

YAMAHA XT250



**WORKS HARD
FOR THE MONEY**
Mellow fellow
By the Staff of DB



Soft suspension is fine for medium trail work, but expect some serious clanking when you jump the XT.

◀ A nice seat/tank junction lets the rider get forward in the turns. The brakes are a little weak and the weight is too much, but what street/trail bike isn't too heavy?

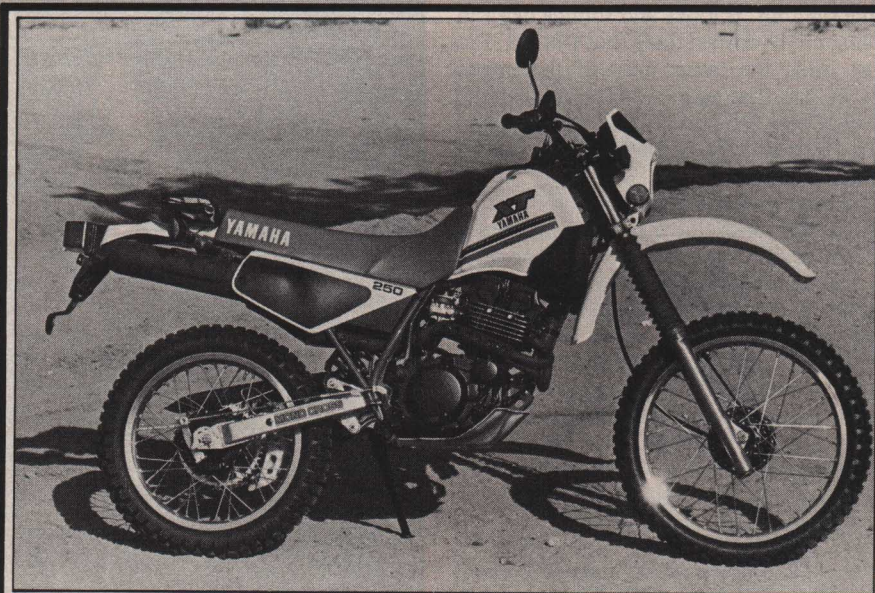
Yamaha didn't skimp when it came to its XT lineup for '84. Of course they did drop the XT125 and 200, but the remaining 250 and 600 got an injection of sophistication over their year-old counterparts. Last year's 250 looked like a relic from the early '70s, with a spindly steel swingarm and a non-business look that appealed to no one. Basically, it was a rehash of parts from years back, and it was never very popular.

This year's XT250 is packed with appeal, from the white and red color scheme, to the YZ-like suspension components. From the lights with their enduro cowling, to the air scoops resting under the tank, the XT looks fun, looks fast and most important, it looks dirt. A rider can bop around town on the XT and feel like a racer.

While looks are important, performance is critical. Both the chassis and the engine have more than just simple updates. Beefier suspension with more travel and an all-new engine with a six-speed tranny top the list of changes.

PERFORMANCE

Starting the XT proved to be a menial task. Turn on the gas, flip on the choke and kick. Nine times out of ten, it fired on the first snap of the lever. After a decent warm-up period, we slid into the mainstream of traffic. For the first few miles or so, we thought the engine just wasn't warmed up.



YAMAHA XT250L

Engine type	..... Air-cooled 4-stroke, DOHC	Weight	..... 258 lbs.
Bore and stroke	..... 73.0mm x 59.6mm	Suspension:	
Displacement	..... 249cc	Front	..... 255mm (10.4 in.)
Carburetion	..... Teiksei Y22PV	Rear	..... 220mm (8.66 in.)
Gas/oil ratio	..... Straight gas	Seat height	..... 845mm (33.3 in.)
Fuel tank capacity	..... 12.0 L (3.17 gals.)	Retail price	..... \$1799
Transmission	..... 6-speed	Country of origin	..... Japan
Gearing, front/rear	..... 15/48	Distributor/Manufacturer:	
Ignition	..... CDI	Yamaha Motor Corp.	
Wheelbase	..... 1430mm (56.3 in.)	6555 Katella Ave.	
Ground clearance	..... 270mm (10.6 in.)	Cypress, CA 90630	

Then, we thought the choke was still on. Actually, it turned out that the XT looks faster than it really is.

While it can't be considered a dog, it still left us a little disappointed in the acceleration department. It's smooth, with an almost docile thrust. Shifting is typically notchy for Yamaha, but the gears seemed spaced just right. The six-speeder is good for about a 70-mph top end with a slight tail wind. It'll move through traffic all right, but don't expect any wheelies unless you're good with the clutch.

Off-road, the motor manners weren't scoffed at. The smooth acceleration is welcomed on a street/trail bike. The limitations of the tires and suspension in the dirt are further highlighted by a robust engine. We trailed the 250 on minor-league two-track roads and some hairy stuff for a dual-purpose machine. It did just fine. There's enough low end to pull some serious terrain without stalling. First and second gears are low enough that you can plonk and enduro at slower speeds without fear of sinking the bike and walking home.

TRAVEL TUNES

Both suspension ends got the beef and inches this year. Up front the travel has been bumped to ten inches over the measly 8.1 of last year. The rear end not only got more travel, it got the new Monocross design also. Add to that a chassis more in tune with the dirt world, and you've got a bike that isn't afraid of going off-road.

While the limitations of the suspension come quickly, they're worlds better than past efforts. You can actually get loose and slam through a few bumps without fear. A longer wheelbase also makes it somewhat stable at higher speeds in the dirt.

BITS AND PIECES

Everyone gave the XT an "A" in seating comfort and layout. The seat itself is firm, yet just supple enough and big enough to carry a passenger comfortably. The problem here is that there are no buddy pegs!

The O-ring chain proved durable and the steel swingarm comes with snail-type chain adjusters.

To remove the gas cap you need the key. The tank itself holds over three gallons of fuel and gets unbelievable mileage.

Our bike (a California model) came equipped with a canister mounted under the tank on the left side of the bike. It's an emission device that prevents fuel vapors from entering the atmosphere.

The front single-leading-shoe brake is weak. A dual-leading-shoe model, or better yet, a disc, would be nice.

SETTING YOUR SIGHTS

Although we felt that the XT250 could have had more power, it still proved to be an excellent machine. There's enough grunt for the trail-conscious, and it'll move through town fine. The bike looks great, handles fine for what it's designed for, and is definitely a step in the right direction. □

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Piston Kits (std. and oversize)		Rod Rebuild Kits		Seals and Gaskets	
Model	Piston Kit	Model	Kit	Model	Seal Sets Gasket Sets
YZ80 J-K-L	\$35.50	YZ80 J-K-L	42.00	YZ80 J-K-L	\$15.60 \$14.20
YZ100 J-K-L	28.00	YZ100 J-K-L	46.50	YZ100 J-K-L	9.80 10.30
YZ125 J-K-L	44.50	YZ125 J-K-L	50.50	YZ125 J-K-L	16.40 11.70
YZ250 J-K-L	64.00	YZ250 J-K-L	45.00	YZ250 J-K-L	27.20 19.20
YZ490 J-K-L	60.50	YZ490 J-K-L	48.50	YZ490 J-K-L	17.40 13.90
IT175 J-K-L	39.00	IT175 J-K-L	42.00	IT175 J-K-L	9.80 10.30
IT250 J-K-L	61.00	IT250 J-K-L	45.00	IT250 J-K-L	16.60 12.40
IT490 J-K-L	51.50	IT490 J-K-L	49.00	IT490 J-K-L	13.40 13.90



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Piston kit consists of piston, rings, wrist pin and circlips.

Rod kit consists of rod, lower bearing, lower pin and thrust washers.

Prices may vary according to year of bike.