

BITS & PIECES

◀ Wouldn't you like to buy this YZM250 in 1992?



1992 RUMORS & NEWS THINGS WE WILL & WON'T SEE IN 1992

• Factory engineers have been testing '92 prototypes since the '91s have seen production, but they've been playing their hands close to the vest. Not only do they want to keep us magazine types in the dark, they don't want the competition to get wind of what they're doing, so they keep the machines and test riders under wraps, and even leak a few false rumors to cover their tracks. Here's what we can expect to see, or not see, in 1992.

HONDA

• Honda has been testing a new power-valve system for the CR250R and it will see production in '92. The system will replace the maintenance-intensive HPP valves and is based on the Japanese NSR125 street bike. At low rpm, the valve extends into the exhaust port, changing port volume and timing for torque. As revs climb, the valve retracts and raises port height for more flow. Best of all, this system can be easily powered by an electronic servo motor, like the WR200 and NSR125.

• We won't see the CR250MA automatic in '92. HRC rider Takayuki Miyuchi won a round of the Japanese Championships aboard the automatic-transmission CR250 prototype (see *DB*, July '90), but the machine is still in the early stages of development. Miyuchi won the second moto after grabbing the holeshot and making short work of the muddy Yamaguchi track. The CR250MA now has an aluminum frame, and maybe we'll see it here in '93.

• R&D has taken a close look at CR250R enduro conversions, so we may see a Euro CRE- or CRM-based off-road 250 go up against Suzuki's championship RMX250 and Kawasaki's KDX250.

• HRC used fluorescent pink plastic at the Anaheim Supercross. We've heard rumors that the '92s will have fluorescent

plastic, but we've also heard rumors of a more orange tank with white shrouds, side plates and fenders.

• Following the success of the dual-sport XR250L, Honda may introduce an XR600L or XR650L. The 650 is more likely, since it would use the electric-start NX650 motor. Honda has plenty of those

SUZUKI DR 250 SH

世界初の油圧式
車高調整機構を装備、
最新のテクノロジー

走破性能はワンランク上、
125を超えた無敵の
125パフォーマー

KAWASAKI KDX125SR

HONDA CRM250R

クラス最大の
40馬力を発揮する
ウルトラマシン

left.

• We've also heard rumors of Honda testing midsized Open bikes in Europe, but we doubt that America will get a CR350R in '92.

• Honda is also supposed to be testing conventional forks, which offer better feel and less stiction than inverted forks. However, there is dissension within the Red camp—part of Honda's suspension woes are reportedly more a frame flaw than anything else. After all, Suzuki is using Showas with much better results than Honda. We'll bet on a new frame from Honda before conventional forks in '92.

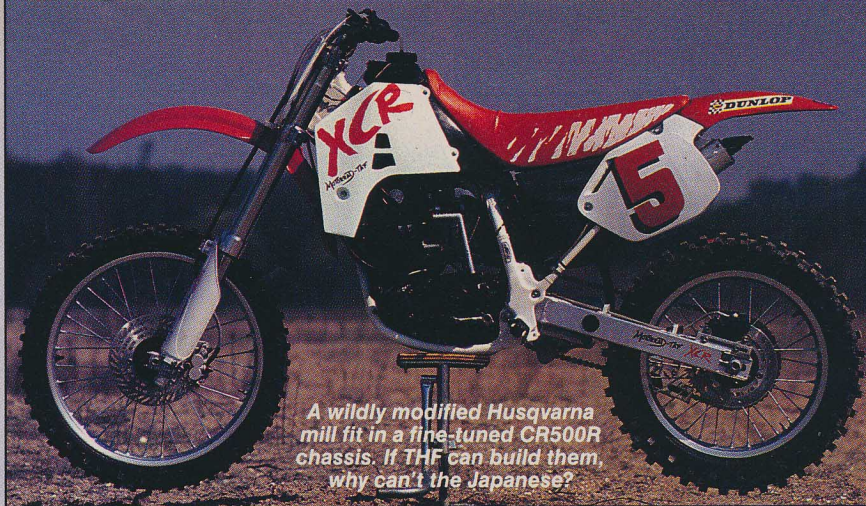
• Speaking of suspension, look for the entire CR line to have good legs in '92. All the big CRs will have Showa units based on the ultra-successful '91 Team Peak CR125s.

KAWASAKI

• Debate rages over whether the KX500 will have a perimeter frame or not. Team Kawasaki UK uses the perimeter frame on its SR500 works bikes, so it's feasible that the '92 KX500 will be perimetered. However, in light of the FIM's move to ban the 500 GPs, we doubt that Kawasaki is going to pump much effort or money into the KX500.

• Speaking of perimeter frames, the KX125 and 250 may go to the '91 KX80-style perimeter frame, which uses oval tubing, and plastic. The goals here are less weight and girth at the midsection. Also, the KX250 will get a new bore and stroke, effectively receiving a whole new motor.

• More news from the perimeter. The KDX200 is under attack by the WR200, so expect some changes for the KDX in '92. The European KDX already has a KX-style box section perimeter frame, but



A wildly modified Husqvarna mill fit in a fine-tuned CR500R chassis. If THF can build them, why can't the Japanese?

Photo by Alexander Stefan

we're more likely to see the oval frame in production, like the '91 KDX250.

• Kawasaki was at the top of the suspension wars for '91, so don't expect any big changes here for '92.

SUZUKI

• Perimeter frames for '92? Don't count on it. We've seen aluminum perimeter-framed RM250s in Japan, but don't hold your breath.

• Likewise, don't expect any big changes in the suspension department, as the RMs ranked highly here in '91.

• We may see a TS200-based RMX200 later in the year, possibly as an early-release '93 model. Suzuki has been testing a TS200 in America, so it's a good bet for conversion to an RMX. Check out page 43 for more info on the TS200. Also, Randy Hawkins rode an RMX-converted RM125 at the Tulsa Qualifier. Could a small RMX be far behind?

• Suzuki has been testing midsized Open bikes in Europe, but we doubt that an RM400 will make it here in '92.

• Look for Suzuki to lead the eyesore

war, as supercross coverage grows on television and the factories are striving to make their machines as bright as possible to be seen on the tube. Gag.

YAMAHA

• Aluminum perimeter frames for the YZ125 and 250? Not in '92, but maybe '93. An aluminum perimeter-framed YZM250 has been getting a lot of attention at the Japanese MX Championships, but don't look for it on our shores anytime soon. With liability lawsuits what they are in the U.S., it will take years of fatigue testing before we see an aluminum-framed production bike in America.

• Pekka Vehkonen has a new works 250 with twin spark plugs and coils (*a la* CZ), an electronic power jetted carb (*a la* Yamaha works road racers) and an electronically assisted transmission. Pekka also tested an Ohlins-built, computerized "smart shock" that monitors and adjusts damping more than 200 times per second. Since Damon Bradshaw has had two DNFs this year due to broken spark plugs, we'll believe the twin-plug head, but the rest is too futuristic to be implemented in '92.

• Bradshaw and Jeff Emig have run white/orange and white/navy blue color schemes so far in '91, so Yamaha is definitely looking to lose the magenta-on-white YZ look for '92. We'll bank on blue but think that the white/aqua WRs are the best-looking bikes on the market.

• After the beating the '91 YZ125 took, look for the '92 to run like a scalded ape.

• The second production run of the '92 WR500 (remember, Yamaha released the 500 and 200 as '92 models) will have updated shifting, like the '91 YZ125 and 250, and a new clutch.

• Yamaha is rumored to be testing midsized Open bikes, like Honda and Suzuki. Don't hold your breath waiting for the YZ360 to see production in '92.

• Following the success of the DR/DRS 250 and 350, look for Yamaha to re-enter

◀ High-performance dual-sports are the rage in Japan, where riding areas are scarcer than ice cubes on the sun. Near the end of the environmental decade, we may all be on high-tech, four-stroke dual-sports. Check out the perimeter-framed KDX125SR and the Honda CRM250.

月刊ガール創刊5周年特別企画 **4メーカー**
人気オフロードバイクを
モニタープレゼント!
 この4台の中からキミの好きな車種を選んで
 応募してくれ、モニター後はキミのものだ!

トレール時代を築きあげた
DTシリーズの最高傑作
YAMAHA
DT200WR

BITS & PIECES



Photo by Stefano Padovani

▲ **Trampas Parker (7)** leads the 250 GPs after four rounds, ahead of defending Champ Alex Puzar (1) and Marnicq Bervoets. Before the Italian (fourth) round, Parker and Emmepi teammate Michele Fanton (4) picked up Chambers and Gatorade as major sponsors. Trampas started the season slowly but won the third and fourth rounds.

◀ **Damon Bradshaw** almost outgunned Jeff Stanton at the New Jersey Meadowlands Supercross, but the Champ put the whoops to Damon for the win. The Yamaha star kept his title hopes alive by gaining points on fourth-place finishing Jean-Michel Bayle, who had to beat Damon by two points to clinch the supercross title at New Jersey.

Brian Swink (42) played second fiddle to the Westerners at the East/West Dallas 125 Supercross, but the Team Peak star came back to clinch the title at New Jersey with an easy win. Swink backed up the Eastern SX Championship by taking the 125 National points lead with a two-moto win at Mt. Morris, Pennsylvania. The kid is hot! ►



Photo by Mike Sweeney

the high-tech thumper field. Yamaha already has the ten-valve, 750cc Super Tenere twin and the five-valve XT660 Tenere, either of which could be shipped here for '92. Also, Yamaha may import the Japanese-only Serow 225 thumper in Americanized trim.

KTM

• KTMs were raked pretty heavily in '91 for having harsh suspension, so look for big changes here in '92. Mike Fisher has been testing pre-production '92 White Power units all year long, and the factory has been working closely with the off-road team for DXC and EXC settings.

• Look for new plastic for the '92 500. The KTM 500GP team has been using a new tank and shroud design, one that scoops more air through the radiators.

• Don't look for the "reverse" 125 or 500 in '92. The 250s and 300s will be the only Katooms to have left-side drive next year. Mike Healey did do some testing on a semi-reverse 125, one with the pipe and power valve on the opposite side of the current 125s, but he reportedly liked his "normal" 125 better.

• We might see a new ignition from

KTM in '92. Testing in America went well but, when tried in Europe, the ignition wasn't received well by the test pilots.

• Did you get used to the turquoise-and-red color scheme? That will be all different next year, as the KTMs are rumored to have blue frames.

BITS & PIECES

• Husqvarna's TE350 thumper may see American streets as a dual-sport in '92. Cagiva has invested heavily in meeting EPA emissions standards, and the TE is already street-legal in Europe.

• Husqvarna is also rumored to be updating existing motocross designs and could be switching to Showa suspension components and Nissin brakes for '92. We hope they put the bikes on a diet, too.

• Husaberg is working feverishly on a 1000cc V-twin to take on the Battle of the Twins roadracing series. It wouldn't be too hard to make a 750cc version and go after Harley-Davidson's stranglehold on the AMA/Camel Pro Grand Nationals. Steve Morehead has already won on a Husaberg; he rode a 600 to victory at an exhibition race in Barcelona, Spain. Husaberg hillclimbers? Husaberg speedway



bikes? Paris-Dakar bikes? The mind reels . . .

• Ohlins is working on a RIBI-like leading link fork system. Will the Japanese buy this design, like they did RIBI, so it won't ever see the light of day? Remember, Yamaha holds a major interest in Ohlins.

• Look for Suzuki and Yamaha to adopt the new mainless and pilotless TMS Mikuni carb on '92 two-strokes. Ditto ATK.

• ATK may see liquid-cooling in '92. The new DOHC, twin-port Rotax thumper mill has a liquid-cooled cylinder and air-cooled head. □