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A Newsletter for the Members of the San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club

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Wild on the Streets In Idyllwild

© Jim Weseman

Queen Nina (aka Shero) outdid herself, setting a new gold standard for ride planning and organization: An overnight to Idyllwild with perfect weather, great riding conditions, comfortable accommodations, and a wonderful dinner. But, I'm getting ahead of myself.

Saturday April 30th dawned bright and clear, and a dawn patrol rider like me could even sleep in a bit, as the big meet-up in Ramona wasn't scheduled until 09:00, with a scheduled departure @10:00. My plan: To ride the new (to me) Monster Bobber, and see whether it would work out as a day-trip ride (100+ miles, with occasional stops). Having borrowed a mini-tank bag from Mikey (five liters or so, right?) I needed to pack real light, no room for

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Monthly Meetings

Are held at:

**The San Diego Automotive Museum
In Balboa Park**

On

**The Second Monday of Each Month
At 7:30 P.M.**

**Enter at Door to North
of Main Museum Entrance**

Herald Policies & Editorial Statement

The Herald promises to provide an interesting forum for all antique, vintage, and classic motorcycle related information and will attempt to do so in a timely manner. Since we publish bi-monthly, please present any items for publication early enough for inclusion. We accept no responsibility for items furnished after the deadline.

As a volunteer staff, we expect other members to help by providing items from time to time. We have a large club membership base with a varied interest in all aspects of motorcycling and, as such, we believe all members have stories of interest.

Let us hear from the garages, sheds and shops of the membership. This publication will remain viable only with the help and consideration of all. Our Editorial phones and e-mail addresses are available. We look forward to publishing your stories.

SDAMC CHARTER

The San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club is a non-profit mutual benefit corporation organized and dedicated to the preservation of antique motorcycles, and in furtherance of such purposes, the sponsorship of antique motorcycle rides, exhibitions and related activities, and the encouragement of social, fraternal and educational activities among its members and the public, with membership open to all persons having an interest in antique motorcycles.

EDITORIAL DISCLAIMER

IDEAS AND THOUGHTS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER REFLECT ONLY THE VIEWS OF ITS EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS. IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE, CONTENTS OR ANY OTHER PART OF THE HERALD, PLEASE LET US KNOW. ONE OF THE BENEFITS OF OUR CLUB IS THE SHARING OF EACH OF YOUR IDEAS AND EXPERIENCES; THEN WE ALL LEARN MORE.

Please send your contributions to any of the Editors as listed above.

Product Review: Bead Popper™

© Ron Caudillo

In the "olden days", virtually all motorcyclists had the ability (even if not the desire) to fix flats and install new tires. All you needed were a couple of tire irons, a patch kit, and a hand pump. One began the process by stomping on the tire's sidewall to break the bead from the rim. The process usually ended with couple of pinched inner tubes and few scraped knuckles. Nowadays, most people figure that flat tires are best repaired by using a cell phone and a credit card!

With the advent of tubeless tires, life is much easier, but not without some new challenges. In my experience, breaking a tubeless tire bead away from the rim is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to perform single-handedly without resorting to a specialty tool. Besides being expensive, most of these tools are far too cumbersome to carry in your bike's tool kit.



The compact Bead Popper™ tool (retailing for \$19.95) appears like a "Fisher-Price" plastic chisel that is hammered between the tire and the rim, causing the bead to break. Being plastic, the chisel won't damage your cast wheels, but some care is needed to avoid damaging the striking surface. The instructions recommend using something like a blunt mallet. I suppose that a good-sized rock or just about any Harley part would suffice in a pinch. (I only mention the Harley parts since they are so frequently found on the side of the road!) The instructions recom-

mend working gradually around the tire's circumference, starting at the 12 o'clock position, followed by the 6 o'clock, 3 o'clock and finally the 9 o'clock positions. Eventually, the entire bead should break free from the rim. Of course the process must be repeated on the other side of the rim, before the tire can be removed from the rim.

The first time I tried the tool, it did not work as advertised. Following the instructions to the letter, the chisel could never seem to separate the tire enough to properly break the bead. After Barb released me from the penalty box (having received a penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct), I realized that the point of the chisel was simply too acute ("sharp" for all of you Rhodes scholars out there). Using a coarse half-round rasp, I dulled the point slightly, and from then on, the tool worked great.

One of the great things about tubeless tires is how rapidly one can get back on the road after getting a flat. Using aerosol stop-leak, or rubberized string ("gummy worms"), or rubber plugs, a repair can usually be accomplished in minutes. But realize that these techniques are only intended to allow you to limp 50-or-so miles, at a reduced speed, until a more permanent repair can be made. This repair will inevitably entail either a new tire (\$SCHACHING!!!) or a hot/cold patch applied from the inside of the tire's carcass. Either way, **someone** is going to have to remove the tire from the rim.

Having used the tool successfully on three occasions, I can strongly recommend this tool to any rugged individualist who wishes to be fully self-reliant regarding tubeless tire repairs. This tool is cheap and effective (after modification). It's also sufficiently light and compact to carry in your long journey tool kit.

By the way, make sure to score some nylon rim protectors. They only cost about three bucks a pair. These little gadgets clip onto the edge of a rim so that the rim is not scratched while the tire is being levered off.

Contact:

**Race Tools Inc,
121 Lincoln Ave.
Rochester, NY 14611
(585) 328-9161
www.racetools.com**

(Photo © Race Tools, Inc.)

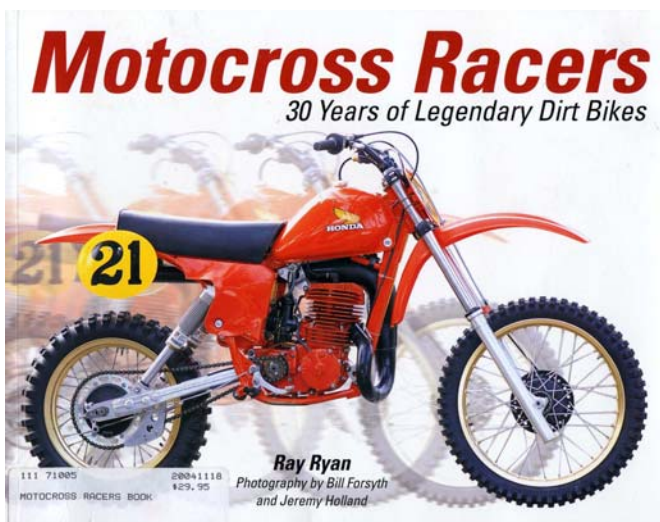
Book Review

Motocross Racers

© Chris Wykoff

Motocross Racers
by Ray Ryan
ISBN 0-7603-1239-7

In 1953 Les Archer, recently released from service duty, resumed his scrambles racing. Les' friend, Ron Hankins, built a 531 frame, derived from the Featherbed frame design, around a Norton Manx motor. His design used just one upper frame tube to accommodate a smaller gas tank and gracefully curved the lower tubes to meet at the heavily gusseted headstock. That year Les raced in 29 races, winning 11. Then he followed that up with 15 wins the next year. Norton was so impressed they threw their backing into Les' team after his first win at Shrublands Park.



The Manx motor was also wrenched on by Hankins and was basically the long-stroke road-racing motor. He was able to get about 42 non-peaky horses for a wide, usable power band. By the early sixties, with many British and European wins to their name,

Archer and Hankins had moved on to the short-stroke Manx motor in a DOHC configuration. A Mahle chromed barrel, twin plugs and an 11:1 compression ratio were the main differences from 'stock' Manx. In 1966 Les sold his Norton stable to the American Bryan Kenney. One of these bikes was the last short-stroke Manx, which is pictured in this book. Les was moving on from four-strokes because the tide was definitely turning for all of motocross, the two-stroke revolution was in full swing.

There are several ways to chronicle the history of a motor sport, through profiles of the men and women who helped shape the history, by following the history of famous races or venues or by tracing the development of the racing machines and the evolution of the technology. This latter path is followed in the excellent 'Motocross Racers', a wide format paperback that profiles 33 of the most famous machines associated with the sport. From the crude simplicity of the first CZ two-strokes to the sophistication of the modern-day Yamaha YZ, or from the raw beauty of the Gold Star to the raw power of the Maico MC490, this book covers the wide range of machines that make up the history of the sport.

One of the stark realities that becomes apparent in reading 'Motocross Racers' is the quick turnover of the 'latest' technology. Les Archer's long run of wins through the '50s and the early '60s is unusual in motocross. The first three chapters deal with, successively, the Manx, Rickman Metisse and the Cheney Gold Star. Then you turn the page and the stone-simple CZ twin-port stares back, heralding the arrival of the revolution. Very quickly, the old British machines were being replaced by cheaper, lighter and more powerful European machinery. Like any motor sport, more power, less weight is the mantra that fuels the rapid development and, rapid obsolescence.

The photographs in 'Motocross Racers' are of the highest quality for a softcover book, even the few racing shots included are not the

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extras, so a hip flask and a Lexan® wine glass were the only must-haves.



For a Del Martian, there was only one route to Ramona: Out Del Dios to Via Rancho, then down Highland Valley/Bandy Canyon and up the grade on 78. Miraculously, there was only one slo-mobile in front of me, and, will wonders never cease, he pulled off at the first available turnout and waved me on. A portent of good things to come?

The meet-up was at Packard's, and only upon arrival was the question presented "Is this the right Packard's?" Rumors were flying that there was a Packard's II somewhere West of town on 67, but as the remaining riders (including Nina) straggled into town, the fears of a bifurcation abated.



Among others, Mikey and Roger came to see us off, and show off the new MGB-GT. Other riders made the meet-up a part of their rides, but were committed elsewhere, so wouldn't be able to join in the festivities. The favored marque for the riders seemed to be Duc, with Monsters being the most prevalent flavor. Out of the 15 or so bikes, there were four Monsters (if memory serves), plus Joe and Ellen on the ST-3.



Somewhere shortly after 10:00 we were off, and a spirited ride up 78 to Santa Isabel, then up 79 through Warner Springs to Aguanga (home of the exploding double-wides), with only minor traffic. Up 371 to Anza for our first gas/rest stop, and a chance to behold the sight of someone making a Britney Spearsian visit to the Porta-Sans (a bit too obscure



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a reference for the pop culture-deprived, perhaps?).



After gassing, and un-kinking for those of us on the jockey bikes, a quick blitz up 371 to 74, and the run into Idyllwild (some claim to have seen triple digits on the way; not me, you understand, but some). Amazingly, the traffic remained relatively light the entire way. Around 90 miles from Ramona, only 20 or so miles



from Anza to Idyllwild, and less than two hours. Nina had arranged for a luncheon at the Bread Basket, with meals to satisfy the heartiest appetites.



Then, on to the Blue Bird Lodge, for check-in, regroup, and for some, a chance to plan the afternoon rides. For others, a chance to begin the pre-prandial bench racing/drink fest. The accommodations were close to ideal; moto-friendly, as you can see from the parking, and those of us situated in the Heights could relax in the afternoon sun, and cast aspersions on the po' folk down in the Bottoms. The occasional whiff of burning grass (weed growth seems to be a feature of our wet Winter) only served to highlight the contentment.



As afternoon segued into evening, Nina and company prepared the repast, a healthy meal with a subtle blend of exotic herbs and spices.

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After much discussion of the state of the universe, and numerous of the world's knotty problems solved with the application of implacable logic, many among us found our way into the arms of Morpheus (passed out in our beds, for the less literary among you).



Sunday dawned glorious, and a number of cups of semi-decent coffee were a welcome way to pry open sticky eyelids. A number of separate plans were made for brekkie, with many opting for a return to the BB. From the various breakfasts, smaller groups made inde-



pendent plans to wend their myriad ways back to San Diego.

The only fly-in-the-ointment for Yr. Correspondent was the discovery, the night before, that a wee cord or two was beginning to peep out from the Monster's rear tire. One of the problems of buying a bike with used tires is you don't know what the original tread pattern looked like, and wear bars were a distant memory. So, Hobson's Choice: Do I try to find a replacement (in Idyllwild?? on a Sunday?? Not a chance!), or do I nurse it down off the mountain and the 100+ miles back to the hobby garage? But for the willingness of Smitty and Jo to hover over me like Guardian Angels for the entire trip back to Carmel Valley, I doubt I would have had the nerve.



As it was, with a bit of discipline on the throttle, a distinct effort to stay on the edges of the tires, and inspection stops every 15-20 miles, the rear tire held up (going from four inches of two cords exposed to 18-24 inches of five cords, with cord fraying in the last 20 miles), and no wild get-offs were experienced.

Wonderful weather, superb organization, stellar camaraderie, and, at last report, we all survived. Who could ask for anything more?

(Photos © Jim Weseman & Joe Michaud)

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blurry, smudged snapshots you might see in cheaper, more mass-produced motor sport books. At first I hesitated over the \$30 price but the photos hooked me and I think it is one book I'll definitely keep. There's something about a racing machine stripped to the bare essentials that transforms pure function into art. While crude looking compared to the previous bikes, the CZ's stripped down look gives it an honest beauty of form following function.

The book spends most of its pages on bikes from the Seventies and Eighties but includes the previously mentioned bikes plus three others from the Sixties. For the most part the bikes are significant models in racing but even the Hodaka Super Rat gets a nod as it was the cheap, simple introduction to dirt-biking for the masses, myself included, and introduced thousands to motocross. Some of the bikes featured in the photos are significant racing machines, such as a works CCM and Brad Lackey's \$80000 RC450. Each bike gets about 2 or more pages of text about that machine's place in motocross history. Ray Ryan writes fluidly and gives good attention to detail. This is a well-researched, well-written book that I highly recommend even if you are not into motocross. The photos alone make the book coffee-table worthy.



World's Most Expensive Loading Ramp

© Greg McDonald

When I retired in 1997 I thought it would be great sport to ship a motorcycle down to Chile and tour around the Cape region and Patagonia-with no schedule. I located a near-new BMW GS in Houston through the BMW Owner's Club and flew there and had a leisurely trip on back roads returning to California.

There was a lot of preparation involved for touring for an indefinite period in such a remote land. And the shipping arrangements and documents . . . almost insurmountable. All I could think about was "This better be an excellent adventure to make all of this worth while." My son Matt had some time off from work and decided to go along and ride on the back.

I found an international freight forwarder/shipping broker in San Pedro who, for a small fortune, took care of the crating and shipping of the bike to Valparaiso, Chile. I had the good fortune to have a friend whose in-laws had a paper company in Santiago and offered to take care of customs and receiving down on that end.

All that was left was for Matt and me to fly to Santiago. It's a long way to Chile—and contrary to popular belief, it is not below us, but rather far to the east, below the east coast of the United States, or even Bermuda. Once in Santiago we got a hotel room in the middle of town, close to the main office of the paper company. All was in order! They had put the machine through customs and had taken care of the paper work and it was being trucked up to Santiago to arrive the next day.

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Matt and I went out to a nice restaurant to celebrate our first night and everything going so well. It was not like a typical South American city, but rather like a European city with a more formal touch. After dinner we walked down a pedestrian boulevard which had performers and all sorts of crafts and food stations. People strolling along having a good



John Healey and Greg MacDonald:
Showing off the \$10,000 loading ramp

time. Out of nowhere three guys jumped me from behind and there was a big struggle because my wallet had much more money and documents than it should have had. They got it and took off for an alley with me in hot pursuit. One guy blocked the alley and had a knife flashing in the air. I took him out with just a stab in my left knee. No problema! Down the alley the other two really worked me over. All the time I was thinking that all these nice people on the street would be there helping but when I crawled and limped back to the boulevard everyone had split except a kind old man and my son. The street was almost empty! Matt helped me back to the hotel but the manager would not let us use his phone to call the police or hospital—because he didn't want to get involved with a crime just like the swell folks down the boulevard. I didn't want to go to the hospital down there anyway and that night two maids looked after me in the room. The next day Matt arranged with the paper company to get

us a flight back to L.A. and to reverse the shipping process for the bike back home.

There was no permanent damage to me—except to my sense of adventure. The bike had a much better trip than I did, having a leisurely cruise up the west coast of South America, through the Panama Canal, up the Gulf to Texas, and then shipped by land back to San Pedro. But this took about two months! When it arrived John Healey and I took my truck down to San Pedro to pick it up. The shipping company brought this completely broken down crate out and put it in the back of my truck. We started out on the freeway but it started collapsing. We pulled into a shopping center parking lot and with the help of an electrical contractor having lunch, disassembled it and threw all the crating materials into a dumpster; that is everything except the plank that the wheels were resting on. When we got home we unloaded the bike and I attached a metal lip on the plank for use as a loading ramp. With the bike safe at home (no damage) I allowed myself, for the first time, to reflect on the entire saga beginning way back in Houston. The Chilean caper, once all the receipts were in (and quickly discarded) had cost me slightly over \$10,000. What did I have to show for it? Why, that beautiful imported hardwood loading ramp, easily worth \$10,000!

I use it all the time. Recently I cut a foot off it so it would fit in my new shortbed. John Healey was horrified: "Do you know what you've just done? You've just cut off \$2,000 worth of ramp!"



SDAMC Rides, Reminders & Upcoming Events

- ◆ **May 9 (Monday): SDAMC Monthly Meeting**
Monthly club meeting held at the Auto Museum, 7:30 pm. Earn Bonus Points! Win Valuable Prizes!
- ◆ **May 27-30 (Friday-Monday) Lake Cachuma Rally**
A **Mulrean Productions** event at beautiful Lake Cachuma, 15 miles North of Santa Barbara. The paltry sum of \$125.00 buys you camping, showers, and nine meals. Enjoy the field events, bike show, daily rides, prizes, cigars, and experiences to regale (or bore) your grandchildren with for years to come. Call 1.888.MCRALLY toll free or check the website www.britishconnection.org/events.html.
- ◆ **June 12 (Sunday): SDAMC Annual T-Shirt Ride**
Details not available at press-time.
- ◆ **June 13 (Monday): SDAMC Monthly Meeting**
Monthly club meeting held at the Auto Museum, 7:30 pm. Earn Bonus Points! Win Valuable Prizes!
- ◆ **July 8-10 (Friday-Sunday) Moto GP at Laguna Seca**
The MotoGP World Championship returns to the USA and Laguna Seca for the first time since 1994. Tickets and information at: www.laguna-seca.com/events
- ◆ **July 11 (Monday): SDAMC Monthly Meeting**
Monthly club meeting held at the Auto Museum, 7:30 pm. Earn Bonus Points! Win Valuable Prizes!
- ◆ **July 31 (Sunday) 2005 Boot Hill Memorial Run**
The 3rd Annual Boot Hill Memorial Run. This is a Poker Run with a Memorial at the end of the ride to pay our respects to those riders who have passed on to that super highway in the sky.

For Sale
Also check for photos on www.sdamc.net

Rumor has it that Scott Brown was helping to liquidate a collection of vintage Japanese bikes, but no further details were available at press time. He can be reached at NC Moto.



San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club

Membership Application

Purpose of Club

The San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club, Inc. is a non-profit mutual benefit corporation organized and dedicated to the preservation, restoration, and enjoyment of antique, vintage, and classic motorcycles, and in furtherance of such purposes, the sponsorship of antique motorcycle rides, exhibitions, and related activities, and the encouragement of social, fraternal, and educational activities among its members and the public.

NAME: _____

SIGNIFICANT OTHER _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY _____ **STATE** _____ **ZIP** _____

PHONE: (H) _____ **(W)** _____ **(Cell)** _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____ **(FAX)** _____

**May we include your name, phone numbers, and e-mail address in our Club Roster,
sent only to members? YES NO Note: Home address excluded**

NOTE: THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY. DO NOT SIGN UNLESS YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS RELEASE. The San Diego Antique Motorcycle Club, Inc. Hereinafter referred to as SDAMC, Inc. its board of directors and members shall not be liable or responsible for damage to property or any injury to persons, including myself, during any SDAMC, Inc. meeting, activity, or event even where the damage or injury is caused by negligence (except willful neglect). I understand and agree that all SDAMC, Inc. members and their guests participate voluntarily and at their own risks in all SDAMC, Inc. meetings, activities, and events. *I RELEASE* and hold SDAMC, Inc., its board of directors and members harmless for any injury or loss to my person or property which may result therefrom. I understand this means I agree not to sue SDAMC, Inc., its board of directors or members for any injury resulting to myself or my property in connection with any SDAMC, Inc. meeting, activity or event.

Applicant's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

**Note: Annual Dues are \$25.00 Mail To: SDAMC c/o SDAM
2080 Pan American Plaza
San Diego, CA 92101**

