

SPECIAL: 12 HOURS OF PONT-DE-VAUX

EUROPEAN EXTRAVAGANZA!

3 Americans take on the world in France!



Oh, well, Mark Ehrhardt never claimed to be a professional sprinter. Despite his fall in the slick mud, the two-time Mickey Thompson Champ had moved into the lead after just three laps.

◀ Session one begins and local Frenchman Cyril "Pont-de-Vaux Holeshot King" Faure grabs the lead. In hot pursuit are the team quads of Ehrhardt/Eichner (11), Anderson (4), Camanini (85), Bontoux (100), Phillips (1), Meynier (3) and Van der Laan (5).



Riding on the #100 team was four-time Pont-de-Vaux Champ Joel Bontoux of France, who came out of retirement to compete this year just for fun on a FourTrax-powered Banshee. Since Joel hasn't been training, he felt that the lighter, more manageable 250 motor (on a trick Banshee chassis) would be less of a handful.

◻ With one of his team's three quads leading, and only half an hour left to go in the '93 12 Hours of Pont-de-Vaux, the chief mechanic for Duncan Racing/Philip Charles Racing finally succumbs to the tension and, shaking his head, slowly walks away from the pit wall and back to the race van: "I'm so nervous right now . . . I just can't watch this anymore!"

The tension is high for many reasons. Pont-de-Vaux is one of, if not the most, prestigious quad races in Europe. PDV, named after the small town in France near the race site, began six years ago, and no American has ever placed in the top three. This year, three Americans are within half an hour of pulling it off. Mark Ehrhardt (Mickey Thompson Champ in '91 and '92) and Doug Eichner (current Mickey Thompson points leader) have teamed up on one of the three Duncan Racing/Philip Charles Racing Banshees and are in the lead. Indiana's Bob Sloan ('92 Cross-Country Champ) has teamed up with Cyril Faure (Yamaha Motor France) and that team is running second.

Of course, in a 12-hour race, mechanical failure plays a major role, and that is another source of tension. It might seem at first that pacing (and a



BEL-RAY

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Maha

APC

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PHILIP CHARLES

Piper's

BEL-RAY

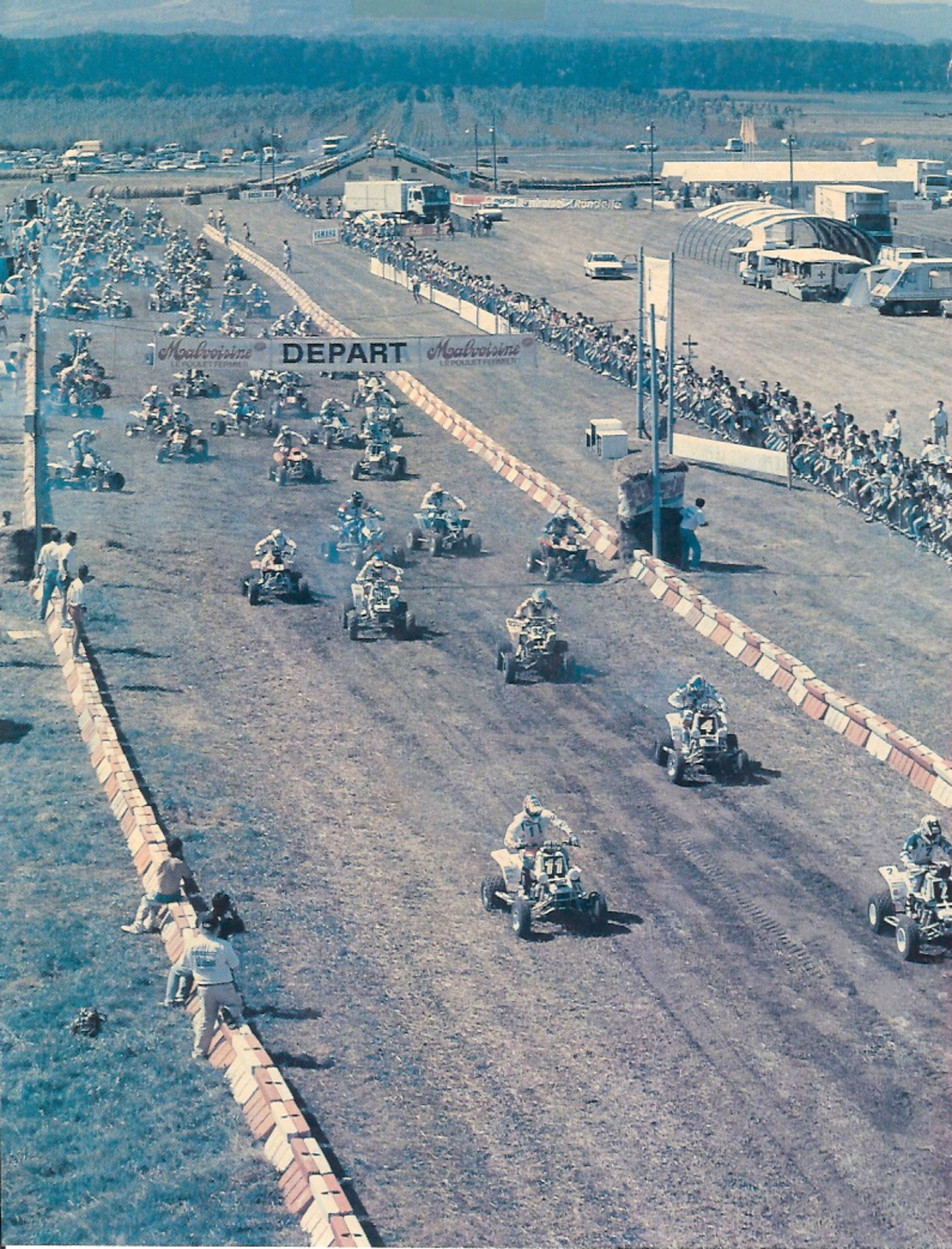
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Douglas Wheel

Piper's

BEL-RAY



Maalvoisine LE POULET FERMET DEPART Maalvoisine LE POULET FERMET



Check 'em out! Between each of the four race sessions, quads were impounded in the area seen here, and no repairs were allowed. During these times, spectators could check out the exotic machinery or take advantage of the various infield activities.

◀ Three hours down and nine to go in Pont-de-Vaux, France. After completing the first of four three-hour sessions, a sweaty but happy Doug Eichner reflects on taking the first session win for himself and Duncan Racing teammate Mark Ehrhardt.

"tortoise vs. the hare" strategy) would be important, but not here. PDV is 12 hours of flat-out hammering, and to slow down to save the machine is to lose the race. Here, only the fastest riders on the fastest, most bulletproof machines have a prayer of winning.

The pressure is not really on the top riders, though, whose speed, consistency and willingness to push themselves beyond reasonable limits of exhaustion is a given. The pressure is really on the machines. What tiny component has reached its point of fatigue and refuses to be pushed any further?

THE SESSIONS BEGIN

The 12 hours are run in four three-hour sessions and after two laps of the first session, Mark Ehrhardt has jumped into the lead. However, problems begin early for the four-time PDV

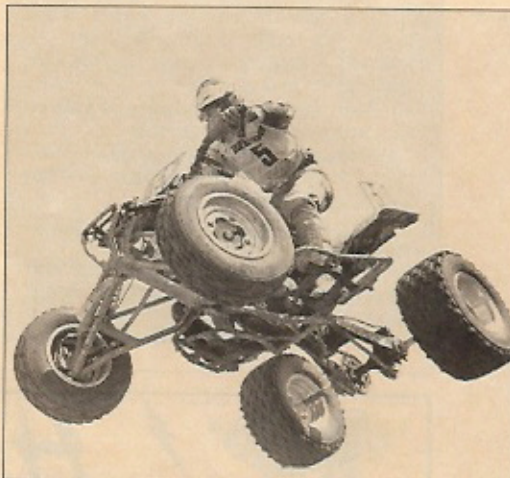
EXTRAVAGANZA!

champ and local favorite, Joel Bontoux, who is hit by another rider. With an injured back and broken A-arms on his TRX-powered Banshee, his team is out of the running. Similar bad luck strikes Duncan Racing/Philip Charles Racing rider Paul Anderson who, teaming with British champs Steve Clitheroe and Richard Cole, crashes hard. The Ehrhardt/Eichner team takes the first session win easily.

Since repairs are allowed only during each of the four race sessions (and not between race sessions), Ehrhardt/Eichner plan a long pit stop during the second session (a night race) to replace all brake pads, a gas tank bolt, change tires, air filter, adjust the chain and refuel. Though the stop takes only nine minutes, the team falls to 44th place and the '92 Veronica Beach Race winner from Holland, Wil van der Laan, takes the lead. It is short-lived, however, as his fast 500cc EML begins suffering failures. As the night session ends at midnight and the fireworks display begins, Ehrhardt's teammate Doug Eichner has miraculously moved up 36 places and the American team regains the overall lead over Sloan/Faure . . . but only by a few seconds.



After 12 hours, the battle came down to these two teams. Here, Mark Ehrhardt slips by Cyril Faure on the inside. Both Mark and teammate Doug Eichner were racing a Banshee for the first time but quickly adapted to the high-revving dune machine. When asked what his main complaint was with Banshees, Mark replied, "They don't handle!" (Hey, Mark, you guys beat 95 other teams; don't rub it in!)



Last year at Pont-de-Vaux, Wil van der Laan placed fifth aboard a Banshee but this year was happy to be back on a 500cc EML machine. "The Banshee feels too short and small to me," said the big 43-year-old Dutchman, who captured the win at the Veronica Beach Race in '92.

THE LURE OF PONT-DE-VAUX LIKE NO OTHER RACE

• During the awards ceremony (and between blasts of high-test French moonshine wine), '93 Pont-de-Vaux Champ Doug Eichner turned to a friend and, referring to ATV racers in general, mused, "You know, this is really our show . . . I wish we had something like this in the States!" Pont-de-Vaux ranks as one of the top quad-only events in the world and other promoters could take a lesson in how things should be done.

In addition to 12 hours of world-class quad racing (with computerized scoring employing radio transmitters attached to each quad, and a wide, safe track), weekend-long PDV is a parade

through the town, a fireworks display, a carnival midway with ATV rentals and displays in the infield of the track, and daily radio and front-page newspaper coverage. The atmosphere is relaxed and friendly, yet exciting. We talked briefly with promoter Michel Maingret.

DW: How did PDV get started?

Maingret: The format has always been quads-only. In '86 we had two races, one with conventional heats and the other a six-hour endurance. Then in '87 we staged the first annual 12-hour race.

DW: Why only quads?

Maingret: I like all motorsports, but on dirt I prefer quads. I feel they're more spectacular, particularly "flat-tracking" through the turns. When we started the race in '86, ATVs were something new, the spectators were

attracted to them, and the formula worked. There are many dirt bike races in France, and we didn't really need another one.

DW: Do you like dealing with the quad people?

Maingret: Yes! The mood is more friendly and fun than with the dirt bike crowd.

DW: Pont-de-Vaux is a rather small town. Do the locals like the event?

Maingret: Oh, yes. They know it's a big deal and they really get into it; every year they jam the streets waiting for the parade, and the infield of the track has a steady, 12-hour flow of spectators coming and going. French quad champion Joel Bontoux summarized it in a newspaper interview: "Pont-de-Vaux is almost like a pilgrimage; every year the riders and fans keep coming back!" ●

EXTRAVAGANZA!

INSIDE PONT DE VAUX

• Annual quad-only event held third weekend of August one mile from the town of Pont-de-Vaux (Pon-duh-VOH), southeast France.

• High-speed, wide, smooth, hard-packed, approx. two-mile course with six TT-style jumps, one big-air jump, and one quarter-mile paved straight.

• Event consists of four three-hour sessions: Saturday 3 p.m. and 9 p.m., Sunday 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

• Each session begins with a Le Mans-style, dead-engine start: At flag signal, riders sprint across track to quads.

• After first three sessions, quads are impounded and repairs can only be made during race sessions. All parts (including motor) can be replaced except the frame.

• Maximum of 100 teams, this year including representative teams from France (65), England (20), Germany (2), Holland (2), Italy (2), Belgium (1), Portugal (1), Spain (1) and U.S.(1).

• Each race team consists of two or three riders and one quad only.

• Winner is determined by team completing the most number of laps and still running at the end of 12 hours.

• First-place payback: \$2500 to be divided among team.

• Quads must be between 240cc and 1000cc, under 102 db., and use standard commercial gas only.



From the woods of America to the French countryside. Cross-Country Champ (and Duncan Racing rider) Bob Sloan teamed with Cyril Faure (France) and enjoyed a few new challenges: the fastest track he had ever ridden on, trying to understand French, and riding a Banshee for the first time. Said Sloan, "Faure's team is really organized; they have two cooks, a doctor/masseuse, and that Banshee is really fast. I was passing Hondas like they were standing still!"

2 DOWN—2 TO GO

Session three spells the end for the '92 PDV-winning Phillips ATV team, (not to be confused with Philip Charles Racing!) which is forced to drop out with suspension problems. While continuing to hold down a solid second place, Sloan and Faure must now



Tearing it up on the short tarmac (pave-ment) section is the third-finishing team (coincidentally #3 in '92 also.) Leader of this fast French team is Jacky Voirin, definitely the wildest man in France. From terrorizing waitresses and trophy girls to spinning donuts after the race to pouring bootleg wine down everyone's throat, this guy is the original party animal. Vive le France!

contend with a motor on the way out and leader Ehrhardt waves bye-bye as he blows by Sloan on one of the sixth-gear straights.

Sloan, despite a communication problem with his French teammates and unfamiliarity with riding a Banshee, posts impressive lap times and enjoys the challenge of Pont-de-Vaux: "In cross-country racing, we do have some fast sections, but I'm used to average speeds around 20 mph, not 50. On some of the straights here, you hear that wind whipping by at 90 mph and it's exhilarating!"

As the fourth and final session be-

EXTRAVAGANZA!

RESULTS:

1993 12 HOURS OF PONT-DE-VAUX

Session 1

- Ehrhardt/Eichner
- Faure/Bousique/Sloan
- Walker/Wildman/Thornton
- Bot/Babouiaz/Longo
- Van der Laan/Gaillard/Abgrall

Session 2

- Kuhn/Barret/De Castro
- Gobert/Bontoux/Vairdot
- Faure/Bousique/Sloan
- Meyner/Voirin/Repellin
- Van der Laan/Gaillard/Abgrall

Session 3

- Ehrhardt/Eichner
- Faure/Bousique/Sloan
- Kuhn/Barret/De Castro
- Perrat/Ferry/Bergeron
- Anderson/Cole/Clitheroe

Session 4

- Ehrhardt/Eichner
- Faure/Bousique/Sloan
- Van der Laan/Gaillard/Abgrall
- Meyner/Voirin/Repellin
- Johnson/Johnson/Hudson

FINAL OVERALL

- Ehrhardt/Eichner.....Banshee.....USA
- Faure/Bousique/Sloan.....Banshee.....France/USA
- Meyner/Voirin/Repellin.....Honda.....France
- Goyon/Goyon.....Banshee.....France
- Van der Laan/Gaillard/Abgrall.....EML 500.....Holl./France
- Hopin/Guyomard/Clavier.....Banshee.....France
- Bonnot/Beaudon/Tran-Duc.....Honda.....France
- Lhuillier/Leroy/Cauchy.....Honda.....France
- Bigault/Cannard/Fromageot.....Banshee.....France
- Wood/Wilkins/Ford.....Suz 250.....England

SPECIAL AWARDS

- Fast qualifier.....Ehrhardt/Eichner
- Fastest lap during race.....Ehrhardt/Eichner
- Fastest 2-rider team.....Ehrhardt/Eichner
- Fastest ladies team.....Hurt/Hinds/Downton
- Fastest vet team (over 40).....Dugelet/Grizard/Ponbille
- Perseverance.....Van der Laan/Gaillard/Abgrall
- Fullest quad.....Torrecilla/Tissot/Ralfour

EXTRAVAGANZA!



A typical pit stop includes refueling, a check of wheels and chain, wiping off the numberplates, and a rider switch . . . all in about 30 seconds.



Father/son racers are nothing new, but how about father/daughter racers?! Horace Robinson competed this year aboard a trick, Banshee-motored LT250, while his daughter Lisa (a top English rider) raced a Banshee on an all-female team.

gins, Sloan and Faure are only one lap behind Ehrhardt/Eichner, a very small margin after nine hours of racing and 153 laps—a margin so small that even a minor problem could mean second place, or worse, for the American team. As the minutes count down, though, Ehrhardt and Eichner build their lead, and when the checkered flag falls at 6 p.m. on Sunday, Doug and Mark have become the first Americans to win Pont-de-Vaux. Bob Sloan, placing second with Cyril Faure, makes the U.S. showing that much sweeter.

Just past the finish line, Ehrhardt and Eichner, who will return to the States to resume their ferocious battle over the lead in the Mickey Thompson series, grin ear to ear and hug each other like long-lost brothers. Not only has great racing brought these two contenders together, it has won them over with the French people, and the following day newspaper headlines in France proclaim "Le reve Americain!" . . . The American Dream!

☆☆☆☆

The Americans saw their dream come true all right, but it took more than wishful thinking to make dreams a reality at Pont-de-Vaux. It took the finest riders, a great crew, an extraordinary machine, and 12 long, tense hours of watching the minutes and laps go by . . . one by one.

(Dirt Wheels extends a special thanks to Duncan Racing/Philip Charles Racing and Michel Maingret for help with this story.) □

SPECIAL: 12 HOURS OF PONT-DE-VAUX

THE AMAZING DUNCAN RACING/ PHILIP CHARLES RACING



BANSHEES

3 super-fast, super-tough quads!

□ Why would any professional team race the equivalent of 30 events on a quad without performing any maintenance on it? Because they have no choice. In a race as competitive as Pont-de-Vaux, taking the time to do a top-end, replace bearings or change the clutch would certainly mean giving up any chance of winning. Now, compound this abuse to a machine by putting the fastest riders in the world on it for 12 hours riding flat-out.

This is what Pont-de-Vaux is all about. To simply finish the race is a major accomplishment. To win it—with no major mechanical problems—is a miracle and a tribute to a supremely talented, well-organized team. The day after the race, we talked with Martin Fletcher at Philip Charles Racing to learn how they did it.

DW: First of all, explain the connection between Philip Charles Racing and Duncan Racing.

Fletcher: As you know, Duncan Racing [in the States] produces ATV performance products and does high-performance engine work. Philip Charles Leisure is Europe's largest quad dealer and we are the sole distributor for Duncan Racing in England.

DW: You and Duncan Racing put together quite a combined effort for this year's Pont-de-Vaux.

Fletcher: Yep. We brought over eight mechanics, three race teams [including eight riders] and three virtually identical Banshees. Back in England I spent four months and over 100 hours prepping each of the quads just for Pont-de-Vaux.

DW: Describe the prep work.

Fletcher: We started with new Banshees right out of the crate, then stripped them down to the frame. Each frame was sandblasted, beefed-up with gusseting, then repainted. Basically we started from scratch and built them up: suspension, motor, chassis, everything. Each machine is worth about \$15,000, not including labor.

DW: What will happen to the three Banshees, now that the race is over?

Fletcher: We'll put about \$7000 total into the three quads getting them back in shape, then try to get about \$7000 for each of them. Last year's race bike now has 30 races on it, and it's doing fine.

DW: Other than the cost of the new Banshees and prepping them for the race, what other expenses are involved in racing Pont-de-Vaux?

Fletcher: We've got fuel for the truck, the ferry crossing from England to France, road tolls, food, about 20 hours on the phone to the U.S. and France working out the details—all told, about \$3000.



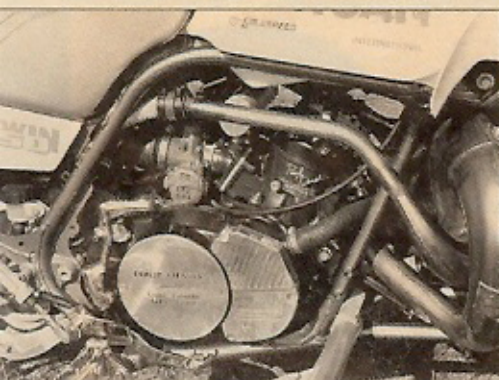
Q: How can a quad fly off fifth-gear jumps like this for 12 hours without disintegrating? **A:** A great machine, the best components and meticulous preparation. For the '93 12 Hours of Pont-de-Vaux, Duncan Racing/Philip Charles Racing entered three identical Banshees and captured the overall with one of them. Seen here: the team quad piloted by Englishmen Paul Anderson, Richard Cole and Steve Clitheroe.

DW: Tell us about interesting setups on the machines.

Fletcher: Of course, they all have Duncan motor work and components, including High-Rev pipes and National Midrange porting. For suspension we ran Laeger's A-arms and swing-



This is just part of the Duncan Racing/Philip Charles Racing crew at Pont-de-Vaux. (That's Mark Ehrhardt top center, with Doug Eichner and Bob Sloan on the right. Martin Fletcher is seen bottom center with Philip Charles on the right.)



With this screaming Banshee/Duncan Racing motor, Mark Ehrhardt and Doug Eichner were never passed—in 12 hours of racing at Pont-de-Vaux—by any other 350. Though they never had to remove it, the PCR cover allows the Banshee clutch to be changed in four minutes; no draining of coolant or oil is necessary. Also note the chromed footpegs (Blaster lefts), which bolt right on and move the pegs back 2".



A stock Banshee-length Laeger swingarm allows using a FourTrax 250R-style axle carrier (with faster chain adjustment) and brake caliper (with more pad area.) Notice the twin rear taillights; Pont-de-Vaux regulations require only one, but why take the chance of having to waste precious time changing bulbs during the race?

arm with Ohlins shocks. Because one of the race sessions is at night, we ran an additional handlebar-mounted headlight and two taillights, just for insurance. Safari rewound the stator. Though we didn't plan on pulling the clutch, we installed the Philip Charles Racing clutch cover; with it, you can change the clutch in only four minutes, as opposed to an hour with the stock cover.

DW: Why the TRX rear calipers on the Banshees?

Fletcher: They are actually stronger calipers and have more pad area than the stock Banshee brakes. During the first session, we ran pads on Ehrhardt/Eichner's machine that were too soft, so they needed changing.

DW: What provisions did you make for fewer pit stops?

Fletcher: First of all, we had only two riders [Mark Ehrhardt and Doug Eichner] instead of three on our American team. Since all racers on a given team are required to ride, having only two really strong riders saves an extra pit stop to switch riders. Then, with a 5.6-gallon tank, we only had to stop once during each three-hour session to refuel. And the Shredder tires in the

rear wear quite well, so we only had to change tires once in 12 hours. At the end of 12 hours, though, all four tires were almost bald. I've never seen front radials wear down like that. One fast right-hand sweeper—not to mention the quarter-mile paved section—really ate them up. If it had started raining toward the end of the race, it would have been really slippery out there!

DW: How much did the riders hold back to save the machines?

Fletcher: None. Once a rider has set a pace for himself, you can't ask him to hold back. Ehrhardt and Eichner said that they rode Pont-de-Vaux almost as hard as they would a Mickey Thompson, which is only five minutes long. That's some serious hammering for 12 hours, especially coming from riders like Mark and Doug. □

DUNCAN RACING/PHILIP CHARLES RACING PONT-DE-VAUX BANSHEES

(All three machines, including Ehrhardt/Eichner's winning machine, are virtually identical)

SPONSORS	
Main sponsors	Duncan Racing (619) 258-6306, Philip Charles Racing (country code 44) 532 778663, Yamaha
Co-Sponsors	Oregon Motorsports, MMF, Douglas, Ohlins, Cascade, Outerwears, Bel Ray, Laeger's, Motion Pro, Escatel Hotel, MXA, James Lucky Ent., Goldspeed
MACHINE	
Quad	'93 Banshee
Quad weight	approx. 355 lb.
Frame	Stock w/unnecessary brackets cut, gussets added, painted
MOTOR	
Motor	'93 Banshee
Porting	Paul Turner National Midrange
Pistons	Stock
Ignition	Stock w/Safari stator, flywheels lightened by Duncan
Spark plugs/gap	NGK B9EV/.028"
Reed cage	Stock w/Duncan reeds and reed stop mod
Carburetors	(2) 35mm PWK Keihins w/Duncan Superflow mod and boost bottle
Airbox/filters/oil	Stock w/James Lucky vented lid/K&N w/Outerwears/Bel Ray
Pipes/silencers	Paul Turner High Rev/Fat Boy
Fuel	ELF (European) Super Unleaded 98 octane pump gas (Pont-de-Vaux regulations don't allow special gas)
2-stroke oil/ratio	Bel Ray/32:1
DRIVE SYSTEM	
Clutch/springs	Paul Turner/same
Gearbox/oil	Stock w/Duncan shift star mod/Bel Ray
Chain	RK SMO 520 heavy-duty O-ring w/solid rollers
Sprockets	JB (U.K.) steel
Gearing f/r	16/40
FRONT END	
A-arms	Laeger's +2" chromoly w/'86 Yamaha Warrior screw-in ball joints and adjustable camber
Spindles	Stock w/steering arm ear welded in place
Front shocks	Ohlins piggyback, stock travel
Steering stem	Stock w/stops cut
Steering stabilizer	PEP
REAR END	
Swingarm	Laeger's chromoly stock length w/Honda-style eccentric housing
Rear axle/carrier	JP +2" (each side) w/Laeger carrier
Rear shock	Ohlins piggyback, stock travel
TIRES/WHEELS/HUBS	
Tires f/r	James Lucky grooved radials/Goldspeed Shredders (Europe), (Turf Tamers used for qualifying and practice)
Tire sizes f/r	145x80-10/16x11-11
Tires-PSI f/r	11/6
Wheels	Douglas Red Label
Hubs	Stock
BRAKES	
Brakes f/r	Stock/Honda TRX250R
Brake lines	Graydon steel-braided
HANDLEBARS/CONTROLS	
Handlebars	Renthal QuadRacer bend
Throttle	Motion Pro CR-type
Clutch lever	Stock Banshee (for easier pull) w/parking brake removed
Cables	Motion Pro
Grips	Graydon
Tether kill switch	Pro Design w/clip sharpened for quick insertion
MISCELLANEOUS	
Nerf bars	MMF
Front bumper/grab bar	Duncan/Graydon
Swingarm skid plate	Stock
Fuel tank	IMS 5.6 gal
Lights f/r	Stock plus single handlebar-mounted 55W halogen w/custom PCR brackets/ (2) stock rears
Seat	MXA Gripa
Body plastic	Stock trimmed
Footpegs	Stock Blaster, using 2 lefts (results in 2" back)
OTHER SPECIAL SETUPS	
PCR (4-minute quick-change) Clutch Cover; Chromed: brake pedal, footpegs, shifter, front bumper	
MANAGEMENT, CREW, TRANSLATORS	
Jim Bellinger, Philip Charles, Steve Cook, Gregory Derain, Lenny Duncan, Martin Fletcher, Kevin Moody, Bart Pfannenstiel, Nathalie Vieux, Brian Woodcock, Mud bike courtesy of David Thornton.	

As the sun sets in southeast France, Mark Ehrhardt jumps on his Duncan Racing/Philip Charles Racing Banshee and round two blasts off at Pont-de-Vaux. ▶