

## **SPRING CLEANING**

# **SHAKING OUT THE MOTH- BALLS**

What your scoot needs  
after a long winter's storage

**By Paul Clipper**

Earlier in the year we wanted to do a story on all the little things you need to do when you're planning to put a bike into storage, something winter weather forces us into in many parts of the country. After our usual hemming-and-hawing session on what the story should include, we finally decided that the whole idea was ridiculous. Nobody ever plans on putting a bike away. Every fall weekend, the hills ring with the cry of "just one more ride..." until suddenly it's spring, and the scoot we intended to lavish all that attention on is slumped in a heap in the back of the garage, pinned in a corner by the lawnmower. It's usually hard to tell the two apart.

Well, you could have avoided this season of decay, but since it's now late April, that news isn't much good to you. The only way to go, at this point, is to fight your way into the corner and drag the beast into the light where your work will be a little more pleasant. Fight back the impulse to fire it up and do a few hot laps around the yard. If you want that bike to last another

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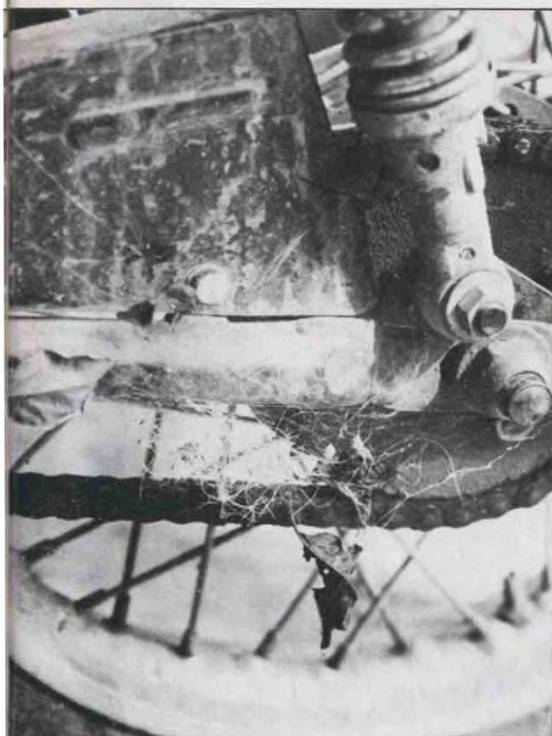
There's no way to save a pair of fork tubes in this condition—the rust pits the plating and they'll leak forever more.

season there are a few things we've got to check first. Of course... if your immediate plans call for a quick sale of the aforementioned machine, by all means do a couple of wheelies down the street—just to get in the mood before you get out the spray cans. You have very little use for the following...

Obviously, the first thing the bike needs is a good wash. Chances are you never cleaned it after that last ride and it looks pretty grim. Even if you did scrub it up last November, it's probably sporting a good coating of garage dust, so get out the hose.

By the way, since this is the first wash of the season, do yourself a favor and do it right. Take the chain off and throw it in a pan of oil, pull out the air





If your chain looks anything like this after a winter's layover, you'd better just throw it away.

filter and stuff a rag in the boot—a real textbook cleaning. It'll make the rest of the job a lot easier.

Now comes the hard part—which end to start on. If you want to do it quick and dirty, just pull each piece off, do the required maintenance, and then put it back on. If you really care about the bike, it's best to tear it down to the bare frame and go over it piece by piece, and while the frame is empty this is a great time to check it for cracks and repaint (which you should do anyhow). Whichever method you use, the three first things you should do are:

- Change the transmission oil.
- Drain, flush, and refill the oil in the forks.
- Repack the wheel bearings.

Don't be surprised if things get complicated right away. If the tranny oil comes out milky, you may want to flush it out with a little mild solvent, and if any chunks of metal drop out, you had better resign yourself to splitting the cases. If the action of the forks is gritty or sloppy in any way, you'd better pull them apart and have a look; and the chances are very good that once you get the old grease off the wheel bearings, you'll find that they need replacing anyway. We never said it was going to be easy.

Now, on to the rest.

Pull the carb off, and take a look inside the floatbowl. There may be some very scary things inside there, but don't worry, they're probably dead by

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(Continued from page 61)

now. Clean the whole carb, inside and out, and set it aside.

Now we'll go looking for some live stuff. Believe it or not, exhaust pipes and cylinders are some of the favorite places of bugs and small animals. Pull the pipe and head off and take a look. Chances are you won't find anything breathing, but while you're in there check the cylinder walls for surface rust, and if you see any at all, pull the top end off and attack it with #400 emery paper. If it's been awhile since your last top end job, drag out the feeler gauges and check the clearances. Look at it this way—if you do it now, it'll be

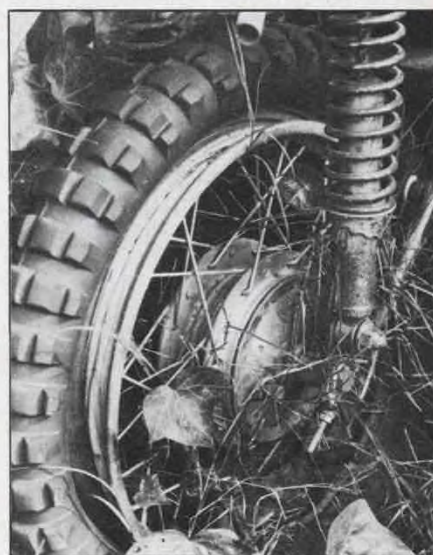


Even little things like grips may deteriorate slightly after a period of neglect.

awhile before you have to do it again. While you've got the pipe off, knock out any excess crud which may have accumulated in either end.

Since we've got nearly the whole bike apart, we might as well continue. Pull off the swingarm and the steering head, and clean and repack the bearings. Once again, if they're at all pitted, corroded or nasty-looking in any way, you might as well replace them. And while we're talking about corrosion, make sure there's no rust on any polished parts, like shock shafts and fork tubes. Clean and/or replace as necessary.

On to the electrics. Take off the top coil (the one under the tank), clean it and its mounting surface, and then bolt it back on. Use plenty of Loctite. Check all the wires for cracks and bare



Don't be surprised if you find a tire or two flat in the spring.

spots, and work your way down to the mag. If you've got a points ignition, you should replace the points and reset the timing; on a CDI this isn't necessary, but do clean up all the corrosion on either type and give the whole thing a shot of WD40, CRC, or some kind of light oil (don't get it on the points!) and a rubdown with a clean rag.

All that's left now are the little details. Give all the controls the once-over, cleaning and lubing as you go. You should notice if a cable or two are bad; needless to say, replace them. Pour that vile looking fluid out of the gas tank and rinse it out with some fresh mix, and if any of the tires are flat, it should be obvious what you need to do last...

It all boils down to this: Spend a day or so going over the bike before you strap on the helmet again. Chances are that scooter took you on a number of good rides last year, and with a little care, work and luck, it should pull you through another year's worth. Happy wrenching! □

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