

KAWASAKI KX60A1 vs. HONDA CR60R

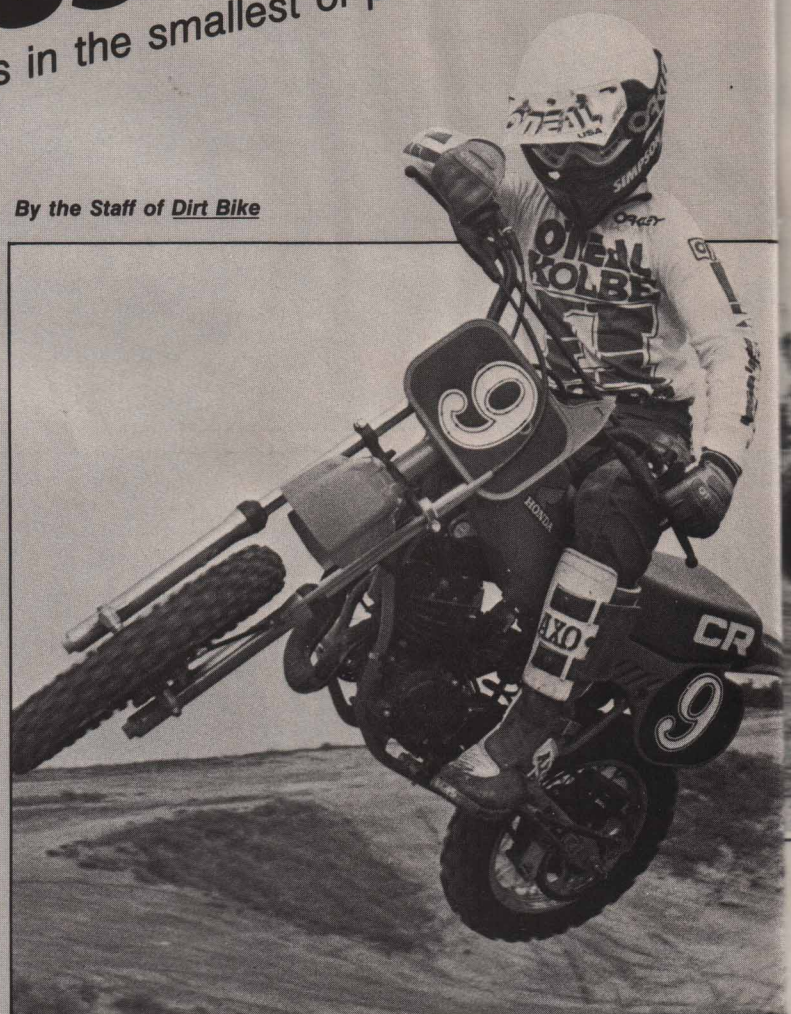
MIDGET MUSCLE

Big features in the smallest of packages

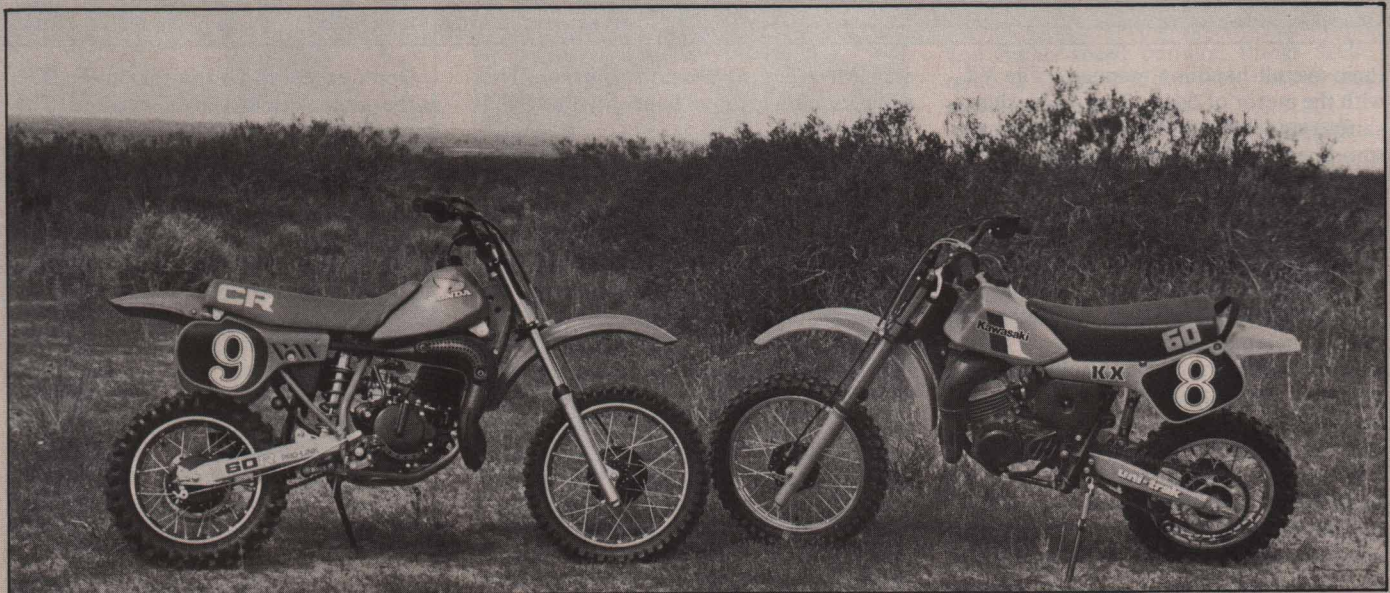
By the Staff of *Dirt Bike*



With the most firm suspension and a stronger mid-range, the KX was the favorite mount.



Softer suspension made for a slightly harder landing on the CR, but we still couldn't keep Keith out of the air.



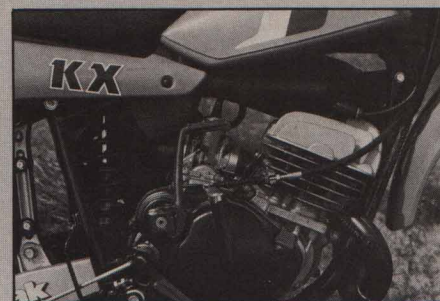
Most riders will find that the KX is slightly larger than the CR, although a small 13-year-old will be the limit for both.



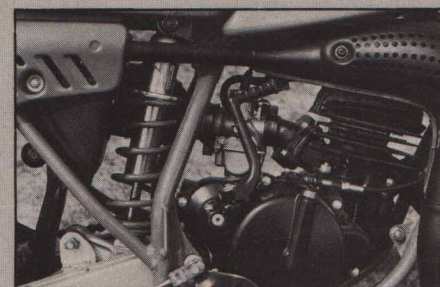
The KX has the horsepower, but the smaller CR is the quicker turner of the two.



The DB mini test crew, Keith O'Neal and KX pilot Joel Tokarsky, compare notes after a day on the track.



A larger carb and two more cc's is all the Kawasaki needs to give it the mid-range horsepower advantage over the CR.



The CR60 looks as slimly constructed as the KX, but it actually weighs seven pounds more.

Little kids have it made. When we were young, all we had to ride were lawn mower-engined, water-pipe-framed little contraptions that had a nasty habit of breaking constantly—either us or itself, it made no difference. If we were able to talk our folks into buying one of these things, chances were it disappeared after the first bloody crash or breakdown.

Nowadays, things are different. The current generation of minis represents a group of motorcycles that pack a surprising amount of technical sophistication into an extremely small package.

The Honda CR60 and Kawasaki KX60 are a good case in point. Even though they are aimed at the entry-level motocross racer, they are no less than scaled-down versions of full-sized race bikes—complete with high horsepower, long-travel suspension, and the ability to win races practical-right out of the rather small box.

PINT-SIZED DIFFERENCES

The Kawasaki is just a tad larger than the CR. Wheelbase and ground clearance are greater on the green bike, making it suitable for a slightly larger body. Sitting on the two bikes, our testers noticed the difference and then immediately shrugged it off. "You might just be able to ride the Ka-

wasaki longer as you get bigger," we were told.

Never let it be said that the *Dirt Bike* mini testers are not incisive critics when they need to be.

Aside from the slight size difference, the two bikes are nearly identical. The Honda falls to the low side of the difference scale, with two cc's less displacement, eight-tenths of an inch less travel in the front forks, and it is a full seven pounds heavier. This small fact set our two testers to flipping a coin, deciding who got to ride the "heavier" bike.

With the lots drawn, they fired them up and went out on the track. The first fact reared its head immediately—the Kawasaki is a good bit faster than the Honda. Even if the CR rider got in front of the KX going into the turns, if there was room enough on the exit, the KX would get by. When we switched riders, the results were the same.

"There's no two ways about it," Joel said. "The KX is faster. When I'm riding the Honda, I have to fight to stay up with Keith."

"The KX feels almost as fast as my 80," said Keith. "I'd rather be on the 80 right now, but if I had to ride a 60, the Kawa-

ki would be the right choice."

BOUNCING UP AND DOWN

We sent them out again with orders to check out the suspension. Both bikes seemed to handle the bumps well, but they both suffered minor problems. Occasionally, when taking a hard hit on the front end, the Honda's forks would bottom with a clunk; but at the same time, the KX was kicking up the rear end over sharp-edged bumps. The testers switched bikes twice, then we called them in for their comments.

"The KX is easier to ride hard. The back end does kick up now and then, but it's not too bad," Joel said.

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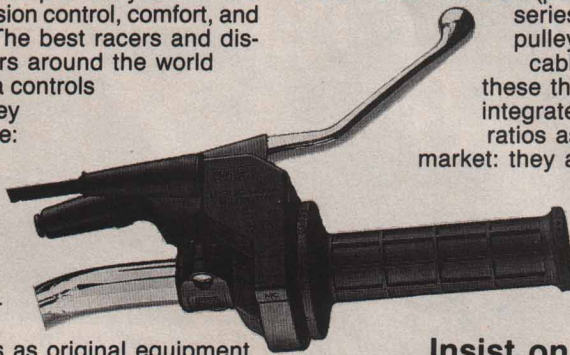
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"I think you're right," agreed Keith, "but the CR turns better than the KX, even if the forks do bottom out."

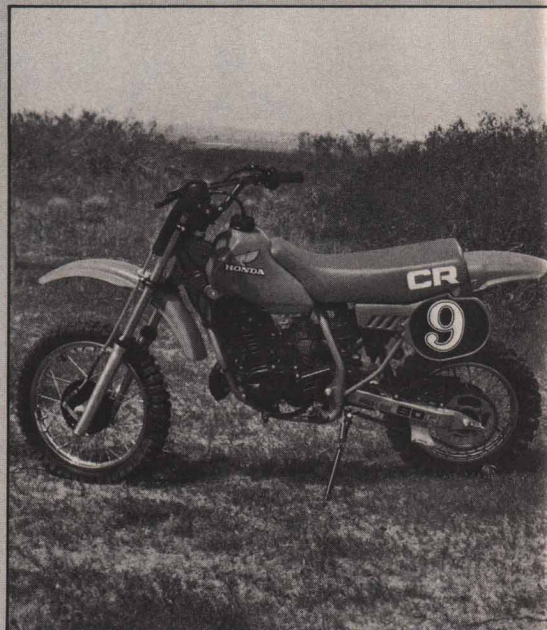
We checked the bikes out. As it turns out, the better steering on the Honda was traced to the soft forks. With the front end squishing down so far in the turns, the bike wanted to turn on a dime, although the high-speed stability suffered. The KX was suffering from too little rebound damping in the rear shock, hence the too quick return.

The CR is easy to fix. One inch more oil in the forks will firm up the front end to the rider's satisfaction. The KX is a little more difficult. Since the stock shock is not damping adjustable, we've found most of the mini hotshoes are replacing the rear shock with a Works Performance item.

MINI BITS AND PIECES

With the nitty-gritty tuning out of the way, we turned the testers loose for the rest of the day, only asking for their final comments once they ran out of fuel.

"The Honda's seat is really firm. I don't know whether or not I like it. The KX seat



HONDA CR60R

ENGINE TYPE	2-stroke, reed valve
BORE AND STROKE	42.5mm x 41.4mm
DISPLACEMENT	58cc
CARBURETION	22mm Keihin
IGNITION	CDI
TRANSMISSION	6-speed
FUEL TANK CAPACITY	3.5 L (0.9 gal.)
WHEELBASE	1060mm (41.7 in.)
GROUND CLEARANCE	225mm (8.9 in.)
SEAT HEIGHT	690mm (27.2 in.)
WEIGHT, NO FUEL	119 lbs.
SUSPENSION:	
FRONT	Showa forks, 180mm (7.1 in.)
REAR	Pro-Link, 200mm (7.9 in.)
TIRES: FRONT	2.50 x 14
REAR	3.00 x 12
INTENDED USE	Mini motocross
APPROX. RETAIL PRICE	\$728
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	Japan
DISTRIBUTOR:	
American Honda	
100 W. Alondra Ave.	
Gardena, CA 90247	

vs. HONDA CR60R

is more comfortable.”
 “It’s hard to shift, too (the CR). But the brakes are better than the KX brakes.”
 “I still think the Kawasaki’s faster. It pulls better on the bottom and in the mid-range. The Honda seems to rev out farther than the KX, but it just doesn’t go as fast.”
 “The Kawasaki has the best suspension, too. It might bounce a little bit, but it just works better than the Honda. Not by a lot, just a little better.”
PICKING THE WINNER
 “The KX is a rocket. I really like the bike, but it would have to have a new shock to feel the best. The Honda is good—I mean, Hannah rides one, right?—but it’s just not fast enough.”
 “I agree. The Honda is a fun bike to ride, especially with more oil in the forks. But if I had to race one, I’d ride the KX. I know I can win on the KX.”
 A clear winner in this race, no doubt. But can the KX hold up against the challenge of the Yamaha YZ60? Stay tuned for another incisive report from the *DB* mini crew. Film at 11. □



KAWASAKI KX60A-1

- ENGINE TYPE 2-stroke, reed valve
- BORE AND STROKE 43.0mm x 41.6mm
- DISPLACEMENT 60cc
- CARBURETION 24mm Mikuni
- IGNITION CDI
- TRANSMISSION 6-speed
- FUEL TANK CAPACITY 3.5 L (0.9 gal.)
- WHEELBASE 1080mm (42.5 in.)
- GROUND CLEARANCE 250mm (9.8 in.)
- SEAT HEIGHT 685.8mm (27 in.)
- WEIGHT, NO FUEL 112 lbs.
- SUSPENSION:
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