



MONARK 125

**Priced high,
but it's
all there...
almost**

With its metallic blue frame, bright yellow fenders, and tank panels the Monark is as distinctive looking as they come.

Ceriani forks handle all the chores up front. Akront rims and Metzler tires are a hard combination to beat. Steel fenders should be made of plastic.



ABOVE—Sachs cylinder sports extraordinarily large finning to keep temperatures down. Two piece exhaust pipe has been a source of problems for Monark riders we know. However, the pipe on our bike worked like a charm.



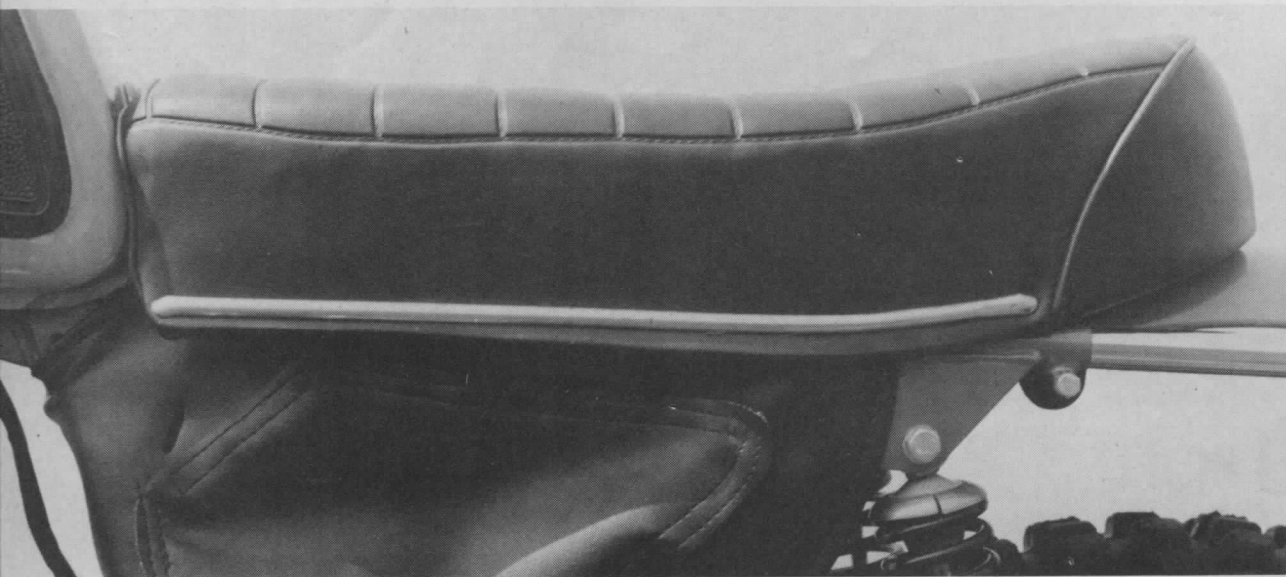
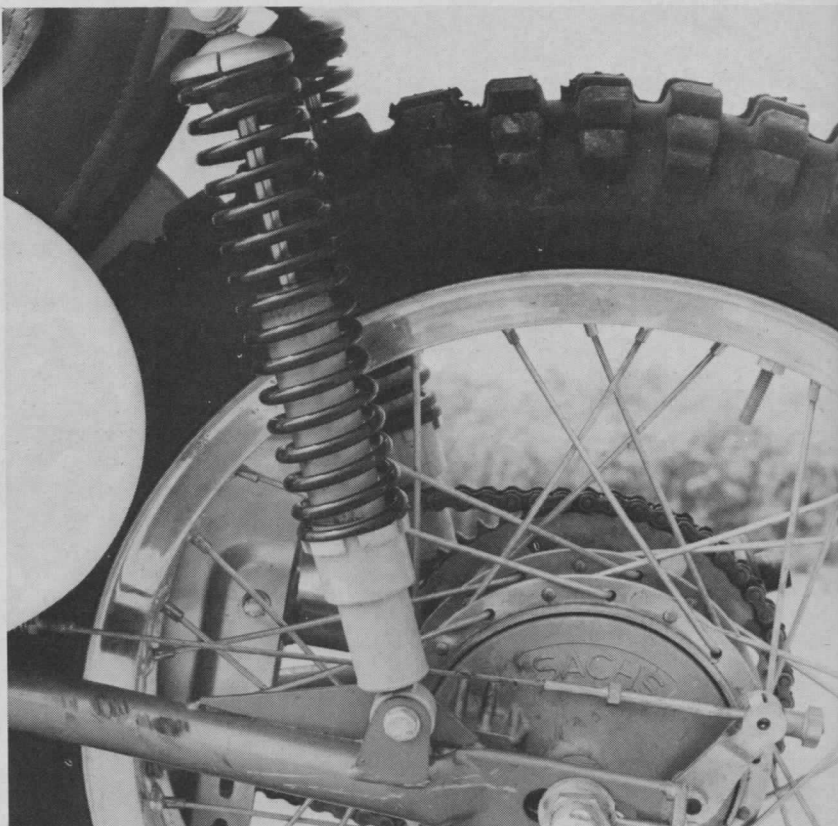
Until early last year, few people knew what a Monark was. Although the Swedish firm has been producing motorcycles for several decades, hardly any have found their way to our shores. Monark-Crescent is one of the world's leading manufacturers of marine engines. Utilizing their knowledge of engine design, they built four-stroke motorcycles to be used as daily transportation by the Scandinavian people. They also used these machines, in modified form, to capture several gold, silver, and bronze medals at the International Six Day Trials over the past twenty years. Now that the age of the two-stroke is upon us, Monark, rather than design their own ring-ding, which could lay in experimental stages for many months (not to mention other development problems), opted for a much easier solution. They purchased the engines to power their competition machines from the German company, Sachs. Since this method not only proved to be simpler but also less expensive, they decided to also farm out other parts necessary for a complete motorcycle. With all of these international components, they now needed a frame in which everything could be lined up to operate properly. This they built themselves.

Fabricated from 4130 Swedish chrome moly, the chassis is indeed a fine piece of work. No frills or extra gusseting plates needed. Simple in appearance, it works flawlessly. The



Girling shock absorbers have more than proven themselves throughout the years. These are no exception. For really hard competition use, the Sachs hubs should be laced in a cross four pattern.

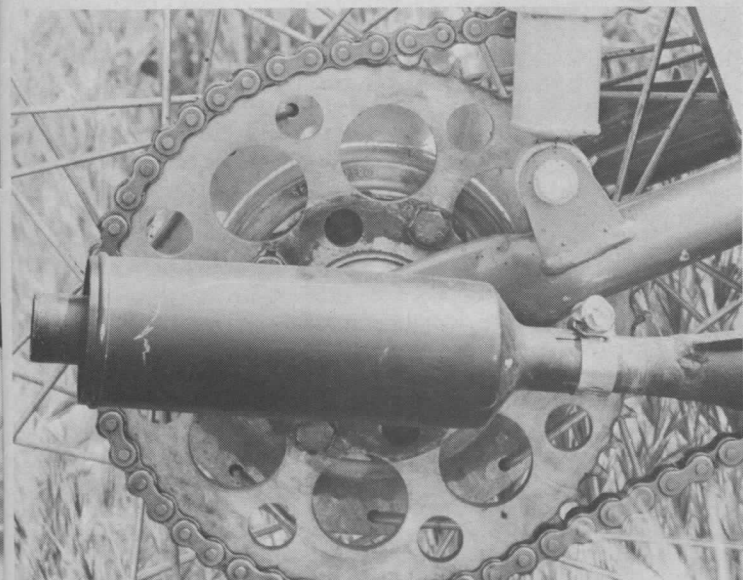
Folding footpeg looked slippery, but gave good grip even when wet. Rear brake is operated by sliding the outer cable while the inner cable stays put.



Seat was long and well padded. Air filter is housed inside the leather shroud behind numberplate.

Steel fuel tank is very heavy. For the price they ask for a Monark, you should be able to get a lighter tank than this.





Bolt on muffler kept the Monark quieter than most other motocrossers.

twin-cradle tubes sweep beneath the engine then curve upward to meet the top tube. This main backbone which passes under the fuel tank splits into two tubes which continue rearward to form the mount for the seat. The swinging arm, also of chrome moly, is one of the few short swinging arms that has not given us handling problems. The entire wheelbase of the machine is only 52 inches.

One of the reasons for the excellent track manners the Monark displayed, apart from the very rigid frame, was the choice of suspension components. Girling shock absorbers on the rear are an asset few people can argue with. Even J.N. uses Girlings and if they can withstand the abuses he puts them through, they'll work for you. Spring rate seemed best suited for someone in the 160-180 lb. range. Precise dampening at all times gives a feel for the track which is not common among small-bore motocrossers. Up front, Cerianis. Sweet, strong, forgiving Cerianis. Oh Lord, if only Japan had them.

The 123cc Sachs powerplant is a proven winner. Everyone knows that Bultacos are fast, but it is possible to get just as many ponies out of a hopped-up Sachs which will probably stay together longer. By now you're sitting there wondering, "What about that rotten tranny, aren't you going to say something about that?" Yes, the six-speed transmission could use some help. The shifting mechanism mars what is otherwise a very strong gearbox. But if you don't want to lay out the extra bucks for one of those fix-it kits, you can learn to live with it. We found that if you back off the throttle, shift deliberately without using the clutch, and keep your foot in it an extra second for insurance it'll hit home 99 times out of 100. But if you're one of those yo-yos who's on the outside of control looking in, who has both feet in the air on the same side of the bike half the time, who shifts with a prayer aimed stab of the toe, heel, or anything else that happens to be handy, it'll miss.

The engine never misses though. Now that all Sachs engines come equipped with a Motoplat electronic ignition, the need to set the timing never arises. It has no points. Time after time the mill fired on the first prod. The 27mm Bing carburetor was a delight. Being a racing engine, the Sachs was understandably peaky. But the powerband was extremely wide for a 125 racer and part of the praise here must be laid on the carb. Perfect metering from a smooth idle all the way to nine grand.

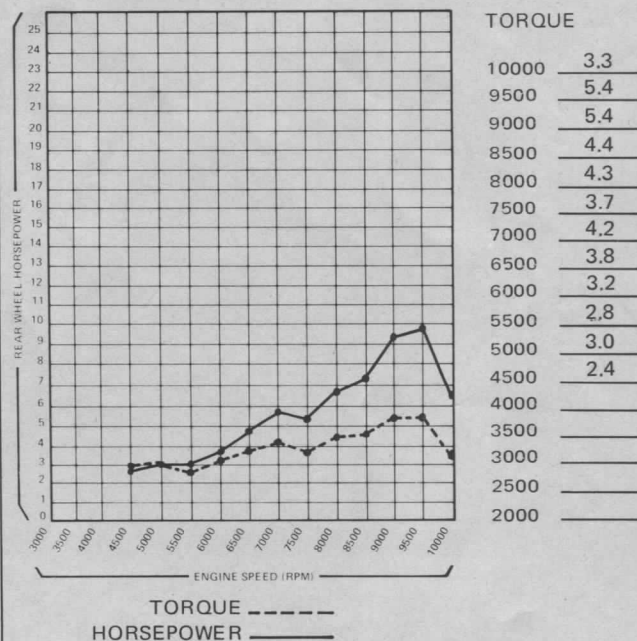
For wheels, Monark also went to Sachs. Here they goofed and the local distributor readily admits it. The Sachs hubs, while housing strong brakes, are narrow and offer poor triangulation. The spokes were eternally loosening themselves. After three motos it might be necessary to have the wheels trued. If you retightened the spokes yourself for very long, the wheels would

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DYNAMOMETER TEST REPORT



SPECIFICATIONS

PRICE	TRANSMISSION
Suggested retail \$1075	Speeds six
ENGINE	Primary drive gear, helical
Engine type two-stroke,	Clutch type wet, multi-disc
piston-port, single-cyl.	Final drive chain, 1/2 x 5/16
Horsepower @ rpm 21 @ 8300	
Torque @ rpm N/A	
Bore and stroke	CHASSIS
in 2.11 x 2.11	Length, overall, in. 78
mm 54 x 54	Wheelbase, in. 52
Displacement	Ground clearance, in. 7
cu. in. 7.5	Weight, overall, lb. 206
cc 123	Frame type double-cradle
Compression ratio 12:1	Tire size
Carburetion 27mm Bing	front 3.00-21
Ignition Motoplat electronic	rear 3.50-18

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end up looking like a drunk stumbling through a trials section.


Monark already has plans for a change to the French Leleu hubs which are used on the Husqvarna 125. These drums are also lighter, which will lower its present dry weight of 206 lb. even more.

Another area which could use a bit of thought is the fuel tank. A steel product, it weighs a ton. Along with the metal fenders, a weight conscious racer could bring the weight of the machine down into the 180 lb. bracket.

The folding footpegs looked as though they would be slippery but weren't. They could stand to be wider though. As they are now, these one by three inch metal rods could be felt through the sole of a motocross boot after an extended ride. When they began to bother, sitting down was a welcome relief. The seat, done in a tuck-and-roll pattern, is great. Firm enough to soften bumps, yet comfortable enough to make you want to sit. The tuck-and-roll pattern does slightly inhibit movement about the seat for cornering and such, but it really isn't necessary to shift around. The chassis design is such that it allows you to take a Maico type "sit in one place throughout the whole race" style. The front end never washed out and the rear seemed to be wired to the throttle. The more gas—the bigger the slide. Not once did the Metzler tires let us down. These weenies are fast becoming our personal favorites.

You might wonder how the Monark tackles long stretches of whoop-de-doo. After all, it does have one of the shortest wheelbases in the 125 class and it is a quick steering motorcycle. Well, it doesn't possess Husqvarna or Bultaco steadiness, but it comes so close that you might not be able to tell the difference. The rear end does pitch back and forth, but never more than six inches to a foot on either side.

Cornering is a breeze. Drive in, plant the front wheel, and power around. Changing lines through a corner is accomplished with the right wrist. No heaving of weight or turning of the handlebars is required. Like we said, the brakes are fierce. This, combined with the quick steering and hairline cornering manners, makes it possible to outbrake and drive in beneath competitors; a maneuver which is not only handy, but extremely infuriating to whomever you choose to zip by.

With all of these attributes and a few other touches like Akront rims and Magura levers, you would probably expect to pay through the nose for a Monark. If you're used to Oriental machinery, the suggested retail price of \$1075 will seem like too much for a 125. It is steep but after spending several weeks on the Monark, somehow we would hesitate to agree with you. 

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