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SPECIAL!**

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KTM 495 · M-STAR 250 · WR400 & MORE!**

DIRT BIKE

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# DIRT BIKE

JUNE  
1984

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5 SECONDS A LAP:  
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M-STAR  
250!**

**EXCLUSIVE!**



**KDX  
250:  
WILL IT  
OUTRUN  
THE 200?**



**HUSKY'S WILD NEW  
WATER-COOLED  
ENDURO WEAPON!**

**KAWASAKI HOP-UP**

ISSN0364-1546



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# DIRT BIKE

JUNE 1984 VOLUME 14, NO. 6



CAGIVA 200



KTM 495



HUSKY 400WR



XT600



M-STAR 250



CR60



ATC250



KDX250



YZ125



ATLANTA SX

**ON THE COVER:**—The scope of our coverage this month is reflected in the diversity of our cover subjects. Clockwise, from top left: Bailey and Barnett dragging feet in Atlanta; Jim Holley aviates the YZ125 at Indian Dunes; Clipper on the KDX250 in the Great Valencia Swamp; Webb digging holes in Gorman on the Husky WR400; and Ron Haase logging solo time at Pismo. Photos by Phil Beckman, Paul Clipper, and Tom Webb; color separation by Valley Film.

**DIRT BIKE** Magazine, ISSN 0364-1546 (June '84) is published by Daisy/Hi-Torque Publishing Company, Inc., with editorial offices at 10600 Sepulveda Boulevard, Mission Hills, California 91345. Subscriptions \$14.98 for 12 issues (one year). Canada add \$4 per year and all other foreign add \$5 per year for additional postage. Copyright © 1984 by Daisy/Hi-Torque Publishing Company, Inc. All rights reserved. Nothing in this magazine may be reprinted in whole or in part, by mimeograph or any other means, without the express permission of the publisher. Contributors: Photographic submissions must be 5x7 or 8x10 glossy black and white, or 35mm and larger color slides. Please mark each photo with owner's name and address. Manuscripts should be typewritten. Unsolicited contributions, manuscripts, photographs and illustrations must be accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope. Unless special arrangements are made in advance, all published material becomes the sole property of Daisy/Hi-Torque Publishing Company, Inc. The publisher does not assume responsibility for unsolicited material. Second class postage paid at San Fernando, California 91340, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to **DIRT BIKE** Magazine, P.O. Box 9502, Mission Hills, California 91345-9502.

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**WARNING:** Much of the action depicted in this magazine is potentially dangerous. Virtually all of the riders seen in our photos are experienced experts or professionals. Do not attempt to duplicate any stunts that are beyond your own capabilities. Always wear the appropriate safety gear.



# TREE TORQUER

*Is no news good news?*

*By the Staff of DIRT BIKE*

The only real news on the KDX250 this year is hardly any news at all. Not too much more than detail changes alter the spec sheet of the '84 KDX. Considering how much we liked the '83 model, this may or may not be a bad sign. For the clear picture, though, we need to look at the overall manners of the KDX.

## POWER PUMPING

The KDX engine is very easy to adapt to. The power delivery is very strong right off bottom revs, and the best power can be found in the mid-range. Not a bit of clutch abuse is necessary—when you ease out the lever, the bike will grunt forward. More throttle twisting will immediately produce wheelspin, unless you happen to be sitting on perfect traction.

The power builds smoothly until about halfway to maximum revs, when the mid-range takes over, delivering its own rush to spin the rear wheel. The KDX will build a reasonable amount of power up to the rev limit, but short-shifting is the best way to ride this bike. Speaking of shifting, gear changing on the KDX is first-rate. Shifter throw is just the right length, and every engagement is smooth, up or down.

Incidentally, this engine design has remained the same since 1982. If it still works, why change it? The only major change we would ask for is a bit more internal detail work to rid the 250 of some of its annoying vibration.


## SLIDERS AND SHAFTS

The KDX forks are still on the soft side—one of our major complaints on the '83. If you take care to set the oil level correctly, they will work well in tight woods with smooth trails. If you ride in major bumpiness, you will want the stiffer Kawasaki accessory springs.

Grease fittings have found their way on to the "dogbone" bolts in the Uni-Trak rear end, and that is just about the only major change we can note. Four-position rebound damping adjustment is still provided—position number two is fine with a new KDX, but when the shock breaks in, you will need to bump it up to number three. There is no compression damping adjustment on this shock.

Both ends take the bumps quite well, with the back end doing a better job than the front in the rough. We have always been fans of the Suzuki Full Floater suspension, but the latest versions of the Uni-Trak are doing a decent job of changing our minds.

With the front end set up to match the



*The Kawasaki is a virtual submarine, just as long as you don't drill holes in the airbox.*





Arai

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BERNE



# KAWASAKI KDX250B4

rear (higher oil level and/or stiffer fork springs), the KDX handles... well, just like a KDX. Good straight-line stability and very accurate, neutral turning. Point that front wheel at the line you want, and it will split it right down the middle. Very good manners.

## GRIBE DEPARTMENT

Our test bike came delivered with far too much vibration for our tastes. The Kawasakis have always been shakers, but after years of producing the same bike, you'd think they would try to smooth things up some. Keeping the motor mounts tight will keep it down to a minimum, but it seems that a little more engine balancing is necessary here.

Maybe it's the extra weight of the 250, the seating position, or just a case of our being spoiled, but the KDX250 is *not* a KDX200 with more torque, and that is a shame. The 200 is light and nimble and easy to flick around, while the 250 feels a little more ponderous and slower to react. The 250 has more torque, it's true, but the 200 feels faster when you ride it. If they could only put a 250 barrel on the 200...

## BITS AND PIECES

Finally, Kawasaki is using standard hex main jets rather than the slotted jets of old. Now you can get a main jet at practically any bike shop in the world. Aside from this and a needle setting one position richer, there has been no change to the carburetion.

A new aluminum shift lever graces the left side of the bike, and the hand levers have been redesigned and made thicker.

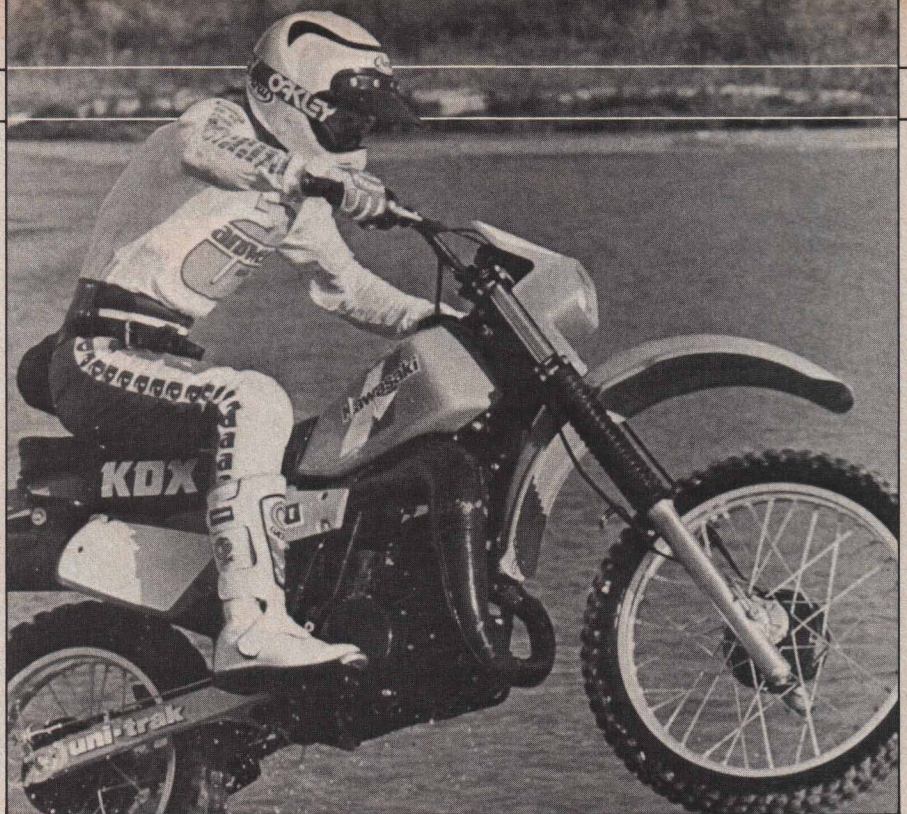
Straight-pull spokes have made their debut on the rear wheel—a design stolen from the motocrossers, and a stronger rear wheel, to boot. Softer chain rollers guide the chain this year, producing less racket and lasting longer.

Both of the KDXs need a new front brake. We didn't like the softness of the 200's front stopper, but on a light bike it is manageable. With the extra bulk of the 250, it is not near enough. Even extending the front brake arm by half an inch would help. The rear brake is good, but it would feel a lot better if it weren't doing all the stopping.

## SUMMING UP

The KDX250 is still a good bike. You have to stay on top of the vibration situation, and it does demand time spent on setting up the suspension. But, once it's made to fit, it will do a good job—it handles well, soaks up bumps very smoothly, is comfortable and not *too* heavy, and it has enough power to get you through the woods at a smart clip.

Its only major problem is living in the shadow of its little brother. The KDX200 can grunt through just about every kind of gnarliness the 250 can—and do it with less weight and quicker handling. If you *must* have a 250, the KDX250 can make you happy. If you have any doubts at all, test it against a 200. You may be very surprised. □



In the upper gears, the KDX is capable of great speed, but a double-leading shoe front brake would help speed up the stopping process.



## KAWASAKI KDX250B4

Engine type	Reed valve, 2-stroke
Bore and stroke	70.0mm x 64.9mm
Displacement	249cc
Carburetion	36mm Mikuni
Factory jetting:	
Main jet	320
Needle jet	R-6
Jet needle	6FJ42-2
Pilot jet	45
Slide number	3.0
Fuel tank capacity	12.5 L (3.3 gals.)
Lubrication	Pre-mix
Gearbox ratios:	
1	2.583:1
2	1.800:1
3	1.350:1
4	1.100:1
5	0.909:1
6	0.777:1
Gearing, front/rear	14/52
Ignition	CDI
Recommended spark plug	NGK B8ES
Silencer/spark arrester	Yes/yes
Wheelbase	1475mm (58.07 in.)
Ground clearance	340mm (13.39 in.)
Seat height	939mm (37.0 in.)
Rake/trail	29°/127mm (5.0 in.)

Weight, wet, no fuel ..... 237 lbs.

### Tire size and type:

Front ..... Dunlop 3.00 x 21  
Rear ..... Dunlop 5.10 x 18

### Suspension, type and travel:

Front ..... 38mm Kayaba, 260mm (10.24 in.)  
Rear ..... Uni-Trak, 270mm (10.6 in.)

Intended use ..... Off-road, enduro

Country of origin ..... Japan

Retail price, approx. .... \$2059

### Distributor:

Kawasaki Motors Corp., USA  
2009 E. Edinger Ave.  
Santa Ana, CA 92705

### Overall rating of bike, keeping intended use in mind:

Handling ..... Very good  
Front suspension ..... Good  
Rear suspension ..... Very good  
Power ..... Good  
Cost ..... Good  
Attention to detail ..... Good  
Effectiveness, stone stock ..... Good

This rating system is included to aid in comparison of bikes in the same displacement and intended-use categories. Comparing the ratings of two dissimilar machines is a meaningless exercise in futility.