

A MICRO BIKE FOR BEGINNERS

YZinger

Y-not Start 'Em Out Right?

By the DB staff and their rug rats

This is a bizarre year for Yamaha, to say the least. First, they come out with a water-cooled 125, and now, they offer a shaft drive mini bike. Yes, you read that right. *Shaft drive.*

Obviously, the 50cc YZinger is made for beginning riders in the under-ten year old bracket. The entire machine is designed with zero maintenance in mind. And, its performance is purposely mild and mellow. Nothing scares a first-time kid rider more than a burst of throttle when he's not prepared for it.

To keep surprises from happening, there's a two-position switch on the bars next to the throttle. When the switch is in the *Start* position, the throttle cannot be opened any more than a crack. Not enough to engage the torque converter to pulling speed. With the switch moved to *Run*, the throttle can be opened up and revved to get the bike moving.

Engagement takes about one third of the available throttle action to get the little bike moving forward. Just the right amount of lag. Once the bike is pulling, the YZinger goes about the hassle of acceleration in a nice, gentle way. The speed builds up; not briskly, but eventually.

There's enough power to climb mild hills and to chug through soft dirt, but deep sand will slay the forward motion. We'd guesstimate top speed to be right around 20 to 25 mph—with a good tail wind.

There's also a restrictor plate that comes with a tool kit that lets you reduce the horsepower to gnat power. While installation is simple, we found that the engine tended to load up and smoke badly with the small, metal plate installed. After the first ride or two, even the most hesitant rider will want to have the full 2.8 foot-pounds of torque.

We all know how poorly adults maintain dirt bikes, so we cannot expect kids to be whizzes with the wrenches. The YZinger is built as close



The YZinger is designed especially for younger riders. Power delivery is soft and mellow.

to bulletproof as anything short of a hammer.

Consider: The engine will only rev out to a lazy 4,500 rpm. That crank could take twice the rpm and four times the horsepower.

No chain maintenance hassles. A tiny, tidy drive shaft gets the power to the rear wheel. It also keeps dumb little fingers from getting turned into Alpo.

Wheels don't even have spokes to mess with. Instead, stamped metal wheels spin happily around.

Autolube means that junior will never have to learn about the gruesome task of mixing gas with oil . . . until he grows up, that is.

There aren't even any points to mess with. A genuine CDI provides the spark and no timing should be required, unless the cases are split—an unlikely occurrence.

The YZinger shares the looks and styling of the YZ line of machines. And, wisely so. Do you think Yamaha made these cute little toys just for fun? Not on your life! They realize that if a kid starts off on a Yamaha, he'll more than likely want to move up to a larger Yamaha. Yamaha, of course, will be

waiting right in the wings with 50s, 80s, 100s, 125s and so forth.

A clever marketing ploy, to be sure. But, a valid and needed one, nonetheless. Weighing in at a mere 80 pounds, it's a safe bet that many a dad will be slipping these micro-bikes into car trunks this next year. And setting off an unstoppable chain of events in the process. □

1981 YAMAHA YZINGER

TYPE	Reed-valve, two-stroke, single
DISPLACEMENT	49cc
BORE AND STROKE	40.0 x 39.2mm
COMPRESSION RATIO	6.0:1
MAXIMUM TORQUE	2.8 ft.-lbs. at 4,500 rpm
CARBURETION	Mikuni VM12SC
IGNITION	CDI
STARTING	Primary kick
LUBRICATION	Autolube
TRANSMISSION	Single speed automatic
OVERALL LENGTH	1,245mm (49.0 inches)
OVERALL WIDTH	575mm (22.6 inches)
OVERALL HEIGHT	715mm (28.1 inches)
WHEELBASE	855mm (33.7 inches)
GROUND CLEARANCE	105mm (4.1 inches)
SEAT HEIGHT	485mm (19.1 inches)
DRY WEIGHT	37 kg (80 pounds)
FUEL TANK CAPACITY	2.0 liters (0.5 gallons)
OIL TANK CAPACITY	0.3 liters (0.3 quarts)
SUSPENSION	
FRONT	Telescopic fork
REAR	Unit swing arm
BRAKES	
FRONT	Drum
REAR	Drum
TIRES	
FRONT	2.50 x 10
REAR	2.50 x 10
COLORING	Competition yellow
PRICE	\$439