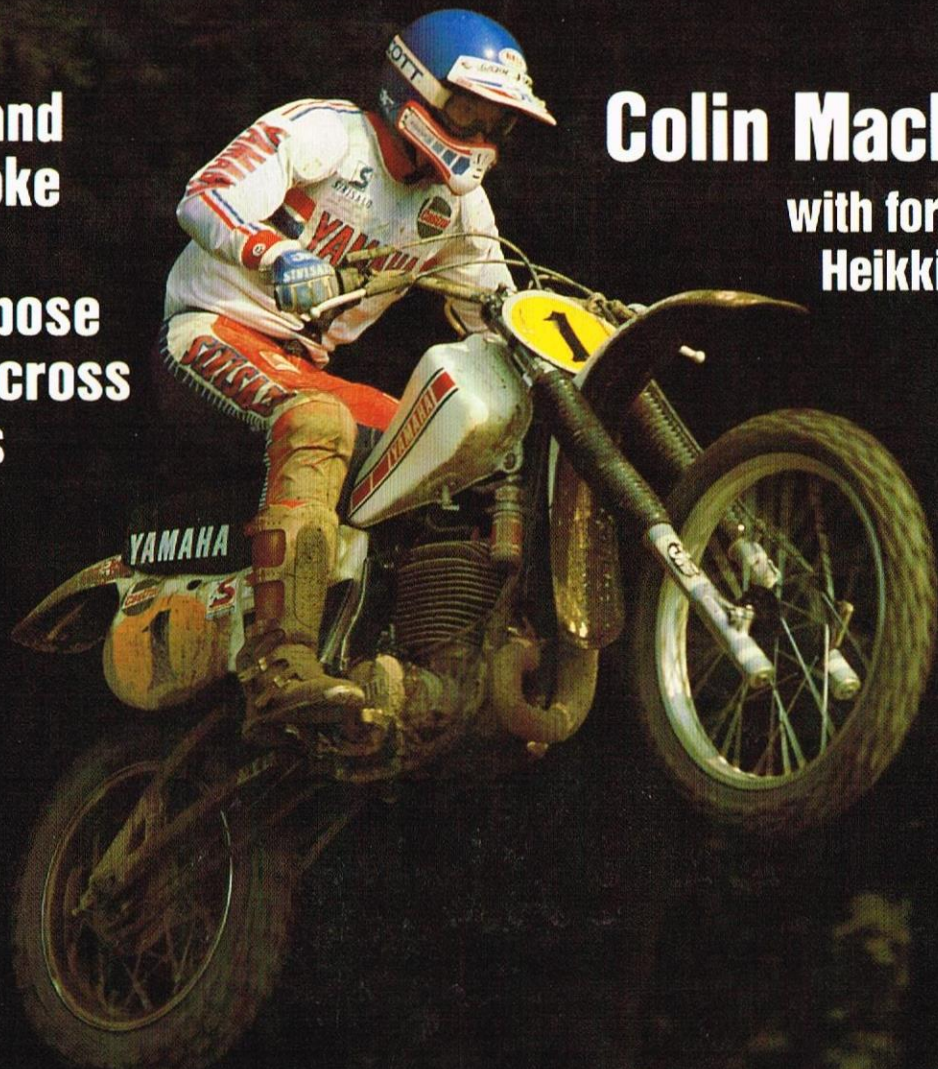


YAMAHA *Dirtbikes*

All two- and four-stroke enduro, dual-purpose and motocross machines

Colin MacKellar
with foreword by
Heikki Mikkola



YAMAHA DIRTBIKES

Win on Sunday. Sell on Monday.

It is doubtful that anybody realized the potential of the Yamaha Motor Company when they entered their 125 cc Red Dragonfly in one of Japan's early post-war road-races. The term 'road-race' was in fact a misnomer as the track was actually hard-packed volcanic ash. Regardless of whether it was on- or off-road, a Yamaha came home first. Indeed they took the first four places and immediately established themselves as a force to be reckoned with in the Japanese motorcycle industry.

The second Asama Plains race was to be yet another Yamaha success with the company taking the first two places in the 125 class and the first three places in the 250 class with their recently introduced YD1.

From this point Yamaha's over-riding priority was to establish a range of streetbikes that would sell well enough to enable them to expand into other areas. However, they never missed any opportunity to produce an off-road version of a successful streetbike.

The first of these was the DT1 and it sold like the proverbial hot cakes. Realizing they had struck gold Yamaha rushed to extend their range. They also sought recognition in international competition, particularly in Europe where the motocross scene was well established. What followed was a remarkable story of expansion during which Yamaha endeavoured to satiate the rapidly expanding market. It was truly a story of 'Win on Sunday, sell on Monday', especially as Yamaha were quick to introduce last year's works technology into this year's production machines. By the mid-1970s they completely ruled some classes and in 1978 they won all the US National titles. By the end of the decade they totally dominated the off-road sport scene.

Here then, for the first time, is the full development story of all Yamaha two- and four-stroke motocross, dual-purpose and enduro machines. Specifications of over 100 different models are included and there are 150 photographs.

The story of Yamaha dirtbikes is unique in that their development opened up great tracts of countryside to motorcycle enthusiasts of all ages and nationalities who previously had not ventured beyond the hard shoulder of a highway. It gave them the opportunity to explore the world and have a lot of fun in the process.

Front cover Heikki Mikkola at Namem in 1979 on a GP500
Back cover The XT600N – Europe's best selling dirtbike

Published in 1986 by Osprey Publishing Limited
27A Floral Street, London WC2E 9DP
Member company of the George Philip Group

© Copyright Colin MacKellar 1986

This book is copyrighted under the Berne Convention. All rights reserved. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the Copyright Act, 1956, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, electrical, chemical, mechanical, optical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without prior written permission. All enquiries should be addressed to the publisher.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

MacKellar, Colin

Yamaha dirtbikes.

1. Motorcycle racing—History 2. Yamaha
motorcycle—History

I. Title

796.7'5 GV1060

ISBN 0-85045-660-6

Design Gwyn Lewis

Filmset and printed in England by
BAS Printers Limited, Over Wallop, Hampshire

Contents

Foreword by Heikki Mikkola 6

Introduction 8

1 The DT1—an American vision 11

2 A touch of the DTs 20

3 Factory fame and fortune 32

4 Works specials for the common
man 43

5 The path to excellence 61

6 The IT blues 84

7 Class warfare 105

8 The Stock Exchange 126

9 Rolling thunder 146

Appendix

1 Evolution of monoshock
suspension 169

2 Specifications 171

3 Port profiles and dimensions 192

About the author

YAMAHA DIRTBIKES is Colin MacKellar's second book in the Osprey Collector's Library, his first being *YAMAHA TWO-STROKE TWINS*. Once again he proves his unquestioned skill in both research and writing. Colin lives in Holland, where he works in the computer industry, with his wife and daughter and one of those killer Kawasaki H2 two-stroke triples. A recent addition to the family is a Yamaha HL500.

The Osprey Collector's Library series is now established as the best currently available. Each carefully chosen title contains a detailed machine analysis, around 150 illustrations and comprehensive specifications. Each subject receives input from the recognized marque and model experts and photographs are obtained from around the world.

Other titles in the series are as follows

AJS AND MATCHLESS – THE POSTWAR MODELS

Roy Bacon

ARIEL – THE POSTWAR MODELS Roy Bacon

BMW TWINS & SINGLES Roy Bacon

BSA GOLD STAR & OTHER SINGLES Roy Bacon

BSA TWINS & TRIPLES Roy Bacon

CLASSIC BRITISH SCRAMBLERS Don Morley

CLASSIC BRITISH TRIALS BIKES Don Morley

CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE RACER TESTS

Alan Cathcart

DUCATI SINGLES Mick Walker

DUCATI TWINS Mick Walker

HONDA – THE EARLY CLASSIC MOTORCYCLES

Roy Bacon

KAWASAKI – SUNRISE TO Z1 Roy Bacon

MILITARY MOTORCYCLES OF WORLD WAR 2

Roy Bacon

MOTO GUZZI TWINS Mick Walker

NORTON SINGLES Roy Bacon

NORTON TWINS Roy Bacon

ROYAL ENFIELD – THE POSTWAR MODELS

Roy Bacon

SPANISH POST-WAR ROAD AND RACING

MOTORCYCLES Mick Walker

SUZUKI TWO-STROKES Roy Bacon

TRIUMPH SINGLES Roy Bacon

TRIUMPH TWINS & TRIPLES Roy Bacon

VELOCETTE FLAT TWINS Roy Bacon

VILLIERS SINGLES & TWINS Roy Bacon

VINCENT VEE TWINS Roy Harper

YAMAHA TWO-STROKE TWINS Colin MacKellar

More titles in preparation

Write for a free catalogue of motorcycle books to
The Sales Manager Osprey Publishing Limited
27A Floral Street London WC2E 9DP

Printed in Great Britain



ISBN 0-85045-660-6



90000

YAMAHA DIRTBIKES

COLIN MACKELLAR

OSPREY