



ONTARIO AUTUMN brings out cold nights, fall colors, and the hundreds of enduro riders who each year enter the Corduroy Enduro, one of Canada's great off-road events.

# Classic Cord woods bash endures

Report and photos  
by COTTON MATHER

HALIBURTON, Ont. — Once again 300-odd motorcyclists — that is, more than 300 strange motorcyclists — gathered Sept. 6-7 to affirm that there is indeed life after Labour Day with the ritual destruction of Locarno Lodge's front lawn at the start of the Corduroy Enduro.

Why let the maple leaves turn red alone, when the trunks can also change color courtesy of the many duck-billed unfortunates who will miss an arrow in this annual bash?

Duct Tapes columnist Ed Hertfelder from Cycle magazine was on hand as Honorary Starter, and started flagging entrants in Canada's national championship enduro from the already-receding grassline of the Locarno lawn at 8 a.m. Saturday. His dubious honor consisted of flagging off three smelly two-strokes per minute for one hour and forty minutes. Perhaps two-stroke fumes have a different effect on those in their golden years; without mentioning names like Bert Irwin and Beth Cooper, Ed had a kind word for veterans, women and Honda riders alike.

The XR Hondas, by the way, were dead on the trail because you couldn't hear them coming. Ears attuned to the Can-Am Cackle were more than once surprised by the whoosh and thump of the big Hondas passing at speed. It

became serious for those just beginning to make headway into the Devil's Staircase section with a Coleman full of brown soldiers.

There was a lot of grumbling this year among the spectators. "The staircase is dry and they're going down instead of up anyhow." "The river is too God-damned low." "Throw some logs in that mudhole."

In truth, sections could have been tougher. I finally resorted to a voodoo curse to induce somebody to capsize at the Burnt River crossing for a photograph; anything after standing for an hour without result, ankle-deep on slimy rocks.

The curse seemed to be more effective in activating electrical gremlins than in upsetting rider stability. Blair Sharpless came charging at the river, already late from a previous Bosch-lunched, and stopped dead mid-stream. The crowd howled for even this minor incident, having been deprived of any blood in previous crossings.

Subsequently, Sharpless discovered a bare kill switch wire that had been bothering the bike all along.

Riders approaching the Devil's Staircase on Sunday afternoon had a quick decision to make. To the left was the trademark boulder-strewn descent, while to the right was an easier path through the trees that only the quick or

the lucky located in time.

The two routes met at the bottom with another choice; this time an easy water crossing or a slippery log bridge — of the type from whence the enduro's name originally was derived — which stranded several riders who didn't have enough momentum to hop the first log.

Honorary Starter visited most of the spectator points and special sections over the weekend, shouting encouragement and directions to approaching riders. "To the left and over the bridge" was the bellowed refrain that seemed to increase his enjoyment of the Devil's Staircase section.

Honorary Starter confided later that he didn't think this was a tough enduro. "You can tell an easy enduro by the high percentage of finishers. Hell, a guy from New Jersey, John Cooper, has won it for the past two years. He's not a top rider back home. He must be at least 46 or 47 and I know he's a grandfather."

KTM factory rider Tom Krehbiel of Virginia was the overall leader at the end of the first day with an incredible score of one penalty point. That meant he was one minute late at one of the checkpoints. Early arrivals were penalized more heavily to discourage racing or taking short-cuts through the Kinmount mayor's back yard.

Canadian Ross Lennox held second in spite of the large new scar on his green Canadian ISDT team helmet, and Frank Sutton occupied third and the top heavyweight position. Unfortunately Sutton's shot at top honors was halted by a broken piston on Sunday. Sutton, along with other Team Canada members, had already sent his best bike to France. This had left several of the team riders at something of a disadvantage.

It was a motley crew that finally straggled back into Locarno late Sunday afternoon. Efficient organization by the British Empire Motor Club had scores compiled and the winners declared shortly after the last riders arrived.

Krehbiel and his 250 KTM ended up with the premier award, but since he was American he did not win the title of Canadian champion in his class. This year only Canadian citizens are eligible for that title, so Ross Lennox moved up to claim the crown.

With the exception of the veteran and the team classes, Canadian champions were also the winners in all other groups. Krehbiel's team-mate Bill Bowen was the top veteran, which was good enough to snare the team award to go with the individual wins.

All in all, a well-run enduro. Next year just remember: "To the left and over the bridge!"



ROCK-STREWN downhill known as Devil's Staircase finished up at an easy water crossing or the corduroy bridge that claimed many riders.



DEAN LITTLE of Acton, Ont., and his Suzuki PE-175 ran into some problems with a rock on one of many steep, slippery uphill back in the woods.