

TRACKS

TRAIL-BREAKER

goes anywhere 

VOL. V, NO. 3

December, 1974

'74 ISDT: 2 Medals for Rokon

Hollander Wins Silver in 49th Italian Trials



A FINE DAY FOR A RUN - and pleasant surroundings, too - not like his hometown of Hamden, Conn. - so Jim Hollander threw on his special duds and off he went. Six days later he had a silver medal, missing a gold by one measly penalty point. The 49th ISDT was conducted this year in Camerino, Italy.

Two Rokon riders on RT-340 Automatics won silver and bronze medals in the 49th International Six Days Trial last fall in Camerino, Italy.

Jim Hollander of Hamden, Conn., won a silver medal, missing a gold by a single penalty point.

Just behind him was Dave Mungenast of House Springs, Mo., with a bronze medal. Dave's Rokon was the only Rokon on the Canadian team, and the only motorcycle on that team to finish.

Rokon's RT-340 Automatics were selected by the American Motorcycle Association as the vehicle for the U.S. Vase "B" Team, but when the over-all number of riders was reduced because of a technicality Rokon team members had to be content with whatever team openings were available.

After a long summer's campaigning across the country in six two-day qualifiers, Rokon had amassed 14 gold, eight silver and two bronze medals. It was this excellent record, - second in manufacturer's team standings - that led the AMA to pick Rokon.

The 49th ISDT was the second international motorcycle "Olympics" Rokon had taken place in. In 1973 Rokon went to the first running of the ISDT in the United States - in the Berkshires of Massachusetts - and came away with medals as well as a special engineering award for the excellence of its unique automatic drive system.

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Season's Greetings

The Christmas season is upon us, with its attendant slush, irritable children, old friends, cocktail parties, unexpected sniffs of evergreens and Great Things from the kitchen, the realization that we're all a year older and not much further ahead, and the sober contemplation of the deeper meanings of life that most of us neglect except at this time of year.

Feeling less curmudgeon-y than usual right now, we thought we'd devote this space to good wishes for a happy Christmastime and a full New Year to all our friends and acquaintances spread around this battered old world. So here goes:

To the missionaries in Africa and the Phillipines, faithfully tending their flocks with Trail-Breakers; to our man Kelly in the Yukon (haven't heard from him lately, and we worry);

To Mrs. Guy Matthews of Wichita Falls, Texas, who crossed the Red River on her MkIII; to Orla Larsen, that grand old founder of Rokon; indeed, to all the crew here at the motorcycle works;

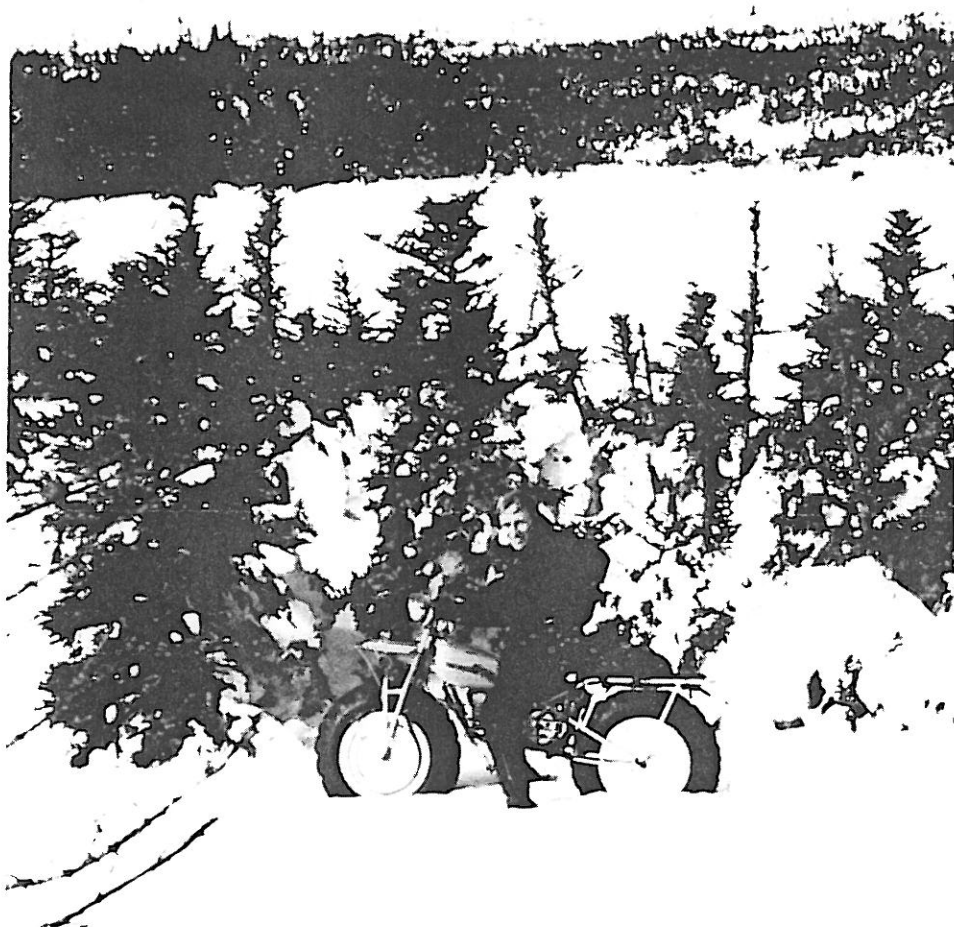
To the Rokon riders who battered themselves in pursuit of silly little silver mugs, to Suzanne Pleshette (who has nothing to do with motorcycles as far as we know but who is nevertheless A Nice Lady); to the waitresses at the Pub here in Keene;

To Jim Fowler, off God knows where doing nice things for odd animals; and to Rod Allin, off somewhere else taking films of whatever's happening;

To missing faces, like Hot Dog Thompson and Fran Dougherty;

In short, to all you great people out there:

**MERRY CHRISTMAS
&
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**



LOOKING FOR THE TREE - Well, actually he isn't, because this grand photo was taken last spring, by the same man who won our photo contest in 1973, Ensign Steve Forrestel, now stationed in Newfoundland. But the slide looked kinda Christmas-y, so here you have it.

Meanwhile, Back At the Factory . . .

This is the time of year to take stock.

We did, and found we had come up short on a couple of promises. We hasten to reassure you right now: we'll fill you in on the new Rokon Ranger one of these issues. Maybe we'll even drop another surprise or two.

Further, we will probably drop some more full color pages - as soon as we find a really spectacular photo so the effort is worth it.

Along with that, keep those photos and letters coming; we might even have another photo contest next year.

We seem not to be getting any racing photos of the RT-340, and we sure would like to.

We Stumble Over Our Tangled Feet

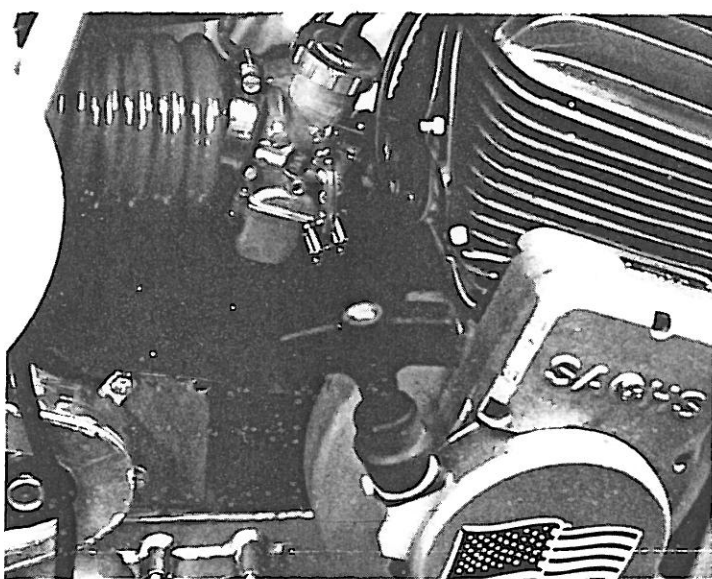
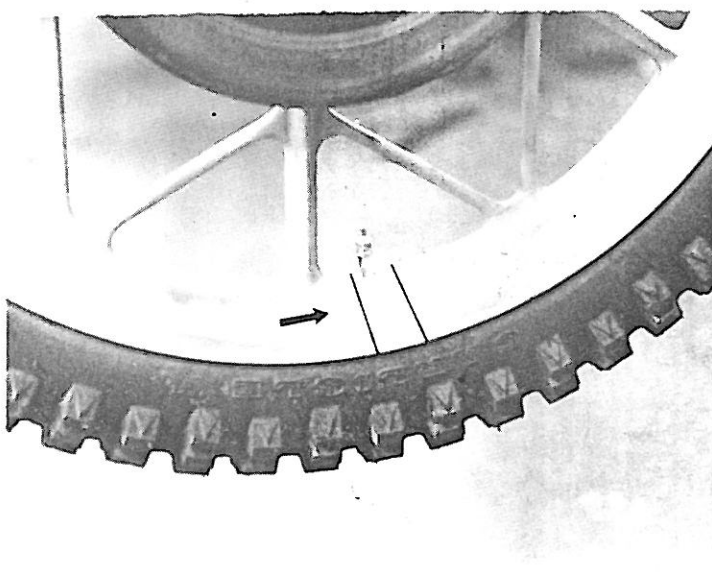
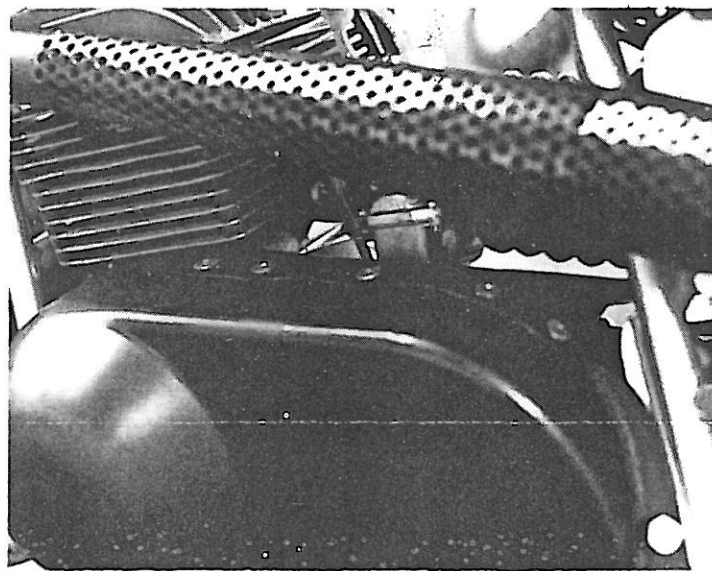
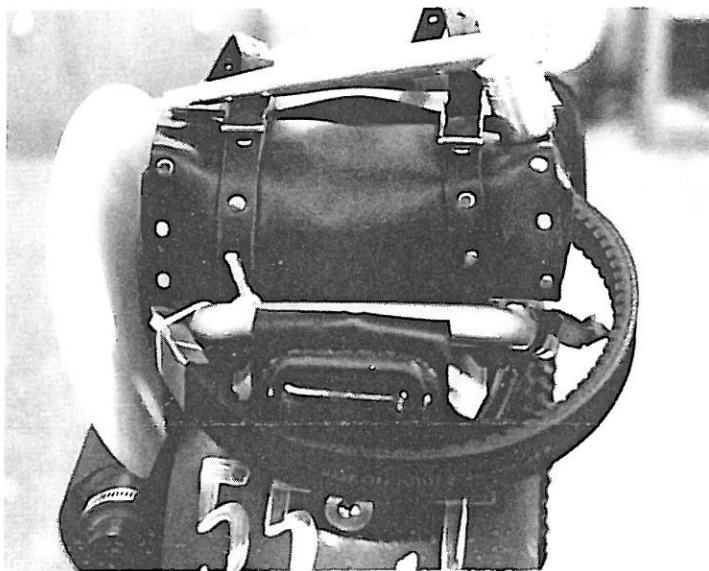
The Prez called us into the office last fall, just after the last issue of Tracks came off the presses, and propped us up on his carpet.

We'd done it, all right; believe it or not, Rokon fans, we committed an error in the last issue! and on Page 1!

"You dummy!" he explained, "You had a picture of our man Tadashi Tomiyama near the top of Mr. Fuji and your caption under the photo said the sacred mountain was 3776 meters high, or about 4000 feet, and don't you know the metric system yet, you dummy?"

We certainly do now, chief; the correct height of Mt. Fuji is 12,388 feet and five and one-eighth inches. Sorry.

Prepare Your Bike Like a Pro



If you're serious about having fun, as the adverts on the telly say, follow the lead of the Rokon pros and set up your bike for duty in the boonies. You'll note that the suggestions they make are nicely divided between convenience and timesaving.

Top left: A special wrench and a handy place for it; note pin welded onto frame to hold wrench, which is 9/16" open end and sockets of 13mm and 15/16". (Sorry, you'll have to make it yourself.)

Center left: Stripe of orange paint so you can find valve stem in the mud.

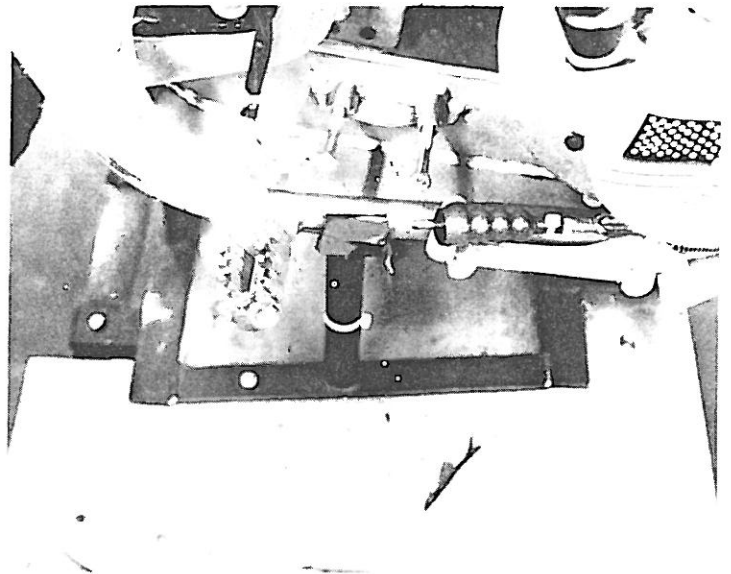
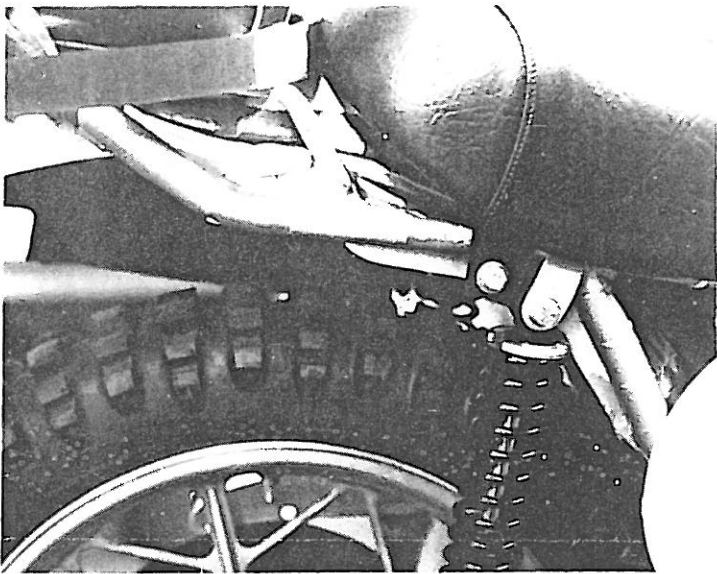
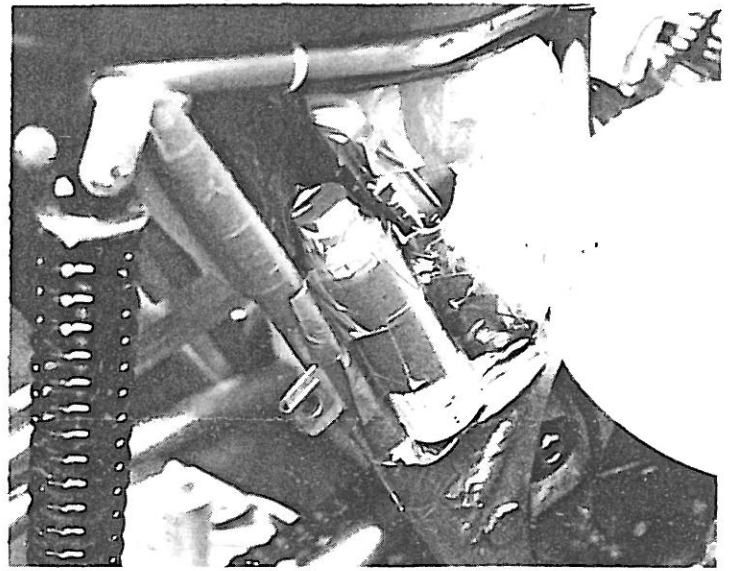
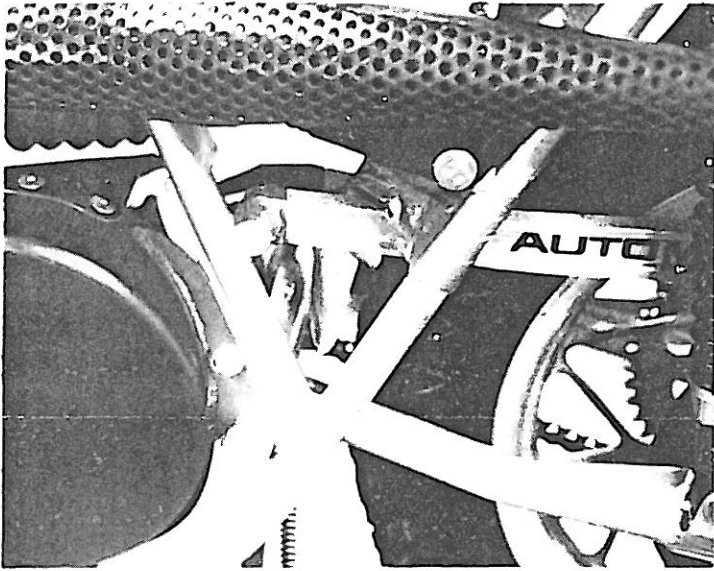
Top right: Riveted-on mud shield prevents electricals from being jiffy-washed.

Center right: Other side, showing handy place to carry spare chain links; a waterproofed pull starter using a piece of 1 3/8" bicycle tube; and legs cut off voltage regulator to permit quicker starter removal.

Bottom right: Find your connecting link faster by painting links on each side in bright orange.



Set Up Your Bike Like a Pro



Some more tips to make you resemble Jim Hollander:

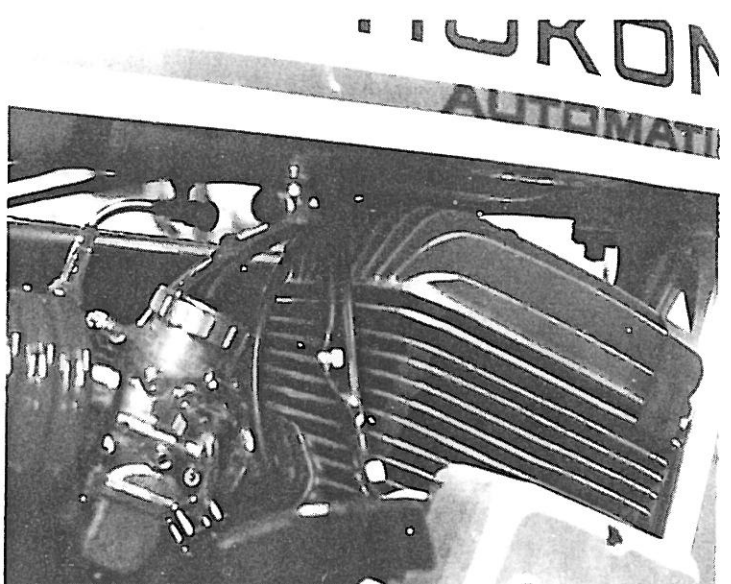
Top left: Tape around torque arm bolt to keep out dirt. (About that torque arm: maybe next year.)

Center left: More tape, this time between fender and frame; keeps out mud. Run wires to rear lights between tape layers.

Top right: Behind number panel (flipped back so you can see) live a tire tool, air gauge and air bottle, snug in a pouch made of that marvelous silver duct tape.

Center right: Footrest is extended by welding on tip of second footrest.

Lower right: Two fuel petcocks with fuel lines and filters, one of them on stand-by duty. Can you also note rubber blocks between fins and rubber inner tube band around upper fins to lower noise level?



We Get Letters

Editor's note: Steve Forrestel, the writer of the letter below, won our photo contest last year with a fine shot of a friend going through a Newfoundland bog on his Trail-Breaker. [You've still got time, but not much; we decide on 1974's winners on Dec. 23.]

From Newfoundland

Dear Sirs:

Thank you for the issues of the new TRACKS I just received. The pictures look great in print! Enclosed are a few more pictures you might be interested in. I'm sure they're similar to those Mike Wheeler sent you. If possible, I would like the slides back, as I have no way of duplicating them. If it ever quits raining, there should be more coming.

Below is a list of parts I need.....

Thanks for everything. By the way, I not only bought Mike Wheeler a beer or two for riding through that mudhole, I split the check with him. (After I assured him his ugly mug was the only bad point in the picture!)

Ens. Stephen Forrestel
Box 6
U. S. Naval Station
FPO N. Y. 09597

And Michigan

Dear Sirs:

I have thoroughly enjoyed your publication, TRACKS.

I suppose my greatest thrill is to let my friends without Trail-Breakers eat their hearts out. They can have their so-called trail bikes; in these Michigan sand dunes, I pull them out.

Please note my address change, and I will as always look forward to your next newsletter.

P.S. I especially enjoyed James Holmlund's picture in the March issue; this is deer country too, you know.

John Farrell
Buchanan,
Mich. 44107



KING OF ALL IT SURVEYS is this MkIII Trail-Breaker, a rugged machine in a rugged environment - North Italian Mountain, Gunnison County, Colo., to be exact. The machine is at 13,200 feet, eight or ten feet below the summit, and the peak in the background is Italian Mountain, almost 200 feet higher.

Photo by Gary Christopher

Never Bet on a Trail-Breaker (In a Contest Against a Bear)

Doubtless you know the Old Yaller Trail-Breaker is a tough and determined beast, but you will be astonished - as we were - to learn that black bears in Alaska know it too.

We just received an incredible letter from our man J. Sesky in Chitina, Alaska, and he backs up his story with witnesses and a sizeable request for parts.

It seems that the good Mr. Sesky is a prospector and on a trip in early September left his MkIII under a spruce while he packboarded in to his prospect. Because he had installed big saddlebags on his bike he had removed the kickstand, and so he left the bike propped against a two-foot-long 2 x 2 beside the tree trunk.

Well, on his return he found a shambles. He writes: "As pieced together from my own sleuthing abilities and the witness of sheep hunters camped nearby, the following events took place:"

A black bear came snooping about, and in trying to move between the Trail-Breaker and the spruce trunk knocked out the prop holding up the

machine, pinning itself against the trunk.

The battle was on. Entangled in packboard lashing rope, the bear tore the hell out of the poor Trail-Breaker trying to get loose. When Sesky returned he found a circle of 30 feet in diameter full of fur, Trail-Breaker parts, bear dung, rubber and gasoline.

Inner tubes were literally torn out of the tires, the V belt bitten almost in two, seats and packsaddles ripped open, steel clutch cover plate torn off, gas tank ripped open, and so on.

Continues Sesky, "The Rokon concedes defeat and lets Bruin loose; Bruin, still in high umbrage, rips asunder roof and walls of nearby tent, attempts to loot 55-gallon drum food cache next and foiled thus trails owner (yours truly) up a glacial river for some five miles to give him "what for" (for bringing in such a nasty smelling noisy creature as a Rokon which attacks innocent bush citizens...."

Sesky brought the stretcher-case back, thanks to the kindness of the nearby sheep hunters, on an Eagle 4WD.

Grandma at 96

Takes to the Road

All her life Mrs. Edith S. Pettengill of Stoneham, Mass., has wanted a motorcycle of her very own, and last summer she got one.

Her son, Gordon, is president of Pettengill Motor Sales, one of Rokon's newest dealers. So for his mother's 96th birthday

The grand old lady declined to reveal any plans for a racing career, but she was obviously delighted with her birthday celebration; we hope you join us in wishing her many years and many miles of smooth riding ahead.

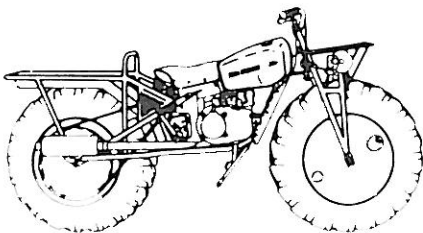


SPECIFICATIONS MK III

ENGINE: Chrysler single cylinder, 2 cycle, model 82007/
PISTON DISPLACEMENT: 8.2 cubic inches/CYLINDER BORE:
Aluminum, chrome plated/COMPRESSION RATIO (Approx.):
8.0 to 1/POWER OUTPUT: 8 horsepower at 7000 RPM/TYPE
OF COOLING: air fan/SPARK PLUG: Champion L10/IGNI-
TION: Flywheel Magneto/EXHAUST SYSTEM: U. S. Forestry
approved spark arrestor/muffler/CARBURETOR: Tillotson
diaphragm type/AIR FILTER: dry type/LUBRICATION: pro-
vided through fuel supply/TRANSMISSION: automatic clutch
through three speed, hand shift Albion transmission with
enclosed kickstarter/FINAL GEAR RATIOS: low, 84 to 1;
second, 49 to 1; high, 30 to 1/BRAKES: disc brake stops
both wheels/AXLES: solid/FRAME: tubular type/FORKS:
tubular type/WEIGHT: 180 pounds/WHEEL BASE: 49 inches/
LENGTH: 77 inches/WIDTH: 28 inches/HEIGHT OVER SEAT:
30 inches/HEIGHT OVER HANDLEBARS: 41 inches/GROUND
CLEARANCE: 15 inches/TREAD: 7 inches/GRADE ABILITY:
60°/TURNING RADIUS: 4 ft. 6 in./FORDING DEPTH: 24
inches/FUEL: 1 quart 2 cycle air cooled motor oil for
every 5 gals. of regular gas. Fuel/oil mixture ratio 20:1/
MINIMUM OCTANE RATING: regular (83)/FUEL TANK
CAPACITY: 2 gallons/SUSPENSION: low pressure tires
absorb shocks/TIRES AND TUBES: implement type, size
670 x 15; pressure 3 1/2 p.s.i./MAX. SPEED: 25 mph/MAX.
SUSTAINED SPEED: 20 mph/MIN. SPEED: 0.5 mph

OPTIONS

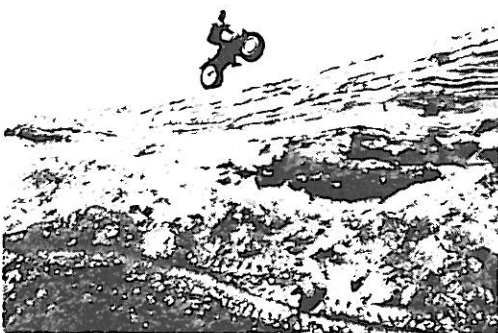
Front Cargo Rack
Water Tight Tool Box
Rear Tow Bar
Emergency Tool & Spare Parts Kit
Bumper Rack
Alternator Light Kit
Rear Passenger Kit



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