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# CYCLE WORLD®

AMERICA'S LEADING MOTORCYCLE ENTHUSIASTS' MAGAZINE

**WORLD'S  
FIRST TEST!**

**SHOCKING NEW  
FOUR-STROKE  
SINGLE FROM  
YAMAHA**

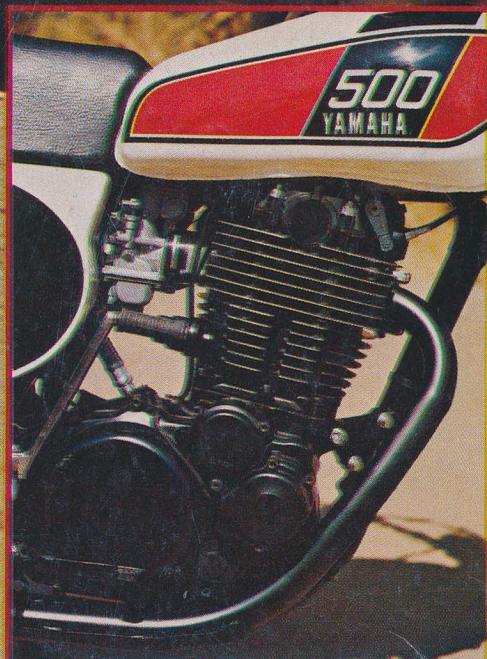


**AN AROUND-  
TOWN SPECIAL  
FROM SUZUKI**

**OSSA SUPER  
PIONEER**

**AND**

**A COLOR  
MOTOCROSS  
SPECTACULAR**



**PLUS ISDT  
QUALIFYING  
MADE  
DIFFICULT**

# CYCLE WORLD

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Yamaha's TT500C was caught in action by Fernando Belair.

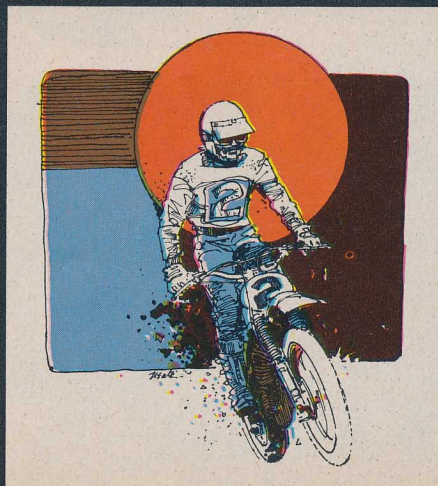
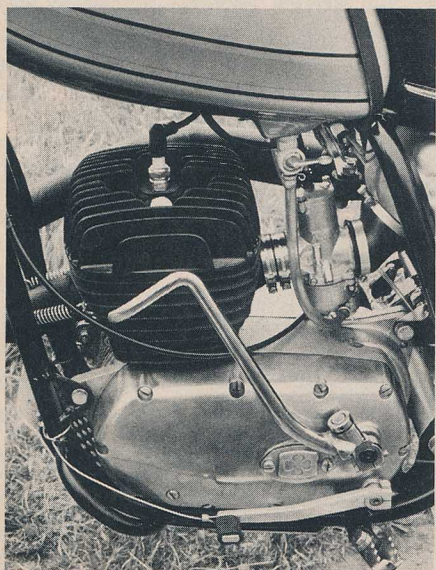


Illustration by Bill Neale

# OSSA 250 SUPER PIONEER

A Capable Woods  
Bike Complete With  
A Major Flaw –  
The Lack Of Long-  
Travel Rear Suspension.



# Cycle World Road Test

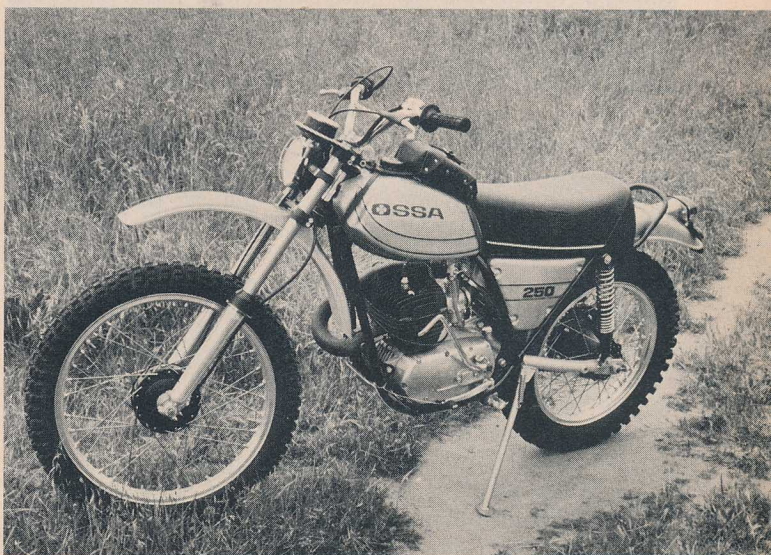
■ WHEN SOMEONE MENTIONS Spain, most motorcyclists think of more than just sunshine, bullfights and Sangria. Spain, through three different companies, also happens to produce some of the world's finest off-road competition machinery, many models of which find their way to the U.S. The smallest of these outfits, Ossa, is distributed nationally through Yankee Motors in Schenectady, N.Y. Hence, Ossas are a bit more commonplace in the East than way out West. But few stateside buyers realize that Ossa also produces movie projectors and related types of cinema equipment as well. In fact, the founder of the Company, Manuel Giro, was also quite a boat fancier at one time, and this involvement with engines eventually led in the direction of motorcycles. By 1949, Ossa had produced its first two-stroke Single for the Spanish masses.

Over the years following, Ossa has become quite well-known in the dirt motorcycle market. And at one time it was heavily involved in European road racing with a competition version of its street 250 Single, a model that never caught on in the U.S. This was at one time the fastest Single in its class, and though it never won a Grand Prix, its presence was always felt. But money cutbacks and an accident that killed its star rider, Santiago Herrero, at the Isle of Man, marked the end of all serious racing efforts for Ossa.

In 1969, Ossa introduced the Pioneer. This 250 enduro became a mainstay in the line until just recently. The long life of the Pioneer is an indication of its reliability and salability. It was versatile enough for a weekend family outing and well-suited for enduros. Year after year the Pioneer underwent only minor styling changes and small engine modifications, remaining the work horse it was intended to be, always ready for just about anything thrown in its way.

Ossa's attempts at cracking the U.S. road market met with little success. Its single-cylinder bikes couldn't withstand the rigors placed on their engines by the wide-open spaces and high-speed cruising. Ossa's *forte* was still off-road bikes. As an addition to the Pioneer, along came the SDR, introduced in 1973. The SDR used a Stiletto (TT racer) top end and revised glasswork, and was intended for ISDT competition. Most recently we've seen the introduction of the Phantom motocrosser.

This year the Pioneer has been replaced by a bike that is a >



Photography: Fernando Belair

conglomeration of all of the aforementioned bikes. The logical name was Super Pioneer, and that's what it is: a "super" Pioneer. In an effort to put together a better mount, Ossa has paid particular attention to saving weight. This has been accomplished by using some good materials and some bad ones, but the fact remains that Ossa boasts the lightest production enduro bike on the market at 209 lb., dry.

At first glance, the Super Pioneer is striking as long as one doesn't mind a rather drab and uninspiring color like greenish gold. Compared to the old Pioneer, the new model boasts more practical fiberglass styling, though we'd much rather see those glass fenders replaced with flexible plastic, as Montesa has done with its 250 Enduro. But for now, an owner might want to take a tip from the Ossa U.S. ISDT team and put a switch to Preston Petty fenders on his or her list of "Things To Do." The gas tank is also fiberglass. The large-diameter opening allows easy filling of the unit, especially during a fast fillup in an enduro or qualifier.

The cap has a tendency to leak unless it really gets screwed on tightly, then it's okay. The tank is held in place with leather straps and rubber mounts. Because of the size and shape of the tank, we had no trouble gripping the sides tightly with our knees while standing or sitting. Rider comfort is satisfactory, the seat is well-padded, and the footpegs are positioned properly. The pegs are cleated and folding, but not spring-loaded. For our own taste, we would like to see the bars angled more toward the rear than they are.

A weight savings is accomplished by using only the minimum of lights. Even with a headlight, taillight and brake switch, the Super Pioneer does not satisfy the law in several states. Check regulations before you head down the highway. But there is enough illumination to guide bike and rider back to camp after dark. Lights, horn and kill button are all in one switch mounted on the left side of the bars. Before riding in the wet, this switch must be sealed, otherwise it will short out and be useless.

A pointless ignition furnishes the spark for the fuel mixture and juice for the lights. Unlike a contact breaker ignition, this unit won't quit sparking when the going gets wet. There is no rubbing block to wear and alter the timing; set it once and don't worry about it again.

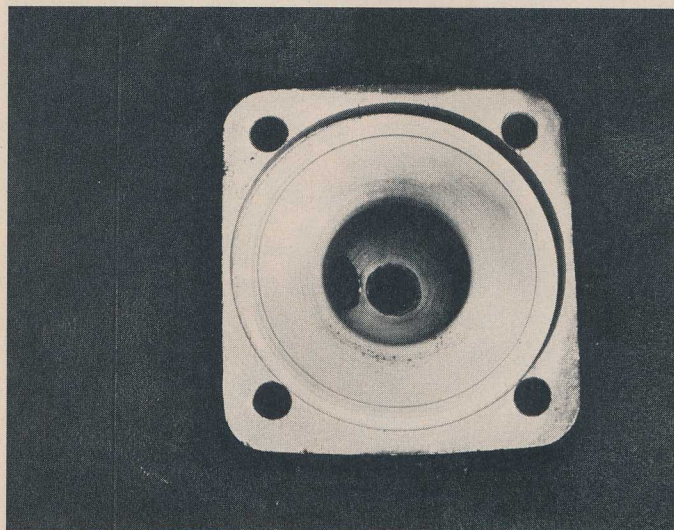
Ossa uses a 32mm Amal concentric carb, which requires messy tickling when the engine is cold. Air is filtered through a poorly designed airbox and small canister-type filter element. Were the machine our own, we would do some serious revising and duct taping to make sure water couldn't reach the airbox easily, as it can with the machine in stock form. But rather than that, a better design would be appreciated.

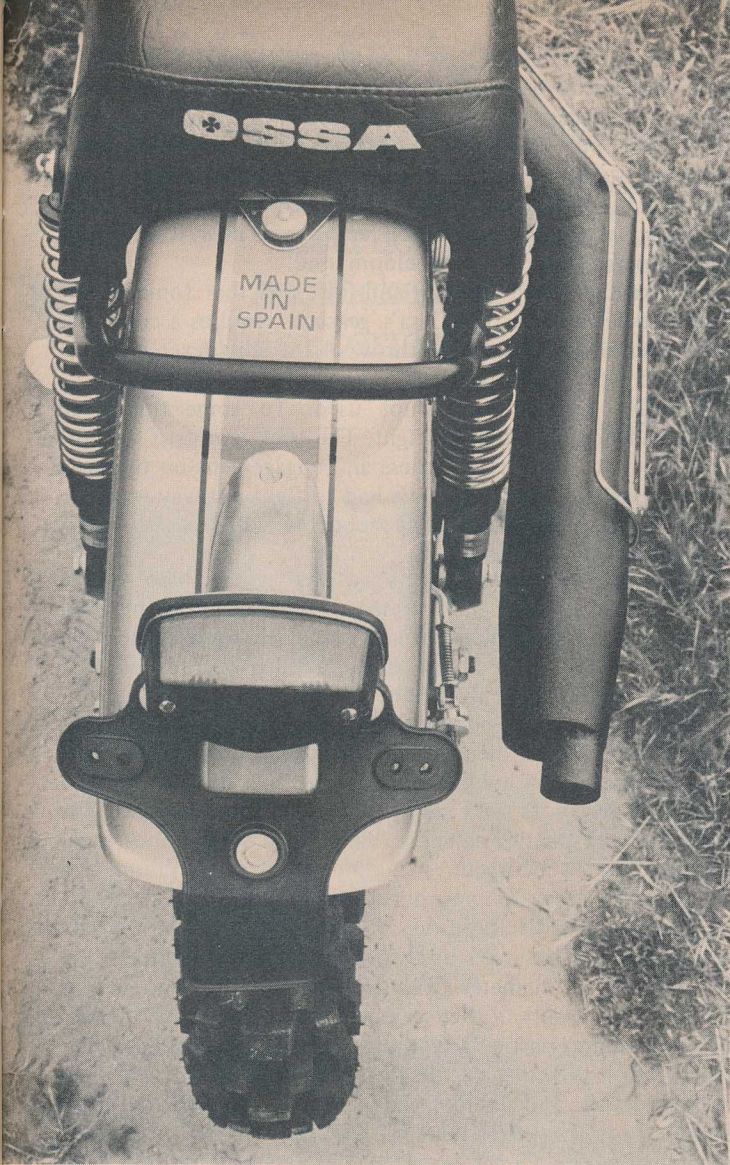
We found that starting was easy under most conditions, except when the bike was dropped. Then we had to do some pushing. It is necessary to flood the float bowl and let gas spew out the overflow for a second or two, at the same time the throttle should be held wide open. Once gas starts to flow, close the throttle almost to the stop and give the starter one swift kick. After a few seconds of warmup, the bike is ready to go. The throttle is plastic and doesn't require any lubrication.

The 250cc engine is a conventional two-stroke power plant. One spark plug is used to fire the combustion mixture, but the cylinder head is drilled for another plug or compression release. Not that the Ossa has a lot of top-end noise, but what it does have could be reduced by rubber suppression plugs between the cylinder fins. Exhaust gases are forced out of the exhaust port and through an upswept pipe that is routed along the right side of the frame. The pipe is tucked in close enough not to hinder the rider, and the heat guard does its job keeping the right leg off the hot pipe.

## PARTS PRICING

Warranty .....	6 mo.
Piston .....	\$38.14
(1) Set Rings .....	10.56
Wheel Rims (bare each) .....	33.86
Front Fender .....	14.95
Rear Fender .....	13.90
Clutch & Brake Levers, assy. (each) .....	14.72
Clutch Cable .....	3.20
Throttle Cable .....	3.20
Brake Cables .....	3.44
Ignition Parts	
Coil .....	37.94
Headlight Bulb or Sealed Beam .....	2.84
Taillight Lens .....	2.00
Battery .....	13.90





# OSSA SUPER PIONEER

## SPECIFICATIONS

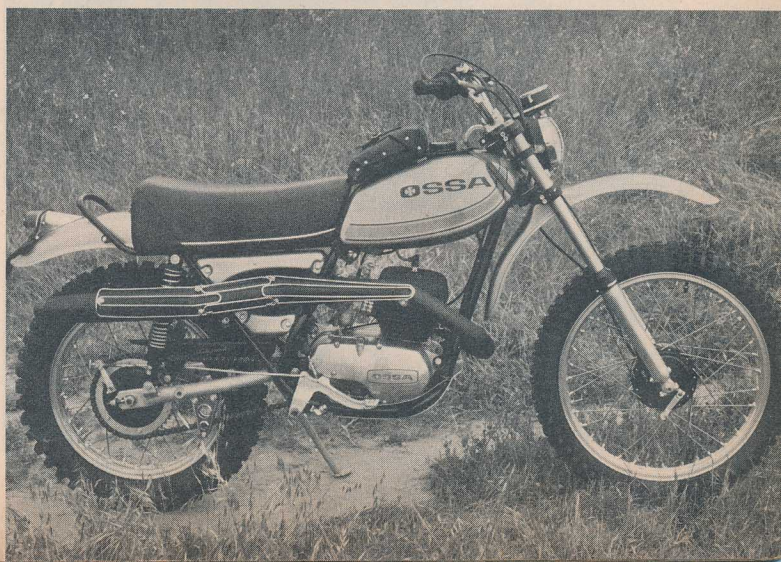
List price	\$1595
Suspension, front	telescopic fork
Suspension, rear	swinging arm
Tire, front	3.00-21
Tire, rear	4.00-18
Engine, type	two-stroke Single
Bore x stroke, in., mm	2.83 x 2.36; 72 x 60
Piston displacement, cu. in., cc	14.9; 244
Compression ratio	12.3:1
Claimed bhp @ rpm	21 @ 6500
Piston speed @ rpm ft./min.	2556 @ 6500
Carburetion	32mm Amal
Ignition	Motoplat transistor
Oil System	pre-mix
Oil capacity, pt.	2.25
Fuel capacity, U.S. gal.	3.4
Recommended fuel	premium
Starting system	Kick, folding crank
Air filtration	oil-wetted foam

## POWER TRANSMISSION

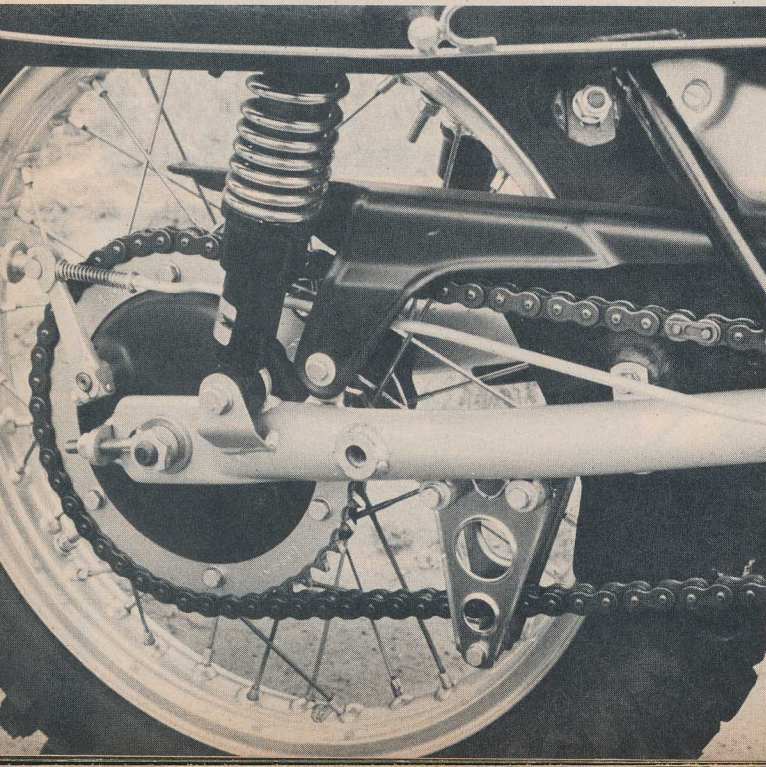
Clutch	multi-disc, wet
Primary drive	duplex chain
Final drive	520 single-row chain
Gear ratios, overall:1	
5th	7.48
4th	10.09
3rd	13.60
2nd	18.31
1st	26.91

## DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase, in.	54.25
Seat height, in.	33.5
Seat width, in.	7.5
Handlebar width, in.	34.0
Footpeg height, in.	13.0
Ground clearance, in.	11.5
Front fork rake angle, degrees	31
Curb weight (w/half-tank fuel), lb.	226
Weight bias, front/rear, percent	45/55



# OSSA 250



Super Pioneer ratios have been altered slightly to accommodate the improved power of the engine. This hasn't been altogether successful. The first four ratios can handle any kind of terrain, but fifth is so high that there had better be a downhill straight before it's selected; it's almost like a trials gearbox in that respect. Our preference would be to move fourth a few points closer to top; as it stands now, it is nothing but a cruising gear, and very seldom used.

Unlike the touch-the-lever-and-shift feel that some of the Japanese bikes have, the Ossa's gearbox requires a conscious effort because of the longer throw of the shift lever. Even so, each and every shift is smooth and positive.

Primary kickstarting is not used. To some this is an inconvenience, and they're right. The trick is not to stall the bike. Clutch action is effortless and engagement on ours was always positive. Even when we had to fight our way up loose, rocky uphill, the unit held its ground. Clutch servicing is easy as well.

One of the better aspects of the whole bike is the double-cradle chrome moly frame. It is of the same material and geometry as the Phantom's. Rock guards are welded to the frame to protect the engine cases, a valuable addition, and included is a lightened aluminum skid plate.

After going to all the work and expense to provide a good frame, the logic of fitting standard Betor suspension components escapes us. A couple of years ago this would have been fine, but today it isn't acceptable when compared to the long-travel suspension on the bikes with which the Super Pioneer has to compete, including Montesa's Enduro and Bultaco's Frontera, to name just a few.

In keeping with tradition, the rear dampers are five-way adjustable. But the bolts used to attach them to the frame are quite small in diameter. This leaves some question in our minds as to whether they can withstand the abuse of hard off-road riding, particularly tough enduros and the like. The front forks suffer from the same malady as the rear—not enough travel. But there is good compression and rebound damping for the travel there is. Trying to go as fast as bikes equipped with LTS produces nothing less than endless tank slappers across desert terrain. In the woods, however, the difference won't be as noticeable.

The bike comes standard with Pirelli knobby tires mounted front and rear. These are a little soft and wear quickly, but work well in the soft dirt or mud. Shoulderless Akront rims with rim locks hold the tires in place.

Under dry conditions the brakes are quite efficient and stop the Ossa fine off-road, but forget it when they get wet. Your guess is as good as ours as to when the things will work! A different lining will make all the difference in the world.

The toolkit is nothing short of spartan; only the essentials are included. These tools fit into a small leather pouch attached to the tank. Minimum maintenance can be carried out, including wheel removal.

There is no question that the Super Pioneer is a better bike than its predecessor, but it is far from the ideal motorcycle. Like the Pioneer, it's suited to the occasional competitor and is perfect for the rider who wants to play on the weekends with a bike that requires little maintenance. After spending some time on the Ossa, it is obvious that it was designed with the woods rider in mind. It doesn't impress us as being our choice for the desert, but that's where the Desert Phantom fills in. Quick, precise steering and gobs of low-end torque make this a perfect mount for the beginner and intermediate rider. Once you reach proficiency, start looking for another bike, or figure on doing a little modification to your Super Pioneer. 