FAST WOMEN – FISH, COX, EVANS

DIRT BIKE

IND

FEBRUARY 1977

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"I DON'T LIKE TO COMPLAIN, BUT..." GERRIT WOLSINK SPEAKS OUT

FIRST LOOKS '77 YZ125D CAN-AM 175MX

NATIONAL ENDURO, TRIALS WRAP-UPS

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DIRT BIKE

VOLUME SEVEN NUMBER TWO FEBRUARY 1977

TESTS

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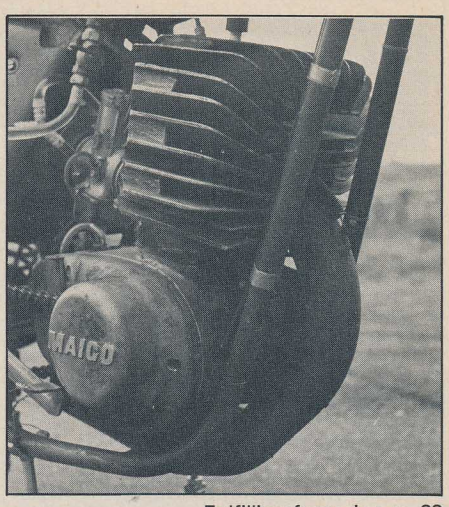

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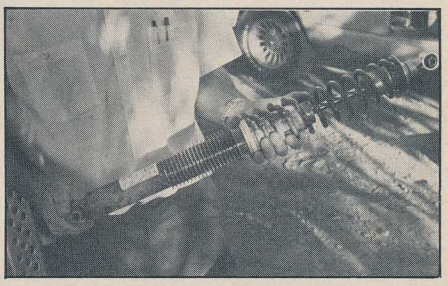

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ON THE COVER: Motocross's favorite dentist, Gerrit Wolsink, hams it up for the Weed camera.

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Kim Lavigne berserks it on the wild pumpkin.

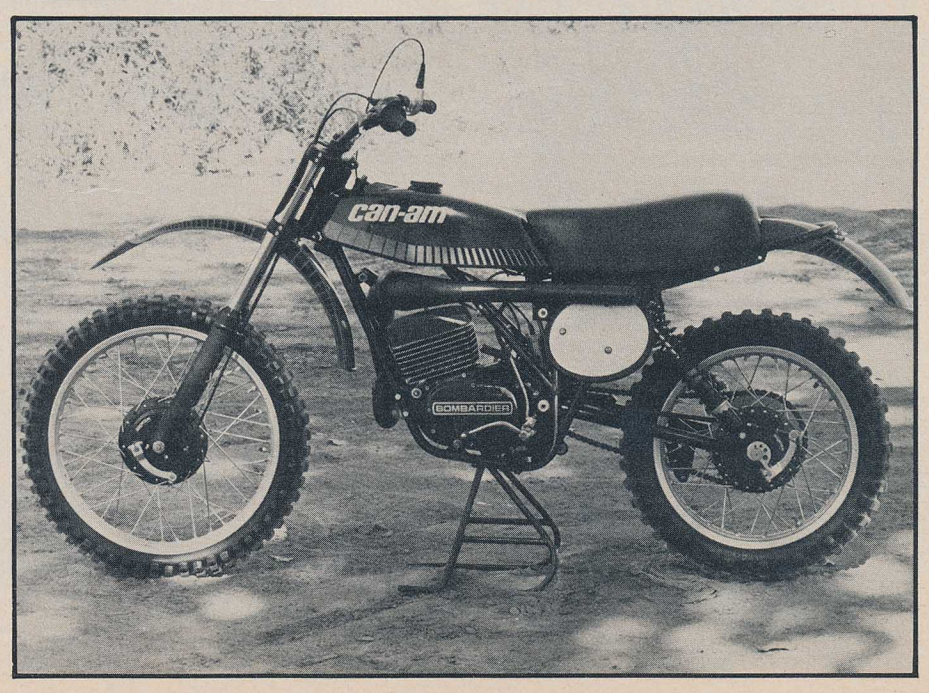
Lots of power, more suspension travel, less downpipe . . .

CAM-AM's 175 MX3

by The Staff of DIRT BIKE

In this era of wide, usable and potent factory-type powerbands and super-absorbing long-travel suspension, we find ourselves staring eye to eye with something designed along a little different lines: a pumpkin named Trigger. Or, minus our nickname, it's Can-Am's new MX 3 175, which is your basic updated Halloween version of the old refrigerator-styled MX 2.

Can-Am's reputation has been built basically in two areas. First there are the fine showings made by their factory racers on short, tight and twisty courses with abundant traction like the ones found in stadiums. Then, surely you remem-



Opposite: Sue Fish, Women's National Champion, slips into some serious berm bustin'.

ber hearing about the incredible peak horsepower figures they were able to coax out of their rotary-valved wonders. Not as impressive now as in years past, but it sticks in your mind. The MX 3 retains these characteristics and offers a number of improvements in the braking and suspension departments, along with a little weight reduction.

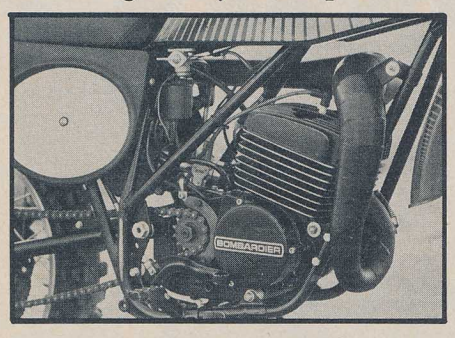
TAKE A LOOK

The most obvious change in the MX 3 that sets it off from any previously designed Can-Am, or any other motorcycle for that matter, is the flashy Pumpkin Festival-influenced orange and black color scheme. Very different, to say the least. The fenders sport jazzy little accent stripes and are now made of a rubber-based plastic which should make them even more durable than the MX 2 white units, and virtually unbreakable, from the feel of them. Likewise, this odd color combination follows through on the boss black 7.1-liter plastic petrol tank which is striped with orange Can-Am "rub-resistant" decals.

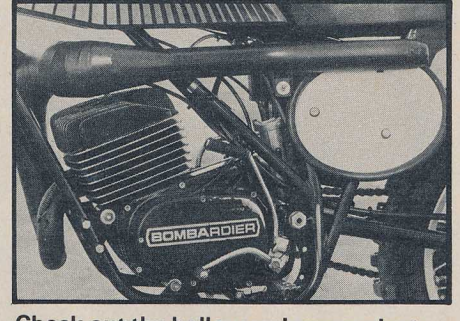
Betor forks with 184mm (7.25 inches) of measured axle travel, nearly an inch more than the MX 2, perform suspension and steering duties up front. They pivot in the exclusive Can-Am interchangeable cone system which allows you to change the fork angle from 25 to 31 degrees in half-degree increments to tune the geometry to the particular type of riding you plan on doing. You merely purchase the desired cones and slip them on either side of the tapered roller bearings. Thirty degrees is standard.

Clamped to the top crown is a set of Gary Jones-designed bars complete with Magura throttle and power levers. No complaints about the grips.

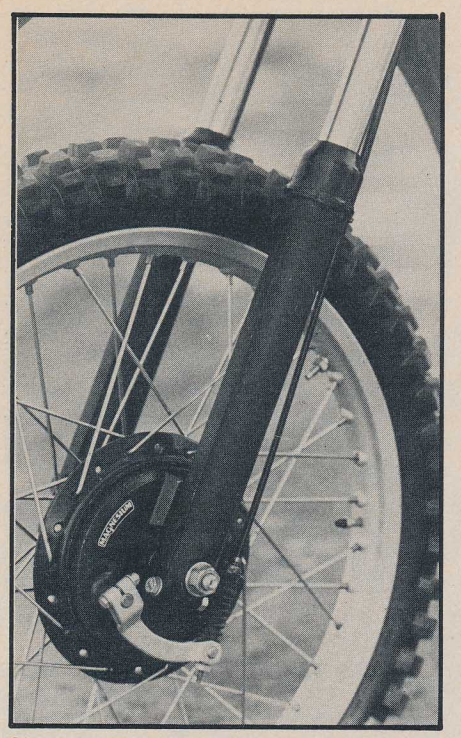
Down below, a magnesium hub, backing plate and brake shoes replace the aluminum units that came on the MX 2, in order to cut off a little excess weight. In addition, the backing plate has been redesigned and the brake actuating lever has been lengthened to give you more leverage, thus a more powerful brake with better "feel." A D.I.D



In this shot you can easily see the handmade 21-piece up-pipe, the brake pedal position adjuster, the protector around the countershaft sprocket to keep the chain from eating the cases if it breaks or comes off, and the Motoplat coil mounted below and behind the petcock.



Check out the hollow swingarm pivot shaft, inaccessible carb positioning and footpegs that need teeth on their front edge.



184mm travel Betors, new magnesium hub, backing plate and brake shoes.

moved nearly two inches forward and down a bit, giving Can-Am its first production lay-down setup. Gabriel (of Canada) gas bag shocks replace the Girlings that were found forward-mounted on the MX 2, and offer a measured 195mm (7.76 inches) of axle travel.

An aluminum alloy rear hub is retained in the rear, but as with the front unit, you get the new magnesium backing plate which appears to be identical to the front component. Magnesium brake shoes are standard all around. Laced around the hub is a D.I.D WM 2 with a Yokohama Super Digger 901 attached. A 47-tooth steel sprocket with a D.I.D 520T chain is used to transmit power rearward.

The swingarm pivots directly off of the back of the engine, resulting in the short distance of just 65mm between the swingarm pivot point and the countershaft centerline. Obviously, the hot setup is to get the two as close as possible so that the chain slack will increase as little as possible when the suspension compresses and extends. This is by far the closest we've seen on a production bike.

Softer padding in the seat makes it much more comfortable than the MX 2's, which was on the stiff side, but the fabric is slippery enough to let you slide up onto the tank occasionally when braking. The aluminum seat base serves as a top cover for the air filter, allowing air to enter from the back. More on that later.

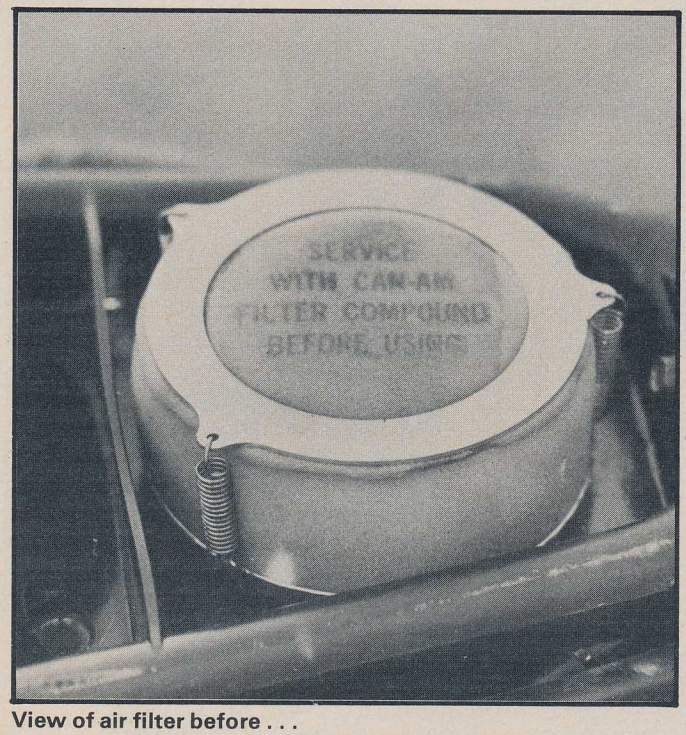
Our Can-Am's powerplant is identical to the oil-injected, rotary-valved unit used in the MX 2. Oil is pumped directly into the inlet port, past the rotary valve as well as through the crank and into the big end rod bearing in order to help lengthen engine life. Pretty slick. Oil for the engine is carried in the large backbone of the frame and is replenished through a dipsticked cap just behind the steering head.

Peak horsepower output is a whopping 26.7 at 8500 rpm, which is more than some 250s. But, it's not what you've got, it's how you use it.

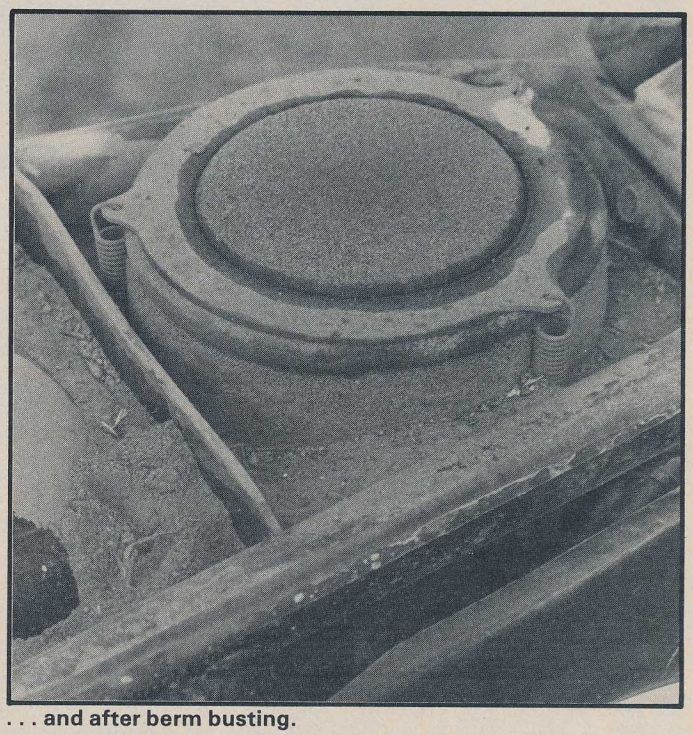
All these pent-up ponies are coupled to a very close-ratio six-speeder. Like all modern motorcycle engines, primary drive is by gears and primary kickstarting is standard equipment.

A 32mm Bing model V-84 controls the fuel/air mixing and breathes from a large still air box. A velocity stack or bell is attached to the box at the carb inlet to give a little added power boost. An oiled-foam filter is attached to the top under the seat. New for the MX 3 is a small dam that is supposed to help keep dirt and water off of the filter.

Check out that up-pipe. Finally an up-pipe. With the suspension extensions and the loss of the down-pipe, you get an extra three inches of ground clearance. Our bike had a handmade number attached, but no



View of air filter before . . .



. . . and after berm busting.

WM 1 is laced to the new hub in a cross-three pattern and is wrapped with a Yokohama Super Digger 900.

The most extensive modifications to hit the MX 3 are in the rear suspension area. To begin with, the swingarm is now three-quarters of an inch longer and is claimed to be lighter (we didn't have a chance to weigh it) than the MX 2's. The bottom shock mounts have been moved back very near to the axle. Up above, the mounts have been

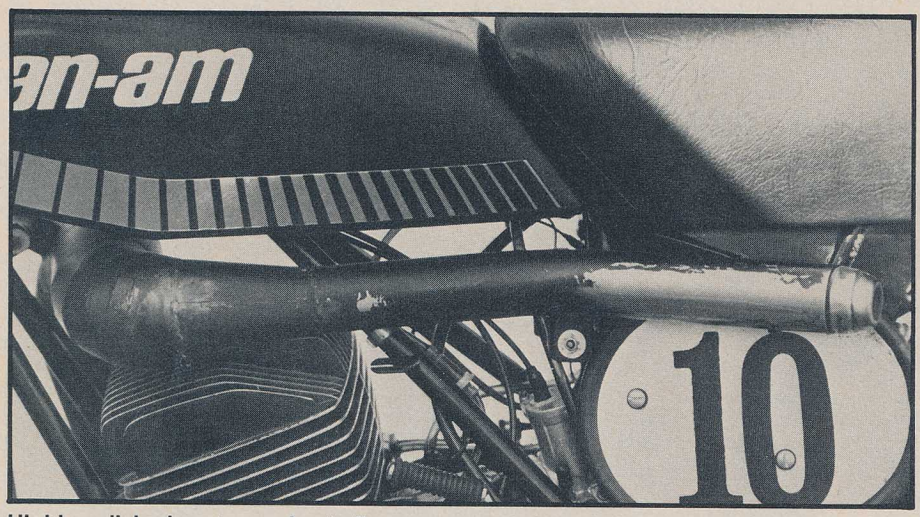
doubt the production unit will be as close to this one as possible and made of stamped steel. Hopefully it will come with a heat shield on the belly and over the silencer area.

Spark is provided by a Motoplat pointless ignition with its magneto outer windings attached to the side case as it is removed.

HOW DOES JIMMY ELLIS DO IT?

Whoa now Trigger, easy boy.

Swing your leg over the saddle and you'll discover that the rein/stirrup/saddle relationship was designed for riders around five foot six, give or take an inch or so. Our guest test riders for two of our test sessions included Women's National Champion Sue "Flyin'" Fish and friends Janine Turton and Kim Lavigne.



Highly polished spots on pipe indicate areas of rider discomfort and a need for heat shielding. Not to mention that it's too loud.

They all felt quite at home perched atop the pumpkin. Kim, a confirmed Can-Am lover (125), at first commented that the MX 3 felt a good bit higher because of the increased suspension travel. The feeling quickly passed as the number of laps increased. For our "regular sized" staffers, the bike felt a bit on the small side. A little extra effort is required to move from the seated to the standing position. It even gave each rider the impression that it was shorter than it actually is. This 175 is much like an overgrown 125, in more ways than one.

Kickstarting is a left-side, right-footed operation. Our test unit would always fire on first kick.

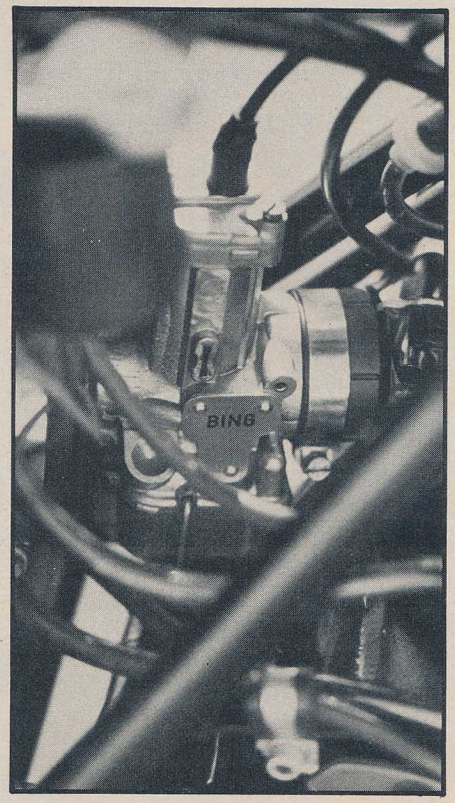
Out on a tight, twisty and smooth course with good traction, you are free to carve your own personalized lines to your heart's desire. Just point it and it'll roll right around with a burst of power that will often have you exiting on the rear wheel. Its turning ability here is what was often referred to as Maico-like in days gone by. Turns become a very natural, precision thought and action routine.

However, when the traction is not perfect and the track's moisture evaporates into the air (as it occasionally does), another phenomenon sets in. This is called the marbles under the wheels illusion. Up front, you'll not notice this so much at a cruising speed as you will when you start to push it. This is partly due to the tires. Add some bumps and it gets worse. Going to lighter oil in the forks (five-weight) helped them absorb better. The 175 is definitely set up for smaller riders. For us the front end would bottom abruptly when landing from even medium-sized jumps and drop-offs. Just a matter of spring rates.

Out back there's a whole different story, and one that's just as exciting. When we received the MX 3 it was already broken in. Not worn-out, merely ridden for a few hours at a press presentation a few days earlier. The gas Gabriels had very little dampening on both compression and rebound strokes and the springs were also on the light side for us. The rear suspension could be bottomed by our heavier riders by merely accelerating. We informed Can-Am and another set of shocks were flown out to us from Canada. They were better and didn't top out with a clunk with the spring preload set at maximum.

The one thing that the rear end does well, and very well at that, is to soak up the small braking bumps

Good grips, Magura throttle and power levers.

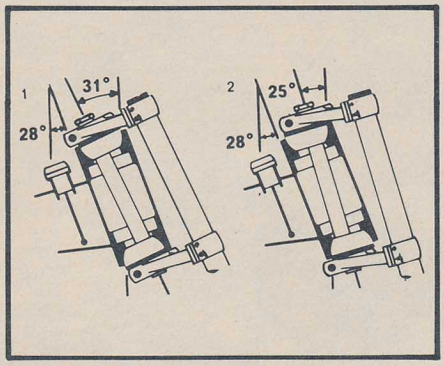


Bing ho!

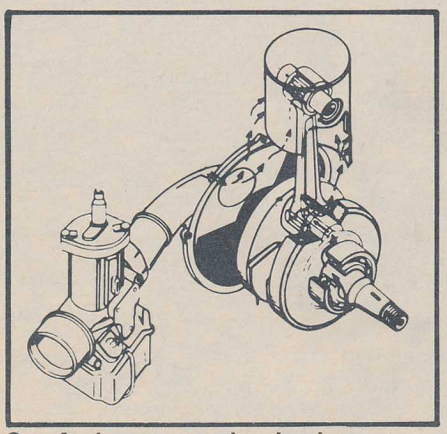
encountered when entering corners while maintaining control. Aside from that, partially due to the power characteristics, a considerable amount of concentration was necessary to keep the rear tire hooked up and following the front tire in the desired direction. Here again, with good traction and few and small bumps, the rear end worked very well. The transition from stick to slick really keeps you on your toes, to say the least.

Out in the whoops on sand tracks

Note the artful striping, smooth seat/tank joint, highly polished tires, magnesium engine side cases, and the short distance between countershaft and swingarm pivot point. No, the works Honda bike stand doesn't come with the bike.



Descriptive illustration of Can-Am's variable fork angle feature.



Can-Am's rotary valve intake system.

the MX 3 is a triple handful. With the suspension bottoming in the rear, the machine would hop and swap from side to side. Here the unusual power characteristics of the Can-Am are felt in full force. It is difficult to keep the bike in the powerband when riding hard in sand (or mud for that matter), as the rear end swaps quickly back and forth. The power explodes and bike thrashes wildly. You've got to be quick with the shift lever.

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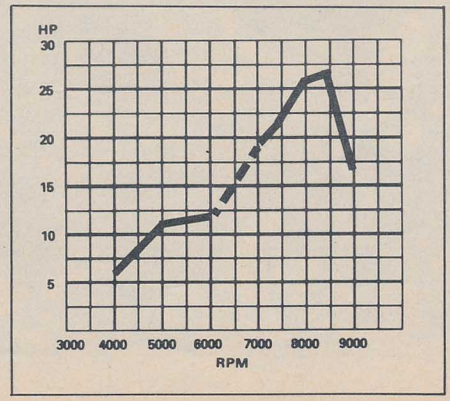

CAN-AM 175 MX-3

Price $1695
Engine . . . Two-stroke single, rotary valve
Displacement 173.6cc
Bore & Stroke . . . . . 62mm x 57.5mm
Compression Ratio 15:1
Carburetion . . . . . 32mm Bing V-84
Standard Jetting:
Main jet #155, needle jet #2.70, needle position 3rd, needle 4 ring, slide 1, pilot jet #40
Horsepower . . . . . 26.7 at 8500 rpm
Clutch . . . . . Wet, multi-plate
Primary Drive:
Straight cut gears, 3.286:1
Transmission Ratios:
1. 2.66
2. 2.07
3. 1.58
4. 1.31
5. 1.09
6. 0.96
Final Drive . . . . . D.I.D 520T
13-tooth countershaft
47-tooth rear sprocket
Air Filtration . . . . . Can-Am oiled foam
Electrics . . . . . Motoplat CDI
Starting . . . . . Primary kick
Lubrication . . . . . Oil injection
Recommended Fuel . . . . . Premium
Recommended Oil . . . . . Can-Am
Fuel Tank Capacity:
7.1 liters (1.9 gallons)
Frame . . . . . Double loop, double cradle
Suspension:
Front: Betor forks with 184mm (7.75 inches) axle travel
Rear: Gabriel gas shocks, 195mm (7.76 inches) axle travel
Wheels & Spokes:
Front: D.I.D 1.60x21 (WM-1) cross-3 3.5mm spokes
Rear: D.I.D 1.85x18, (WM-2) cross-3 4.0mm spokes
Tires:
Front: 3.00x21 Yokohama Super Digger 900
Rear: 4.10x18 Yokohama Super Digger 901
Dimensions:
Wheelbase:
140.5cm (55.3 inches) + 2.5cm
Swingarm length . . 50.0cm (19.7 inches)
Ground clearance . . 26.5cm (10.4 inches)
Bars, height . . . . . 112.5cm (44.3 inches)
width . . . . . 86.5cm (34.1 inches)
Pegs, height . . . . . 35.0cm (13.8 inches)
width . . . . . 48.0cm (18.9 inches)
Seat Height . . . . . 90.0cm (35.4 inches)
Fork angle:
30 degrees — variable in half-degree increments from 25 to 31 degrees by purchasing available cones
Weight:
94 kilos (206 pounds) with oil but no fuel. 44.9% on front (88.5), 55.1% on rear (109)
Brakes:
Front: 152mm cable-operated conical drum
Rear: 152mm cable-operated conical drum
Instruments . . . . . None
Lights . . . . . None
Silencer . . . . . Yes; MX only
Spark Arrestor . . . . . None
Warranty . . . . . None
Parts Prices:
Piston . . . . . N/A
Rings $8.95
Clutch cable $5.95
Brake pedal $6.75

CAN-AM 175 MX 3

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AH YES, THE POWER OR, WHY DID THEY NAME IT TRIGGER?

Below 6000 rpm, the power is not very usable for racing. It's about 11 to 12 horses around five and six, but you may as well call it a flat spot. After the flat spot, or, as the power begins, it virtually explodes from 12.2 at 6000 to 19.6 at 7000. From there, it's not long before you're at 8500 with a whopping 26.7 where the power falls off sharply. Hence the nickname Trigger, for its lightning-like power characteristics. The subtlety of a .44 magnum going off.

The six close ratios combined with the pipey and powerful rotary-valved whizz banger give you very little time between shifts. You're always shifting up and down and in rapid succession. Also, there's a tendency to knock it out of gear because of the light shifting action. This power in sand, mud or loose dirt along with the quick shift requirement turns the bike into a difficult plaything when attempting to keep your speed up or compete with another bike. Our lighter riders who weighed in around 110 to 120 or so were able to make a little better use of the power, as it would pull them a bit sooner, therefore they would not have to shift quite as often.

WHAT ELSE

Both brakes performed flawlessly, even the rear which was operated by a very long and large cable, but it does require more pressure than most. Surely our cable was kept in perfect condition and very clean. The "feel" was smooth, progressive and strong at both ends.

The seat is very comfortable and did a fine job of absorbing what the rear suspension wouldn't.

This was the first time we have had a chance to try Yokohama Super Diggers, and it's a bit hard to evaluate them by their performance on one bike, especially this bike. The rear knobs had a tendency to rip at their base from acceleration, and some were torn off completely.

The high-zoot, handmade pipe protruded out beyond the left side of the motorcycle enough to burn everyone's leg when stretching back,

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CAN-AM 175 MX 3

Continued from page 82

or when up front in the cornering position. A heat shield is definitely in order.

BRACKETS, BOLTS AND BUGABOOS

There's a long rubber block bolted to the top side of the swingarm to protect the arm and to take up a bit of the slack when the shocks are extended. The chain guide has a rubber roller and rubber on its sides to keep wear and noise down.

The brake pedal is easy to find and easily adjusted for height by loosening one nut and rotating an eccentric cam-type device. Nifty.

There's an extra bracket on the frame tube to the left rear side of the head for a third pipe mount. It'll no doubt be utilized on the production pipe.

Several consecutive bermshots through a powder patch (see color photo) made the engine eventually quit running because of air starvation. Upon removing the seat it appeared as though a shovel full of dirt had been dumped atop the air filter (see accompanying b&w photo). Some work is needed in this area.

After a short time, the kickstarter began to drag and hang up on the frame.

The carburetor is hidden away within a maze of frame tubes, wires, cables and hoses, making it very difficult to get at for servicing and jet changes. Our float valve leaked when we got it and still leaked when we returned the bike.

And, three times the spark plug cap fell off.

IN PARTING

The oil-injected, rotary-valved powerplant has great potential in horsepower output and reliability.

This bike is particularly well suited for smooth and easy tracks where the power and the suspension can be used to their full advantage. Lighter riders on fast smooth tracks will just plain love it. The Can-Am has a very impressive power output, but it needs good traction in order to use it. Knowing the kind of tracks you plan to compete on will help you decide whether the Can-Am is for you.