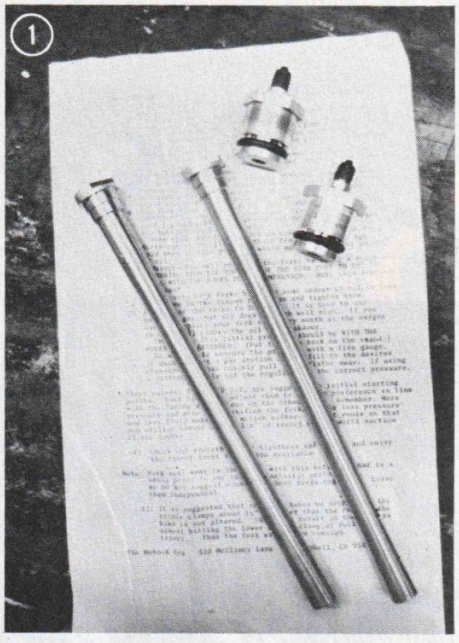
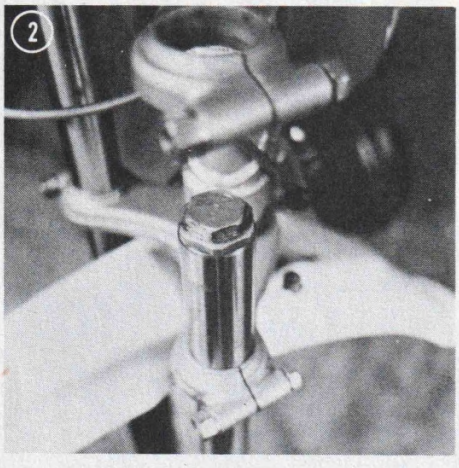
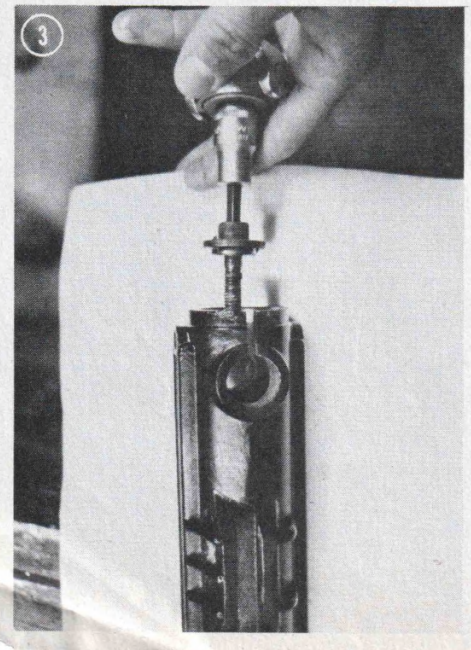
HUSKY GAS FORKS

Just like Lackey's for fifty bucks.







By Jim Mercier

Lately, it seems if you don't have a foot or so between your front wheel and fender, you're living in the dark ages. The Moto-X Fox has come out with a kit that is designed to give nine inches of travel and convert stockers to gas filled units. Their kit comes with longer damper rods, and new top stanchion caps with valve stems in the top for filling the gas. The kit also will use compressed air instead of gas. This is because compressed nitrogen is hard to come by. Only problem in using the air is the fact that the oxygen in air (30%), causes the oil to break down, according to the Fox.

Installing the kit is a hassle, unless you have the right tools, and the only tool that most people probably won't have is the tool that keeps the damper rods from turning while removing them from the stanchions. A piece of steel rod, a half-inch or so in diameter, ground at 45 degrees will do just fine. It fits in the top of the damper rod and, with a little pushing, keeps it from spinning. We didn't have a tool either, so we made one. It worked, but the factory tool will function better.

First, get the front end of the bike off the ground. Most people racing on a

1
Kit comes with all needed parts and good instructions.

2
Pull off the number plate, remove wheel, loosen the pinch bolts and slide the tubes out. If they aren't free in the tubes, try pushing screwdriver in the slot. Don't forget to drain the oil.

3
Place the stanchion in the vise, be sure not to mar the slider. Place an 8mm Allen in the bolt and knock loose.

4
Pull the tube from the stanchion, it should come out easily.

5
Damper rod should fall out. If not, shake free.

6
Remove the spring and collar from rod. Replace these pieces in the same order on the new rod.

7
Place the damper in the slider and tighten Allen bolt. While tightening the bolt, have a friend put pressure on the tool you made to hold damper rod from turning.

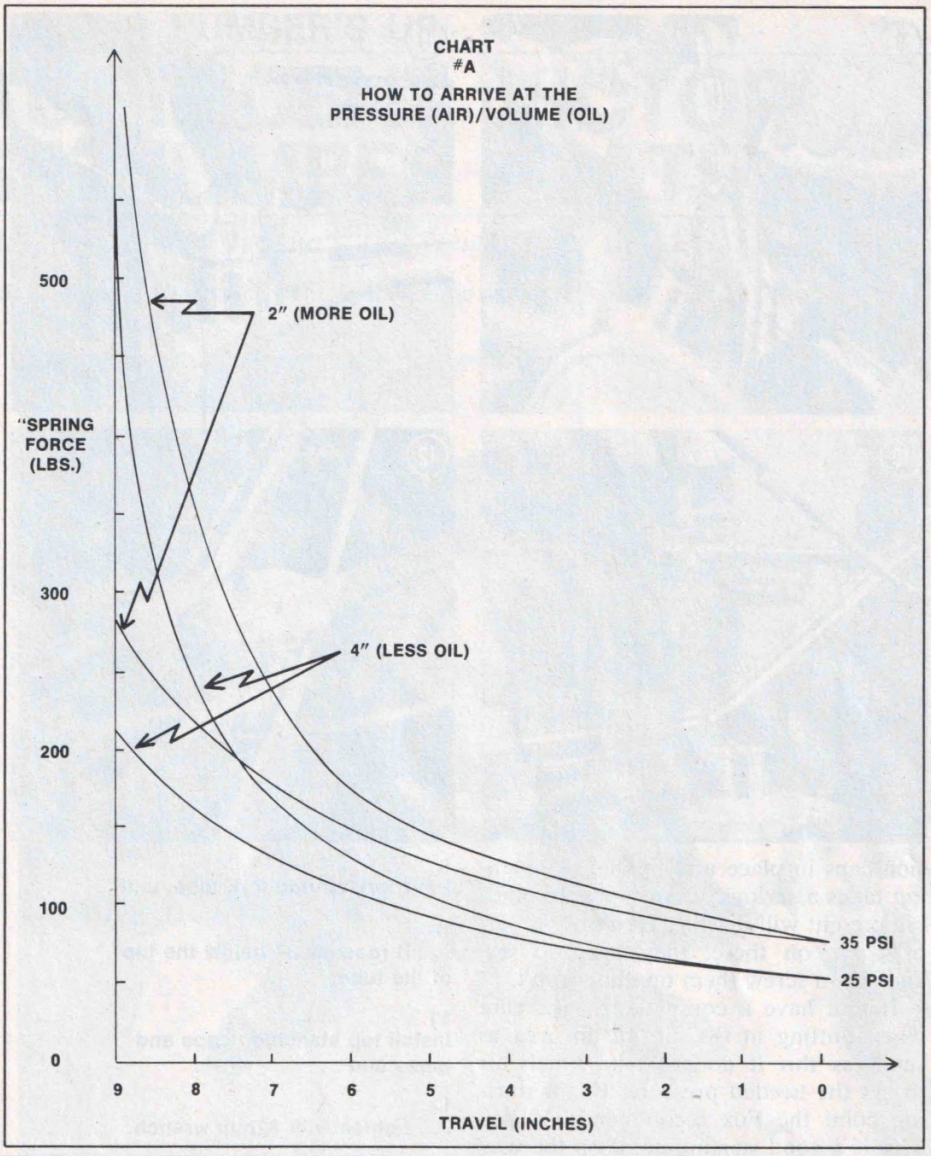
steady basis have a center stand, or orange crate; that'll do fine. Remove the front wheel and drain the fork oil. Loosen the top pinch bolts and remove the stanchion caps. Loosen the other pinch bolts and remove the springs; you're ready to start on the dampers. This is where you need the tool. For the damper bolt, an 8mm Allen is needed. We found that an impact works good for this job. It seems to shock the bolt loose quicker than turning with a ratchet.

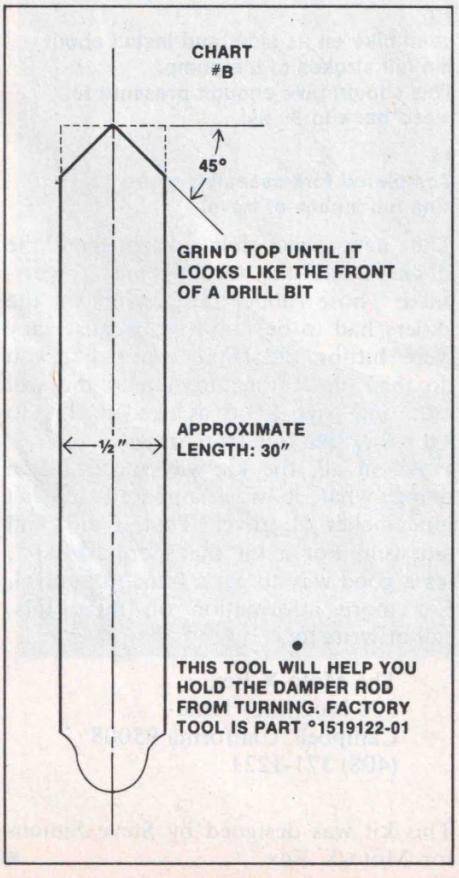
Once you're inside the fork, you have the hard part of the job done. On the top of the damper rod is a spring and collar. They must be installed on the new damper rod, so be sure to put them on the same way they came off. Ours had to be pried off with a small screwdriver.

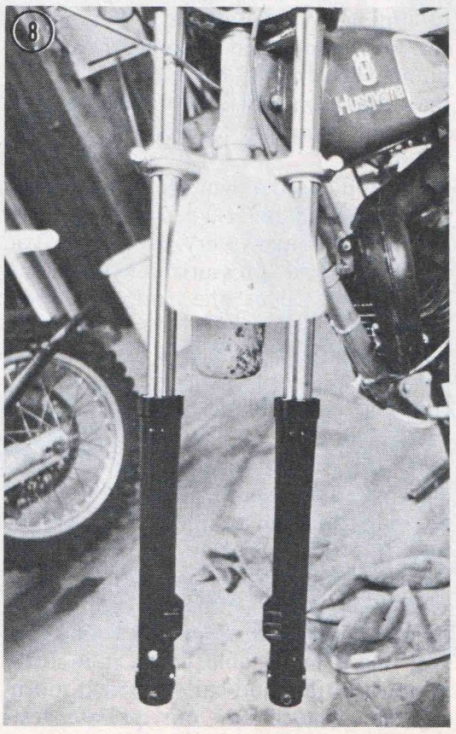
Drop the damper rod back into the stanchion tube and slip it into the leg. Be sure to put the threaded end toward the bottom of the leg. Tighten the Allen bolt in the end of the leg and slide it into the triple clamp. To keep the leg from falling out, tighten one of the pinch bolts, but don't completely tighten. Complete the other leg and grab some fork oil. The Fox doesn't make any recommendations on the weight of the oil, so we used 20 wt. Bel-Ray. You can tune the damping by changing the weight of the oil. For example, if you weigh about 200 lbs. we recommend using 30 or even 40 wt. oil. But either way, you can tune it to the way you like. There are two other things you can change to adjust the unit for your *"feel."* By increasing the amount of air pressure, you increase the *"effective spring rate,"* that's when the forks are fully extended. When the forks are compressed to the maximum, you can change the volume of oil to effect the spring rate. (See chart A). This chart shows the spring rates at different pressures and volumes of oil.

Since the volume of oil is very important, we used their recommendations. For starters, they recommend you fill the fork until the level reaches three inches below the top of the stanchion tube. By the way, you don't use the fork springs with this kit; the air pressure replaces the spring. Neat, huh? The internal pressure affects the force most, when the forks are almost fully extended, whereas the volume of oil has its greatest affect when the forks are fully compressed. Changing the amount of oil in the fork, changes the compression ratio of the units, creating a firm feeling when nearly fully compressed.

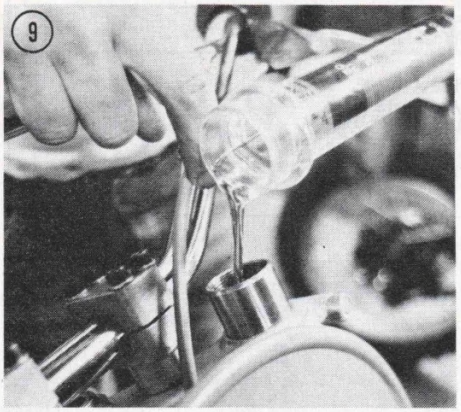
To accurately measure the amount of oil we used a ruler that has a sliding stop on it. Set the stop at three inches and dump in the oil. Place the front wheel back in place and secure it down. Place the Moto-X Fox stan-

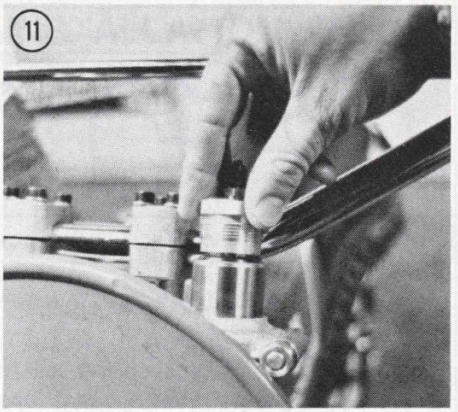


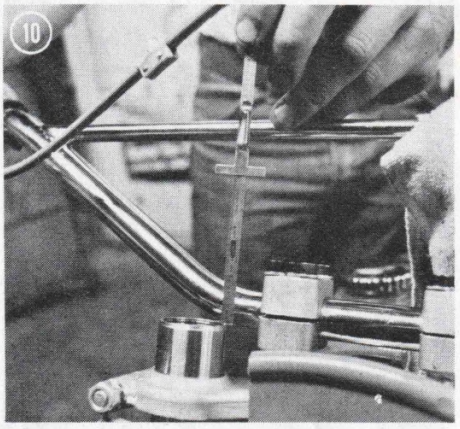


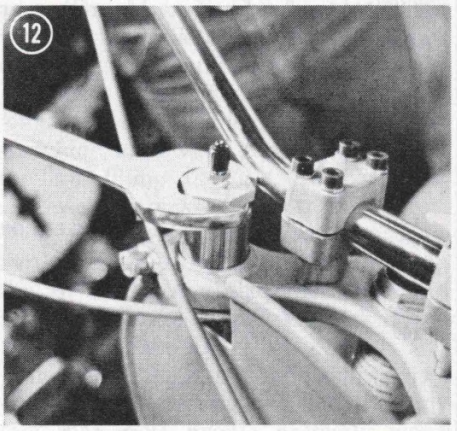


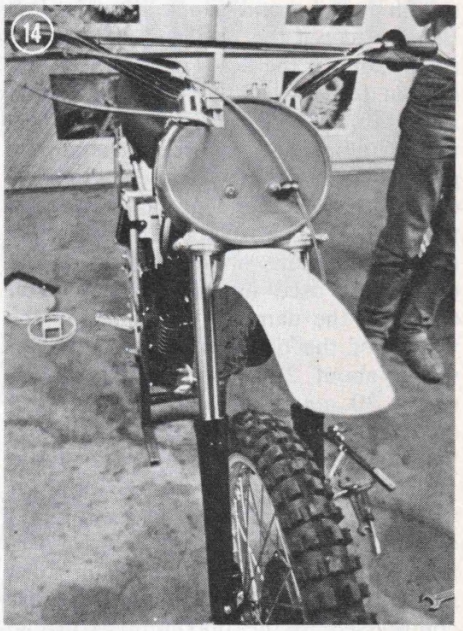
8
Slide the tubes into the triple clamps, and tighten the bottom two pinch bolts. Raise the tubes 1½" above the top clamp before completely tightening.











sion caps in place and tighten. Tightening takes a serious 32mm wrench, but a big cresent will do fine. Don't use a pair of pliers on these, they have to seal and if you screw them up, they won't.

If you have a compressor, take care when putting in the air. In an area as small as this it doesn't take much air to get the needed pressure. For a starting point the Fox recommends 30 psi. This is a good starting point on the way to tuning. We didn't have a compressor, so we pumped it up with a hand pump. This might be a better method than the compressor, because if you over fill, you put excess pressure or the seals.

As you bleed down the air pressure, do it in small bursts, because the pressure drop happens very fast. After you have the forks pressurized, you've got it whipped. Since the forks are now longer, the fork angle is now different. By raising the stanchion tubes up 1½", the fork angle will return to stock. The front wheel will come close to the fender, *but should not touch.* If it does, lower the fork tube until the fender is clear. Be sure both tubes are raised the same amount in their clamps. Any difference will put uneven pressure on the axle; might even break it in half.

We completed our fork conversion in about two hours; after reading this you ought to be able to do it in forty minutes. Bright and early the next morning, we headed for our private testing grounds. The day before we had ridden the Husky, so we knew how it turned and how the forks felt. At first they were too soft. We raised the pressure to 35 psi. This helped a great deal.

9
Pour fork oil into fork tube, until . . .

10
. . . It reaches 3" below the top of the tube.

11
Install top stanchion caps and tubes and . . .

12
. . . tighten with 32mm wrench.

13
Lean bike on its side, and install about ten full strokes of the pump. This should give enough pressure to bleed back to 30 psi.

14
Completed fork assembly gives nine full inches of travel.

The new forks felt softer than the stockers and the turning wasn't worsened. Those rubber dust covers on the sliders had to be removed because they were hitting the triple clamps. If you do this, pay close attention to the seal area and wipe it off as needed. Try to keep this area free from dirt.

All in all, the kit was successful in doing what it was supposed to, get nine inches of travel. That it did, and did well. For a kit that's only $49.95, it's a good way to get a bunch of travel. For more information on these kits, call or write to:

The Moto-X Fox
520 McGlincy Lane
Campbell, California 95008
(408) 371-1221

This kit was designed by Steve Simons for Moto-X Fox. ●