

SUZUKI JR50T

FROM TODDLER TO THROTTLER

Get Him Off The Trike and Onto a Bike

By The Staff of Dirt Bike

Parents! Step up and admit that when your little one turns four years of age, one of the first things that crosses your mind as he blows out that quartet of candles, is to get him on a bike, now that he's finally old enough and his tiny legs can actually reach the ground. Face it. It's all natural, don't worry! You have motorcycles in your blood thicker than grandma's pancakes and molasses, and your heart is clutching for him to get involved too.

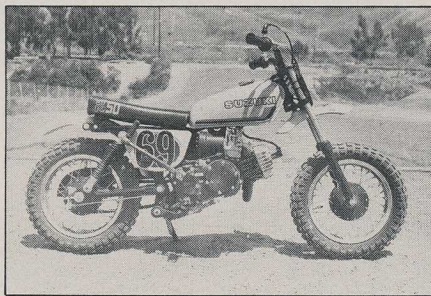
Why else would you be reading this test on the little Suzuki JR50T? Certainly it's not for yourself!

Before this write-up goes any farther, let's lay one thing out on the line. We tested this JR for a beginner, by a beginner, and that's what you will be reading about; how the JR takes a small boy who can ride a bicycle, and turns him into a motorcyclist, including all the way up through his first race.

For a first-time beginner to motorcycles, the JR is an excellent teacher. The exhaust pipe is fitted with a power reduction plate—a washer with a small hole drilled into it, that keeps the power way down and soft. Just what the new rider needs; nothing that will get away from him, even at full-throttle. The limiter cuts the motor's power and top speed nearly in half, so the 50cc scooter can be tamed quickly and easily.

The rear brake is pedal-operated, while the front is a handlebar-mounted lever, and at the left foot is a shift lever. There are only two positions for the lever, up for neutral and down for drive, so there is no confusion at that point.

The seat height measures 19 inches and all of the peg and handlebar locations appear comfortable, as is. All of these components give the youngster a feeling of a true motorcycle, with all of the equipment of a big bike, right where they'll find it when they move to a larger mount, minus the clutch. The JR is an automatic.



Suzuki's little JR50 is the hot setup for a beginning rider. It will take him from the backyard beginning stages, to the racetrack.

The kickstarter is extra-long for those short legs, and requires very little effort to turn the engine over.

Our JR started quickly, even when cold, but after warm-up, when the bike was dropped out on the track, there was a certain starting procedure that had to be followed to bring it back to life. The big trick is to keep the throttle wide-open with the engine in neutral (or up position), then kick. Hold the throttle on until you're sure the engine is running fully, then back it off.

Top speed with the restrictor in is not even as fast as a slow eight-year-old girl. After the new rider progresses—which will come a lot quicker than you may suspect with the JR—get him on a small circuit. Here, he can learn the meaning of braking for slowing, rather than just stopping when dad says it's time to go home.

Soon he will be holding the throttle wide-open all the way around the backyard. At this point, you might want to remove the power reduction plate from the bike, to bring out the motor's potential.

Simply take the pipe off, and right at the head is a washer with a small hole in it. Just slip it out, put the pipe back on and see what the difference is. The motor becomes a bit noisier, but nothing irritating. The power increase is substantial, but it's still something that a small rider can comfortably control.

If he wants to race, the removal of the restrictor is a must, or he'll get
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blown into the weeds. From there, he can learn how to go faster, but it will be a long while before he learns to use all of the engine and hold it wide-open around any mini track. If he finds he wants more power yet, you can pull a little extra out of the little powerplant by removing the silencer/spark arrestor. Even without the silencer, the bike is just as quiet as it ever was, and it won't bother anybody. Now you've got it at its stock limits; anything further will bump you into the PeeWee Modified class.

As for the suspension, it is a bit stiff at both ends, and the JR hops in braking bumps.

The only major problem we found with the JR is the magneto/points cover. It is not sealed in any way, just held on with two screws. Dirt continually works its way into here and covers the tips of the points, and the plug will draw no spark. This almost kept our rider out of his first race, but a quick removal of the screws and plate, then a scrape of the points with a good ole pocket knife, got him going in his first moto. We strongly suggest some kind of silicone sealer around the plate.

Finish Line

The JR Suzuki can last a mini rider all the way up until he is eight or nine, and is a solid, reliable scooter. Power can be drawn out of the stock, restricted motor in varying degrees, as little at a time as you want, and soon you'll have a little pip-squeak racing right beside you. The only problem is, what do you do after he grows up and starts passing you? It might help to stick the restrictor back in and even things up.

SUZUKI JR50T Specifications

NAME AND MODEL	Suzuki JR50T
ENGINE TYPE	Single-cylinder, air-cooled, two-stroke
BORE AND STROKE	41.0mm x 37.8mm
DISPLACEMENT	49cc
HORSEPOWER (CLAIMED)	N/A
CARBURETION	12mm Mikuni
IGNITION	Magneto, points
TRANSMISSION	Single-speed constant mesh w/ neutral gear
FUEL TANK CAPACITY	0.4-gallon (1.5 liters)
WHEELBASE	33.7 inches (855mm)
GROUND CLEARANCE	4.5 inches (115mm)
SEAT HEIGHT	19 inches
WEIGHT (CLAIMED)82 pounds
SUSPENSION:	
FRONT	Telescopic fork
REAR	Swingarm, shocks
TIRES:	
FRONT	2.50x10 2PR
REAR	2.50x10 2PR
INTENDED USE	Off-road
APPROX. RETAIL PRICE	\$419
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	Japan
DISTRIBUTOR:	
U.S. Suzuki	
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Santa Fe Springs, California 90670	