

# DIRT BIKE

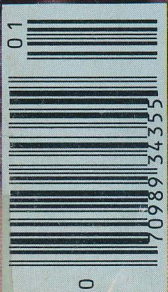
RED-HOT 125 HONDA!

INDIANA-  
NEW JERSEY  
ENDURO  
ACTION



SNEAK PEEK:  
YAMAHA  
TT250  
MONO

MINIS:  
HONDA CR80,  
YAMAHA YZ80



# DIRT BIKE

January 1980

Volume 10, No. 1



**On the cover:** Test rider Kenny Zahrt is about to grow wings on the CR125. Clipper photo. And a sneak preview of the TT250.

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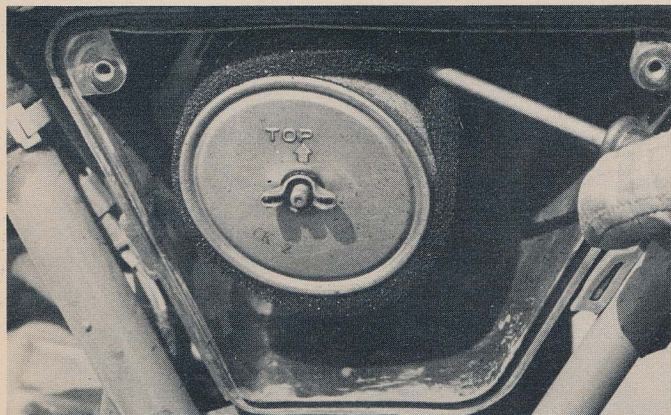
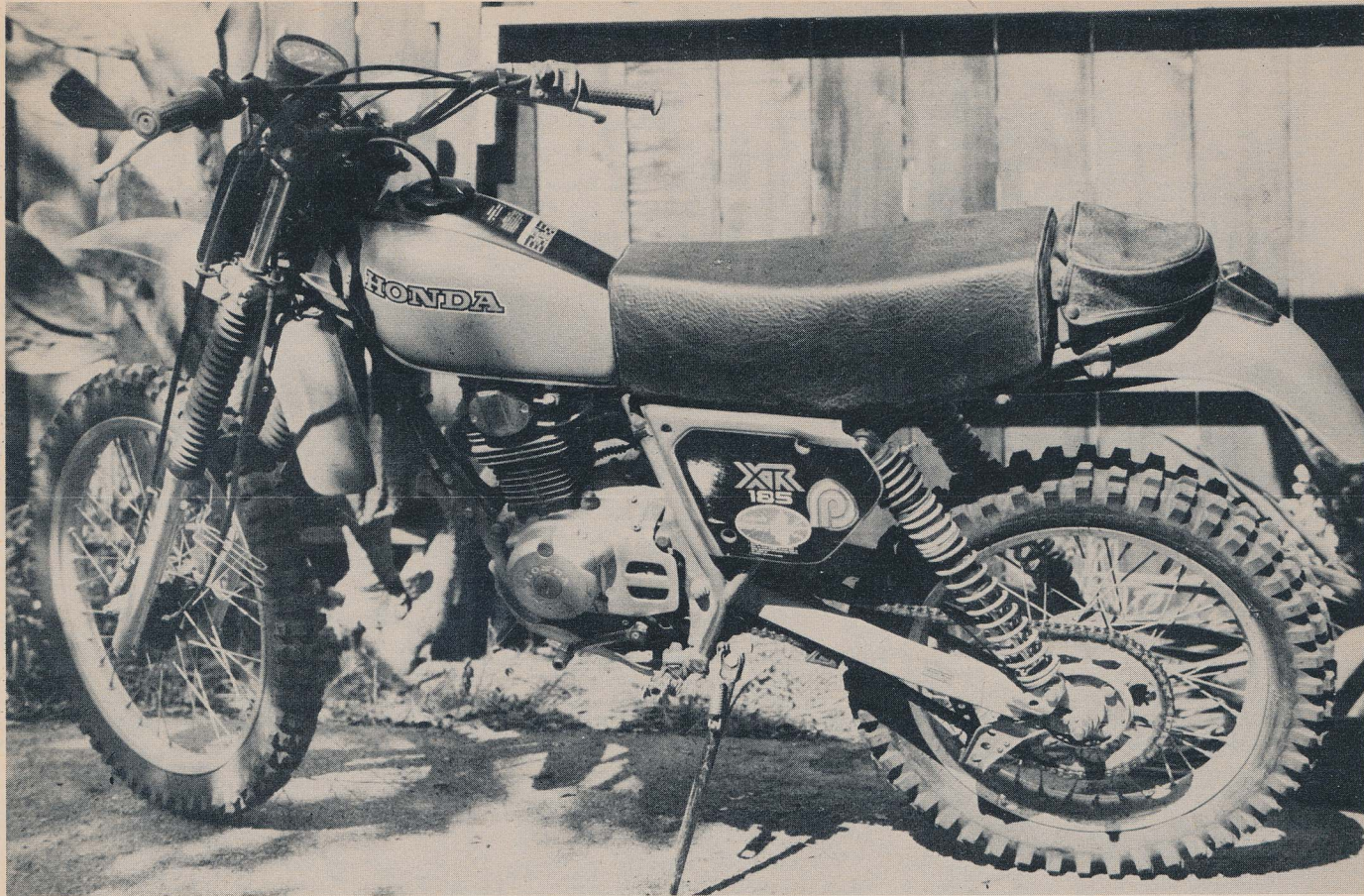
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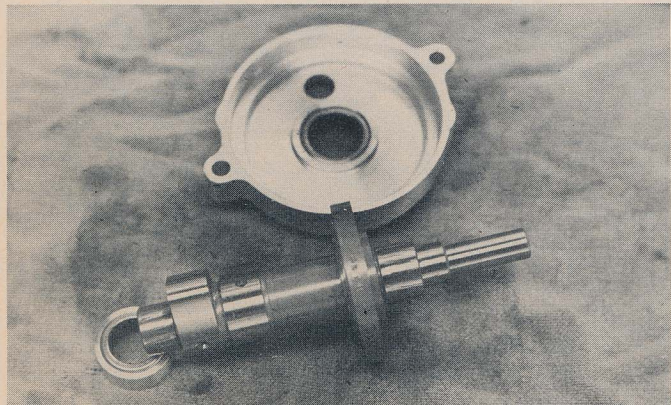
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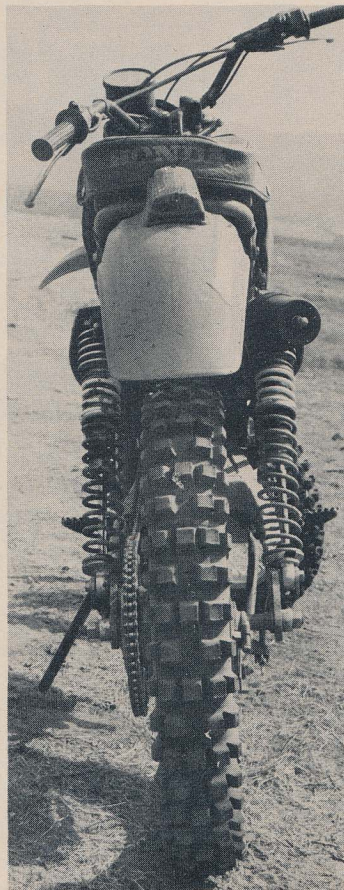
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*Two-part air filter is a good way to assure a clean air supply—essential for long engine life.*



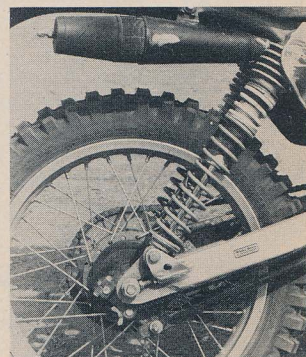
*A high-zoot needle bearing cam from Megacycle, number 43-X-1. We'll show you everything you ever wanted to know about cams next month.*



*Metzeler rear tire improves traction potential 100 percent.*



*3.00x21 Metzeler on the front end took care of a minor washout problem we had experienced in the past.*



*Triple-rate Works Performance shocks are the best thing that ever happened to Project XR's suspension. Silencer is shown with resonator attached, helps cut noise down somewhat.*

# PART FOUR, THE LAST

# PROJECT XR

Time to finish it: taking the high-buck approach for an all-out enduro weapon

By Paul Clipper

Time marches on, and it becomes necessary to finish Project XR. If we keep changing parts, tuning, and fiddling away with this bike, soon we're going to find out that it's been outdated right out from under us. After seeing the new 1980 XR200, this is partially the case, but more about that in a few paragraphs.

Our objective this month was to see how the XR would react to ultimate components, the kinds of parts you might spring for if you were interested in a no-compromise enduro or cross-country bike. After all the other work that has gone into the XR, there were a limited number of things we felt we could rationally add.

We felt confident in sticking with the stock forks with the Terrykit installed. They have sufficient travel, the damping is wonderful, and they are reasonably strong—and certainly light. In super-rough riding they do have a tendency to flex slightly, but not enough to justify spending upwards of \$300 for a pair of accessory forks. Lots of folks are finding that a C&J frame and a set of Kayaba or Simons air forks are the hot setup for the XR500, but we're working with a lot less weight and horsepower here, and unless you have money to burn, it just isn't necessary.

We did, however, pop for a set of Works Performance Triple-Rate Gasers on the rear, to the tune of \$169.95 a pair. All Works shocks are hand-tuned for damping and spring rate on each particular bike, and it shows when you ride them. On Project XR, the behavior of the rear end was perfect whether we were riding over stutter-bumps at moderate speeds, or slamming square-edged holes with the throttle pegged. Just the kind of action needed for a long-distance event. We of course are still using the White Brothers swingarm, which is an inch longer than stock and quite a bit stronger, but Works can match up a set for the stocker, also.

We went all the way with tires, and installed Metzeler—a 3.00x21 on the front, and a 3.75x18 on the rear, an expensive proposition at approximately \$46.95 and \$51.95 respectively. There are a number of places and times of the year when the use of these tires isn't necessary—like whenever ground moisture is high enough to allow a

decent amount of traction. But, in the dead heat of a nut-dry summer, or seven months of the year in Southern California's rocky clay, the only thing that works well is a Metzeler, sad but true. Project XR performed amazing turning feats with the new rubber; it was hard to accept the fact that we were riding the same bike.

The last high-buck mod on our list was a cam, to give more top end to the already modified (198cc) motor. We now have in our possession one each Megacycle #43-X-1 needle bearing cam, with a much more radical grind than the stocker. Unfortunately, it arrived too late to be installed this month, and considering the care necessary during installation and factors involving valve spring lengths and piston clearances, we decided to devote a full feature next month to the installation, plus a how-to on four-stroke top-end maintenance, so check us out next month for all the details.

We also made a few minor changes, the most noteworthy of which was the addition of a new two-stage air filter, put out by Jim O'Neal Distributing. It slips into place on either the stock air box, or the genuine Honda performance option box, and it consists of an outer filter of very coarse foam and an inner of normal filter material. The outer sock stops most of the crud before it even reaches the inner, and it works without a change of jetting. Cost: approximately \$3.99.

Two more things: We raised the gearing slightly by going from the stock 58-tooth sprocket to a 56, and a resonator was installed on the end of the Super Trapp to cut down on the noise.

D/FW Honda in Bedford, Texas, wrote us a letter with a tip on 520 sprockets. For the countershaft, use a CR125R sprocket; and on the rear, they tell us that an aftermarket sprocket for the "old XL175" will bolt right on. Thanks for the tip, guys. Only thing is, as soon as the '80 models are out, you'll be able to buy stock sprockets for 520 chain. Oh, well.

## Riding impression

Even with the resonator on the exhaust, the XR sounds like rolling thunder. Once we get the cam tuned in, we expect to be able to drop the number of discs in the Super Trapp

without sacrificing any top end. This should take care of the noise.

As we said earlier, the shocks work great. All manner of ugly obstacles can be roared over or through without a second thought, and the forks still perform without a whimper. The greatest improvement came about through the use of the new tires—now the XR is almost as predictable as a Maico on hard-packed surfaces. We could corner on a well-graded short-track oval to within six inches of handlebar-dragging without losing the front end, and the rear would respond in a like manner, needing a good application of throttle to break it loose. Truly remarkable manners, but they didn't come cheap. As said before, if traction isn't at a premium in your area, you will be able to get off a little more cheaply.

As you know, we at DIRT BIKE don't like to boast about our achievements, but on one tuning outing, Project XR found itself on a local MX track chasing a group of RM250s. What happened? It smoked through them like a hot knife through pudding, headlight and all. We're pretty proud of this bike.

But, at this point, there's no need to go on. We've done everything we could rationally conceive of, and made suggestions for both inexpensive and not-so-inexpensive mods that the stock XR is sure to respond to. We would like to have lightened it up a little more, but plastic tanks and seat bases and such are only right now becoming available, and we know what would happen there anyhow.

By this time, you should know that the new (1980) XR185 is a full 200 (well, 195), and comes stock with a 520 chain. It looks like a nice little unit, with a lot of small detail changes that are all for the better. The chassis is the same as last year's, except for a different design swingarm (maybe stronger...?), so all the parts we've used in this project should bolt right on, and you may not even want to fool with the engine. How about that!

## Conclusion

Finally, to sum this whole experiment up, the best thing to do is insert a few sentences of Clipper's raw notes, jotted down after one of the most recent test sessions: "... certain intelligent changes will result in a high-potential enduro/cross-country

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mount, at a minimum of expense. A few of our peers in the magazine business have religiously maintained that there is no possibility of building a competitive four-stroke mount for less than \$3000, which usually includes a new frame, suspension, motor job, etc. I haven't totaled up the figures yet, but I believe that Project XR proves this belief false." □

### Names and numbers

Powroll XR185 big-bore kit . . . \$45.00  
Powroll XR185 pipe w/Super  
Trapp . . . \$65.00  
Sudco 28mm Mikuni carb kit,  
approx. . . . . \$65.00  
MTD Twister throttle  
w/cable . . . . . \$19.95  
Terrykit fork kit . . . . . \$39.00  
White Bros. swingarm kit  
w/S&W shocks . . . . . \$259.95  
Tsubaki 428 chain, 132 links . . \$20.00  
White Bros. Super Trapp  
exhaust system . . . . . \$47.50  
Resonator for Super Trapp . . . . \$5.50  
O'Neal two-stage air filter . . . . \$3.99  
Works Performance gas shocks,  
triple-rate . . . . . \$169.95  
Megacycle needle bearing cam,  
43-X-1 . . . . . \$110.00  
Metzeler 3.00x21 tire . . . . . \$46.95  
Metzeler 3.75x18 tire . . . . . \$51.95  
Yokohama SD-902, 3.00x21 . . . \$32.49  
Yokohama SD-901, 4.10x18 . . . \$35.13

All of the prices are approximate, and no, we didn't use all these parts on the same bike at the same time.

### Addresses:—

#### White Bros. Cycle Specialties

11611 Salinaz Drive "M"  
Garden Grove, California 92643  
*Alloy swingarm kit, fork kits,  
Super Trapp pipe and resonator*

#### International Motorsports

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Riverside, California 92501  
*MTD throttles*

#### Sudco International

1824 E. 22nd St.  
Los Angeles, California 90058  
*Yokohama tires, Tsubaki chain,  
Mikuni carbs*

#### Powroll Performance Products

P.O. Box 1206  
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*All sorts of hop-up parts*

#### Megacycle Cams

90 Mitchell Blvd.  
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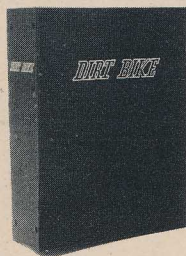
#### O'Neal Distributing

18340 Gault St.  
Reseda, California 91335  
*Air filter, tires, shocks*

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