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**SEE INSIDE**

**YAMAHA YZ125E: 11 GRAND GASSER**

# **DIRT BIKE**

APRIL 1978 • \$1.00 UK60p

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**RED ROOSTER  
HONDA CR250R**

**TESTS:**

- **HERCULES 250 ISDT**
- **SUZUKI RM80C**
- **YAMAHA SR500**

**CHUCK SUN  
ON THE  
RISE**



**TOMMY CROFT**



**TRAINING WITH BRAD LACKEY**  
**FIX FLATS WITH LESS FUSS**  
**KYB PRO-LINE SUSPENSION**

# DIRT BIKE

VOLUME EIGHT NUMBER FOUR  
APRIL 1978

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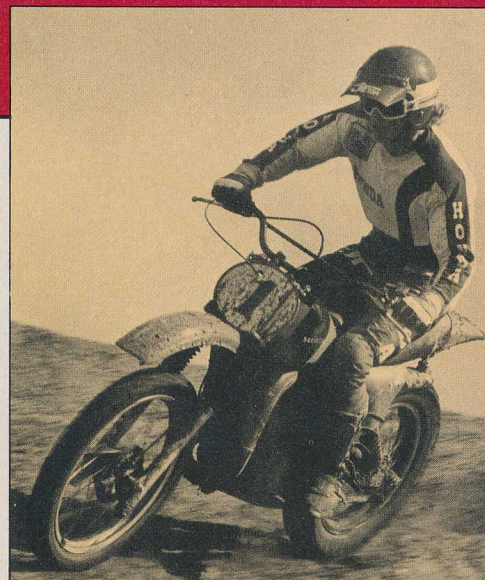
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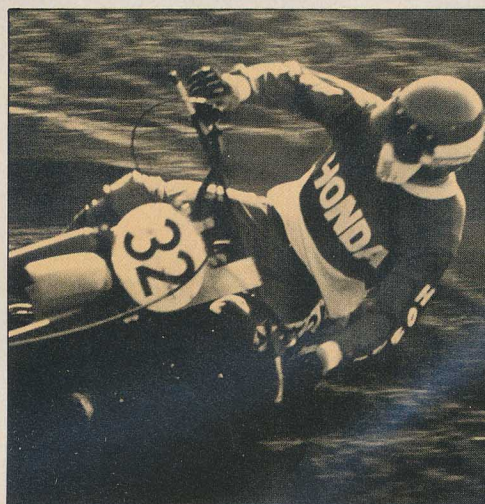
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**ON THE COVER:**  
Tommy Croft and the Big Red Machine  
that Cincinnati didn't build.  
Photo by Len Weed.

**NEXT ISSUE ON SALE APRIL 20**

Little arms can mix it up just like the big boys

By the Staff of **SMALL BIKE**

Brobdingnagian? Lilliputian? Gulliver's Travels? Once again we find ourselves lordling our largeness over miniscule motomania. Miniscule in size only. The race faces are full-on serious. Just figured it out. We're Brobdingnagian, it's the bike that's Lilliputian.

Suzuki has held the world 125 title for three years now. Let's see how their two-thirds version stacks up.

#### What's new to see on the C

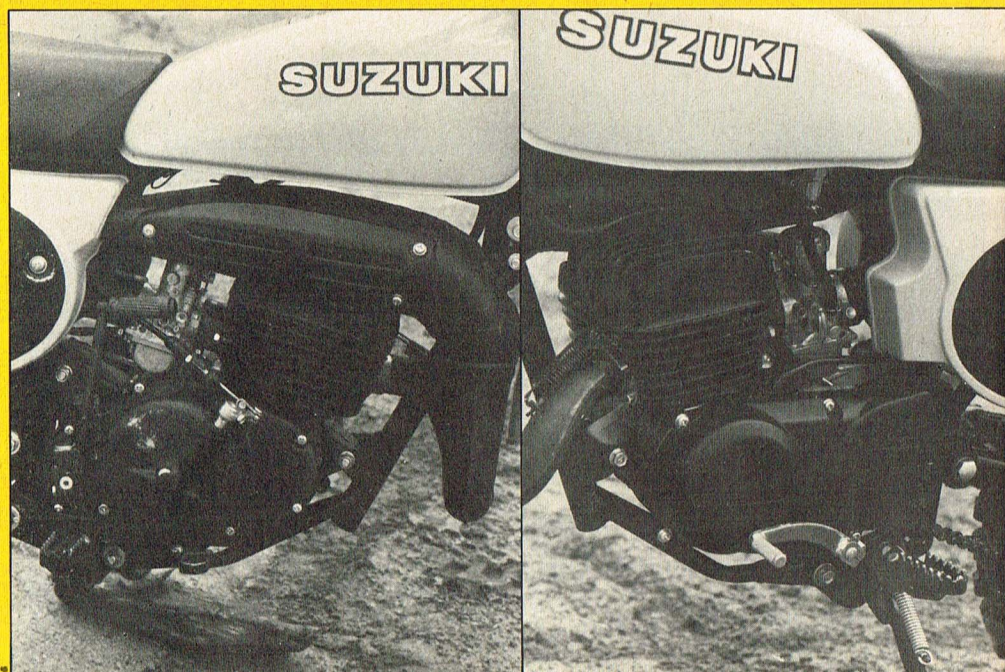
The trick factory porting for last year's modifieds went into the new unit. Carburetion was increased from 24 to 28mm. Compression was upped from 7.0 to 7.2. They added a six-speed transmission and one additional clutch plate. Also new is the leading axle front fork. Travel is up 10 millimeters to 145. Last year's standard oil shock has been replaced with gas/oilers and rear wheel travel has been upped from 4.2 to 4.8 inches. A new handlebar offset now allows the fork tubes to be slid up or down in the clamps to fine-tune front-end geometry.

#### Guest tester quest

Here's the foursome we came up with. Suzuki factory-sponsored Steve Schmitz, 15, who won the 80-stock Grand National in Houston. Chris Heisser, 16, a Team DG rider on an RM80. Matt Whiting, 13, a Yamaha factory rider and three-time NMA Number Two, and Erik Kehoe, 13, a Yamaha support rider sponsored by Hatch Accessories who was AME Number One Mini Expert last year in Southern California.

#### What they said about the see

Those familiar with last year's RM commented that it had more in low and mid-range, but needed some help on top. It got the top-end help this year.



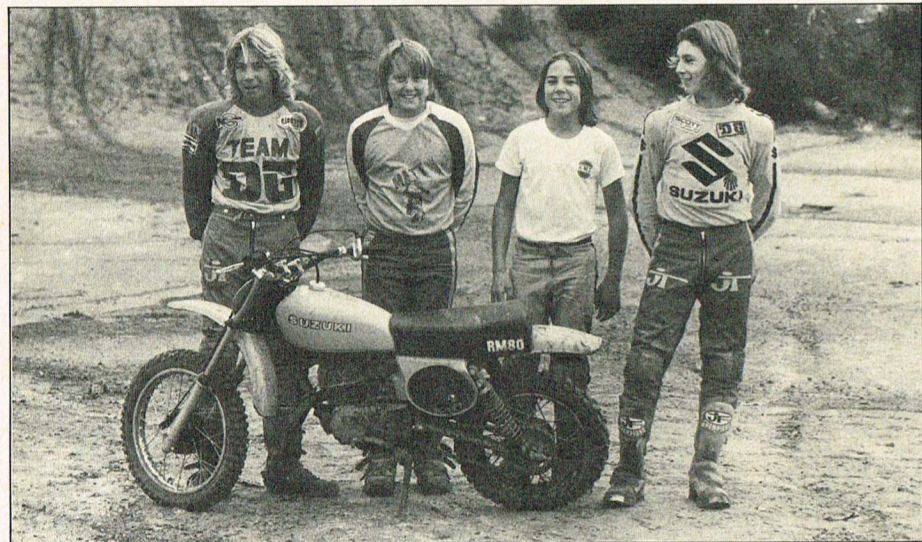
Factory porting, more compression, a six-speed tranny and a carburetor increase to 28mm highlight the engine changes.



Factory rider Steve Schmitz.

# SUZUKI RM80

# SUZUKI RM80



The mighty mini zoot DB test crew in inaction, a highly unnatural state. From the left: Chris Heisser, Matt Whiting, Erik Kehoe and Steve Schmitz.

They felt the power was smoother with more in the mid-range and much more on top and that it was easier to keep it on the pipe. No doubt the new six-speed box helps. The Yamaha riders found the power peaky compared to the YZ, with less low end. Everyone noted that the new model definitely had more power than last year's.

The quartet felt that steering had been improved a little. Handlebar setback was used to offset the switch to the front leading axle forks.

No complaints with the front suspension, nothing that couldn't be sorted out to suit individual rider tastes.

The Yamaha riders preferred their monocross rear ends, the Suzuki riders

said they could dial the RM in with softer springs.

Overall impression. The bike has been improved for '78 and is quite capable of going head to head against the Yamaha.

The only casualty suffered was the rear brake pedal, which got bent out of shape in cranked-over right-handers. Otherwise it held up fine for four of the fastest mini riders in the nation.

#### Cubic dollars

Here are some people who specialize in building super-trick versions of the production bike.

DG Performance, hopeful of finding another Hannah or Glover, sponsor a



DG's Chris Heisser.

three-man mini race team of Drey Hicks and Ted Brady on YZs and Chris Heisser on an RM80. By the time they finish with their \$1795 special the only stock parts left are the gas tank and frame. For more info, it's DG Performance Specialties, 1170 Van Horne, Anaheim, California 92806; (714) 630-5471. Their Book of Tricks catalog, listing all products, is \$2.

C H Performance Products offers three different stages for the RM80. The Pro kit is \$1495. The \$1395 Intermediate kit does not have the long-travel Betor mini forks and offers Girling or S&W shocks and a more radical motor than the \$1295 Junior kit bike. The address is C H Performance Products, 7633 Winnetka Avenue, Canoga Park, California 91306; (213) 998-7250. Their 1978 catalog is \$2.

R&D Racing works closely with the factory on development work and sponsors several riders on RMs: Mike Healey on the 50, Scott Burnsworth on the 80 and 100 and former mini-champion Brian Myerscough on the 125. Their accessories range up to the \$1800 full kit bike. For more info the address is 11419 Bombardier, Norwalk, California 90650; (213) 864-8218.

#### Last paragraphs

What we have here is an equal opportunity situation. While this wasn't a shootout, we have already looked at the new monocrosser from Yamaha and that's what everybody wants to know anyway, right? So here's a conclusive statement. Which is better? We don't know. We can't fit onto the things without banging our knees. Our teen consultants preferred their own brands, but all admit the two bikes are close. One thing that might surprise many is



Gas shocks are new. Rear wheel travel is just under five inches.



New handlebar setback allows forks to be serviced easier as well as permitting fine-tuning of the steering geometry.

the kind of lap times these minis are capable of turning.

One veteran observer of the mini scene suggests predicting which brand will win, Yamaha or Suzuki, after hearing a description of the racetrack. On the longer, smoother tracks the six-speed Suzook can stay on the pipe and do some serious top-end motoring. On shorter, bumpier tracks the Suzuki becomes more difficult to keep on the pipe for the less experienced rider and requires more shifting.

What is clear is that Suzuki is just as serious about their smaller racers as they are about the larger RMs. And for those with milder aspirations there's the DS80 trailbike with lighting and the 19-inch-tall mini-mini JR50. But out on the track the RM80 provides a strong lower rung up the RM ladder. For those small enough to fit and hold on, the RM80 is armed to get it done. ■

## SUZUKI RM80C

**PRICE:** (retail, approx.) \$579

**ENGINE TYPE:** Two-stroke, reed valve, single

**DISPLACEMENT:** 79cc

**BORE & STROKE:** 49mm x 42mm

**COMPRESSION RATIO:** 7.2:1

**CARBURETION:** 28mm Mikuni

VM28SS

**PRIMARY DRIVE:** 3.84:1

**TRANSMISSION RATIOS:**

- 1) 2.57
- 2) 1.94
- 3) 1.55
- 4) 1.27
- 5) 1.08
- 6) 0.92

**FINAL DRIVE:** 3.00 ratio; 428GM chain; 14-tooth countershaft; 42-tooth rear sprocket

**AIR FILTRATION:** Oiled foam

**ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:** PEI electronic

**LUBRICATION:** Pre-mix

**FUEL CAPACITY:** 5.3 liters (1.4 gallons)

**FRAME:** Mild steel

**SUSPENSION:** 14.5 cm travel (5.7

inches) forks; 12.2 cm travel (4.8

inches) measured at the rear axle.

Showa 12.5-inch shocks.

**TIRES:** 2.75x16 IRC knobby

3.60x14 IRC knobby

**DIMENSIONS:**

Wheelbase: 117.0 cm (46.1 inches)

Swingarm length: 36.8 cm (14.5 inches)

Ground clearance: 20.5 cm (8.1 inches)

Bars, width: 69.9 cm (27.5 inches)

height: 95.8 cm (37.7 inches)

Pegs, height: 28.7 cm (11.3 inches)

width: 41.9 cm (16.5 inches)

Weight: 62 kg (137 pounds) claimed

dry. 63 kg (139 pounds) actual, ready

for gas.

**BRAKES:**

Front: Cable-operated

Rear: Rod-operated

**SILENCER:** Yes

**SPARK ARRESTOR:** No

**PRIMARY KICK:** Yes

**WARRANTY:** None

# Go for it!

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