

Germany battled the Czechs as America battled the motocross course. All the while an Italian named Gritti was playing spoiler. By Dale Boller

THE ISDT

• "HE'S AN ANIMAL," said Mike Hannon, who himself has obliterated entire forests, small mountains and motorcycles by the score while qualifying for the ISDT and winning National enduros. Hannon is an aggressive rider without much finesse—sheer strength and the laws of physics keep his careening Bultaco upright. It's easy to spot him—tall, apparently out of control and viciously fast. He easily qualified for the U.S. Trophy Team.

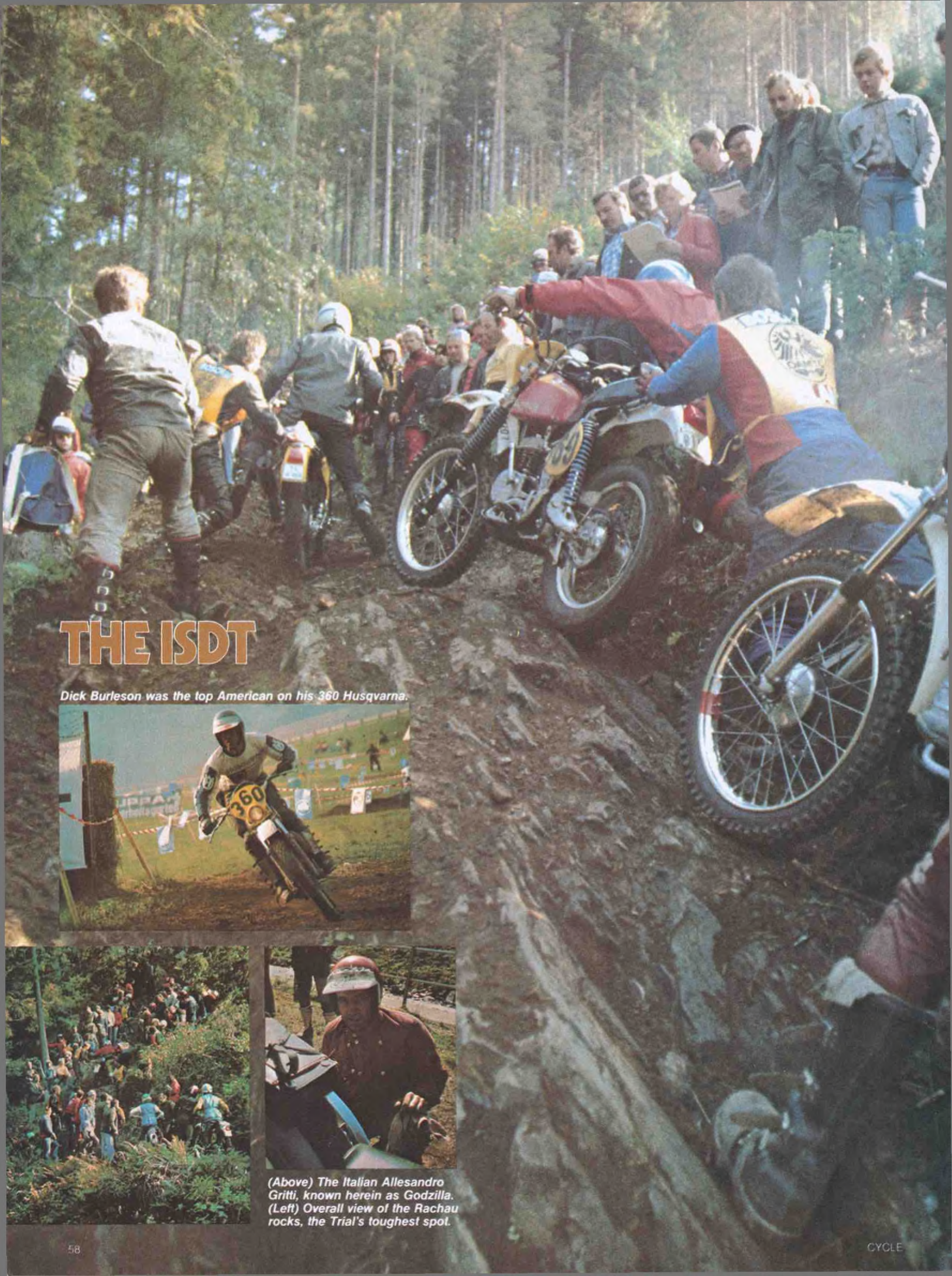
In Austria Hannon found himself on the same riding number with an Italian named Allesandro Gritti. Mr. Gritti contributed more to the outcome and color of the trial than any other individual. In fact he won the whole thing—no other rider had a better score. And here is Hannon, the American pit bull, calling Gritti an animal. Which means Mr. Gritti himself has to be Godzilla.

PHOTOGRAPHY—DALE BOLLER



Trophy winning West Germans fly in formation at the MX test.





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Dick Burleson was the top American on his 360 Husqvarna.



(Above) The Italian Alessandro Gritti, known herein as Godzilla.
(Left) Overall view of the Rachau rocks, the Trial's toughest spot.



"His trail pace is unbelievable," said Hannon, who rode with the Italian for 1016 miles. "I'd be all strung out on a fire road, and he'd come by with both wheels sliding and both feet up—20 mph faster, but always in control. He did the same thing on pavement. That's what got me—big dirt-track slides on the street. He never bobbed or got in too deep. I was scared for him at first, but later I realized he was a genius and it was natural. In tight woodsy sections I could keep up. I even passed him occasionally just to say I did it. But give him an open road and he was gone. No way I could keep up."

Gritti's blistering trail pace didn't make his Gold Medal any more valuable than Hannon's, but the same pace by Gritti and other Europeans in the twice-daily special tests kept the cream of American teams struggling to hold down mid-pack positions. That was the irony of the Austrian Trial. A five-minute motocross twice a day superseded 7 hours and 170 miles of daily trail to determine the winners. How this happened is a function of ISDT scoring and the fact that this year's trail sections were quite easy.

Each day, a 170-mile trail loop is divided into twelve to fifteen sections and a rider is assessed 60 points for every minute he is behind schedule at the end of each section. He also receives one point for every second it takes to negotiate the special test. In Austria this was a twisting, turning motocross completed by most people in just under five minutes (300 seconds)—or about 300 points worth, twice a day. A standing-start acceleration test down 200 meters of asphalt added another 50-or-so points to daily scores, so most riders totaled about 650 points per day on the basis of special tests alone. The other ways of collecting points were in general insignificant. Therefore, if a rider accumulated no trail points by losing time between sections (usually the case in Austria because of easy trail terrain), the two special tests and a drag race suddenly become 650 times more important than seven hours of trail.

Yet the trail is where a Six Day rider's traditional skills are best evaluated—riding unknown territory at speed, negotiating tough terrain, completing the famous four-minute tire change and simply finishing day after day.

Moaned John Penton, who spent \$60,000 to \$80,000 to field a U.S. Vase Team, "Our guys just aren't motocrossers." His guys are fantastic trail riders, good mechanics, and they're mentally disciplined. Yet they



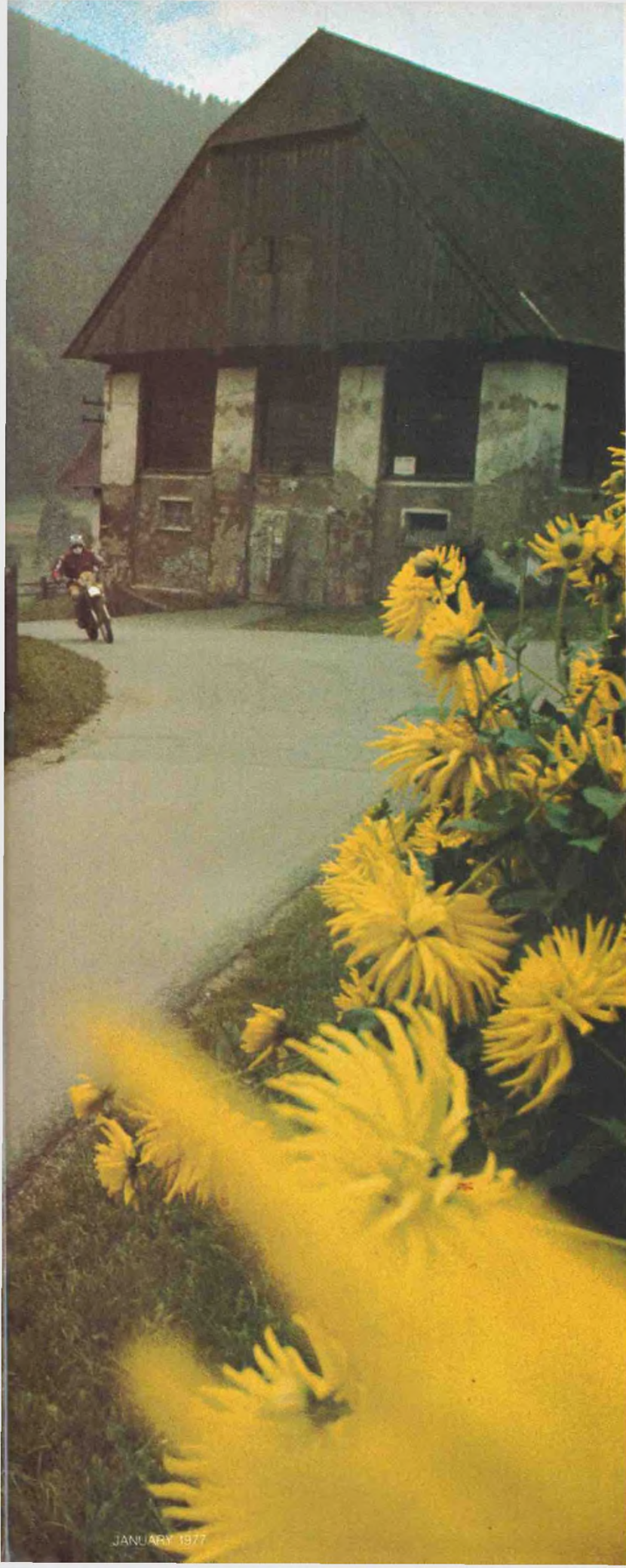
Carl Cranke plunges down a hill in the twice daily special test.



(Top) School kids flocked to the roadside during their lunch hour, and like all Austrian spectators, smiled and waved. (Left) Three riders plod through mud alley which appeared in the course four times. (Above) Yamaha's Chris Carter was the only American to win his motocross heat.

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finished a disappointing fourth because they lacked superhuman ability in one highly specialized skill.

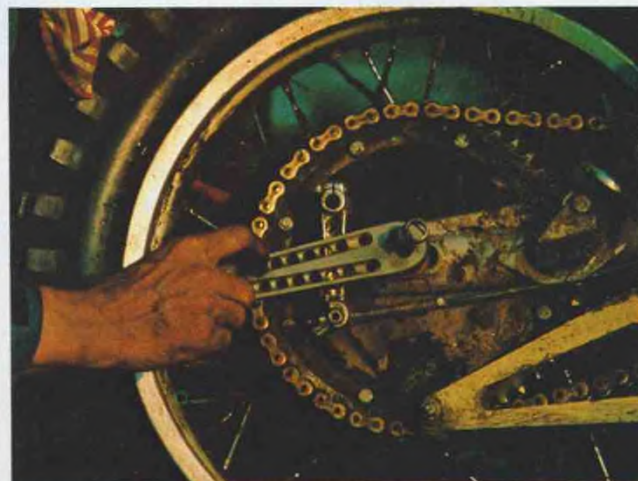
Six Day has changed from the times when a truly demanding course devoured half the field and five or six different special tests evaluated a variety of particular skills. Now it's a painless trail ride between motocross heats. Only 13 people, or 4½ percent of the 289 finishers, lost course marks. Less than 11 percent of the total entry DNFed.

Austria's trail was quite easy for two reasons: first, land closure problems reduced the number of genuine dirt paths available. Therefore a lot of city streets, paved country roads and public dirt roads were used. And second, speed averages were kept low to prevent berserk riding on these public thoroughfares. It was rumored that the sponsoring OAMTC (an Auto Club-type group) visited Italy two years ago to witness a Trial first-hand and were so shocked by "racing in the streets" that they vowed to make sure the same thing didn't happen in Austria.

Picture this year's Trial as a gorgeous ride through scenic Austria interrupted twice a day by a 5-minute motocross. Or a 4-minute and 24-second motocross if you're Harald Strossenreuther, the West German 125 ace who turned in the week's fastest special test on his KTM. He even beat Godzilla on that single best ride of the Trial, but Gritti's week-long average aboard his 250 KTM was still fastest.

The special test—which started on a farmer's field, went up a mountain, through the corner of a forest, then to and fro on a hillside that was infested with thick mud and numerous jumps—wiggled for two miles within a stone's throw of impound. Its tricky path, outlined with red and yellow ribbon, determined the outcome of the Trial. Every 15 seconds a man who had just finished riding 90 miles of trail had to ignore weariness and ram a tool-laden, mud-covered motorcycle around the course as fast as he could. The Germans were better at it than anyone else, winning seven of nine classes and the World Trophy. Czechoslovakia and their fleet of Jawas were next-best by virtue of a Vase victory and second place in the Trophy contest.

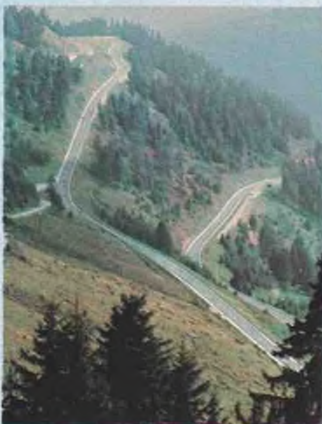
America had mounted its strongest team for the Vase competition—Dane Leimbach, Jack Penton, Tom Penton and Carl Cranke—all of whom arrived at course



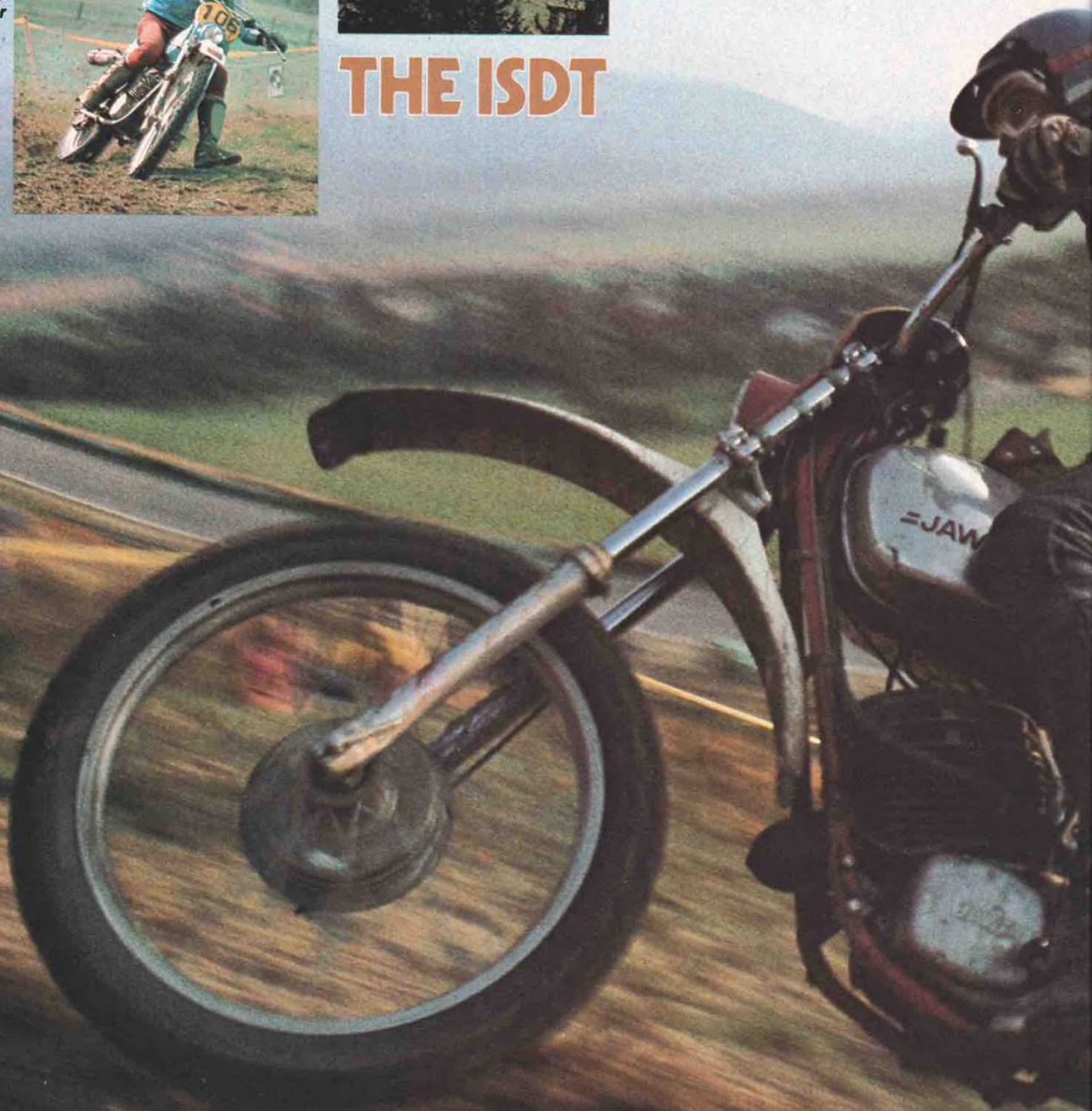
Exotic homemade special tools help in the four-minute tire change.

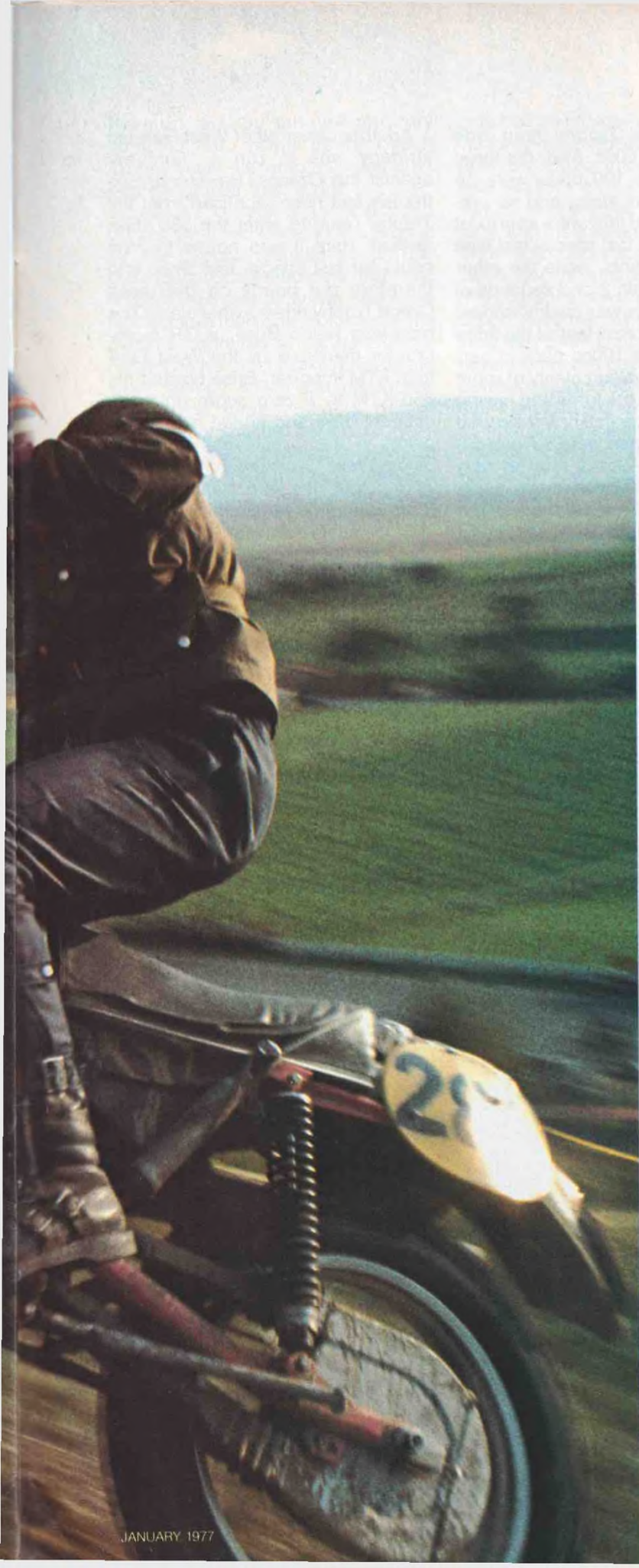


(Above) A broken arm didn't stop Austrian Reinhard Knoll from taking home a Silver. (Right) Harold Strossenreuther set the Trial's top special test time on this KTM. (Far right) One of the many paved roads.



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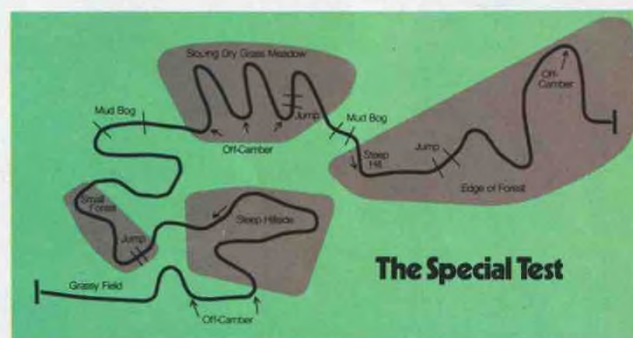


checks as much as 15 minutes *early*, and all of whom got out-motocrossed between the red and yellow ribbons. They placed fourth out of 16 nations—a fine showing in absolute terms—but still several hundred points behind the Czechs, Germans, and Italians who filled the first three places.

America's six-man Trophy Team made quite a stir with the European press because it consisted of five different brands—two Pentons, a Rokon, Hercules, Bultaco and KTM—and a lady Team Manager, Marcia McDonald. For the two days that the team remained intact, it hovered in fifth and sixth place out of 15 participating nations. Then a main bearing on Kevin Lavoie's Penton let loose and the team began collecting the usual assessment of 15,000 points per day for a missing member. Our six-day tenth-place total was 61,994.6 points, compared to 312 for Trophy-winner West Germany.

Marcia McDonald's limply-stated, "It was mechanical, what can you do?" belied her true feelings and the personal stake she has in Six Day. For several years she has helped operate a Junior ISDT program in New England that has produced several young Six Day qualifiers. She guided Kevin Lavoie through the Junior program and then managed him as a Vase Team member for Ossa last year. His splintered main bearing was a dreary ending for both of them.

John Penton had little reason to be exuberant either. He's wanted a Trophy for America since the Civil War and he's spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in pursuit of one. John was glum all week. First Lavoie's main bearing, and then that damnable special test, pouring points on his American Vase Team twice a day. His son, Jack, had one terrific assault on the track that



A special track was laid out for the final day's motocross test.

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stopped the clock at 4 minutes, 38 seconds. But Godzilla Gritti ran a 4:26 on his try, so Jack still added points to the Vase Team total.

That's how team points are scored. The fastest in each class gets zero and his time is subtracted from everyone else's to determine their points. This difference is totalled for each member of each team and that is the team score for the day. If Jack Penton ran 4:38 (278 seconds) and Gritti ran 4:26 (266 seconds), the U.S. Vase Team gets lumbered with 12 points from Jack Penton (278 minus 266).

Here's where good team strategy comes into play. First of all, since each class is scored separately, it's wise to avoid placing team members in classes full of particularly fast riders because their quicker times will build up points on everyone else. Therefore the West German Trophy Team consisted of three 100s, two 125s and one 175—far away from the speedy

Czechs, whose Trophy men ride 250s, 350s and 500s. Also, the three Germans in the 100 class were so used to riding together, and so precisely skilled, that they were able to let one member set fast special test time and get zero points, while the other two finished within 2 or 3 seconds of him. This strategy was clearly evident in the final motocross test as the three Germans led the 100cc pack in perfect formation, making plenty of room for each other in the turns and having a fine time. At the finish, the second and third place men were 1.7 and 3.3 seconds behind—for a total of only five team points. Even more teamwork by the two West Germans in the 125 class resulted in a .4-second spread. The final Trophy Team member in the 175 class ran away with his race and got zero points, so the team total for the day was 5.4 points. By contrast, the U.S. Vase Team picked up 234.9 points.

Another clever bit of West German strategy was to run a "jammer" against the Czechs. He was an extremely fast rider sacrificed from the Trophy Team to enter the 350 class instead. Here it was hoped that he could set fast special test times and therefore put points on the three Czech Trophy riders in that class. The man was Heino Buse, a GP motocrosser managed by the West German KTM importer. Buse blasted his 350 KTM to a zero score on three different days and added nearly 125 points to the Czech total of 383.8. Since West Germany only won by 71.8 points, the importance of Mr. Buse cannot be understated.

Gritti had an even more devastating effect on the Czechs. He dominated the 250 class, where Czech motocross star Jiri Stodulka was expected to zero the special tests and put points on everyone else. Instead, Gritti put points on him and iced the

SPECIAL TEST RESULTS

Fastest Single Special Test Recorded

50cc	4:47	Erwin Schmider	Zundapp	West Germany
75cc	4:56	Klausdieter Ruck	Simson	East Germany
100cc	4:31	Milan Kremel	Jawa	Czechoslovakia
125cc	4:24*	Harald Strossenreuther	KTM	West Germany
175cc	4:26	Eduard Hau	Zundapp	West Germany
250cc	4:26	Allesandro Gritti	KTM	Italy
350cc	4:33	Josef Cisar	Jawa	Czechoslovakia
500cc	4:31	Ottokar Toman	Jawa	Czechoslovakia
Open	5:05	Herbert Schek	Hercules	West Germany

*Fastest time of Trial.

Fastest Single American Special Test

175cc	4:49	Dane Leimbach	Penton	Ohio
250cc	4:38	Jack Penton	Penton	Ohio
350cc	4:47	Carl Cranke	Penton	California
500cc	4:46	Dick Burleson	Husky	Tennessee

The Week's Special Test Average for Each Class Winner

50cc	5:05	Erwin Schmider	Zundapp	West Germany
75cc	5:07	Gerhard Haatz	Simson	East Germany
100cc	4:50	Josef Wolfgruber	Zundapp	West Germany
125cc	4:44	Harald Strossenreuther	KTM	West Germany
175cc	4:44	Eduard Hau	Zundapp	West Germany
250cc	4:39	Allesandro Gritti	KTM	Italy
350cc	4:51	Heino Buse	KTM	West Germany
500cc	4:48	Stanislav Zloch	Jawa	Czechoslovakia
Open	5:23	Ladislav Gordos	Maico	West Germany

The Week's Special Test Average For Best American In Each Class

175cc	5:05	Dane Leimbach	Penton	Ohio
250cc	4:54	Jack Penton	Penton	Ohio
350cc	5:03	Carl Cranke	Penton	California
500cc	4:59	Dick Burleson	Husky	Tennessee

Fastest Time In Motocross Test

50cc	15:50	Erwin Schmider	Zundapp	West Germany
75cc	14:53	Gerhard Haatz	Simson	East Germany
100cc	14:50	Josef Wolfgruber	Zundapp	West Germany
125cc	13:29	Jurgen Grisse	Zundapp	West Germany
175cc	12:51	Eduard Hau	Zundapp	West Germany
250cc	12:36	Walter Leitgeb	Puch	Austria
350cc	12:34	Josef Cisar	Jawa	Czechoslovakia
500cc	12:34	Stanislav Zloch	Jawa	Czechoslovakia
Open	14:28	Ladislav Gorgos	Maico	West Germany

Fastest American Time In Motocross Test

175cc	13:39	Mike Rosso	Hercules	Pennsylvania
250cc	13:11	Malcolm Smith	Husky	California
350cc	13:21	Carl Cranke	Penton	California
500cc	12:53	Dick Burleson	Husky	Tennessee

AMERICAN RIDERS' SCORES

Name	Brand	Score	Position	In Class	Medal
1. Dick Burleson	360 Husky	3985.9*	4		Gold
2. Jack Penton	250 Penton	3995.5	10		Gold
3. Tom Penton	250 Penton	4010.4	11		Gold
4. Carl Cranke	350 Penton	4066.1	16		Gold
5. Frank Gallo	400 Penton	4118.9	12		Gold
6. Jim Hollander	340 Rokon	4127.8	18		Gold
7. Billy Uhl	250 Hercules	4131.3	20		Gold
8. Gary Youngkins	400 Penton	4132.4	13		Gold
9. Malcolm Smith	360 Husky	4133.3	21		Gold
10. Dane Leimbach	175 Penton	4143.6	11		Gold
11. Rod Bush	250 Penton	4175.1	23		Gold
12. Gary Edmond	340 Rokon	4180.2	21		Gold
13. Mike Hannon	250 Buellaco	4224.5	34		Gold
14. Jeff Gerber	250 Penton	4231.6	35		Gold
15. Eric Jensen	250 Penton	4239.2	39		Gold
16. David Ashley	400 Yamaha	4245.1	20		Gold
17. Lars Larsson	250 KTM	4250.5	39		Gold
18. Chris Carter	400 Yamaha	4256.6	21		Gold
19. Jeff Hill	400 Penton	4261.5	22		Gold
20. Drew Smith	175 Hercules	4266.6	21		Gold
21. Mike Rosso	175 Hercules	4280.9	22		Gold
22. Dennis Vandecar	250 Penton	4352.6	52		Gold
23. Don Cichocki	175 Penton	4354.2	26		Gold
24. Bill Geier	400 Penton	4357.2	27		Gold
25. Earl Law	250 Ossa	4369.5	53		Gold
26. Harry Heilemann	175 Penton	4392.2	28		Gold
27. Ben Bower	360 Buellaco	4402.9	30		Gold
28. Charlie Bethards	360 Buellaco	4410.0	31		Gold
29. John Fero	400 Yamaha	4438.6	32		Gold
30. Stan Rubottom	400 Yamaha	4533.0	37		Silver
31. Jim Simmons	360 Husky	4823.8	44		Silver
32. Rick Weathersbee	250 Penton	6385.2	76		Bronze
33. Ken Maahs	400 Husky	6808.0	49		Bronze
34. Larry Thompson	250 KTM	DNF/disqualified			
35. Kevin Lavoie	400 Penton	DNF/main bearing			
36. David Hulse	250 Ossa	DNF/accident			
37. Ron Lamastus	250 Ossa	DNF/axle broke			

*Allesandro Gritti's Trial-winning score was 3786.2.

German win by single-handedly dumping 158.7 points on the Czech Trophy Team—an amount equal to 41 percent of their total score.

Late in the week a rumor popped up that Gritti had cheated. If a protest by the Czechs resulted in his disqualification, they would win the Trial. It seems the speedy Italian may have ridden more than one motorcycle in a scheme contrived to facilitate illegal repairs on his official bike. Early in the week several KTM's lost gearboxes when pins began coming out of shifter mechanisms. For years these pins have been installed by hand at the KTM factory, and they never had a record of failure. However, to speed up production, KTM contracted the job to Rotax, an Austrian firm which built a machine to install the pins. Apparently the hand-assembled pieces had a much closer fit because only pins from the new shifters worked loose. The first failure struck Gritti's teammate Elia Andrioletti, another contender for the overall win. Fearing the same fate for his own gearbox, Gritti may have slipped into the woods, climbed on a ringer while his shifter was being replaced and

switched bikes again later in another hidden hollow. Evidence to support this conjecture includes testimony from persons riding close to Gritti's minute who sensed something was fishy, and the existence of a duplicate Gritti motorcycle complete with the same decals and license number. (Photographs were taken of the two bikes together at a checkpoint.) Whether Gritti actually cheated will never be proved because the Czechoslovakians ignored the evidence and didn't protest, preferring to win on the racetrack rather than by default.

Gritti, if he did cheat, wasn't the only one. Sadly, elaborate and cunning plans for sneaking fresh parts onto motorcycles often replace careful preparation as the means of earning a medal. As Carl Cranke once said, "There's no such thing as an innocent bystander at the ISDT." Another American quipped, "Anyone able to stay broken for longer than five minutes should have gotten a medal. That was the hardest thing to do all week." Indeed, there were dozens of non-entrants on the course with knapsacks full of something other than knap. Enforcement is swift

when the blaggards are caught, but few are discovered because 170-miles of trail simply can't be policed.

As individuals, the 37 Americans who rode Austria did quite well. Dick Burleson did best of all by placing fourth in his class and topping the U.S. scores. Going into the last day's MX test, he trailed both Tom and Jack Penton, who were only 1.7 seconds apart for the week and 20 seconds ahead of Burleson. Bad starts by the Pentons and a rocket ride by Burleson made the Husky enduro king first overall by 9.6 seconds. Twenty-nine Americans earned Gold Medals, which means their individual scores were within 15 percent of the class winners' scores—no easy trick against berserkos like Godzilla.

This was the first year our Trophy Team didn't ride six Pentons. John Penton felt he stood a better chance to win in the four-man Vase competition, and since no single manufacturer stepped forward to support a Trophy Team, six individuals on five brands were tossed in a pot and handed to Marcia McDonald. All won Golds except Kevin Lavoie, who dropped out with his main-bearing failure. Lars Larsson, an Americanized Swede who works for Torsten Hallman Racing, rode a 250 KTM to his fifth ISDT Gold in eight tries. Connecticut Rokon rider Jim Hollander won his first Gold in four attempts after Rokon pulled their support at the last minute (Hollander almost had to stay home). Billy Uhl breezed to his fifth Gold aboard a 250 Hercules with help from ace German support crews. Penton's Gary Younkins earned his second Gold Medal in two tries on a 400cc Cross Country GS. And of course Mike Hannon on a 250 Bultaco dueled with Godzilla and the novice jitters to take the top medal in his first try.

All four Vase riders easily won Golds and the Penton threesome of Carl Cranke, Jack Penton and Tom Penton was the top U.S. Manufacturer's Team. The Hercules, Yamaha and Bultaco Manufacturer's Teams all finished three riders on Gold also.

Next year in Czechoslovakia it's likely that various trails in between the special tests will determine the Trial's outcome. Hopefully, our best team won't have to be anchored by Brad Lackey and Jim Pomeroy to stand a chance of winning.

FINAL RESULTS

World Trophy

1. West Germany	312.0
2. Czechoslovakia	383.8
3. East Germany	785.1
4. England	2,130.4
5. Austria	2,226.1
6. Poland	2,349.9
7. Belgium	5,346.8
8. Canada	8,469.0
9. France	33,566.3
10. America	61,994.6
11. Holland	63,225.9
12. Sweden	91,172.1
13. Switzerland	92,962.2
14. Finland	93,256.7
15. Italy	255,304.3

Silver Vase

1. Czechoslovakia	580.7
2. West Germany	625.0
4. Italy	717.6
4. America	981.3
5. Finland	1,307.0
6. East Germany	1,345.4
7. Belgium	1,366.5
8. Austria	2,363.0
9. Canada	3,954.7
10. Switzerland	4,243.6
11. Holland	4,936.2
12. Sweden	32,528.3
13. Spain	61,220.8
14. France	66,941.3
15. England	77,408.0

MOTORCYCLES

Brand	Entered	DNF
Ancillotti	3	0
BPS	4	0
Bultaco	16	3
Can-Am	6	0
Elmeca	1	0
Fantic	2	0
Gori	2	1
Hercules	25	2
Husqvarna	20	2
Jawa	33	1
KTM	79	8
Maico	13	0
Monark	9	3
Montesa	4	2
Moto Aim	3	0
MZ	8	0
Ossa	14	3
Penton	22	3
Puch	12	0
Rickman	1	0
Rokon	2	0
Rond Sachs	1	0
Simson	8	1
Suzuki	3	0
SWM	14	3
Triumph	3	2
Yamaha	5	0
Zundapp	9	1
Totals	322	35