



Lightweight riders will be able to slide the ATC around, but it really doesn't have the power to do it with ease. Four speeds and a more free-revving engine make the ATC70 the best bet for the bigger rider.



## HONDA ATC70

ENGINE TYPE ..... 4-stroke  
BORE AND STROKE ..... 47.0mm x 41.4mm  
DISPLACEMENT ..... 72cc  
CARBURETOR ..... 13mm Keihin  
IGNITION ..... Flywheel magneto  
STARTER ..... Recoil  
TRANSMISSION ..... 4-speed  
CLUTCH ..... Automatic/centrifugal  
FUEL TANK CAPACITY ..... 1.1 gal.  
WHEELBASE ..... 895mm (35.2 in.)

GROUND CLEARANCE ..... 87mm (3.3 in.)  
SEAT HEIGHT ..... 570mm (22.4 in.)  
CLAIMED WEIGHT ..... 169.8 lbs.  
TIRES ..... 16 x 8-7 Ohtsu  
BRAKES ..... Rear drum only  
APPROXIMATE RETAIL PRICE ..... \$648  
DISTRIBUTOR:  
American Honda Motor Co.  
100 W. Alondra Blvd.  
Gardena, CA 90247

# SMALL W

## Starting out on

By the short-legged

**D**irt biking couples with kids know that their children are going to learn how to ride someday. It is an indisputable fact of life—if even one person in a family rides now and then, they're all going to want to do it someday. The problem is when, or better yet, how old. Even a Yamaha YZinger demands a certain amount of leg length in order to control, not to mention some amount of coordination in order to stay upright. You can put training wheels on a YZinger, but it's not exactly the hot setup.

The best idea is to let the kids learn about things like throttle control and braking on something with three wheels. At least with a three-wheeler there's no danger of falling over when stopped to consider the next obstacle. And it just so happens that there are now two kid-sized three-wheelers available that are guaranteed to fire up anybody less than ten years old, and will do so without scaring the parents half to death.

### SUZUKI ALT50

The Suzuki ALT50 is an absolutely pint-sized three-wheeler. This thing is so small, you're liable to trip over it in a darkened garage and think that you just stepped on a roller skate. The seat height is just 18½ inches, and if you subtract the distance between the footpegs and the ground—about five inches—you can see that a 13-inch inseam is all it takes to straddle one. If you've got a four-year-old with an urge to gas it, this is the machine that'll do the job.

The ALT uses a 50cc engine to move it around, and in stock form, it comes supplied with a restrictor plate in the exhaust system that cuts the power down to just shy of nil. This is just the ticket for the complete beginner, because with the restrictor in place, the ALT will barely pull its own weight. Once the rider gains a little more experience, the plate can be removed. At that point, the hole in the plate can be drilled larger and then reinstalled to make the trike slightly faster, or simply left out so all the power can be tapped. Without the plate, the 90-pound three-wheeler will wheelie around just like the big ones.

Two more safety features are worthy of note. There is a safety starter mechanism on board that will only allow the engine to be started with the parking brake locked on. This way there's no chance that Tiny



## WONDERS three wheels

Staff of DIRT BIKE

Tim will fire it up with the throttle wide open and use his sister for a berm. And, if he's still a little terror, there is a handy leash attached to the back of the ALT that connects to a plug-type kill switch. Leash in hand, you can walk along behind, and if things start getting too radical, you can pull the plug on the little beast.

Operation of controls is simplified by lack of same—there are only two, throttle and brake. The clutch is centrifugal, and therefore automatic, and the single rear brake stops both rear wheels with little fuss. The fuel tank holds just under a half gallon of gas, and with oil in the injector tank and the transmission full, the ALT weighs in at just under 100 pounds.

Everything on the ALT has been designed with safety for small fry in mind. Even the front axle parts are rubber covered to prevent gouging of tiny legs. The whole unit has been put together for the youngest of rank amateurs, and we think Suzuki hit the nail right on the head. This is the perfect learning machine for kids.

### HONDA ATC70

Once they get a little more experience, you can move them up to an ATC70. The ATC sits four inches higher than the ALT, weighs about 70 pounds more, and has considerably more horsepower out of the box. Obviously, the ATC is still built for kids, but for bigger kids than the ALT.

This is not to say that the ATC isn't a good learning tool. It all depends on the size of the child in question. Anyone over 40 inches tall is liable to feel a little cramped on the ALT, which makes the Honda the best alternative. If an inexperienced rider is going to learn on the Honda, the throttle assembly can be adjusted to limit the maximum throttle opening and keep the speed down to a reasonable level.

Bigger kids will also appreciate the fact that there is a four-speed transmission on the Honda. There is no clutch to worry about, being automatic, and the shift pattern is one up and three down—backwards to us, true, but the kids won't mind. If more power is necessary in the future, hop-up kits abound for the tiny Honda.

The four-stroke powerplant puts out plenty of *oomph* for such a little machine, and the ATC has no problem chugging up small hills. With a 1.1-gallon tank, there is enough fuel on hand for hours of bouncing merrily around the yard.



Our microscopic test rider makes a failed attempt to pitch 'er sideways. The ALT will do a wheelie if the washer is removed from the exhaust. Even our least experienced testers said it was more fun in the "high-performance" mode.



### SUZUKI ALT50

ENGINE TYPE .....	2-stroke	GROUND CLEARANCE .....	80mm (3.1 in.)
BORE AND STROKE .....	41.0mm x 37.8mm	SEAT HEIGHT .....	470mm (18.5 in.)
DISPLACEMENT .....	49cc	CLAIMED WEIGHT .....	90 lbs.
CARBURETOR .....	12mm Mikuni	TIRES .....	145/70-6 Swallow
IGNITION .....	CDI	BRAKES .....	Rear drum only
STARTER .....	Recoil	APPROXIMATE RETAIL PRICE .....	\$499
TRANSMISSION .....	Single speed	DISTRIBUTOR:	
CLUTCH .....	Automatic/centrifugal	U.S. Suzuki Motor Corp.	
FUEL TANK CAPACITY .....	0.4 gal.	3251 E. Imperial Hwy.	
WHEELBASE .....	725mm (28.5 in.)	Brea, CA 92621	



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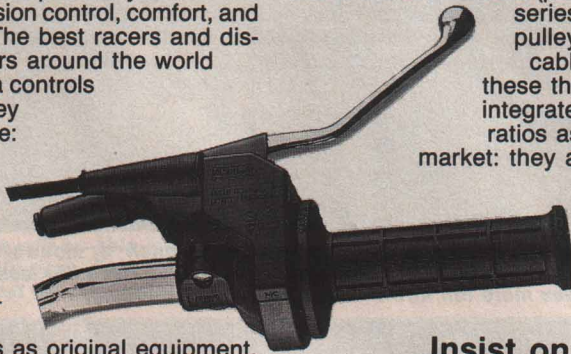
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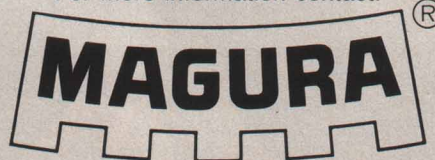
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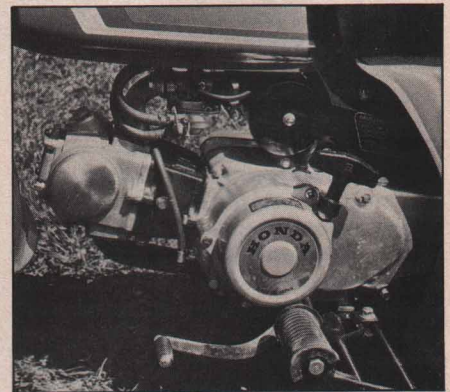
**SUZUKI ALT50/  
HONDA ATC70**



The ALT50 engine uses a washer in the exhaust pipe to limit power output. With the washer in it makes less power than a cheap lawn mower.

**TRYING THEM OUT**

The ALT is more or less a putt-around vehicle. The tires are small, and as a result the ride is a little on the rough side, although at the speeds the small Suzuki is capable of there will be no complaints from the lightweight riders. Even though it looks like it should be able to turn around itself, a few of our mini testers complained the ALT should be able to turn a little tighter. Go-fasters that they are, all were happier with the restrictor completely removed.



The ATC70 makes more power and uses more gears than the ALT, and is more suited to a larger child.

The Honda delivers a more comfortable ride, due in part to the larger tires, and the ATC's turning radius was tighter, much to the delight of the testers. Naturally, the Honda will pull a faster top speed than the ALT (which has only a single-speed transmission), so a little discretion should be used in planning *who* gets to ride *what*.

Both machines are small enough to fit in the trunk of your car, cheap enough to keep you out of hock, and much more fun than a day at the petting zoo. Whether your kids are just learning or fast becoming the next Bob Hannah, the ALT50 and ATC70 are both great machines on which to learn the joys of off-road. Now you have no more excuses for leaving them home. □

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