



Champ Travis Spader feels that the Lobo is the best handling chassis available, particularly for cornering.

WHEELS OF THE CHAMP

Travis Spader's Duncan/Lobo 250R: #1 Maxxis ATV Nationals Pro Class

By Bill "WBGO" Lanphier

"Who is that new guy?!" I excitedly asked a spectator during the Pro class practice at the season opener. The quad had no stickers or number and, from a distance, I couldn't quite identify the rider. But he was flying — it was almost like a video tape on fast-forward.

The spectator turned to me and responded with surprise, "You don't know Travis Spader?!" Then it made perfect sense. Guys as fast as Spader don't just pop up overnight. He is unquestionably one of the sports all-time fastest riders and he's been gunning for the National No. 1 plate for a long time. At the close of the 2000 season, he'd won four

of the 10 rounds and took home the Pro class title with over 20 points to spare.

In our last issue, we talked to Spader about the 2000 season and racing in general. Now let's check out the quad that took him to victory in the world's most prestigious MX/TT series, the Maxxis ATV Nationals, also known as the Grand National Championships.

Pro Class Power

Spader's main sponsor, Duncan Racing, provided the lightning-fast powerplant for the Honda 250R-based machine. The heart of the motor is Duncan's new PC 2000 Power Cylinder. Trick features include a Nikasil-

coated bore (it's way more durable than an un-coated sleeve), O-ring seals for the DR head with interchangeable domes, and 50 percent more coolant capacity than available with a stock cylinder.

But the most exciting feature on the PC 2000 is a powervalve. Spader was the only Pro using one, and it obviously made a difference. "Without the powervalve," explains Loren Duncan, "Spader would come off the line in the top five maybe 60 percent of the time. With the powervalve, he was there 95 percent of the time. It basically doubles the powerband range."

The powervalve is a deceptively simple but



Some riders are known for their TT skills, others for their starts and others for their jumping talent. New Jersey's Travis Spader does it all and his Duncan/Lobo quad obliges.

effective device that's already in use on motocross motorcycles. Exhaust pressure forces the spring-loaded powervalve open at a specified RPM and changes the exhaust port duration. When the valve is closed, compression is higher and low end is improved. When the valve opens, the motor can rev freely into the mid- and high-RPM range.

Powervalves are in use in snowmobiles, personal watercraft, and dirt bikes. Why has it taken the ATV aftermarket so long to build a powervalve? Time and expense! Duncan explains, "Our PC 2000 cylinder is the result of a year and a half of development. We've got \$100,000 into it."

The cylinder is available in two configurations: Midrange and High-Rev. Going from one to the other is not as simple as swapping powervalves, though, and both the ports and the valve must be cut differently. In the Nationals, Spader used a Midrange setup for the motocross and a High-Rev for the TTs. The Duncan TS08 pipe provides more top end, while the PTR eliminator exhaust provides better mid and bottom. A 39mm Keihin was used at the faster tracks like Muddy Creek, while a 37mm gives more bottom end for the relatively slower tracks like the Georgia opener.

For greater durability, Duncan had the stator rewound with higher quality materials. To provide more of a hedge against DNFs, aftermarket gears — second through sixth gears — were installed.

Pro Class Handling

A great powerplant is nothing without a great rolling chassis. While based loosely on Honda TRX250R geometry, the Lobo chassis from Roll Design takes it to a whole new level. One look at the gull wing style lower A-arms and single lower front frame member instantly makes it clear that this is not a mere Honda copy. The A-arms and swingarm work together with Axis suspension and allow Spader to tackle monster jumps, rutted-out turns, whoops and braking bumps at

frightening speeds.

Unlike on most of the other aftermarket frames, Spader's machine uses 400EX front spindles and brakes instead of those from a 250R. "People think the EX front brakes, which have one piston instead of two, aren't as good as on the R, but that's not true," said Duncan. "That single piston is large on the EX, and the brakes hold up for both MX and TT. The EX front spindles are lighter than those on the R, and they've proven to be very strong, as well."

SPADER TALKS ABOUT HIS RIDE

Fortunately, *ATV Sport* was able to get a ride on Spader's machine. Unfortunately, none of us are Pro level racers and that's what it takes to find fault with this incredible piece of machinery. And, even then, it would be more a matter of minor nitpicking than fault finding. Yes, Spader's quad is about as close to perfect as a machine can get.

"Empowered" is an overused word nowadays, but it aptly describes how you feel on this quad. It's almost as if you can do nothing wrong. The chassis is totally forgiving. The shocks will eat up anything. The brakes have a great feel and will stop on a dime. Power is very strong and smooth throughout. The ergos are great and the machine feels instantly comfortable.



The many years of hard work finally paid off. In 2000, Spader, Duncan Racing and Roll Design won their first Pro-Class championship.

ATV Sport: Describe this machine's power.

Spader: I feel the most gain in the bottom and mid ranges. It accelerates much faster and comes off the line better.

ATV Sport: Do you find yourself short shifting?

Spader: Yes, that's important. Most people make the mistake of over-revving it. Because it can pull hard at lower RPM, I can shift sooner and carry one gear higher through the corners. That means less wheelspin.

ATV Sport: Where is the main handling advantage of the Lobo chassis?

Spader: Cornering. It turns on a dime and hardly pushes at all. It's fast responding and steers more quickly.

ATV Sport: How about the shocks?

Spader: The valving is the big advantage there. The dampening is better than anything else available. It's very stable over rougher terrain.

ATV Sport: With the lower ride height, is bottoming ever a problem?

Spader: Even though the Axis shocks sit lower than some others, that's not a problem because of the adjustable crossover and dual-rate setup.

ATV Sport: How do you compare these new ITP Holeshots MX fronts to the car radials?

Spader: They have a little more give and absorb the sharp-edged stuff better. Plus, they work better in loamy terrain where the car radials can skate.

ATV Sport: How about in blue-grooved hard pack?

Spader: The radials might have an advantage there, but you hardly ever see that in motocross. The Holeshots track really well in hard-packed clay because the tire compound is softer.

ATV Sport: How about the rear Holeshots?

Spader: They have a lot more forward traction than Turf Tamers, yet still slide well. Being taller, they spin less, too. They're a little more bouncy on stutter bumps, but we just slow the rebound on the shocks.

ATV Sport: *Your machine looks pretty straightforward. You don't really have any unique setups?*

Spader: No, nothing crazy. The wider footpegs are really nice and they're much easier on the soles of your feet. You might have to run the shifter a little higher to compensate, but the tradeoff is well worth it.



The team plans to run these Holeshot MX front tires exclusively for the 2001 season. Note the unique shape of the Lobo lower A-arms, as well as the 400EX spindles and brakes.



The Duncan Racing PC 2000 Power Cylinder (as used by Spader) provides a relatively simple, pre-ported, bolt-on upgrade for Honda ATC250Rs and TRX250Rs from 1985 to 1989.

SPADER'S DUNCAN/LOBO 250R

Displacement	265cc
Bore x Stroke (mm)	68.5 x 72
Crank & flywheel	Stock
Ignition	Safari stator, Hinson adjustable counterbalancer
Reed valve	Pyramid
Carb	Keihin 39mm PWK or 37.3mm PJ w/DR Super Flow
Airbox/filter	Stock/K&N Filter with Outerwear
Pipe	PTR TS08 Pipe or PTR ELIMINATOR
Silencer	Fat Boy
Clutch basket/ plates & springs	Hinson/DR C12
Transmission	Stock with Baldwin 2-6 gears
Sprockets	Sunstar
Gearing	15/37 to 15/40

CHASSIS

Weight	345 pounds
A-arms	Lobo
Front spindles	Honda 400EX
Front shocks/travel	Axis/10.75 in
Swingarm/length	Roll Design Lobo/17.5 in.
Rear shock/travel	Axis/11.25 in.
Rear Axle/carrier	Dominator/ Millennium
Tires	Holeshot MX
Tires sizes f/r	19 x 6-10/18 x 11-8
Wheels f/r	Douglas Ultimate 10 in. 4+1/8 in. 3+5
Brake Calipers f/r	400EX/250R
Pads & rotors	Braking

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