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

DIRT BIKE

# DIRT BIKE

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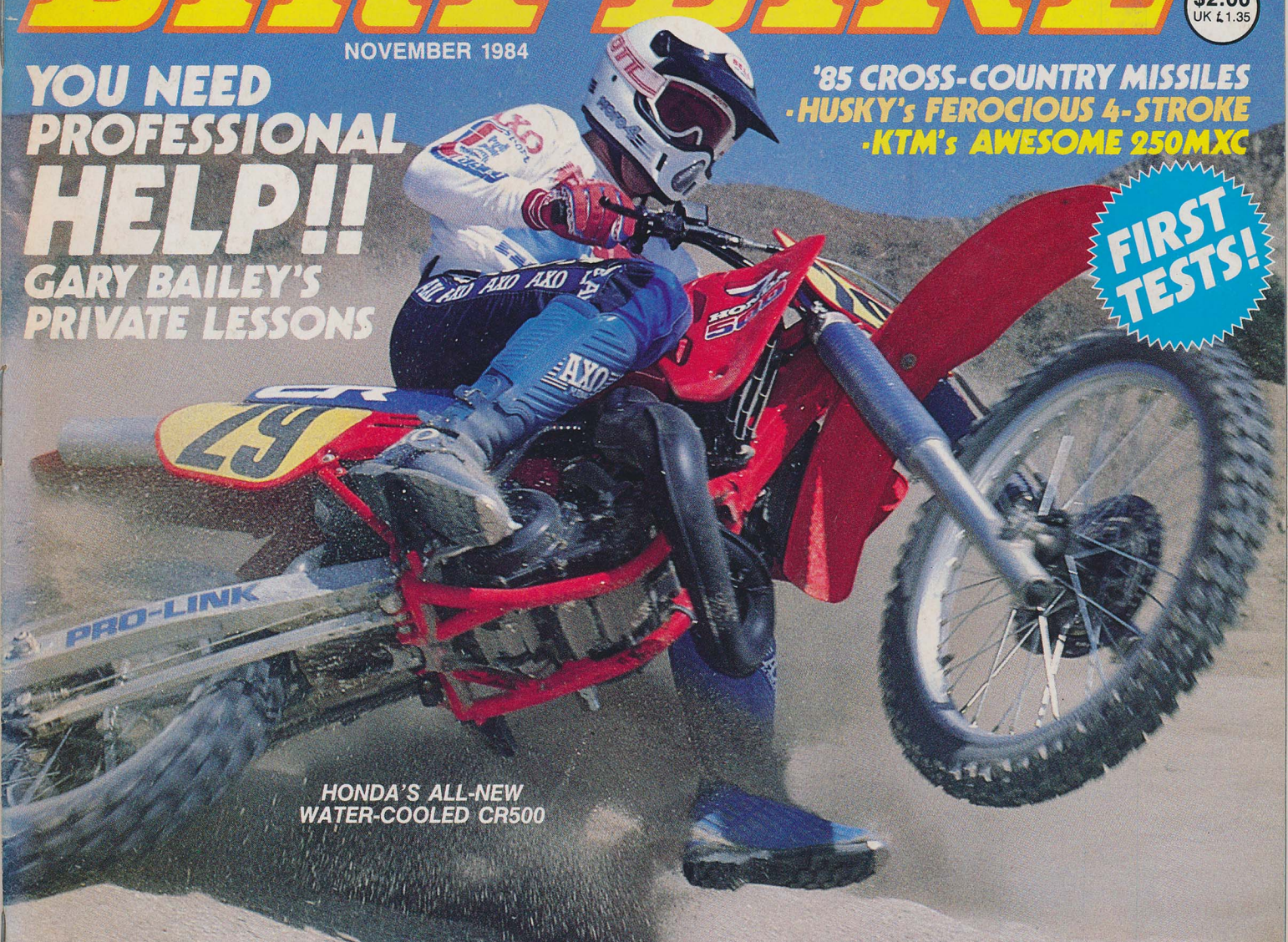
NOVEMBER 1984

**YOU NEED  
PROFESSIONAL  
HELP!!**

**GARY BAILEY'S  
PRIVATE LESSONS**

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

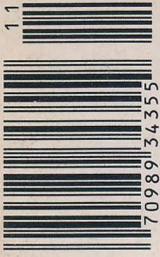
**FIRST  
TESTS!**



HONDA'S ALL-NEW  
WATER-COOLED CR500

**NATIONAL MX  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
CONTROVERSY:**

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

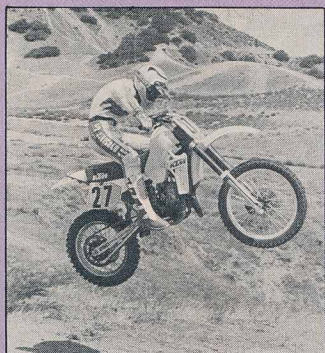


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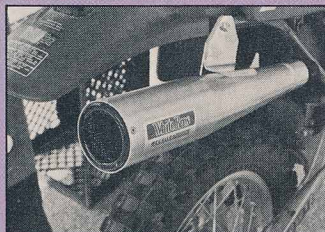
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1985 KTM 250MXC



1985 HUSKY 4-STROKE



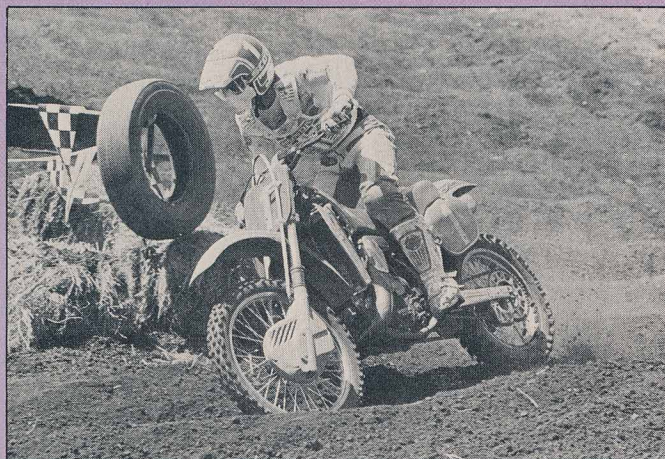
XR PIPE SHOOTOUT



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.

## TESTS

### 20 KTM 250MXC

Euro enduro on the cutting edge

### 44 HUSQVARNA 510TX

The '85 four-stroke: a cross-country cruiser

## COMPETITION

### 32 AMA NATIONAL MOTOCROSS WRAP-UP

Surprises, shockers, stunners, sweeps and no-shows

### 62 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP MX: THE CRUCIAL ROUND

Andre Malherbe goes for his third World title

## FEATURES

### 28 HONDA XR500 PIPE SPEED TEST

Who makes the fastest XR500 pipe?

### 34 PRO FILE: KENNY CLARK

Yamaha race team manager talks motocross

### 38 PROFESSOR BAILEY'S BOARDING SCHOOL

Four-day training camp

### 42 NEW KAWASAKIS FOR 1985

Watercooling the Team Green lineup

### 49 PRO FILE: GEOFF BALLARD

An Aussie on the American ISDE team?

### 50 PRODUCT EVALUATION: MARCY HOME GYM

When you can't join a health club

### 51 PRODUCT EVALUATION: MAXIMA FILTER OIL

The stickiest stuff this side of silicone seal

### 54 NEW HONDAS FOR 1985

The eliminator lineup

## DEPARTMENTS

### 8 FROM THE SADDLE

The wedding reception

### 10 LAST OVER

Daybreaks

### 12 BITS AND PIECES

News snips from around the globe

### 14 MISTER KNOW-IT-ALL

Purveyor of wisdom

### 19 RIDERS WRITE

The OP-ED column

### 68 NEW PRODUCTS

New gear showcase

### 73 CRASH & BURN

Make like an ostrich

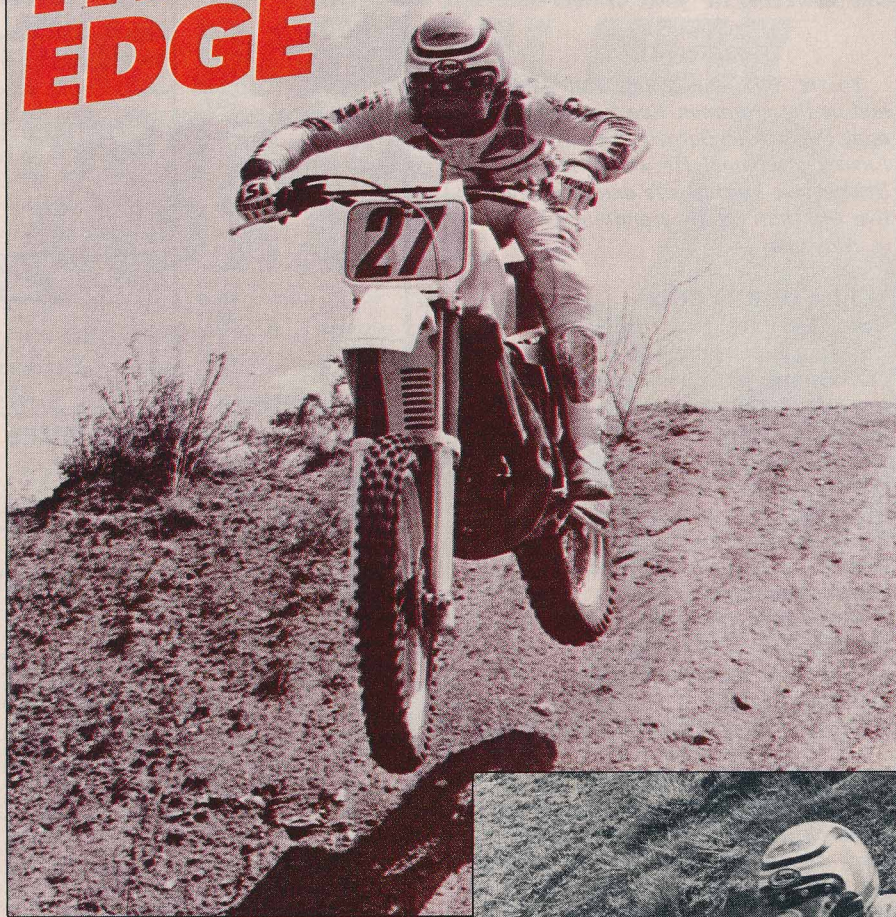
**WARNING:** Much of the action depicted in this magazine is potentially dangerous. Virtually all of the riders seen in our photos are experienced experts or professionals. Do not attempt to duplicate any stunts that are beyond your own capabilities. Always wear the appropriate safety gear.

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1985 KTM 250MXC

# THE CUTTING EDGE



Even though the new tank looks bulbous, this KTM is one of the slimmest bikes made today—sliding forward is a snap. We mashed the pipe during a close shave with a deep rut.

a new engine design has resulted in more torque and horsepower, and the fastest 250 of '84 is now about ten percent up across the powerband. Also, the rake has been changed for tighter turning, and the whole package was slimmed down with the help of a new gas tank. Sadly, the bike has gained four pounds in the process, going from 219 to 223, but it is still the lightest 250 enduro bike going.

## MOTOR MADNESS

In an attempt to extract more horsepower lower in the rev range, KTM lengthened the stroke of the 250 engine and decreased the bore diameter. They succeeded. The new bike has just enough extra grunt to lug through the test sections that the '84 had trouble with. During our first impression, we thought that first gear was slightly tall, but after lugging the bike through some of the tightest trails we would find, we have amended our opinion. First gear should be fine for anything but vertical walls.

Overshadowing the low-end power, though, is the unbelievable mid-range. When the MXC comes on the pipe, things happen rapidly. In good traction conditions the KTM will stand up and rocket forward so suddenly that the rider really has to be on his toes to keep from winding up on his

*KTM has just moved the term "no compromise" into the nether regions*

By the Staff of DIRT BIKE

There's no denying the fact that we were impressed with last year's KTM 250MXC. The bike was lighter than anything else in the class, had an awesome power delivery, and what it lacked in suspension refinement (read: Marzocchi forks) was overshadowed by the light weight and accurate handling. We liked the bike so much that we refused to give it back, and it was ridden every weekend—with zero mechanical troubles. If asked what we thought KTM could do to improve the '84 MXC, we would have been hard-pressed for an answer, other than ironing out the Marzochis.

Well, '85 has rolled around, and KTM has not sat on its hands for the past year. We noted with a certain amount of joy that the bike would now be delivered with White Power 4054 upside-down forks, a suspension system that made its debut on the bigger bikes last year and has proven to be a vast improvement over the Zokes.

At that, we would have been happy, but



*Getting the MXC around a corner takes little more than a nod of the head, thanks to the new rigid front end. Steering is so precise, it may be disorienting to some riders.*



# 1985 KTM 250MXC



**There is no trick to doing wheelies on the MXC; the trick is to try to keep the wheel on the ground!**

back. In marginal traction the rear tire will spin wildly—we wore out the original Metzeler in two rides.

This mid-range explosion will take some getting used to. The best way to ride the MXC is to take it easy on the throttle. Roll the power on and shift early—keep the engine working and the rear end will behave. Treat the mid-range like a nitrous injection system—not the sort of thing you want to use all the time, but when you need it to make a pass, it'll be right there. Top-end power is also very strong, but like the lower end, it pales in comparison to the mid-range.

For the technoid freaks among you, the KTM achieves its power through a Nikasil bore, a sprayed-on cylinder coating developed by the Mahle Piston people that is comparable to the Kawasaki Electro-Fusion bore. "Nikasil" stands for nickel silicone carbide, and although this cylinder can't be honed or bored, KTM testing indicated that the material should last through at least four pistons. Mahle is currently setting up a cylinder re-coating plant in New England, so we should soon be able to get such cylinders rejuvenated inexpensively.

The gearbox hasn't been changed for '85, but the gap between fourth and fifth gear is not as noticeable, thanks to the additional power on tap. Shifting is pretty much standard KTM, which means the lever throw is relatively long, and gear engagement is slightly on the notchy side. Not as notchy as, say, a Yamaha IT, but not as smooth as a KDX200.



**The White Power 4054 forks are a giant step up from Marzocchis, but they do demand a careful setup. The brake line you see here is not stock; the production line should be cleaner and much more rigid.**

## SUSPENSION STROKING

The Pro-Lever/White Power suspension system on our test bike was no less than excellent. KTM changed the leverage ratio of the system, and also lowered the weight. One of our testers remarked that the Pro-Lever reacted much like the Suzuki Full-Floater system, a suspension we've had much respect for over the years. Our MXC needed no dialing in and seemed to suit a wide range of rider weights—a sign of a well-developed system.

Chatter bumps do not exist with the Pro-Lever. Even with the rear end fishtailing wildly from too much rear brake, trying to compensate for way too much speed, the back end would simply float over the bumps, remaining in tight control. On bigger crushers it takes each hit and then moves on to the next one, with no shocks being transmitted through the frame. One of our 200-pounders managed to bottom the rear end once, indicating that the spring is just a little on the stiff side. Lighter-weight riders may find even better results with a lighter spring and/or slightly lower preload.

Our front end came to us a little confused, but it gave us an opportunity to become very familiar with the White Power forks. Because of a change in the internal valving, no one in the country was up-to-date on how they have to be set up, and as a result, our forks were topping out badly during the initial ride. This is always a symptom of too little oil, and when we checked it out, that was the problem.

By looks alone you can tell that these forks were not put together like normal forks, and that is the perfect truth. In a way, they are easier to work on than normal forks, but measuring the oil level is a job that will take most people a few tries to perfect (see *DB* August '84, page 36). Limited space keeps us from going into detail here, but you should read every bit of information KTM gives you before you start tearing them apart.

The important thing is that they work. After we got them dialed in, they soaked up anything thrown in their path. Even huge, square-edged crushers were cushioned with not much more than a dull *thud*. These are seriously good forks, much better than the Marzocchis of the earlier bikes. We would strongly urge any new KTM owner to get to know them inside and out and take the time to dial them in perfectly. Even though they feel good as delivered, with a little fiddling you can make them *perfect*.

## HANDLING AND TURNING

The White Power 4054 forks give new meaning to the term "rigid." There is either no flex at all in these forks, or so little that a rider will never be able to detect it. This can be felt in any situation where the front wheel is on the ground. On a high-speed run it feels like you can take your hands off the bars. The front end doesn't shake or squirm in the least. Any time you go into a turn, they offer instant reaction—turn the bars even the slightest amount and you're moving in that direction.

It sounds great, but it takes some getting used to. Most first-time riders on this bike will badly underrun a number of corners, thinking that the bike is going to react like every other bike. It won't. You don't have to muscle this KTM—just twitch the bars, lean into the turn, and roll the throttle on. KTM pulled in the rake a half degree to make the front wheel stick better, and stick it does. The MXC turns as well as any bike we've ever ridden, enduros and motocrossers included.



# 1985 KTM 250MXC

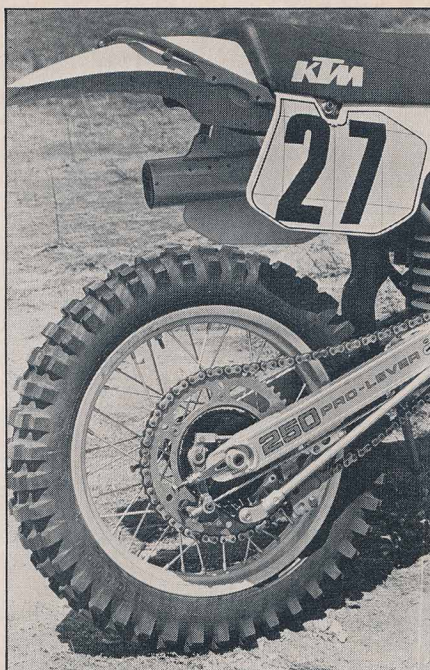
## BITS AND PIECES

Helping out the handling is a new, 3.1-gallon gas tank. It may look odd-shaped at first, but when you sling a leg over one, you'll appreciate just how narrow it makes the bike. One test rider commented that he could slide so far forward, he had to look over his shoulder to see the gas cap!

KTM has finally designated a new kick-stand. This one actually stays up without clanking around and doesn't snap up as soon as the bike is vertical. An extremely welcome addition.

Every one of the suspension pivot points uses zerk fittings for regreasing. Also, all of the major pivots use needle bearings, making it one of the slickest-moving systems around.

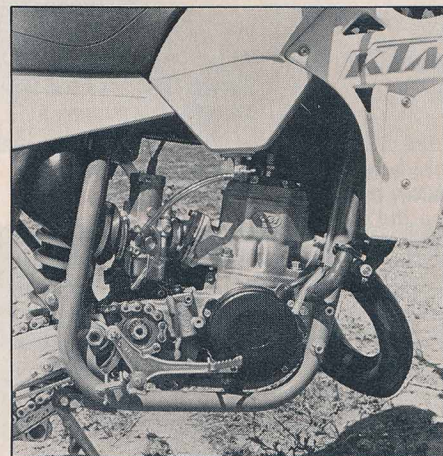
A word on the brakes: excellent! The front disc uses a floating rotor and a dual-piston caliper, and is the best disc brake we've used to date. (The year is, however, still young...!) The double-leading-shoe rear drum works without chattering or locking uncontrollably. Together they make a perfect combination.



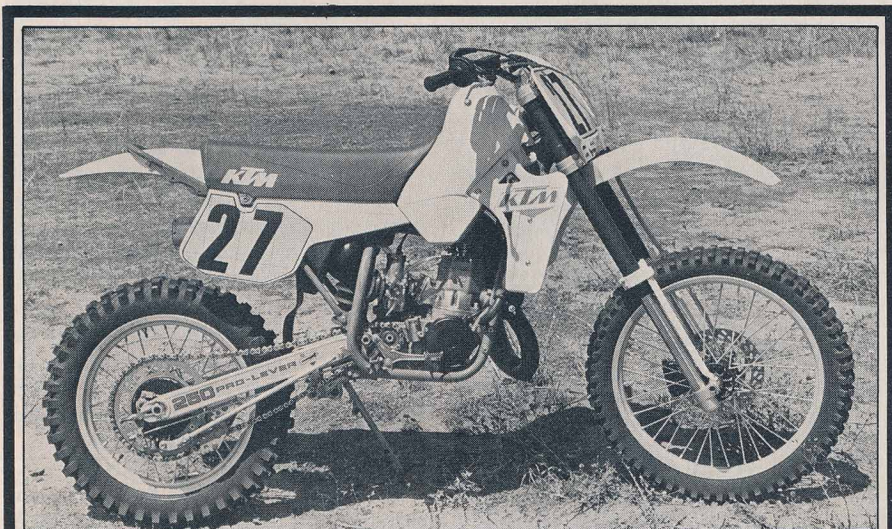
Double-leading-shoe rear brake is super strong and has been cured of the hair-trigger tendencies of last year's 125. Rear frame loop is stock this year, as is the aluminum muffler. A spark arrester is optional.



We found the rear suspension able to soak up any kind of an impact, even rear wheel landings from a surprising altitude. One-hundred-and-fifty-pound riders may feel the need for a softer spring.



KTM went to a smaller bore and a longer stroke in order to increase the low-end power. The grunt factor has been multiplied on the '85, but the mid-range power is awesome.



## KTM 250MXC

Engine type	2-stroke, reed valve
Bore and stroke	67.5mm x 69mm
Displacement	246.8cc
Carburetion	38mm Bing
Factory recommended jetting:	
Main jet	190
Needle jet	280
Jet needle	8L2
Pilot jet	50
Slide number	215
Fuel tank capacity	117.5 L (3.1 gals.)
Lubrication	Pre-mix
Gearbox ratios:	
1	2.917:1
2	1.929:1
3	1.412:1
4	1.100:1
5	0.084:1
Gearing, front/rear	13/52
Ignition	Motoplant CDI
Recommended spark plug	NGK B10EG
Silencer/spark arrester	Yes/no
Wheelbase	1460mm (57.5 in.)
Ground clearance	342mm (13.5 in.)
Seat height	952mm (37.5 in.)
Rake/trail	27.5°/105mm (4.1 in.)
Wet weight, no fuel	223.5 lbs.

Tire size and type:	
Front	3.00 x 21 Metzeler 3E
Rear	4.50 x 18 Metzeler 4E
Suspension, type and travel:	
Front	White Power 4054 forks, 300mm (11.8 in.)
Rear	Pro-Lever single shock, adj. comp/reb., 320mm (12.6 in.)
Intended use	Off-road, enduro
Country of origin	Austria
Retail price, approx.	\$2997
Distributor/Manufacturer:	
KTM America	
1906 Broadway	
Lorain, OH 44052	
Overall rating of bike, keeping intended use in mind:	
Handling	Excellent
Front suspension	Very good
Rear suspension	Excellent
Power	Excellent
Cost	Very good
Attention to detail	Very good
Effectiveness, stone stock	Excellent

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.

## SETTING RECORDS

If you want a new 250 enduro bike this year, you haven't got too much of a choice. There's no more KDX250, no IT250; there hasn't been a PE250 in years; and the XR250 is out of the league of any of these two-strokes. That leaves you with a choice between the Husky, the KTM, and the Can-Am. Obviously, we haven't had a chance to even see the offerings from the other factories yet, but after riding this MXC, we have to say that they've got a tough job in front of them if they plan to beat out KTM.

The MXC is a no-compromise machine. There's no such thing as "leftover enduro technology" here. This is the cutting edge of enduro and hare scrambles technology—this MXC does its job so well that some riders will have trouble sleeping at night after piloting it through a race, while other riders will hate it for its hair-trigger response. There's no middle of the road. You either like it or hate it. We like it. A lot. □