penton GNCC** races in Millfield, Ohio (Rt 13 east of Athens). **Dave Sanders** of Ill. and **Barb & Matt Weisman** of Ohio will be attending to set up a Penton display. **John** will be out of the country and will not be there.

**Sept 30 - Oct. 1** The 4th annual ISDT reunion will be held at the **Byrds Campground** in the Ozark mountains - Cass, Arkansas. The Penton display will be set up. There will be many Penton owners riding the event. There will be a Saturday evening banquet. For information call: **Bart Winters** at (501) 646-1168 or check [www.geocities/isdt\\_reunion.com](http://www.geocities/isdt_reunion.com)

**March 2000** The second annual Ride With **Paul Danik** will be held in **Cochran, Pa.** More information will be in the next newsletter. Prep your bike before storing it for the winter so that it will be ready to go in March.

Meeting minutes have been removed from this document.



**PENTON OWNERS GROUP**