

IND
34355

FUTURE SHOCK: KAWASAKI KX 125

APRIL 1980

\$1.25

UK60p

DIRT BIKE

HONDA XR 200: SUBTLE STROKER

BEAT THE CLOCK! ENDURO TRICKS

KTM 175: THE MONEY MACHINE



BIZARRE BIKES FROM EUROPE—PAGE 18

SUZUKI RACE READY RM 250T

ISSN 0364-1544



70989 34355



DIRT BIKE

APRIL 1980

VOLUME 10, NO. 4



Improving the Breed
Page 49

DEPARTMENTS

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 TABLE OF CONTENTS
This is starting to get a little silly | 12 NEW PRODUCTS
Chimes, bells, and whistles |
| 5 FROM THE SADDLE
Gift catalog for the weird | 14 MISTER KNOW-IT-ALL
Lies, insults, and abuse |
| 6 LAST OVER
Ten steps to incompetence | 16 RIDERS WRITE
Praise, prose, and paranoia |
| 8 BITS AND PIECES
News, rumors, and gossip | 72 CRASH AND BURN
Anatomy of a header |

ON THE COVER: — Jim Weinert gets sideways on the DB KX 125. For a complete test see page 44. (Paul Clipper photo.)

TESTS

- 22 ITALJET M5C BRAVE**
More mini madness
- 26 KTM 175 MC80**
The total enduro
- 38 SUZUKI RM250T**
Love it or leave it
- 44 KAWASAKI KX145 A-6**
Future shock
- 49 HONDA XR200**
Little red gets bigger

FEATURES

- 18 EUROPEAN EXOTICA**
Try to find your local dealer
- 30 THE KNEE**
Read it and wince
- 35 LEGAL UPDATE**
A message from the Duck
- 56 ENDURO BASICS**
Timekeeping from A to D
- 58 THE MX TAPES**
The Professor goes video

DIRT BIKE ISSN 0364-1546 (Apr. '80) is published monthly by Daisy/Hi-Torque Publishing Co., Inc., with editorial offices at 16200 Ventura Blvd., Encino, California 91436. Subscriptions \$9.98 for 12 issues (one year). Foreign subscriptions add \$3 per year and Canada \$2 per year for additional postage. Copyright ©1980 by Daisy/Hi-Torque Publishing Co., Inc. All rights reserved. Nothing in this magazine may be reprinted in whole or in part 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 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 Co., Inc. The publisher does not assume responsibility for unsolicited material. Second class postage paid at Van Nuys, California 91408, and at additional mailing offices. **DIRT BIKE**, P.O. Box 317, Encino, California 91316.

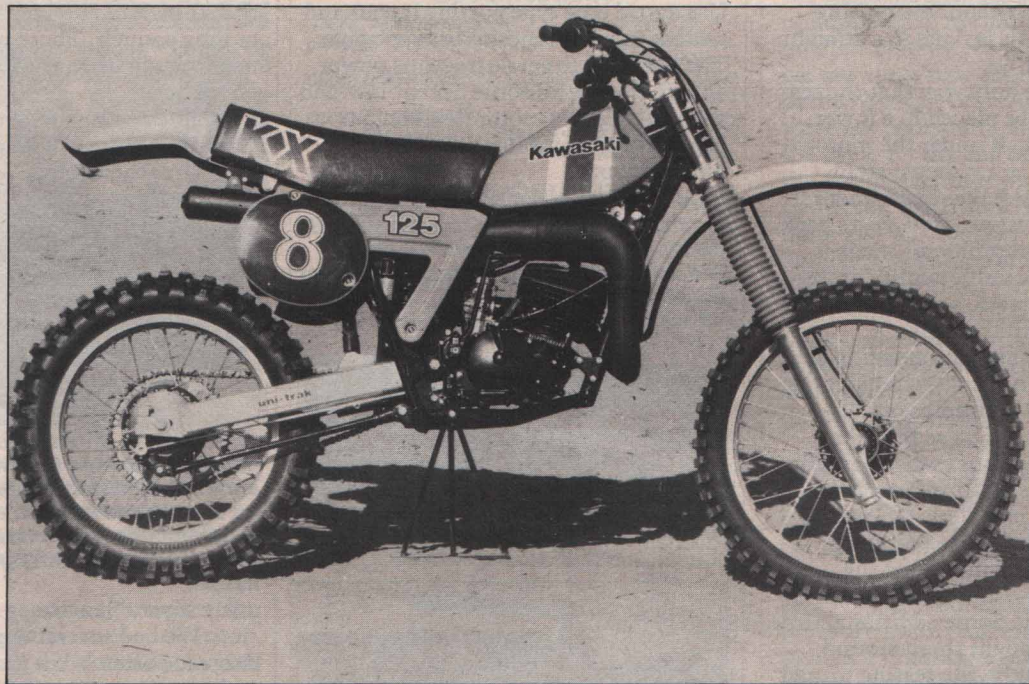


KAWASAKI KX 125 A6

FUTURE SHOCK?

Long arm inspection

By the Editors of Dirt Bike



Kawasaki is a daring company, unafraid to experiment with new ideas and concepts. Their engineers seem to take pride in being different. Copy? No way. They actually seem to go out of their way, when often, it might be to their advantage to follow the mainstream of technology.

Occasionally, this go-for-broke attitude results in a marvelous machine. Bear witness to the Mighty Z bike that set a new standard in the super bike field. In fact, Kawasaki created the super bike.

Their mistakes, while few, have been noteworthy. Recall, if you will, the attempt by the Big K to field a team of bikes for the Six Days held in the USA. They were the trickiest things to ever come down the pike. This trickiness crumpled the team effort and left the riders begging for "ordinary bikes." Bikes that wouldn't break under them. Tested designs. Proven hardware.

Well, now... what do we have here? The KX125 A-6 is probably the strangest looking bird to drop out of the technological sky in a decade. It's a single shock rear suspension, but, un-

Left: — Jimmy Weinert put in some hot laps on the new Uni-Trak.

like the Yamaha mono, the KX has its shock low, vertical and in the center of the bike. A long swingarm dangles nakedly to the rear, like some sort of massive aluminum divining rod.

As you look at it, the mind reels off center, and you say to yourself, "It can't work."

Wrong.

Not only does it work, but it works better than anything else we've tested on a motocross bike to date. In fact, we must even go so far as to suggest that this just might be the new wave. The Future Shock.

It makes sense. When one weighs the single shock concept against the double shock approach, the complications of two shocks and their attendant limitations are unarguable.

First off, you have to find someplace to put the damned things. This means a wide rear section and clearance problems for everything from the chain to the exhaust pipe. Often, as with the new Suzukis, you end up with a rear section wide enough to irritate the rider when he's standing up with his weight back.

Another very real problem is matching the action of the two shocks. If

they're not ultra-close in both compression and rebound damping, the shocks can work *against* each other and turn the machine into an evil device over the bumps.

Additional double shock problems are cost (two units, right?), weight, placement and load transference. So, you might ask, why hasn't everyone and his mother gone to the single shock approach long ago?

Fair question.

Consider the early Yamahas, and the development problems they've experienced. Too often, the location of the mono unit (above the engine) has resulted in a heavy feeling bike, even if the total weight of the bike was in the ball park. Put an extra ten pounds of weight at the three-foot level and you can feel it protesting every direction change with a vengeance.

It was not until the G models (the 1980 bikes) that Yamaha worked to get the weight of the mono unit down lower. Afd, if you bothered to read the March issue of DB, you learned that the new, lowered mono was, indeed, the answer.

The Uni-Trak, we feel, is an even better answer. It has all the advantages

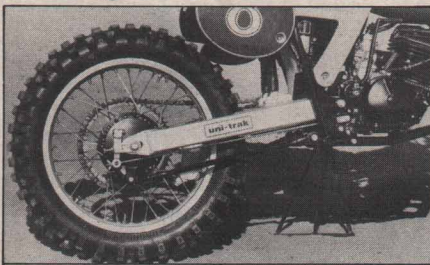
of the mono, with virtually none of the drawbacks. Even the subject of weight changes when the Uni-Trak is discussed. Most of the test riders remarked that the KX125 was very light, yet a glance at the incredibly accurate Dirt Bike Scales (plus or minus .001 of a ton) indicate that the KX registers at 201 dry. Several 125s are lighter and even a few 250s come close to this mark, yet the universal feedback we got was that the KX "felt light."

This absolutely must be due to the position of the mass of the rear suspension, because just about everything else on the chassis is done in a straightforward manner.

Just about the only way that the rear suspension can be placed in a lower position is to slip it under the motor and use a lever bar ratchet system. We've seen an Al Baker experimental bike with this system a few years back, but the attendant problems made it impractical. The vulnerability of the shock and the bizarre stresses created hassles not worth the gain.

All theories aside, one amazing fact remains: The Uni-Trak system works. We were able to hit bumps on the KX125 as hard and fast as the bike would go and the usual wrist-pounding and spine-shortening impacts never got through to the rider. This feel was so plush that several of the test riders stated that they couldn't feel the ground, or had no idea what the rear wheel was doing. Some additional time in the saddle brought them around, and, rather quickly, the testing turned into rant-and-rave sessions about the Uni-Trak.

Let's digress for a moment. You

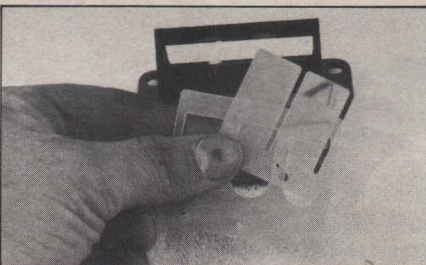
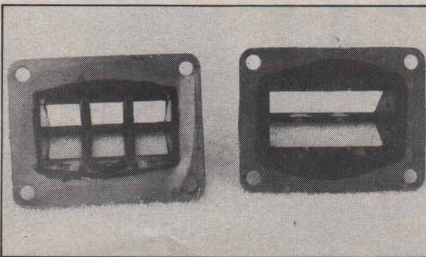


Two close looks at the radically new Uni-Trak rear end. The swingarm is a massive aluminum structure. The remote reservoir for the huge KYB shock can be seen nestled behind the number plate. A nifty nylon block serves as a very quiet and slippery chain guide. It'll also flex, rather than break, like a conventional metal guide.

know the old rule about jetting a bike? "Only make one change at a time." That rule applies to more than jetting. It's a common sense approach when a new machine is developed. Apparently, the Kawasaki engineers have an abundance of confidence and feel they can take chances in more than one area—and get away with it.

This has been a mistake, we feel, on the KX125 A-6. While the Uni-Trak is a runaway success, the approach to the engine left us cold. As we understand it, the idea behind the motor was this: Use a road race type porting layout and tie this in with a motocross type pipe. The goal was to get outrageous power at high rpm, with some decent low-end snap to keep the motor flexible. On paper, this sounds logical. In practice, it didn't work.

Here's the stock reed cage next to the modified reed cage. As you can see, all we did was cut the ribs out of the way and install the Boyesen reeds in place of the stockers.



A close look at the Boyesen reeds shows thin reeds perched on top of the thicker reeds. The small reeds measure .01 inches, while the big reeds hit .027 inches.

Our test KX125 felt down on power compared to the other bikes in its class. In fact, it felt down on power compared to last year's motor. This was doubly distressing to our test riders, because, to a man, they had liked the torque engine in the 1979 model. The 1979 engine had excellent low-end for a 125 and pulled like an ox at mid-range. At peak revs, it gave away only a little to the King of the 1979 Hill—the Suzuki RM125.

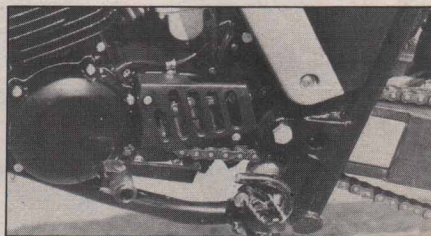
Here's the way the 1980 engine felt to us. The KX would not load up or blubber down low and had a fair amount of pulling power right at the bottom, but not enough to allow the rider to short shift the bike. In other words, it had enough to keep from falling on its face and the engine would lug, but it would not accelerate com-

petitively next to another 125 racer.

Right when most 125s start to pull at mid-range, the KX125 would hesitate and the rpm would build very slowly. The mid-range was there and it was smooth, but the time factor crippled it. On a big bike, a slow buildup of rpm is a useful thing... on a 125, it means coming out of a turn and losing ground to other bikes.

If there was a big punch at the top, perhaps all of the aforementioned could have been shined-on and excused, but the snap at higher revs that the KX *did* deliver was not enough or long enough. There was a brief surge near the top, then the KX simply ran out of beans.

What this translated to in real world terms was this: In a drag race to the first turn, the KX125 A-6 will give



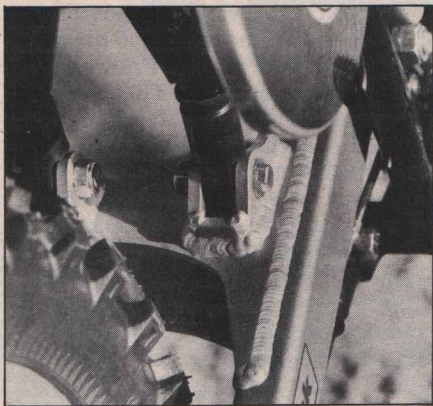
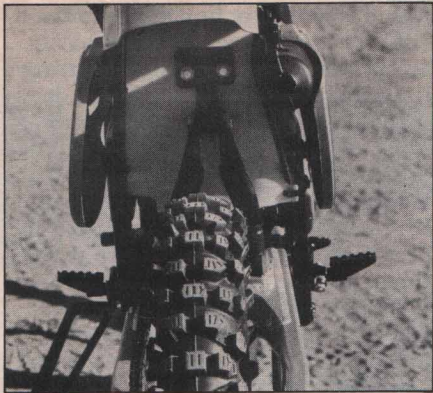
Weak spot in the design: a fairly long distance between the swingarm pivot and the countershaft sprocket means a lot of variation in chain tension as the wheel moves up and down. The closer these two points are together, the less hassle.

away several lengths to the competition. We had several opportunities to drag race other bikes against the KX and even a very tired 1980 RM125 with clapped-out rings easily pulled the KX.

We spent some time with the KX and tore it down to see if we could find the problem. A degree wheel was affixed to the crank and we checked the locations of the ports. Here's where we found some numbers that confused us. The exhaust port, for example, opened too soon. We measured 80 degrees from Top Dead Center. Last year's motor had the exhaust port cracking open at about 84 degrees from TDC. Quite a difference.

Also, the main transfers and auxiliary transfers appeared too low. Once we got the motor apart, we examined the reeds and found them to be very thin, flexible units. The reeds measured out to a bit over .015-inch. When you consider that Yamaha reeds are .028-inch thick, you can see how thin the KX reeds are.

Thin reeds have advantages and disadvantages. The thin design and flexibility mean that the reeds will open at a very low pressure drop, which in turn means good response at low revs. However, thin reeds will not work well at higher rpms and also tend to get a bit confused and to flutter when the engine is working at its hardest. When a



The lever bars on the Uni-Trak are slightly offset to the right side of the bike to allow for chain clearance. Regular maintenance is a must to keep all of these pivoting joints working smoothly.

reed flutters, it gets out of synch with the pulses, and performance suffers.

For this reason, we consulted Eyvind Boyesen, the reed expert, and got some answers. He feels that a single reed just cannot do the job in a high performance engine, hence the existence of the patented dual petal reed. In the dual reed, a thin reed rides on top of a thick reed. The thin one will open easily under a low pressure drop and the thick one will take over at the higher revs. This gives the benefits of good low air speed response, as well as no flutter at high speeds.

We also trimmed the ribs out of the stock KX125 reed cage to get a superior air flow. One large hole will flow more than three small holes of the same area. Our experiments brought some fresh life into the KX125.

While still not as fast as an RM125 or a CR125 Honda, our lightly modified KX125 was able to turn competitive lap times and was able to come out of most corners one gear higher than the stock bike. This makes an appreciable difference in the fiercely competitive 125 class—at all levels.

Other than the reed and reed cage modification, we also made a thinner base gasket for our bike and sanded the head gasket down on a sheet of plate glass to bring the compression ratio up to 7.5 to 1 from 7.0 to 1. We used 320

grit with a light oil for the sanding and took off about .010 in less than an hour's worth of sanding.

This brought our total investment for modifications up to less than \$25. Not bad. To get the reeds, which we feel are a must, here are some addresses you might need:

LIMANTOUR CORP.
4539 Hamilton Blvd.
Allentown, Pennsylvania 18103

KAWASAKI KX125 A-6 Specifications

NAME AND MODEL	Kawasaki KX125 A-6
ENGINE TYPE	Two-stroke, reed-valve, single cylinder
BORE & STROKE	56.0x50.6mm (2.20x1.99 inches)
DISPLACEMENT	124cc (7.56 cubic inches)
HORSEPOWER (CLAIMED BY FACTORY)	26 horsepower at 10,750 rpm
CARBURETION	32mm Mikuni
FACTORY RECOMMENDED JETTING:	
MAIN JET	147.5R
NEEDLE JET	Q-4
JET NEEDLE	6F21-2
PILOT JET	50
SLIDE NUMBER	2.0
RECOMMENDED GASOLINE	Premium
RECOMMENDED OIL (MFR.)	Kawasaki two-stroke oil
FUEL TANK CAPACITY	8.0 liters (2.1 gallons)
FUEL TANK MATERIAL	Plastic
GAS/OIL RATIO	20:1
LUBRICATION	Pre-mix
AIR FILTRATION	Oiled foam in air box
CLUTCH TYPE	Wet, multi-plate
TRANSMISSION	Six-speed
GEAR BOX RATIOS:	
1	2.14 (30/14)
2	1.67 (30/18)
3	1.33 (24/18)
4	1.15 (23/20)
5	1.00 (21/21)
6	0.91 (20/22)
GEARING, FRONT/REAR	12/52
IGNITION	Electronic CDI
PRIMARY KICK SYSTEM?	Yes
RECOMMENDED SPARK PLUG	NGK B9EV
SILENCER/QUALITY	Average noise for racer
EXHAUST SYSTEM	High pipe, right side
FRAME, TYPE	Single downtube, split cradle, chrome moly
WHEELBASE	1470mm (57.9 inches)
GROUND CLEARANCE	330mm (13.0 inches)
SEAT HEIGHT AT TANK	970mm (37.1 inches)
STEERING HEAD ANGLE	28 degrees
TRAIL	120mm (4.72 inches)
WEIGHT WITH ONE GALLON GAS.	211.5 pounds (dry 201 pounds)
RIM MATERIAL	Aluminum alloy
TIRE SIZES:	
FRONT	3.00x21 4PR knobby
REAR	4.00x18 4PR knobby
SUSPENSION:	
FRONT, TYPE AND TRAVEL	KYB telescopic, forward axle 280mm (11.0 inches)
REAR, TYPE AND TRAVEL	Uni-Trak, single shock 280mm (11.0 inches)
INTENDED USE, MFR.	Motocross, off-road racing
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	Japan
PRICE, APPROX.	\$1369
PARTS PRICES, HIGH WEAR ITEMS:	
PISTON	\$19.35
RINGS ONLY	\$10.20
CYLINDER	\$176.90
SHIFT LEVER	\$11.52
BRAKE PEDAL	\$16.40
FRONT SPROCKET	\$10.62
DISTRIBUTOR:	
Kawasaki Motor Corp., U.S.A.	
2009 E. Edinger Ave.	
Santa Ana, California 92705	
OVERALL RATING, FROM 0 TO 100, VARIOUS CATEGORIES, KEEPING INTENDED USE OF MACHINE IN MIND:	
HANDLING	98
SUSPENSION	99
POWER	75
COST	85
ATTENTION TO DETAIL	90
EFFECTIVENESS, STONE STOCK	85

L.O.P.

2010 Washington St.
Waukegan, Illinois 60085

J.T. RACING

303 W. 35th St.

National City, California 92050

(714)427-0871

PRICE:—\$ 25.95

All that aside, how does it work?

One of the reasons we took the extra time to search for power in the KX is that the bike handled so well. In fact, on a genuinely nasty track, even with the standard untouched motor, the KX is competitive in the Novice and Intermediate classes. At Sunrise Cycle Park, we saw three new KX125s on the line in the Novice event. At the start, all three got poor starts, near the back of the pack. By the end of the moto, all the green machines were running one-two-three. Still, Sunrise is a real MX track and was rougher than usual that Sunday. On a smooth track, a stock KX125 A-6 will get pulled badly on every smooth straightaway. When the track is chewed to bits, loaded with chuckholes, laced with stutter bumps and rutted to the max, the KX will flex its Uni-Trak muscles.

Backing up the rear end is a set of forks that we've ignored until this point. If anything, the forks on the new KX are the equal to the revolutionary Uni-Trak at the rear. These KYB (made for Kawasaki) units are excellent in every respect. For a 125, the 38mm tubes are more than enough. Travel is right at 11 inches, matching the 11 inches of the Uni-Trak rear suspension.

Square bumps didn't seem to bother the forks and we could only bottom them when slamming the front end down hard in a big-eye front wheel landing. As with all new generation KYB forks, the Kawasaki units have a wide range of adjustability with air pressure, oil level and oil viscosities. While the manual calls for four to five psi pressure, we like the KX just fine with no pressure whatsoever. Some of our riders preferred a few pounds, but most bled the air caps after a riding session to retain the softness.

Layout and feel

At first, the rearward position of the pegs and the way-back bars tend to throw a rider off. However, the KX125 is a sit-down bike. Sure, you have to stand up for the gruesome stuff, but most ordinary bumps are taken quite comfortably with the butt planted in the saddle. We know this is a contradiction of everything you've ever heard, but somehow, the KX is happy to have the rider relaxing.

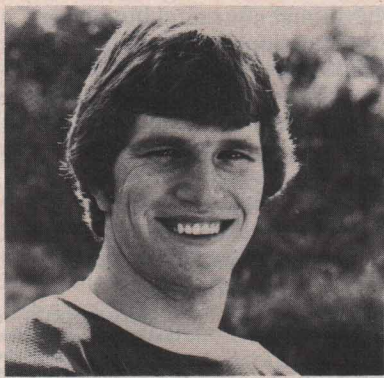
With the forward pegs, the rider can assume one of two positions when riding the KX: He can ride straight-armed with his weight well back,

Get PROtection Like...



JIMMY WEINERT

Jammin' Jimmy... an M-X legend in U.S. Moto-Cross ... 500 National Champion twice! Winner of every form of M-X racing! Seven seasons with Kawasaki as their No. 1 U.S. racer! This year the "Jammer" will be revving-up the 125cc circuit and blowin' the top off the domes! The "Jammer's" choice of boots ... Hi-Point!



JIMMY ELLIS

"Captain Cobalt", the team leader of PDQ ... the potent vitamin team that strikes fear into the factory riders! The "Captains" winner of major Supercrosses and was runner up to the National 250cc title! Jimmy will be WFO'ing the PDQ Yamahas on the National circuits in '80. The "Captains" choice of racing boots ... Hi-Point!

"The Choice of Champions"

The "Jammer" and "Captain" won't agree on who's going to win a race, but, both agree on the choice of racing boots. They rely on Hi-Point to give them the protection, performance and comfort they need to win the big ones.

If you race or ride in the dirt, you should require the same PROtection. Hi-Point boots come in sizes 5-13, plus 1/2 sizes in M-X or cleated Enduro style soles. Also Mini M-X boots in size 1-7. See your Hi-Point Dealer and ride PROTECTED.

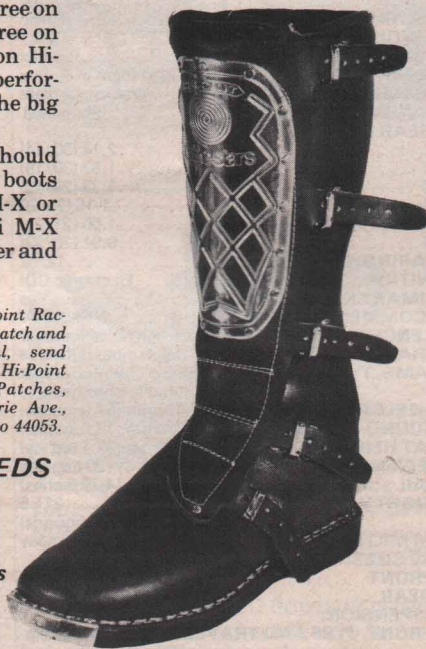


For a Hi-Point Racing Jersey patch and visor decal, send \$1.00 to: Hi-Point Racing Patches, 3709 W. Erie Ave., Lorain, Ohio 44053.

ALL YOUR COMPETITION NEEDS ARE AS CLOSE AS YOUR HI-POINT DEALER



Hi-Point Racing Products
3709 W. Erie Ave., Lorain, OH
P. O. Box 2327, Amarillo, TX
9604 Oates Dr., Sacramento, CA



which is wrong, or he can ride forward, with the arms loose, which is the hot set-up. With the weight back, getting to a standing position is a hassle, demanding a tug on the bars to get up. Most awkward.

With the weight forward on the saddle, the rider can lower his knees, tilt the hips forward and ease up on the pegs. This places the bars close to the thighs and the arms in a slightly downward attitude. Tall riders will have trouble adapting to the layout of the Kwacker, and short riders—in general—will have no trouble at all. One problem with this forward body position is that the toes of the rider tend to point downward more than on a more conventional laid-out bike. This means that if care is not taken, feet can be pulled under the pegs when the bike is bottomed over bad bumps. Some riders will want lower, flatter bars on the KX, like those on the older Husqvarnas.

Both foot controls are easy to reach without lifting off from the peg. The shift lever is a super solid-looking folding tipped unit that appears indestructible. Both hand levers are the old-fashioned, straight-shaped, long-legged types. Sun Lines, or some type of shorty levers should be considered. By now everyone knows that. Or should.

Because of the Uni-Trak design, the rear section of the KX is narrow. No side panels bulge out to interfere with the standing position of the rider. The tank/saddle juncture flows smoothly together and moving from front to back presents no problem. Though tall, the KX settles a bit with a rider in the saddle. Riders under 5'8" will have a problem getting a leg over the saddle. Such is life.

Bits and pieces

Shifting on the new KX was smooth and delightful. If memory serves us correctly, we had a case of the flying agonies with the 1979 model. Progress. We were able to run through the gears—up or down—without the clutch.

As delivered, we felt the top end of the KX was not enough. It barely exceeded 50 miles per hour in sixth gear. Yet, gearing the bike up would hamper the acceleration process even more. At the Indian Dunes Shadow Glens track, we were reaching for another gear twice per lap... and not finding it.

Guess what? Everyone liked the small, cross-ribbed grips.

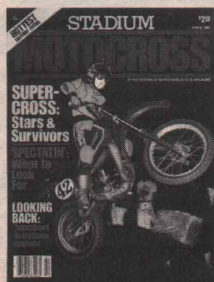
Our pipe was tucked in well, but proved a bit of a hassle to get off. Some jiggling and maneuvering was required. We took the stock muffler off after the initial testing and replaced it with an O'Neal aluminum muffler. A few pounds lost, but a lot quieter exhaust note. The O'Neal mufflers are made to

(Continued on page 64)

SEE THE SUPERBOWL FOR \$2

You'll see it all in our collector's edition of **STADIUM MOTOCROSS.**

Race with Hannah, Bell, Barnett, Tripes, and all the other superstars of Motocross from Seattle to Atlanta to the Motocross Finals in Anaheim.



STADIUM MOTOCROSS • Box 317 • Encino • California • 91316

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

Please send \$2 plus 50 cents postage and handling for each copy ordered. Make checks payable to Hi-Torque Publications.

DB

A. TANK SHIRT

- Emblem on front \$5.70*
- Emblem, both sides \$6.70*
- Circle color: yellow blue
- Circle size: S M L XL
- Color: Orange
- Size: S XL only
- Emblem # _____

B. T-SHIRT

- Emblem on front \$6.20*
- Emblem, both sides \$7.20*
- Circle color: white red yellow
- Circle size: S M L XL
- Emblem # _____

**C. SWEATSHIRT \$9.70***

- Circle color: red yellow lt-blue white
- Circle size: S M L XL
- Emblem # _____

D. DIRT BIKE RACING JERSEY \$17.20*

- Emblem on front and back.
- Circle color: red, blue, yellow
- Circle size: S M L XL

* PRICES INCLUDE 75-CENTS FOR POSTAGE AND HANDLING

BIKE TOPS FROM PLUS PRODUCTS

CHOOSE YOUR T-, TANK OR SWEAT SHIRT DESIGN MEN'S SIZES ONLY!

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> M-253 ENDURO M-248 BULTACO M-250 HARLEY DAVIDSON (Big Bike Racer) M-281 HARLEY DAVIDSON WINGS M-130 HARLEY DAVIDSON #1 M-255 MAICO M-249 JAWA CZ L-511 SMOKIN' L-679 SPOKER BOOGIE M-252 MOTOCROSS M-251 SUZUKI C-067 OSSA (flaming) C-060 HUSQVARNA (flaming) M-246 KAWASAKI (Big Bike Racer) M-280 HONDA C-100 BSA (flaming) M-240 SUZUKI (Big Bike Racer) M-270 TRIUMPH C-200 TRIUMPH (Flaming) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LX-34 I'M #1, WHY TRY HARDER L-833 I'M SO HAPPY I COULD JUST SHIT M-531 CANADA M-180 U.S.A. M-268 DODGE VAN M-271 CHEVY VAN M-174 FORD VAN M-182 BOONES FARM L-156 BEER DRINKERS HALL OF FAME L-15 KEEP ON TRUCKIN' M-516 LET'S BOOGIE M-172 THE DEVIL MADE ME DO IT R-248 HOT DOG (Skateboard) CM CHOPPERS MAGAZINE MXA MOTOCROSS ACTION MAGAZINE BB BIG BIKE MAGAZINE DB DIRT BIKE MAGAZINE RV VAN-PICKUP & OFF-ROAD WORLD (Do It In Your Van) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Make check or money order payable to:
PLUS PRODUCTS, INC.
P.O. BOX 14945
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89114**

Nevada Residents Add Sales Tax

DB

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

**PRICES EFFECTIVE FOR 90 DAYS —
ALLOW 6-8 WEEKS FOR DELIVERY**

(Continued from page 48)

the stock specs, but actually do cut the noise level better than the steel stock silencers.

No leaks appeared in our bike. Fork seals stayed tight, the carb didn't seep and the engine remained dry as a popcorn burp.

Air filter service presented no real problems, but the owner's manual says that it should be replaced after five cleanings, which does not appear to make a lot of sense. Maybe they know something we don't. Consider an accessory filter, with that kind of an implied warning.

The importance of a clean filter is emphasized by the fact that the barrel does not have a replaceable liner. That means you cannot bore or hone the Kwacker if you happen to let some dirt into the guts. This means cubic dollars and much high octane grief. Again, keep everything scrupulously clean and you'll be a happy person.

One of the few "old-fashioned" things on the KX is the location of the countershaft sprocket in relation to the swingarm pivot point. The gap is wide, compared to the rest of the 125 racers on the market. This means that chain life on the KX will not be as long as it could (or should) be.

No one should experience a problem with the massive aluminum swing-arm. If anything, it's overkill. To give you one example of how well Kawasaki aluminum arms are fabricated, Assistant Editor Brian George, flipped a 1979 250 Kaw (and his body) and tied the frame into a knot. The folks at Buchanan (the frame straightening experts) expressed amazement that the arm had not been bent in the crash.

The Uni-Trak itself represents another area of maintenance that most riders never considered before. Several links *must* be greased on a regular basis. The excellent owner's manual gives the details. Don't ignore them. Some of these components are highly stressed and the proper lube at the proper interval can keep the unit fresh and strong for a long time.

Getting to the Uni-Trak shock takes some wedging and cursing. Adjusting the preload is not a simple task. The new Yamaha is easier by far to get to for both damping and preload changes.

The shock itself is a short, squatty, massive piece of hardware. For every inch of travel at the shock, the rear axle moves over three inches. That's a tremendous load! But, at least the shock piston speed is relatively slow. We found no need to delve into the shock to make any adjustments. All of the riders, ranging in body weight from 140 to 200 pounds, liked the rear end action and couldn't fault it.

We had a slightly weeping head

gasket during the entire test, in spite of resurfacing the head and trying two different head gaskets. We checked a few other KXs and found some weeping in the same spot, but no one mentioned a hint of detonation or dingling.

If you were curious about interchangeability, here's the scoop. While the bolt pattern on the '79 and the '80 engines are the same, the cases on the new bike are manufactured for both the 125 and the 175 bikes. This means that to adapt the 1979 barrel to the '80 cases, a 5mm ring would have to be machined to take up the extra space. However, you cheaters out there might be interested in the fact that the 175 top end will slip on. Interesting, eh?

Oh yes. If you do opt to put a '79 barrel on the new cases, you must use a '79 piston as well. There's a simple matter of holes in pistons and ribs in ports. You understand, surely.

Oh yes... one thing we forgot to tell you. On that reed cage modification. Cut the reed stops completely off. On page 39 of the Kawasaki Owner's Manual, it's stated that a Boyesen reed is used. This is incorrect. It should read: "a Boyesen type reed." Got it?

We had no spoke or wheel problems, but did experience severe vibration at times on the KX. It was invariably traced to loose motor mount bolts. The problem proved chronic and we investigated. It turned out that Kawasaki put in motor mount bolts that were much smaller than the holes in the cases, hence the vibration. In particular, the top rear bolt was a good 2mm smaller than the hole. Any smart owner will take a drill bit to the engine and hog every hole on the bike out to the limits and put in tight, hefty motor mount bolts.

The plastic on our test bike held up well, in spite of a few low sides and one spectacular high side that we won't get into at this time. A few more inches could have been added to the length of the rear fender to keep mud from ending up on the rider's back.

Summary

The KX125 A-6 is a brilliant bike with one flaw: not enough beans. It is simply down on power compared to the other screamers in the 125 class. We were able to extract more power out of the bike for low bucks. There should still be more lurking in there.

Actually, if Kawasaki had delivered the new KX with last year's motor in it, we would have had almost nothing to snivel about. As it turned out, it appears that our verbal abuse will only last until 1981... or until some horsepower is released from that barrel. If Kawasaki is able to get that motor working, or they make a mid-production change this year, the competition will have to reevaluate its thinking. □

DONELSON CYCLES, INC.

HARD TO GET Parts and Accessories
TRIUMPH **BSA**
YAMAHA **Norton**

We purchased the entire U.S. BSA distributorship
 We import TRIUMPH, BSA and NORTON parts direct

OUR PRICES CAN'T BE BEAT! Call for prices & orders.

ORDER BY PHONE — TOLL FREE — 1-800-325-4144

C.O.D. — NO Personal Checks * FREE FREIGHT ON ITEMS LISTED *



The New MX, Enduro tire with dimple blocks and rim saver bead.

Dunlop Tires		
K190	3.60 x 14	\$22.90
	4.10 x 14	26.45
	5.10 x 17 6ply	\$41.95
	4.10 x 18	34.95
	4.50 x 18 6ply	44.95
	4.60 x 18	39.95
	3.00 x 21	\$31.95



Cheng Shin Tires		
C-183A	3.00 x 14	\$15.95
	3.50 x 14	18.45
	3.00 x 18	\$21.45
	3.50 x 18	24.95
	4.00 x 18	32.95
	4.50 x 18	37.95
	3.00 x 21	\$22.95



C-183D		
	3.85 x 14	\$21.95
	3.60 x 18	\$24.95
	4.10 x 18	31.95
	4.60 x 18	39.95

If not available will substitute Nan Kang

BELL HELMETS
 Moto Star III \$85.95
 Star II 89.95
 Mag II 72.95
 RT 49.95

FREE Freight

SCOTT MX BOOTS
\$139.95
 Reg. \$198

FREE Freight

the MXL boot
\$99.95
 Reg. 149.95

FREE Freight

Check our prices on Hi-Point & Full Bore boots

Nylon MX Pants
\$69.95

FREE Freight

\$12.95/pr.
Ankra Tiedowns

Fannypak Tool Bag
\$29.95

FREE Freight

SCOTT Goggles
\$12.95

D.I.D. Chain

428H x 114 links	\$18.00
520 x 110	\$24.00
530 x 106	\$24.00

ORDER BY PHONE TODAY!

CALL TOLL FREE!
 1-800-325-4144

CALL TOLL FREE

3328 Woodson Rd.
 St. Louis, Mo. 63114
 Mo. call Ph. (314) 427-1204

THE BEST OF 100 ISSUES!

Don't miss out on the 100th anniversary edition, THE BEST OF DIRT BIKE. This collector's item is a one-time special issue filled with the most outrageous articles, features, tests and photos ever published in DIRT BIKE. Only \$2.

THE BEST OF DIRT BIKE • P.O. Box 317 • Encino • California • 91316

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

Please send \$2 plus 50 cents postage and handling for each copy ordered. Make checks payable to Hi-Torque Publications. DB

