

australasian **DIRT BIKE**

AYERS ROCK 12 HOUR MX

JUNE 1983

\$2.20 (\$2.75 NZ)*

YAMAHA IT490K

**BIGGER THAN '82, BETTER THAN '82,
BETTER THAN EVER**

KTM500 TRAIL

STYLIN' IT UP EASY STREET

INTERVIEWS

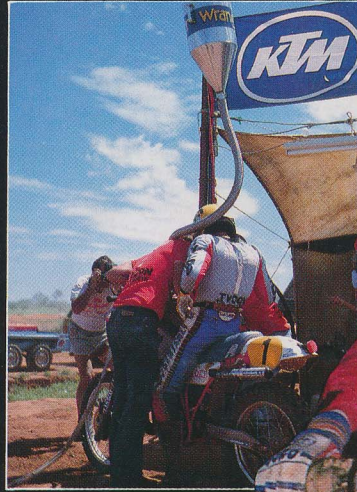
RAY VANDENBERG & VAUGHAN STYLE

THE PERILS AND PLEASURES OF PRO MOTOCROSS

CARBURETTORS

JET SETTING FOR BEGINNERS

MOTORCYCLE SAFARIS



**MAICO
490
ENDURO**
SPIDER, SPIDER,
ON THE WALL



VOL. 9, NO. 2
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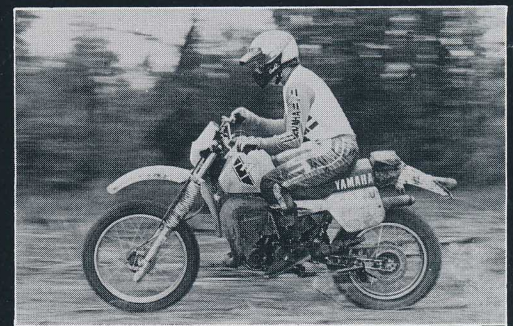
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 TYPESETTING: Ever since H.Mud started winning a fortune off them (\$18 in seven
 minutes) they won't talk to us. If there ah a lot of spelling mistakes, they did it to
 get back at uss.



COVER

Radio Alice sponsors a gruelling 12 hour motocross out near Ayers Rock. Naturally, ADB was there. And naturally, we were too smart to ride.

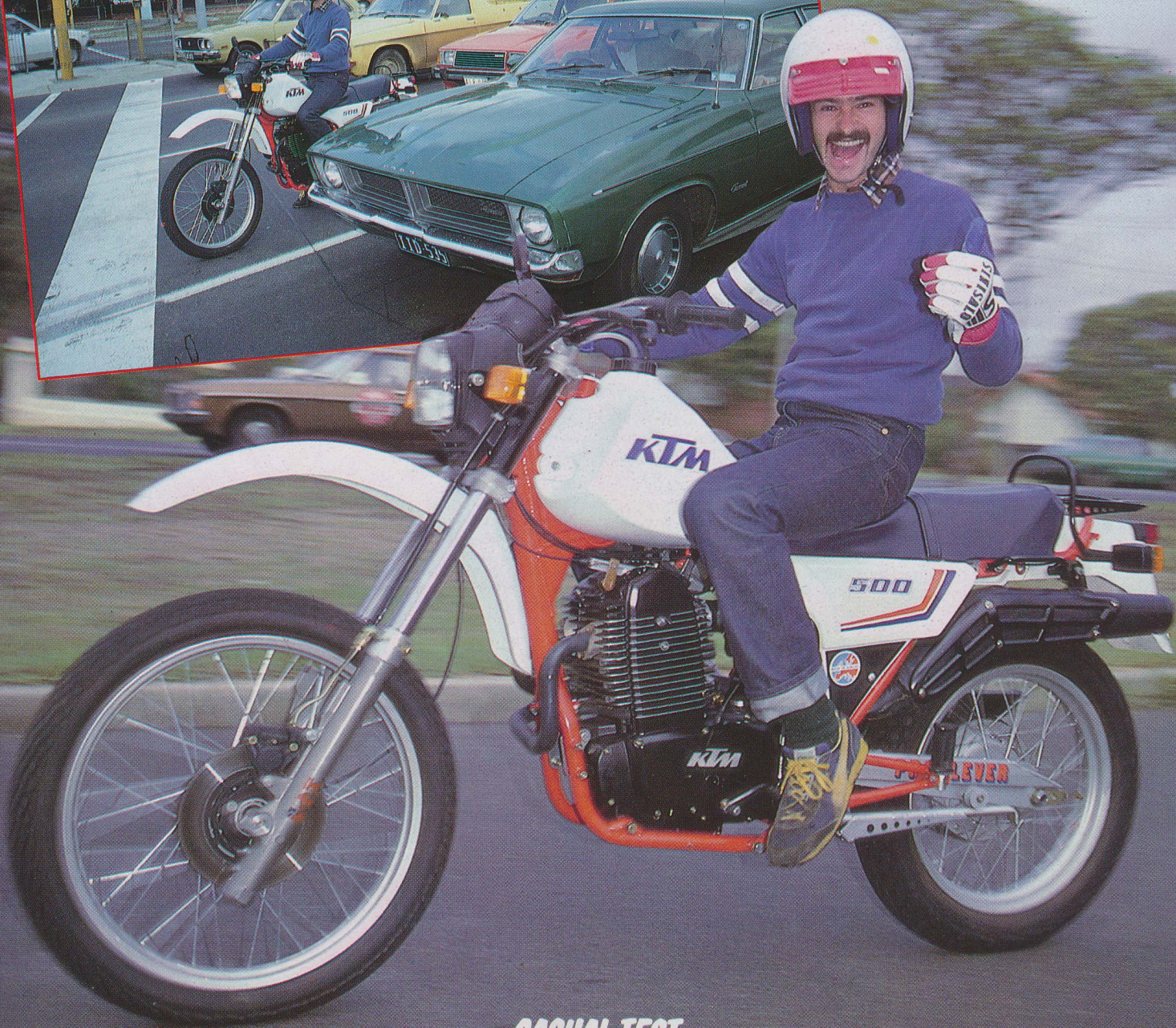
INSET Phil Lovett won it and established himself as the nation's toughest sun bronzed Aussie. Photo on Kodachrome by Geoff Eldridge.

INSET

Honest Muz always says he looks "gumby" on a bike. To prove him wrong, we took 327 colour slides, and here's the one that made him look good. That's a Maico 490 Enduro he's on. Kodachrome by Geoff Eldridge, who can take a nice photo of anyone.



*Recommended and maximum retail price. Have you any idea what it costs us to print this thing now that Bob Hawke has devalued the Oz dollar?



CASUAL TEST

KTM500 TRAIL

Cashing in on the four-stroke popularity boom

When we tested the KTM500 Enduro model for the first time, we had a big surprise: the thing seemed actually competitive in enduros. Phil Lovett proved it by winning a one day NSW Championship Round outright on one. This year KTM expanded their model lineup to include a trail version. It wasn't a hard job.

For the most part, this bike uses the same components as the proper enduro version, but there are some significant differences. Perhaps the main one is the use of a Marzocchi shock in the trail version, where the XC (Cross Country) has a White Power unit. The reason is that most

buyers of a bike intended to be used primarily on the road aren't all that much into performance, so saving money is important.

The money saved by using the cheaper Marzocchi can then be spent on frills like a full lighting system which includes blinkers and spotlight, with full instrumentation

KTM500 TRAIL

(dirt lights, some people call them). There are rubber covered footpegs, including an extra set for a pillion. The seat is a two-up version complete with a pillion hanging on strap. There is a nifty rear mounted luggage rack with a rubber strap. The fuel capacity has gone from 10 litres up to 14. There is taller gearing. And the knobbies have disappeared in favour of the more road oriented Metzeler trials universal with its low block pattern (they're similar to what the BMW R80G/S runs).

With those changes, the KTM500 becomes a great round town bike. Obviously, any trip into the bush is going to see this model take a back-seat to the real enduro model, but what the hell. People who buy this bike are in it for only one thing: pose value in the city.

You'd have to be. It's expensive at \$3700, so buyers aren't going to be economy minded. And with the rubber pegs, rack, tyres and Marzocchi they aren't going to be Phil Lovett pretenders either. They'd have to belong to the BMW 318i set, the Porsche 924 set. Get the picture?

And for them, what does the KTM offer?

For a start, it offers hassle-free commuting. It has an exhaust note that four-strokers love but which is quiet enough to please bank clerks in their Mitsubishi Colt GLXs as they sit still in traffic marvelling at how much fuel they're saving by comparison to the fool next to them in a 429 cu. in. T'bird. The KTM starts with surprising ease. From cold, you pull in the decompressor and kick it through a few times, pull on the choke, line up the yellow dot in the window in the cylinder head, then give it a good kick. Fires up easy.

The seat height is lower than other KTMs, although it is still on the

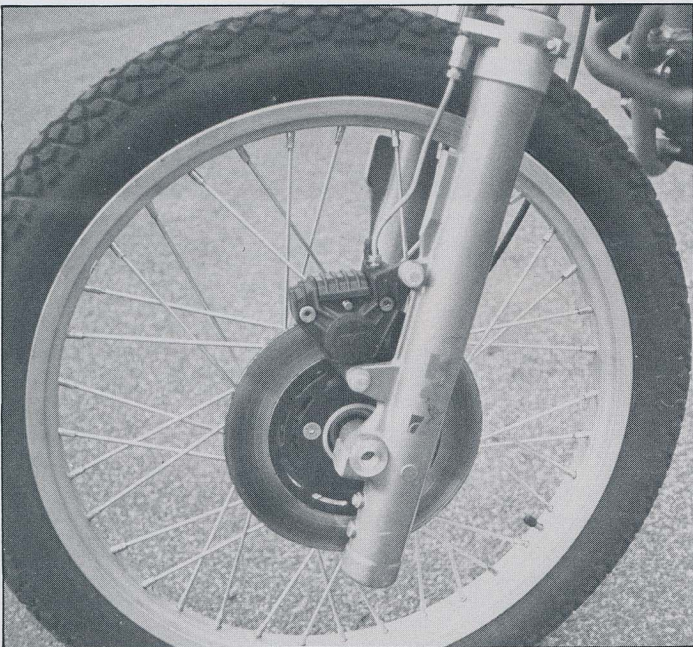
firm side. The pillion gets a comfortable ride if you ever want to carry one. And why wouldn't you? Buy a bike like this and you are almost obliged to ferry people around just to get the exposure you've paid for.

Metzeler's dual purpose tyres are really neither here nor there. They're not as good as Metzeler road tyres, nor are they as good as Metzeler knobbies. Fact is, they fit the image of the KTM to a tee. It isn't a Honda VF750F, nor is it a KTM495 Enduro. To the uninitiated, they look the part, and that's what counts. You don't count on them to perform to extremes on either tar or dirt.

For road riding, the KTM is surprisingly good. With its comfortable ergonomics and easy riding engine it'll cruise around town till the sun sets. And after that, the 12 volt ignition pumps out enough power to give you a decent light. Up front, the disc brake puts the KTM into the safe zone: it's necessary for a bike of this weight when you venture onto the street.

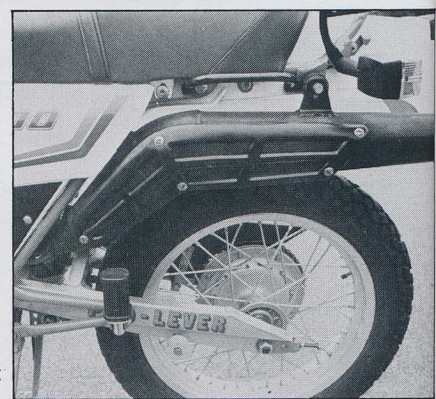
Off the road is a different story. It's right at home thumping down fire roads or loping along easy mountain trails. Ask any more of it and you start to feel the limits of the tyres and you become pretty aware of the weight (around 130kg). But the engine performs, because it's the same as the enduro version. The forks are the same diameter, but with slightly different damping and spring rates. The chassis is identical. It works, but it has limits.

But that's fine by us. It sure doesn't pretend to be anything except what it is. Anytime you pass a fellow dirt bike owner on the street, the KTM screams at him "Hey! Look at me!" The message is loud and clear: you have the money to own it, and you also know enough about dirt bikes to recognise a quality brand and to understand what performance is all about. This KTM might be a tiny bit short on that performance, but it doesn't matter a damn.

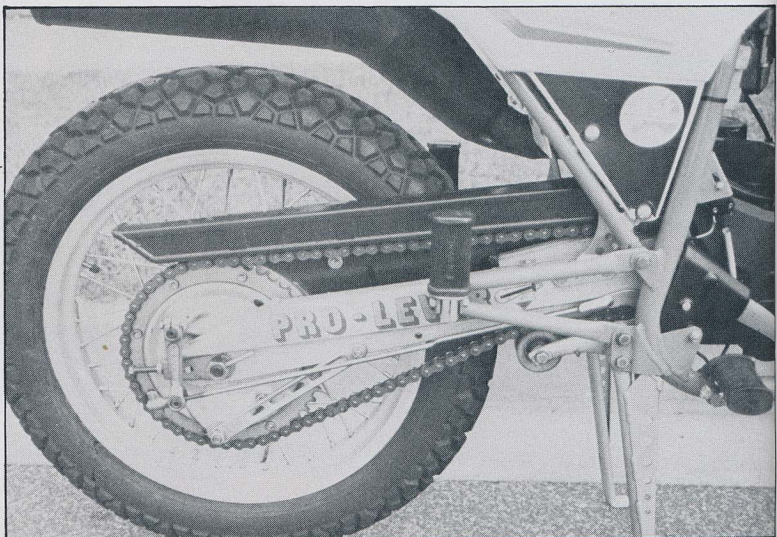


ABOVE
This Rotax engine is identical to the XC version, but the factory geared it up to the sky. Various countershaft sprockets are available to suit your taste.

ABOVE TOP
Visible differences are the blinkers and headlight design, the stepped pillion seat with strap, blinkers and luggage rack. Not so visible is the Marzocchi shock and the slightly different fork internals.



RIGHT
Muffling is excellent, just as it should be. Note the pillion pegs.



ABOVE
A Marzocchi shock feels firm at first, as does the seat, but you get a comfortable city ride.

LEFT AND RIGHT
A Brembo disc brake has been proven in 18 months of competition riding and will give no trouble on road use. It's what you need to haul the rather heavy KTM to a stop in a panic situation.

