

WHAT'S GONNA BE GREAT IN '78

What's in store from the Big Four . . . and Hodaka

An 1100cc, four-cylinder, four-stroke shaft drive. That biggie, among numerous four-stroke roadsters, highlighted Yamaha's presentation of their 1978 model line, but the real news is the new YZs, naturally. The 125, 250 and 400 will all feature aluminum swingarms. The 250 is the most changed, with a new six-speed engine. The other WhyZees have also been refined. The all-new YZ80E has, for the first time, monocross suspension and leading front axle forks. It's supposed to be a real gasser. For those younger riders caught in the chasm between too-big-to-mini and too-small-to-125 is the YZ100. The chassis is scaled between the 80 and 125. And, according to Yamaha, the YZ125 top end will fit right on the YZ100.

The IT line retains the 175, 250 and 400. Both the 175 and 250 (for the first time) are six-speeders. The TT500 now has a yellow gas tank, the XT500 remains the four-stroke alternative to the DT Enduro line. The DT100 has two suspenders; the 125, 175, 250 and 400 are monoshockers.

The dirt models also include two milder minis — the GTMXE for dirt only and the GT80E with street lighting. Most of Yamaha's dirt bikes should be available around year's end.

Honda has released part of their 1978 off-road line, but they're saving the biggies for later release, probably sometime after the first of the year. DIRT BIKE will have an exclusive test on one of the new dirt models. Could it be a 250 or 400 racing replica Elsinore, or maybe the XR500 trail thumper? We don't know.

Machinery already released

includes the XL75, XL100, XL125 and XL175 street/trailers, the Z50A mini bike, the CT70 trailbike, the XR75 mini-thumper, the three-wheeled ATC90 and the four-wheeled Odyssey buggy.

The big news from Hodaka is their first-ever 175. They now offer a trailbike in every displacement class from 80cc to 250cc. Yep, there's a new 80, which the blue and orange elves of Athena insist resulted from a blend of Preparation H and Mickyroonium. The first-time shrunk mini 80 is 40 pounds lighter and three inches lower.

The 175 is a limited edition street/trailer with radial head, Petty front fender, folding shift lever, toolbox, 2.9-gallon gas tank, 11 inches of ground clearance and a suggested retail under a grand.

The latest 125 SL updates the illustrious Wombat of yesteryear, the same critter Frank Wheeler wheeled across Australia all by his lonesome. And with a new Wombat available can the Womball be far behind?

The 250 Samuel Lipshitz Replica will be selling for \$9524.95 plus tax and dealer set-up. Hurry on down to your freeway-close dealer because there are only three in production. To assuage the anticipated hordes of disappointed trail-pounders, Hodaka has come up with the Lipshitz Replica, an economy version with all the pizzazz and versatility of the real thing at only a fraction of the cost. A mere \$1095. The big SL has gas shocks, quick-change rear wheel and humongous cruising tank.

Rounding out the fivesome is the new Road Toad. And don't forget the get-'em-while-they-last offer at any Hodie dealer — *How To Trail Ride by Hodaka*, a handy instruction manual, yours for the asking.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Green

Meanie. Are, actually, as in three of them. The 250 Kawasaki 'crosser will probably be in dealer showrooms by the time you read this. We're told that the bike is only a few pounds heavier than the works 250 with which Jimmy Weinert won this year's Superbowl of Motocross and has the same geometry. The Jammer's bike had a little engine work and personal suspension set-up, otherwise the bikes are virtually identical. Watch for a DIRT BIKE test in the next month or two.

The 125 berm-buster should be available after the first of the year. The KX380 is tentatively scheduled for late spring, early summer.

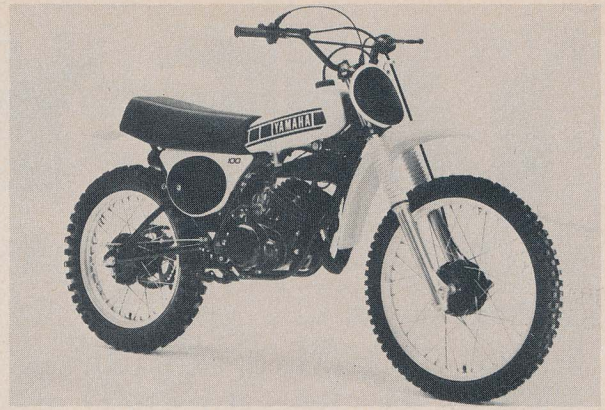
The KL250 signals Kawasaki's entry into the four-stroke off-road market. The street/trailer is scheduled to hit the dealers before January.

Suzuki will be introducing two four-stroke off-riders in the Spring. The 264-pound DR370 will retail for around \$1279, the street/trail version, the SP370, will go for around \$1379. Both bikes have laid-down suspension. Look for the latest PE250 around March and the brand-new PE175 in April. The 175 weighs 209 pounds, is a six-speeder and reportedly has nine inches of travel up front, eight inches in the back. Suzuki has added an RM50 mini-racer and a JR50 mini-mini that will go for \$299. The new RM125 and 400 will have aluminum swingarms, floating rear brakes and two damping adjustments for the shocks.

As this is written Honda and Kawasaki have not yet had their new model presentations. We'll pass along more info as it becomes available, along with a long look at what's new across the Atlantic in future issues.



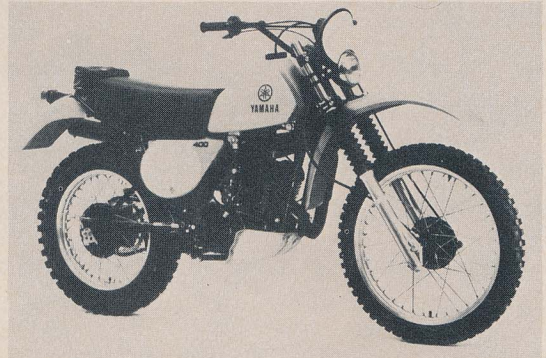
YZ250E. A brand-new, trimmer engine with a sixth gear. Claimed weight 216 pounds. Aluminum swingarm, 38 Mikuni.



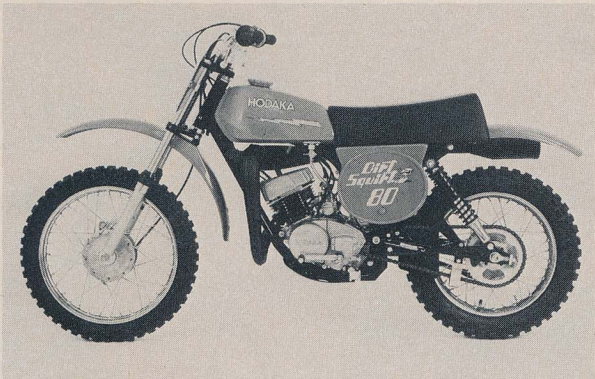
Yamaha YZ100E. The wheelbase is two inches shorter than the YZ125. Height is two inches lower. 125 top end slips right on.



Yamaha YZ80E. First time for Monocross suspension and leading axle forks. Claimed weight 146 pounds. 26 Mikuni. Five speeds.



Yamaha IT400E. Yamaha sponsored the ISDT Silver Vase team in 1977 and here's the big-bore of the IT line. It's still blue. The 250 has been upped to six speeds.



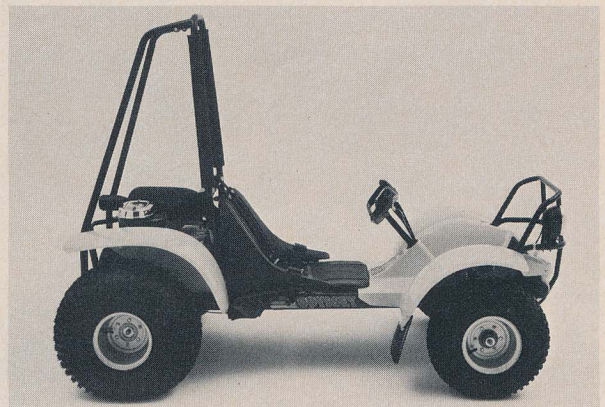
Hodaka Dirt Squirt. 80cc. Five-speed. Claimed weight 151 pounds. Suggested retail \$495.



Hodaka 175SL. Five-speed. Claimed weight 266 pounds. Suggested retail \$995.



Hodaka 250SL. Five-speed. Claimed weight 284.5 pounds. Suggested retail \$1095.



Honda Odyssey. A minified dune buggy with MT250 engine and roll bar.