

POLARIS 250 TRAIL BOSS



BORN & BRED IN THE USA

Made the American way

By the Staff of DIRT BIKE

Our thoughts on sighting the Polaris for the first time were like those of young brats being told to eat their spinach. "Do we have to? It's so ugly. Yecch!" However, after one quick ride on the Polaris, we all agreed that this was no plain blue vegetable, but a big, powerful handful of fun!

Polaris Industries, the number one U.S. snowmobile manufacturer, has entered the ATV scene with what is possibly the best all-around four-wheeler on the market. Now, you don't want to go so far as to race a Polaris against a Suzuki Quadracer; the Polaris is classified as a utility vehicle, but for a huge variety of uses, nothing beats the Polaris.

Our first look at the Trail Boss, with its front and rear racks, headlight and 440-

pound weight, told us it was a work-related utility machine. However, after riding the beast for a full day, we decided to classify it as a "far too much fun to be just utility" machine.

Here are some of the highlights on the Polaris 250 Trail Boss:

- A big four-wheeled ATV with front and rear racks and a trailer hitch.

- Up front, the hazards of the outdoors are handled by two MacPherson struts. That's right, MacPherson struts, like on the cars.

- Roost power comes from a 244cc two-stroke engine with an oil-injection system. Highly unusual in a market dominated by four-strokes.

Polaris uses its PVT (Polaris Variable Transmission) snowmobile automatic trans-

◀ *This is no Quadracer, but it is a whole lot of fun. We couldn't get our test riders off the Trail Boss once they discovered how graciously it landed after a short flight.*

mission on the Trail Boss. No clutch lever, no foot shift lever; just put it in forward, neutral or reverse with the hand-operated lever on the left side of the engine and roost away.

- Electric starter with a recoil pull rope back-up system ends those dead battery blues.
- Single-shock rear suspension is adjustable only through the preload on the spring.
- The tires are mounted on ten-inch rims, and the Trail Boss is decked out in mud flaps all around. The color is dark blue like a WWII Navy Corsair.

- Instead of footpegs, there are large floorboards with built-in safety bars around the flat foothold. There are no foot-operated controls on the Polaris. Throttle, front brake and rear brake are all on the handlebars.

GOOSE IT AND ROOST IT

Riding the Polaris is a surprising joy. It starts with a small amount of choke and a push of the starter button. The spark arrester/silencer keeps the machine mercifully quiet, and the PVT automatic transmission keeps it revving at the perfect rpm for whatever terrain it encounters. The power is amazingly strong! Slip her into forward and grab a thumbful of throttle, and the Polaris shoots off like it was fired from a catapult.

Amazingly, the Trail Boss is right at home in a powerslide. The PVT transmission is load sensitive, so it automatically keeps the engine revving at the perfect torque range for full-lock donuts or flattrack-style sweepers. It tows heavy loads, climbs hills, or just cruises down a dirt road with the same ease. No worry about when to shift or what gear to use, just work the throttle, and the Polaris will handle it.

SOAKING IT UP

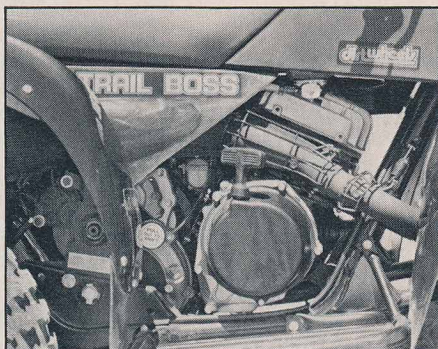
You're probably thinking, "Now wait a minute, this pig weighs 440 pounds. How well can it handle?"

Good question. During radical maneuvers the machine feels like it's carrying a little excess fat, but the superior suspension overcomes its weight problem and gives it handling qualities that can be eye popping.

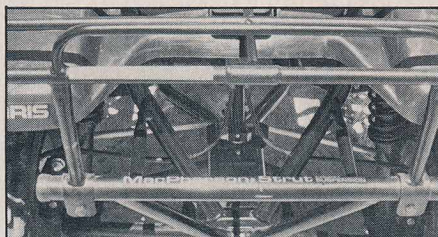
The MacPherson struts will handle the ugliest ruts, bumps, boulders, streams and whoops with terrifying ease. Nose landing off jumps, while not advisable, was absolutely no problem for the mighty MacPhersons.

Out back, the rear shock performed admirably over the worst the terrain had to offer. We did get it to bottom out, but only over the gnarliest of jumps, and it never gave out a metal-to-metal clank.

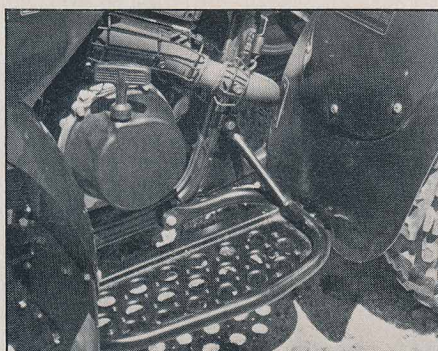
Some of our test riders thought that the floorboards felt downright weird. Roosting over whoops, or jumping, was when we most noticed the odd feeling of the boards. We don't think they should be replaced, but the rider should be warned that they will take some getting used to.



We liked the PVT automatic transmission and snowmobile-type engine disc brake. The rear brake had more than enough stopping power for the 440-pound blue beast.



The mighty MacPherson strut front suspension laughs at whoops, ruts, bumps and boulders. The front is so forgiving that we even tried nose landing the Polaris off jumps. No problem!



There are no footpegs on the Trail Boss. Instead, the Polaris has floorboards with built-in safety rails that keep the rider from running over his own feet.

MORE STUFF

The Polaris is wide, and this bothered some of our smaller riders. Normal-sized humans had no problems with it.

The reverse gear is plain and simple to work. Just reach down with your right hand and pop the Trail Boss into "R" and go backwards. This sounds really elementary, until you've tried some of the complicated reverse gear systems on some of the other ATVs we've ridden. The Polaris system is easy to work, and that drew our applause. You can also use the electric start in both neutral or drive, another nice simple touch.

A really trick item on the Trail Boss is the rear brake system. Instead of mounting a disc on the rear axle like most other ATVs, Polaris uses a snowmobile-type engine disc. The braking is almost too good. A big grab



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Engine type	Air-cooled, single-cylinder 2-stroke	Suspension:	
Displacement	244cc	Front	MacPherson strut, 6.25 in.
Bore and stroke	72mm×60mm	Rear	Coil spring over shock, 6.0 in.
Carburetion	VM30SS slide	Brakes:	
Ignition	CDI	Front	Hydraulic drums
Transmission	PVT (Polaris Variable Transmission)	Rear	Disc
Fuel tank capacity	4.5 gals.	Intended use	Sport/utility
Wheelbase	47.0 in.	Suggested retail price	\$2198
Overall length	74.0 in.	Country of origin	USA
Width	43.5 in.	Distributor/Manufacturer:	
Ground clearance	5.75 in. to bottom of sprocket	Polaris Industries, Inc.	
Seat height	33.5 in.	Hwy. 89	
Weight (dry, claimed)	440 lbs.	Roseau, MN 56751	

of the handlebar-mounted lever will easily lock up the rear wheels; a weak two-fingered pull is more in order for controlled braking.

SUMMED UP

The Polaris is not a race machine, but its inbred versatility makes it a marvelous play/utility, work-it-hard or have-a-lot-of-fun-with-it machine. It handles well enough to be

classified with ATVs intended for pure sport, and it certainly would be a big asset around the farm, on a construction site, or in the backwoods.

The Polaris 250 Trail Boss is an American multipurpose marvel that'll keep the Japanese manufacturers up late at night chewing their fingernails. Good stuff. □

The Trail Boss is just too much fun in a powerslide. The load-sensitive automatic transmission keeps the engine revving at the ideal torque range for flattrack-style sweepers.

