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← CRAZY MX PILOT COMPLETELY FLIPS OUT: WHY HE DID IT! PAGE 24



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APRIL 1986 • VOLUME 16, NO. 4



DIRT vs. STREET



HONDA CR80



YAMAHA YZ125



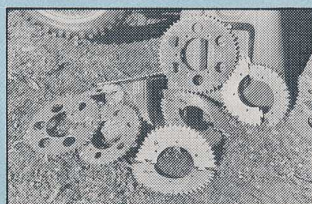
ANAHEIM SX



HONDA XL600



YAMAHA TT350



125 SPEED SECRETS

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TESTS

- 24 YAMAHA YZ125S**
More juice equals more roost!
- 34 HONDA XL600**
Pavement burner and trail terror
- 60 M-STAR/HUSQVARNA 250 MOTOCROSSER**
The European alternative
- 68 HONDA CR80**
Completing the perfect bloodline?
- 74 YAMAHA TT350**
Honda stalls, Yamaha hauls

COMPETITION

- 52 ANAHEIM SUPERCROSS**
Team Honda takes no prisoners

FEATURES

- 38 MINICYCLE BUYER'S GUIDE**
Ground-level machines for munchkins
- 44 FREE RACING POSTER!**
Johnson and Bailey duke it out
- 56 DIRT vs. STREET**
Yamaha YZ490 against the Venture 1200!
- 80 ENDURO JACKET SHOOTOUT**
Ten jackets face the *Dirt Bike* firing line

TECHNICAL

- 30 YZ125 TEAM TIPS**
Factory facts
- 32 HONDA CR500 RACE PREP**
Bites easier and swallows better
- 40 125 GEARING EXPOSE'**
Will more teeth make you faster?
- 42 DISC BRAKES**
A good bleeding will do them good

DEPARTMENTS

- 7 FROM THE SADDLE**
The psych job
TANKSLAPPER
I shoulda known better
- 10 BITS AND PIECES**
Caution: This is the month of April
- 14 RIDERS WRITE**
Fledgling journalists correspond
- 18 MR. KNOW-IT-ALL**
Rondo's teeth get sharper
- 88 NEW PRODUCTS**
One-stop shopping for dirt eaters
- 92 CRASH & BURN**
The human dart routine

ON THE COVER:—*Dirt Bike* test rider Steve Schmitz gets absolutely nuts aboard the rejuvenated Yamaha YZ125. Steve completed a 180-degree aerial maneuver for the *DB* cameras. Tom Webb took the photo, and Flash Kuhn snapped the awesome "whip" shot. DeWest artfully designed the cover, and Valley Film performed the color separations.

WARNING: Much of the action depicted in this magazine is potentially dangerous. Virtually all of the riders seen in our photos are experienced experts or professionals. Do not attempt to duplicate any stunts that are beyond your own capabilities. Always wear the appropriate safety gear.

IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE!



FIRST MUD, PART I

Off-road life is tough. It's savage. It requires consummate skill, inside knowledge, well-tuned equipment and, yes, sheer personal courage. It can be a real jungle . . . or a desert . . . or a gnarly, tree-choked forest. But whatever it is, *DIRT BIKE* gives you everything you need to conquer it. Riding tips from the masters of terrain like Gary Bailey, the MX Professor, Husky's Larry Roeseler and Honda's Johnny O. Tuning secrets, inexpensive hop-ups, trick new items and comprehensive bike tests. *That's the DIRT BIKE advantage.* Because what you find in here gives you a brutal edge over the competition—out there.

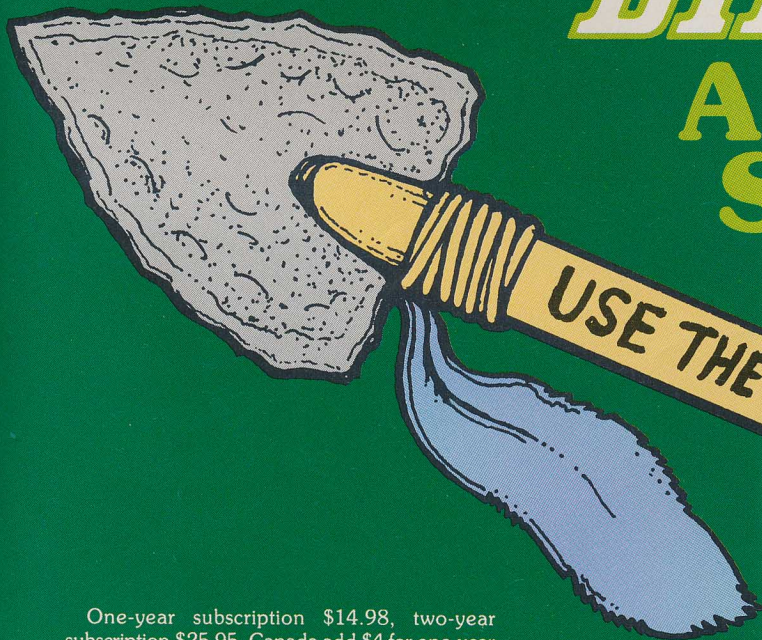
"TOMBO" STALKS THE NEWSSTAND

. . . and can't find a copy of *DIRT BIKE* anywhere—it's all sold out! Tombo's not too happy about this, but hey, it's really his own fault. He's been *meaning* to take that trip into the village to mail in his subscription. . . .

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DIRT BIKE THE NUMBER
ONE OFF-ROAD
MAGAZINE



WHITE OPEN TO CONQUER

Four-stroke enduro front-runner

By the Staff of DIRT BIKE



The four-stroke enduro has carved its niche in the off-road world. After continual refinements through the early part of this decade, the Yamaha engineers have developed a bike that has no bad manners, and is a bona fide gas to play on.



For serious play, small four-strokes tend to be no fun, but big four-strokes are tons of fun.

The decade of the '80s has seen the designers of Japan reevaluate their thought processes concerning the off-road market in the States. The big blue IT490 as well as its little brother, the IT250, are now nothing but a memory. The two-stroke PE250/200 that Suzuki once offered was shelved, and the once mighty KDX450 and 250 have long since become two of Kawasaki's forgotten species.

What started this mad extinction? Was it the poor sales revenue generated by the Japanese two-stroke enduro line and the obvious appeal of Honda's big-bore four-stroke thumpers? It seemed that everywhere you went the boom of the Honda four-strokes echoed in the hills. Although heavy and cumbersome when compared with their two-stroke cousins, the big red machines were virtually bulletproof.

After watching Honda manhandle a major portion of the market, Yamaha released its own big-bore four-stroke, the TT600. In its infant stage the big Yammie

had its fair share of problems, but like the red competition, when left in a stock state, it was as reliable as a tank.

REWIND, REALIGN AND REFINE

For 1986, Yamaha has opted to go with a middle class four-stroke designed to fit the cavity left by Honda, which decided to drop its 350 in favor of a 250. This may prove to be the "Pepsi challenge" as far as marketing genius is concerned. The '86 Yamaha TT350 puts out a very potent four-stroke rush that would never be mistaken for a 250. Powered by 346cc of four-stroke, four-valved, overhead cam muscle, the 350 has more than enough grunt to master any hill Mother Nature throws in its path.

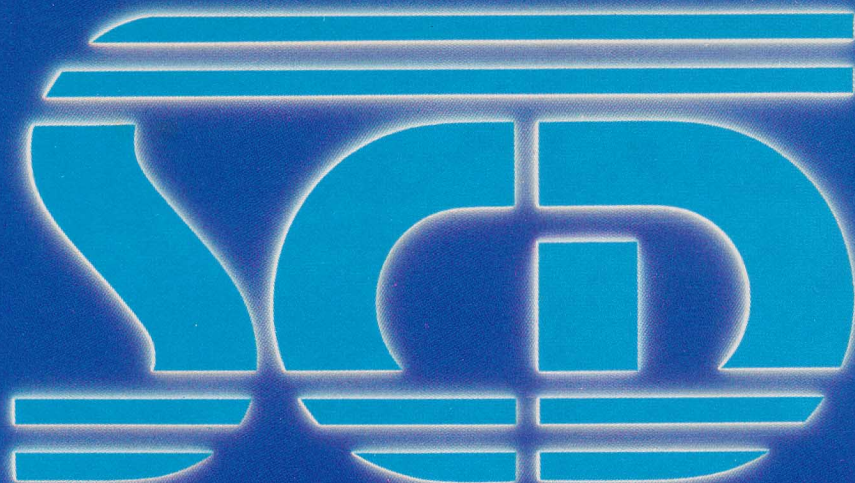
With the stock gearing, only vertical elevator shafts will challenge the 350 pilot. By adding two teeth to the rear sprocket, the stump-pulling torque of this machine will leave you without excuses if you fail to scale your intended goal.

Out on the flat tarmac, it's simply a question of how fast the operator is willing to

travel. A trip through the six-speed tranny will leave the unsuspecting rider with a goggle full of tears. The top end of this machine is serious, to say the least.

EXCUSE ME, MR. YZ, CAN I BORROW YOUR LEGS?

A big plus for the 350 is the use of Yamaha's vast motocross technology. The forks are 41mm telescopic, looking like direct descendants of the YZ line. In the rolling bumps and small stutter obstacles the action would have to be rated as very good. It's in the high-speed nasties that limitations become noticeable. During our evaluation of the TT, we had a wide range of riders spend time on the bike. Those of lesser skill fell in love with the action of the forks, stating that they would leave the units just as they are. When the 350 was handed over to our higher-ability testers and pushed to the limits, the reaction was quite different. In serious G-outs or harsh bottoming conditions the impact was transferred to the rider's arms. After the first serious outing on the



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YAMAHA TT350



Flight time aboard the TT350 resulted in "four-stroke stability"—meaning that though burdened by 250-plus pounds, the TT proved a safe flier.

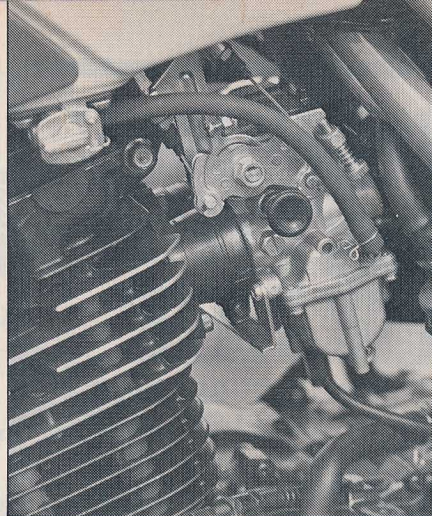
bike, the pressure was relieved in the forks, and this helped but didn't cure the dilemma. We learned to live with the situation. Raising the oil level 10mm helped, but it's our estimation that the forks need stiffer springs.

The damping chores out back are handled by a rising-rate monoshock, again a YZ hand-me-down. The progressive action of the gas/oil shock brought smiles to the faces of all testers. In the course of the test, the big TT was put through its paces in every imaginable situation, and the rear end responded with nary a snivel. In direct comparison with the front end, the rear suspension system passed with flying colors.

IT'S HANDLED

With a claimed dry weight of 249 pounds, the TT is definitely not anorectic. But then again, try naming a production four-stroke that is. Weight, when distributed correctly, can be dealt with, and the '86 350 is proof of that. While slightly hampered in the high-speed department by the fork action, the overall handling of the thumper is surprising. In all but the tightest situations, the Yamaha responds as it should. There are no eye-opening glitches through high-speed sweepers, and the straight-line tracking is smooth and controlled. In tight switchbacks or rock-infested trails, the 350's weight will become apparent, but a qualified jockey should have no problem dealing with it.

The newly designed single downtube cradle frame must take some of the credit for the overall handling prowess of this big machine. The aluminum swingarm out back keeps the rear end from doing any sudden break dances, and the positive weight distribution handles the rest.



Fueled by twin Teikei Kikaki carburetors, the TT runs cleanly and efficiently throughout the range. Even killer nosebleed hills failed to make the Yamaha blubber, and in the wide-open spaces the big 350 just kept pulling.

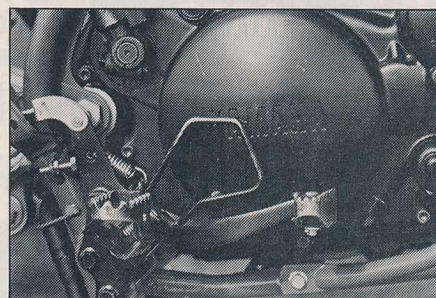
A LITTLE OF DIS AND A LITTLE OF DAT

Thankfully, a machine capable of such top-end speed and weighing nearly 250 pounds without fluids, has been graced with a front disc brake. The reasons are obvious. The front stopper on the big thumper is progressive, and plainly and simply, a pleasure to deal with. The trick plastic guard protecting the rotor is not only hot looking, it will prevent mud and brush buildup.

Standard drum-type shoes handle the stopping chores out back. When compared



The eye-watering top-end muscle is easily harnessed by the power of the disc front brake. The fancy plastic guard, though not capable of preventing serious rock damage, should be able to keep the smaller branches from disrupting stopping ability.



Such trick features as the case savers and sturdy folding brake add up to a big plus for the off-road enthusiast.



1986 YAMAHA TT350

Engine type	Air-cooled, single-cylinder, SOHC, 4-stroke	Ground clearance	310mm (12.2 in.)
Bore and stroke	86mm x 59.6mm	Seat height	920mm (36.2 in.)
Displacement	346cc	Rake/trail	27.5°/115mm
Carburetion	Teikei Kikaki Y24PV/1	Wet weight, no fuel	253 lbs.
Fuel tank capacity	9.46 L (2.5 gals.)	Tire size and type:	
Lubrication	Wet sump	Front	80/100-21 4PR IRC
Gearbox ratios:		Rear	100/100-18 4PR IRC
1	2.466:1	Suspension, type and travel:	
2	1.812:1	Front	41mm telescopic
3	1.368:1		280mm (11.0 in.)
4	1.080:1	Rear	Monocross, adj. comp./reb.,
5	0.889:1		280mm (11.0 in.)
6	0.759:1	Intended use	Off-road/enduro
Gearing, front/rear	14/50	Country of origin	Japan
Ignition	CDI	Retail price, approx.	\$2199
Recommended spark plug	NGK D8EA	Distributor/Manufacturer:	
Silencer/spark arrester	Yes/yes	Yamaha Motor Corp.	
Wheelbase	1440mm (56.7 in.)	6555 Katella Ave.	
		Cypress, CA 90630	

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UPS DAILY

with the powerful front disc, however, the action feels anemic, and they barely fulfill their intended use.

In the looks department the TT got oohs and aahs wherever we went. The plastic air scoops enhance the exterior package, as well as direct cool air to the magnesium alloy head.

The fuel tank carries gas nice and low on the left side of the machine, where it should. The side panels tuck in nicely, and we experienced no meltdown on the exhaust side. The front numberplate/headlight combination is sano and functional. The 55-watt halogen headlight should shed enough light to keep you on the trail. Both front and rear fenders keep the muck off the bod, and the front unit is vented to further increase airflow to the powerplant. The stock plastic lever protectors are a welcome sight, and the rear tool pouch carries just about every tool needed to keep you chugging along.

Little trick items like the case savers on the frame, aluminum folding shifter, and standard odometer all result in a sano package.

THE RIGHT WHITE

Yamaha has come up with a highly competitive four-stroke muscle machine that is quite capable of giving the dominant Red Brigade a run for the money. The four-stroke enduro mount is here to stay, and judging from this bike, there is no reason it shouldn't be. □

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