

Texas A&M The Battalion

Vol. 82 No. 42 USPS 045360 10 pages

College Station, Texas

Tuesday, October 28, 1986

Racers popular in B-CS

Cycles said to be 'too powerful'

By Robert Morris
Reporter

Ninja, V-Max, Interceptor and Eliminator — these and other high-performance motorcycles with macho images have taken over the College Station market for males between the ages of 18 and 24.

They also have caused problems for insurance agents and motorcycle dealers.

"The fact is all of these cycles are too powerful for the people on them," said Budd Abbott, marketing manager for Century Dairyman Insurance of Austin. "Less than 500 people in the United States are capable of handling the type of motorcycles in the super-sport category, and most of them are riding the pro circuit."

Joe Fisher, owner of University Cycles in College Station and a Yamaha motorcycle distributor, said most people don't realize that along with the purchase of a high-performance motorcycle comes the responsibility of learning how to use it.

Randy Pazzaglia, president and general manager of Central Cycle and Supply and distributor of Kawasaki and BMW motorcycles, said these "macho-image" cycles are called super-sports or cafe-racers by the people who sell them.

"About called them 'death machines,'" Pazzaglia said.

Some of the machines can reach speeds of 160 mph, and all do the quarter-mile in less than 11 seconds.

Pazzaglia said almost none are ridden by people capable of handling this power.

Randolph Adami, a junior at

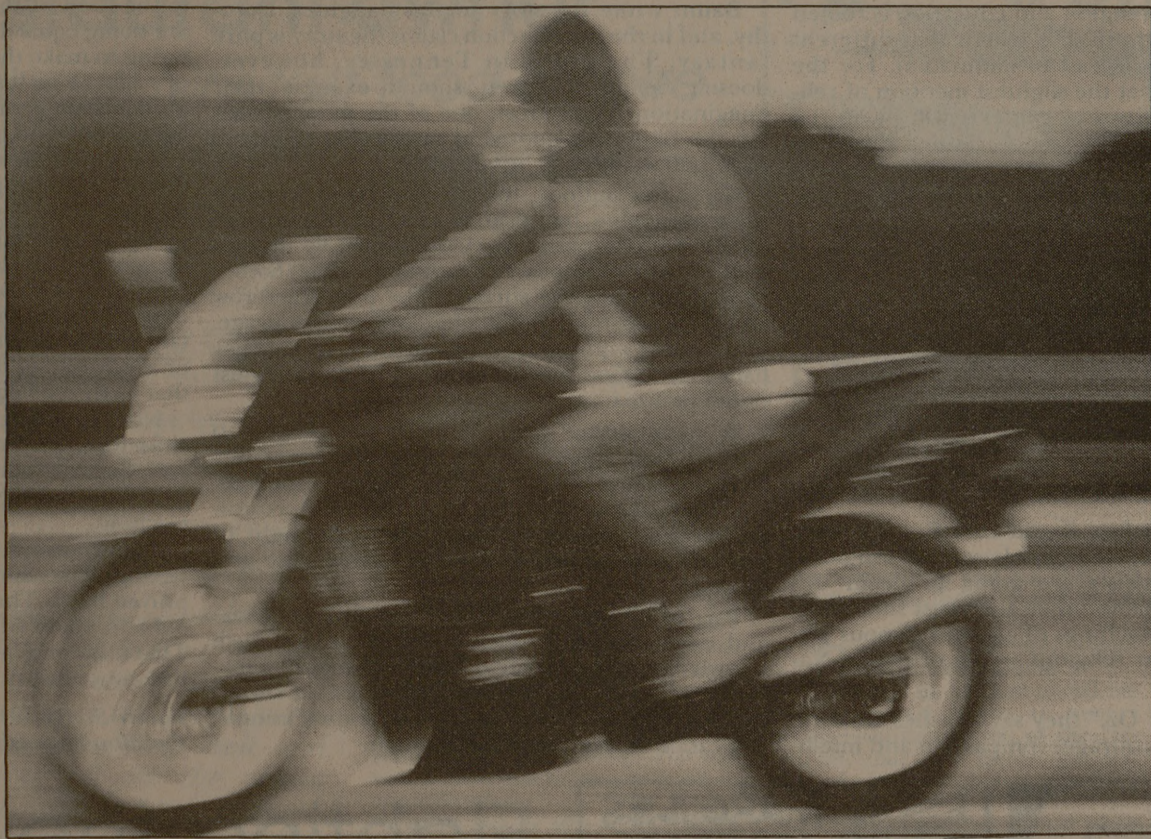


Photo by Tom Ownbey

Andy Crenshaw bought his Ninja motorcycle six months ago but has ridden smaller bikes for two years.

Texas A&M, is among the minority of people who own a high performance motorcycle that have experience.

He estimated almost 75 percent to 80 percent of the people currently riding these cycles have little or no experience.

Adami began riding a small motorcycle three years ago and rode two other small motorcycles before taking on a super-sport.

Still, he admitted he bought the cycle because he "liked the style of the bike."

As far as performance is concerned, Adami said he enjoys having

the power, yet he said he rarely uses it.

Pazzaglia said that these motorcycles are taking over the market of the young male consumer because of their strong male-image appeal.

The macho performance market was created by the Japanese motorcycle producers in the late 1970s and early 1980s in response to the lagging sales of the typical cruiser motorcycle made popular in the early 1970s, Pazzaglia said.

However, he added the strong sales push has been greatly helped by the image portrayed in movies like "Top Gun," where speed is pre-

sented as the ultimate object of macho release.

"All these guys come in to buy a cycle that will make them Tom Cruise," Pazzaglia said, referring to the actor in "Top Gun" who was shown in the movie riding a Kawasaki Ninja 900.

College Station Police Sgt. Gary Bishop compared the current popularity of the high-powered cycles to that of the black Trans Am in the late 1970s.

Fisher said the sporty image appeals to Americans — from muscle-

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Man charged with spying against U.S.

Former Air Force sergeant wanted 'to embarrass' U.S.

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A disgruntled former Air Force sergeant was arrested Monday and charged with trying to deliver secrets about an Air Force reconnaissance program to the Soviet Union, authorities said.

Allen John Davies of San Jose, a naturalized American citizen who works for Ford Aerospace & Communications Corp., was arrested by FBI agents in Palo Alto, south of San Francisco in the heart of Silicon Valley, said U.S. Attorney Joseph Russioniello.

If convicted, he could be punished by sentences of up to life in prison.

Davies, 33, was arraigned before U.S. Magistrate Frederick Woelflen and held pending a hearing Thursday on a government request to keep him in custody without bail until trial.

Davies showed no emotion during the brief hearing in a packed courtroom.

A sworn statement by an FBI agent filed in federal court says that on Sept. 22, Davies offered information about the Air Force program to an undercover FBI agent who posed as a representative of the Soviet consulate in San Francisco at a meeting in the city's Golden Gate Park.

Russioniello told reporters that Davies did not ask for any money

when he offered classified information to the agent.

"His apparent motive was spite," Russioniello said.

He said Davies had been discharged in 1984 for "inadequate job performance" and apparently felt it was unjustified.

Davies provided detailed verbal information about the program as well as a hand drawing depicting various aspects of the program, according to the statement by Agent Roger Edstrom.

He said that much of the information Davies provided at the meeting was classified as secret, according to Air Force Maj. Boyd Lease, director of the reconnaissance program.

He said Davies stated he had worked on the reconnaissance program while in the Air Force in 1983 and 1984.

Davies had been told not to discuss his work or disclose the existence of his unit, he said.

Davies said he was providing the information out of revenge because of the unfair way he was treated while in the Air Force, the agent said.

"He also stated that he wanted to do something to embarrass the U.S. and to interfere with the effectiveness of its reconnaissance activities," he said.

Political campaigns nationwide marred by mudslinging tactics

WASHINGTON (AP) — Negative campaigning, the volatile "dark side of politics" that some call mudslinging, is making its presence felt heavily this year in campaigns across the nation.

Personal attacks as well as accusations of conflict of interest, absenteeism in high office and political extremism have left their stamp on many Senate, House and gubernatorial campaigns.

"In these last weeks before an election, we see again the dark side of politics," Sen. John C. Danforth, R-Mo., told the Senate earlier this month. "Each campaign plumbs new depths of name-calling in thirty-second TV commercials that transform personal attack into an art form."

"Politics becomes an even dirtier job, hardening to its practitioners, revolting to the public."

That is the same conclusion Pennsylvania Republican Lt. Gov. William Scranton III said he reached when he ordered his staff to scrap negative ads aimed against Robert P. Casey, his Democratic opponent in the race for governor.

"This year's campaign has deteriorated into an unproductive name-calling contest," Scranton said last

week. "It has become like a back-alley brawl. Mudslinging is not leadership. . . . We dirty our own nest and it is time to clean that up."

Casey has run television spots attacking Scranton's attendance record at the state Senate and several agencies as lieutenant governor.

"He had trouble finding his way to work," Casey said. "When you don't go to work, you don't get promoted, you get fired."

A few days after Scranton's non-negativism pledge, 600,000 brochures attacking Casey were mailed out.

Scranton's campaign people said it was all a mistake, that they hadn't meant to break his promise. Casey said he'd make an issue of the mailing.

Among the many other negative examples around the country:

- In Wisconsin last weekend, consumer advocate Ralph Nader, questioning why Republican Sen. Robert Kasten's drunk-driving arrest has not become a bigger campaign issue, said Kasten "needs rehabilitation rather than re-election."

Joe Sims, Kasten's news secretary,

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State Department shows 'displeasure'

U.S. not cracking down on Syria

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ever since Syria went on the U.S. terrorist list as a charter member in 1979, the United States, in deciding whether to censure President Hafez Assad's government, has had to weigh the leverage Damascus may have with anti-Western elements in the Middle East.

The dilemma was evident again Monday as the State Department registered its "great displeasure" with Syria's policies while also trying publicly to hold Assad to his pledge to assist the seven U.S. citizens listed as hostages in southern Lebanon.

Syria is considered the dominant political force in Lebanon, and while Assad's government is philosophically too secular to please most Muslim fundamentalist groups involved in terrorist incidents, its political influence is substantial.

Also, terrorist experts within and outside the U.S. government are convinced that Syria plays a double role — providing a safe haven for Abu Nidal, head of the Fatah Revolutionary Council, and others accused of terrorism, but also assisting American hostages, at least after they are released.

In the case of at least three of them, Jeremy Levin, a Cable News Network correspondent; the Rev. Benjamin Weir, a Presbyterian minister; and the Rev. Lawrence Martin Jenco, a Roman Catholic priest, the Syrians are credited with helping them get out of Lebanon once they

were freed by their captors.

"Nobody thinks Syria could press a button and get them out," said a State Department official who spoke anonymously. "But we feel they've tried to be helpful up to a point."

Syria is not considered the dominant influence with the groups believed to be holding the Americans.

"These people, if they are influenced by anybody, are influenced

by Iran," the official said. "And Syria doesn't want to jeopardize its relations with Iran."

Privately, State Department officials have no doubt that both Syria and Iran use terrorism to advance their political aims. Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger blamed both governments three years ago for the bombing of the U.S. Marine

headquarters in Beirut that killed 241 U.S. servicemen.

He said Iranians exploded the truck bomb with the "sponsorship and knowledge and authority of the Syrian government."

The United States also accused Syria of responsibility for the bombing of the American embassy in Beirut the previous April.

New shuttle engine design passes first tests

SPACE CENTER, Houston (AP) — Early tests show that a new rocket engine design will eliminate the flaws that caused space shuttle Challenger to blow up, a NASA official said Monday.

John Thomas, manager of the space agency's solid rocket motor redesign team, also said NASA is on track toward a resumption of space flights in early 1988.

A new engine "has been tested and we are much more confident than ever before that it is a good design," Thomas said, but added that much more testing remains to be done.

Challenger blew up 73 seconds after launch Jan. 28, killing all seven crew members.

A presidential commission de-

termined that the accident occurred when a joint on the solid rocket engine leaked flame that ignited rocket propellant.

Among the factors blamed by the commission were warping of the metal parts of the joint that unsealed two rubberized O rings and low temperatures that reduced the seals' resilience.

Thomas and his team designed a joint with an extra lip to prevent warping, added another O ring, and developed a heater to keep the joint warm. All of these elements worked well in early testing, he said.

Thomas said engineers also tested the joint design used on Challenger and duplicated the

leaks that the investigation concluded occurred.

The new design was subjected to "hot fire" tests using a scale model burning some 70 pounds of propellant for 80 seconds, Thomas said.

"The results have been very, very pleasing," he said. In one of the tests, he said, the joint sealed even without the use of O rings.

Engineers are testing two ideas for insulating the steel walls of the engine from the 1,500-degree heat generated by the propellant.

The next stage calls for tests using rocket segments that are the full circumference of a flight engine but which burn only 300 pounds of propellant.

Leaders of world religions join in peace prayer

ASSISI, Italy (AP) — Bearing olive branches and offering prayers, Pope John Paul II and other leaders of great world religions, from Muslims and Jews to fire-worshipping Zoroastrians, solemnly pledged Monday to work for peace.

The pope, summing up the resolve of his religious colleagues, urged world leaders to fashion "strategies of peace with courage and vision."

Dalai Lama, the exiled Buddhist god-king of Tibet, called the historic gathering in Assisi, hill-town birthplace of St. Francis, a recognition of the "indispensable spiritual dimension" in efforts to end war.

And the efforts had an immediate, if temporary, impact in far corners of a war-torn globe.

Warring parties in a dozen countries, including Nicaragua, El Salvador and Cambodia, acceded to the pope's appeal that combatants lay

"Either we learn to walk together in peace and harmony, or we drift apart and ruin ourselves and others."

— Pope John Paul II

down their arms for 24 hours Monday. The cease-fire broke down in Lebanon, however, and minor violations were reported elsewhere.

In at least a dozen other conflicts, meanwhile, from the Iran-Iraq border to Northern Ireland, was dragged on heedless of the plea.

The 160 participants at the prayer meeting represented 32 denominations and groups from Christendom as well as American Indians, African animists, Japanese Shintoists,

Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Bahais.

The denominations' adherents number 3.5 billion people, or 70 percent of the world's population.

In a moving climax to the day's events, the participants, resplendent in attire of a dozen colors, gathered on the steps of the Basilica of St. Francis and raised olive branches in a commitment "to make peace a central aim of our prayer and action."

In his final address, the pope warned that the choice facing humanity is "true peace or catastrophic war."

"Either we learn to walk together in peace and harmony, or we drift apart and ruin ourselves and others," he said.

Dalai Lama told reporters, "The significance of today's gathering must be found in its symbolism. We stressed the importance of prayer and reflection and the indispensable

spiritual dimension in building peace."

But a Moslem from the Ivory Coast, Ahmed Tidjani, cautioned that many of the participants, unlike the pope, lacked the power to translate "the spirit and meaning of Assisi" into concrete action. He described the meeting as largely a "ceremonial exercise."

The nine hours of fasting, prayer and pilgrimage began at 9 a.m. in front of the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli, built on the site where the peace-loving founder of the Franciscan order died.

In chilly weather and under periodic showers, thousands of pilgrims and tourists packed the narrow alleys of this central Italian town. Police and plainclothesmen pushed and shoved the onlookers to clear the way for the religious leaders.

The pope arrived in a motorcade from nearby Perugia and shook

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— Dalai Lama

hands with the leaders of more than 60 delegations, including Anglican leader Dr. Robert Runcie, the archbishop of Canterbury, and Elio Toaff, chief rabbi of Rome.

The individual groups first held their own prayer sessions in churches, monasteries and town buildings.

Toaff and the other Jewish participants gathered in a small square

where a synagogue once stood before it was destroyed in the 14th century.

After 2½ hours of prayer, the participants walked in silent processions to a square in front of the 800-year-old Basilica of St. Francis, where the 13th-century friar is buried.

Representatives of each religion then mounted the podium one after another and offered a public prayer.

Muneyoshi Tokugawa, the chief Japanese Shinto priest, read from poems composed by Emperor Hirohito.

"Although the people living across the ocean surrounding us are all brothers, I believe, why are there constant troubles in this world? Why do winds and waves rise in the ocean surrounding us? I only earnestly wish that the wind will soon puff away all the clouds which are hanging over the top of the mountains."