

**HONDA'S OUTRAGEOUS CR500: WE RIDE IT FIRST!**

**XR PIPE SHOOTOUT: THE FASTEST PIPE FOR YOUR BIKE IS...**

DIRT BIKE

# DIRT BIKE

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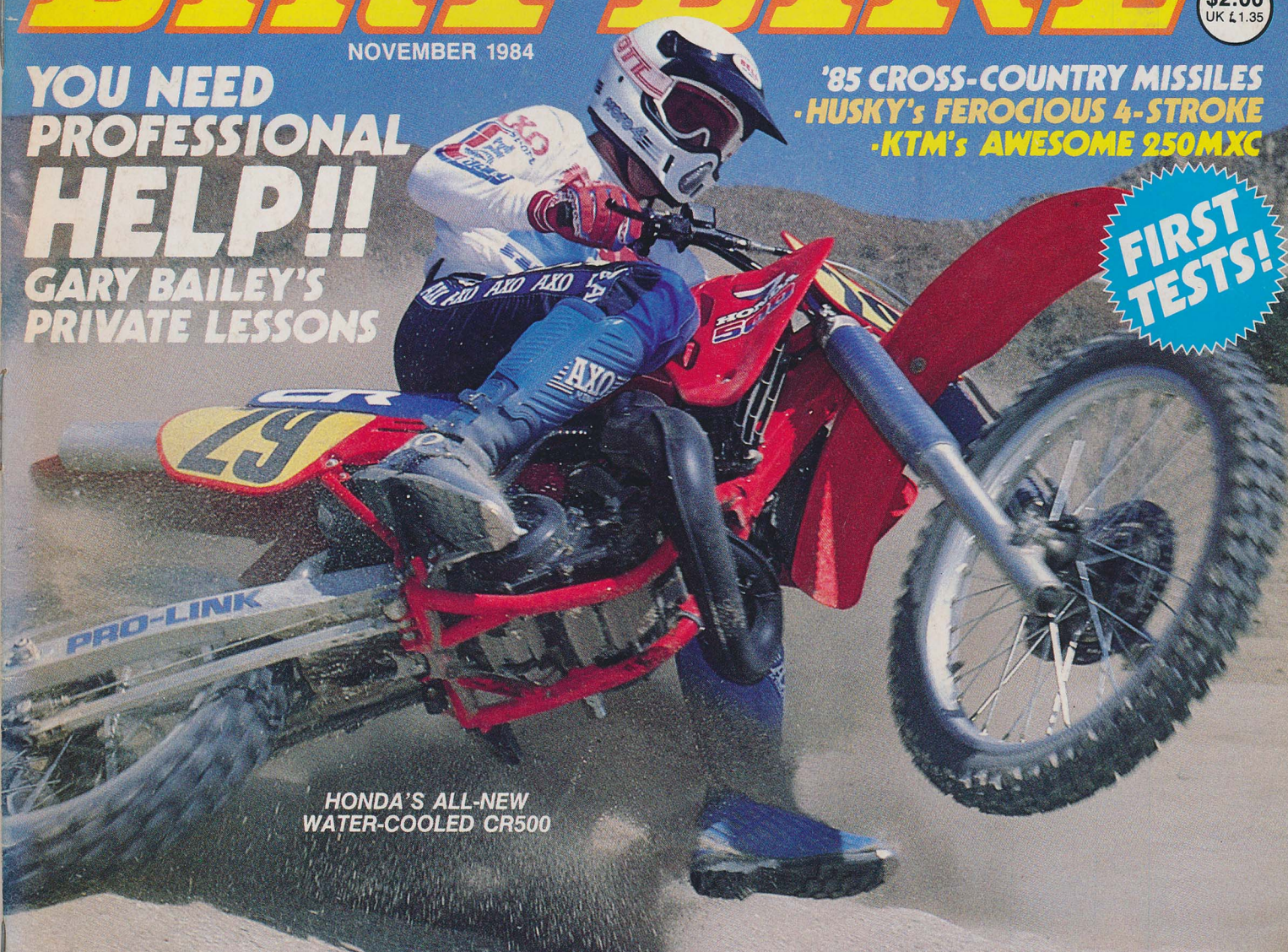
NOVEMBER 1984

**YOU NEED  
PROFESSIONAL  
HELP!!**

**GARY BAILEY'S  
PRIVATE LESSONS**

**'85 CROSS-COUNTRY MISSILES  
-HUSKY'S FEROCIOUS 4-STROKE  
-KTM'S AWESOME 250MXC**

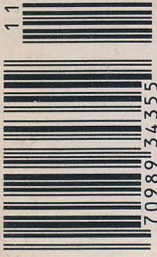
**FIRST  
TESTS!**



HONDA'S ALL-NEW  
WATER-COOLED CR500

**NATIONAL MX  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
CONTROVERSY:**

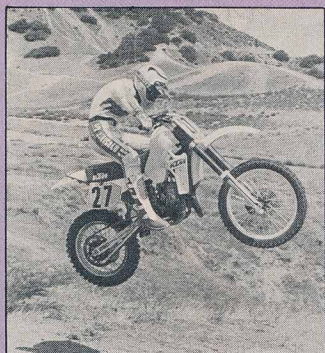
**THE RACING  
IS OVER  
BUT THE  
FIGHTING  
GOES ON!**



ISSN0364-1546

# DIRT BIKE

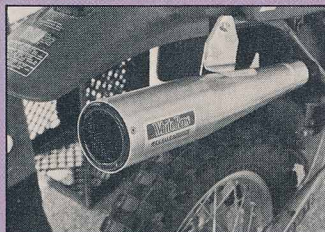
NOVEMBER 1984 • VOLUME 14, NO. 11



1985 KTM 250MXC



1985 HUSKY 4-STROKE



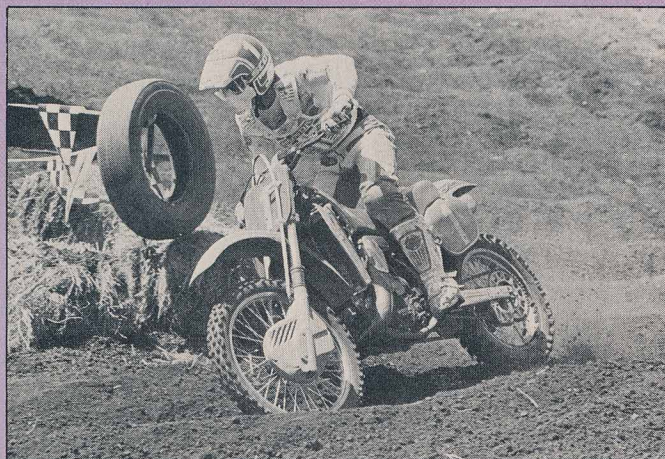
XR PIPE SHOOTOUT



1985 KAWASAKI



1985 HONDAS



THE NEW CHAMPS

**ON THE COVER:**—Steve Schmitz gets twisted on the brand-new Honda CR500, while David and Broc and the rest of the 500 class get down to business at the Colorado National. Honda shot by Paul Clipper, race shot by Tom Webb, color separation by Valley Film.

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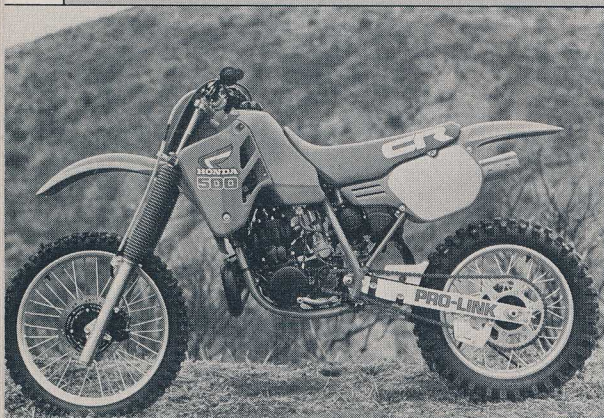
**WARNING:** Much of the action depicted in this magazine is potentially dangerous. Virtually all of the riders seen in our photos are experienced experts or professionals. Do not attempt to duplicate any stunts that are beyond your own capabilities. Always wear the appropriate safety gear.

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# ELIMINATOR LINEUP

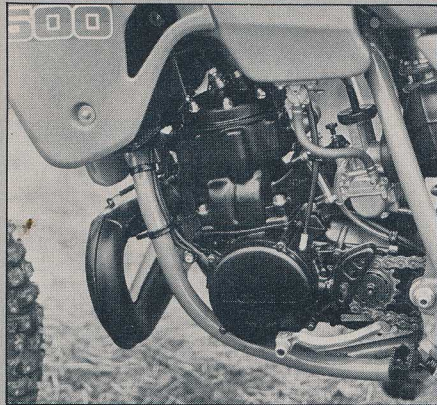
How close are they to the works machines?

By the Staff of DB



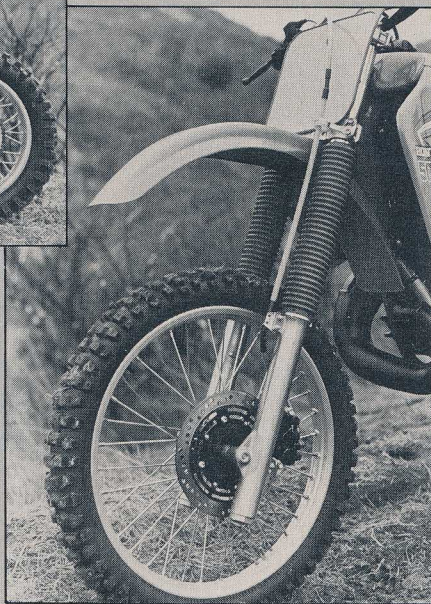
We started testing on the CR500 right before we went to press, and although it is too soon to report the news, we'll leave you with one fact: It is fast! ▶

Honda is claiming a full 60 horsepower with the biggest CR. This waterized boiler incites terror and appears to be a real threat for an Open class killer.



The 500 is the only CR NOT to get any exhaust valve add-ons. It's still a five-speed, and we're informed it WILL NOT have any detonation or starting problems as last year's bikes.

Big news with the 250 is hardly visible. More travel, a new shock and a rethought rear lever ratio should make the suspension package more competitive. ▼



Up front, the Showa forks have been revised and will hopefully perform up to par. They're still compression adjustable and now have factory blue fork boots.



Good news for California riders—Honda has gone back to the Bridgestone M22 and M23 tires. These are the best hard meats in the business.



Every year we've come to expect our senses to be assaulted with the new Honda MXers. This year only one of the red racers staggers you at a glance: the new water-cooled 500. Both the 125 and 250 appear to be updated and refined versions of what worked last year.

But the 500... ah yes, the big monster... now that gets the blood boiling!

### A COOL 60 HORSEPOWER

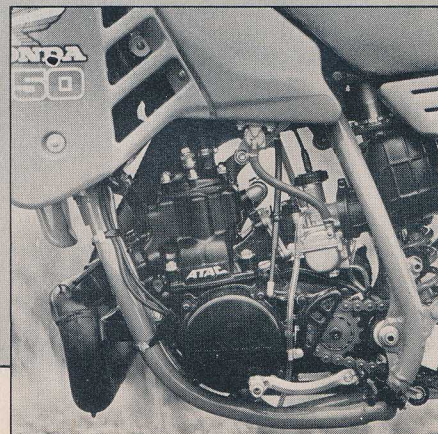
Last year's 500 was a thorn in Honda's quest for a steamroller lineup of motocrossers. Rather than spend time, money and effort making the '84 into a winner, they canned the beast. They took what they learned from the National and GP motocross circuit and funneled it into their new production water-cooled 500.

### A BRIEF RIDE ON THE BEAST

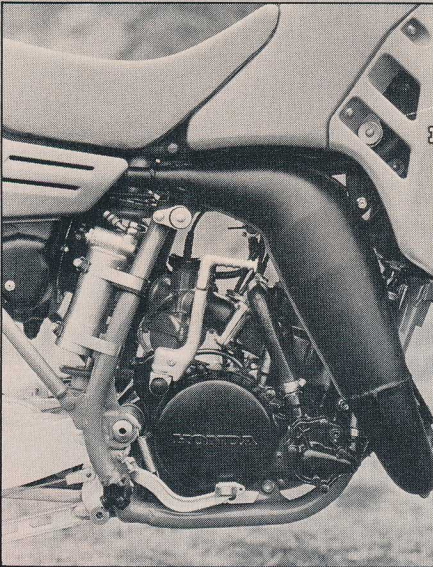
We received our 1985 test CR500 too late to do a test on it. Riding was limited to a photo session and a few tentative laps around a baked-dry MX track.

We can tell you this: The new CR500 is a rocket-mobile. It pulls ultra-clean from

Thankfully, Honda moved the ATAC system on the 250 down to the pipe, as on the 125. Working on last year's cylinder proved to be a nightmare. Note how low the pipe hangs—it looks like a crusher model.







The new flat-slide Keihin carb is one of many changes on the 125 engine. They've coaxed a few more ponies out of the 125 with pipe, porting, and other minor items.

low revs and has a mid-range that is borderline monster.

Our photo riders—who put in most of the riding time—said there was no detonation or pinging. Apparently, the watercooling and the redesigned top end has eliminated the banging and pinging of 1984.

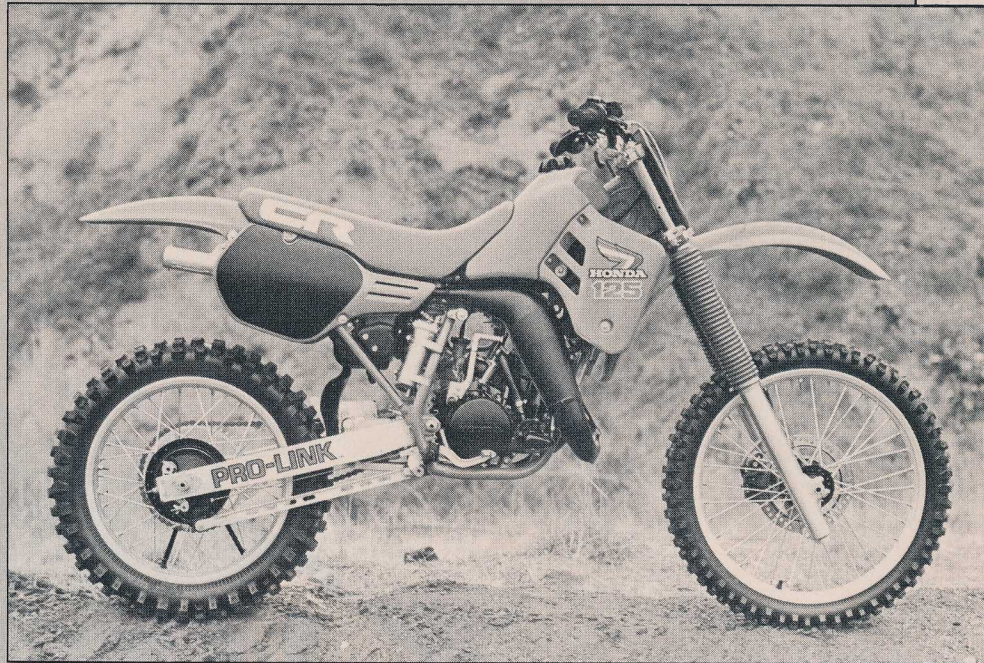
Look for a full-blown test of the 500 next month. We plan to take the bike out and get it hot and nasty...and then let you know the whole scoop.

### TECHNICAL IMPROVEMENTS AND NEEDED CHANGES

The entire motorcycle is brand new—the chassis, engine and suspension systems. Obviously, liquid-cooling is the biggest news with the engine. Honda assures us that the pinging and detonation problems are things of the past and that the '85 500 is smooth and very, very fast. In fact, they claim 60 horsepower, a new milestone for a production motocrosser. The 500 will feature *no* exhaust valves, add-ons or gimmicks.

With the chassis and suspension, Honda takes a step closer to their works machines. They have relocated the steering head and swingarm pivot points to give the bike better motocross manners. Just what that means is not yet known. As far as suspension, undeniably a weak link in the production Honda motocrossers, both ends have been refitted, updated and rethought.

Showa once again provides the damping units, and the front 43mm assembly has adjustable compression damping with 12 inches of travel. New damping has been fitted into the forks, and Team Red says it is a lot closer to being workable than in previous years. In the backyard, a new lever ratio, a new shock and more travel greet the 500. The shock still has both compression and rebound adjusters, plus a larger piston diameter, increased oil capacity, and more



shaft travel. All of the Pro-Link pivots ride on needle roller bearings.

### NEW ATAC FOR '85

Both the 125 and 250 appear to have been refined, not redone. Front discs are the norm. Blue fork boots and new seat/tank and plastic have been fitted to the CRs. The 125 engine is outfitted with the ATAC system, using exhaust resonance to boost low and mid-range power. A lighter crank and outer rotor ignition, combined with electronic advance and a smaller coil, should make for better throttle response and a weight savings.

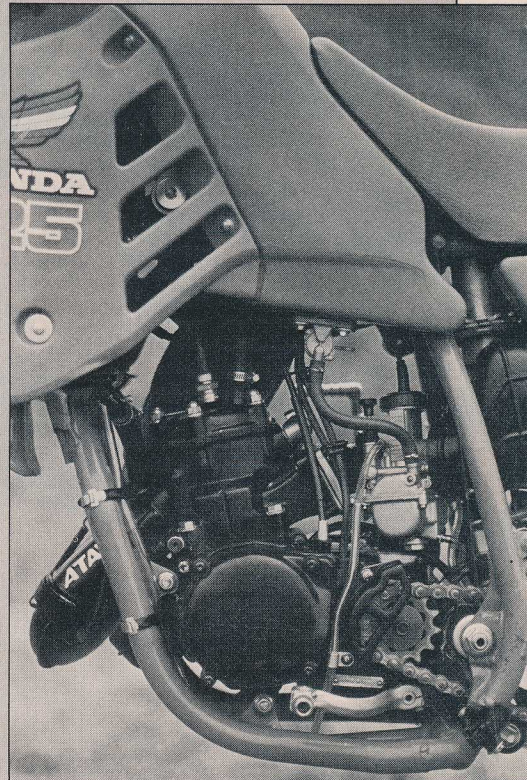
Internally, the 125 has a newly designed top end which they say puts out 32 horsepower at 11,500 rpm. Magnesium crankcases and a redesigned cylinder and head shave off a few pounds, putting the weight right at the FIM limit. Add a new pipe, stronger clutch and revised ATAC unit, and Honda says that power is up over the '84 model.

For the middleweight crowd, the 250 is more than refined; it has been dramatically polished and zooted for '85. An all-new ATAC system has been moved off the cylinder and down to the pipe like the 125. This makes for much easier maintenance than the headache-prone '84 model. A new ignition, new porting and enlarged cooling passages should make for more hp and a longer engine life. All the CRs feature a brand-new flat-slide Keihin carburetor that resembles nothing we've ever seen before. Honda says they work!

### ALL TOGETHER NOW!

It sure looks like Honda is full main jet for 1985. Their staggering monsterized 500, combined with well-thought-out changes and refinements to the 125 and 250, should make for an interesting year. In 1983 they stomped the competition with their arsenal. Nineteen eighty-four proved to be a letdown,

New styling along with more power is the theme for the CR125. Check out the tank and seat and the workslike radiators. Honda says handling is up, power is up, and life in the 125 fast lane should be up.



The 125 still carries the ATAC chamber mounted on the front of the pipe.

with less-than-ideal suspension, and engine trouble with some 125s and all the 500s. They claim the engineers have been working overtime on the new CR line and that we won't be disappointed. If that's the case, watch out! □