

PRE-EXCLUSIVES!

FIRST '86 TEST RIDES:
'86 KX250 • '86 CR500 • '86 YZ250 •
'86 HUSKY 4-STROKE • FIRST LOOK AT HONDA'S WILD NEW FAT CAT 200!

DIRT BIKE

DIRT BIKE

NOVEMBER 1985

WPS 34355

**NEW YORK NATIONAL ENDURO:
SURPRISE! SURPRISE! HONDA
STINGS TEAM HUSKY!**

EXOTIC BIKE TESTS:

- SUPER-FAST XR MINI
- HONDA XLV750
- 200 LB. YZ250
- HONDA'S WORKS 4-STROKE



1986 HONDA CR500

\$2.00
UK £1.60

**HOW
TRAIL RIDING
CAN IMPROVE
YOUR MX SKILLS!**

**NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS GO
INTO SUDDEN-DEATH SHOWDOWNS:
WARD HAUNTED BY "INSTANT REPLAYS"!**



1986 HONDA 4x4

**4-WHEEL-DRIVE 350:
HONDA'S FLOATING BATTLESHIP
SINKS THE COMPETITION!**



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DIRT BIKE

NOVEMBER 1985 • VOLUME 15, NO. 11



1963 vs. 1971 vs. 1985 SHOOTOUT



'86 YZ250



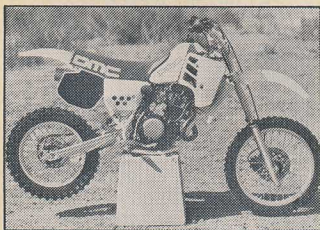
'86 KX250



'86 HUSKY 510TE



'86 HONDA 4x4



RADICAL XR MINI



'86 HONDA CR500

ON THE COVER:—Lots of new stuff for '86. Jeff Hicks twists the latest KX250 production 'crosser while our spy (cleverly disguised as a barm) snaps the shutter. Hard-working Steve Schmitz plows a sandy Hondaland corner aboard the equally hard-working '86 CR500 Honda. Photo by Fran Kuhn. Tom Webb got into his Lewis-and-Clark mode while blazing the Rubicon Trail aboard the incredible Honda Four Trax. Photo by David Gerig, who sneived profusely because his socks got wet. DeWest stayed late to arrange this startling array of off-road activity into a rather small rectangular layout, and Valley Film did the separations. Thank you, Don Pardo.

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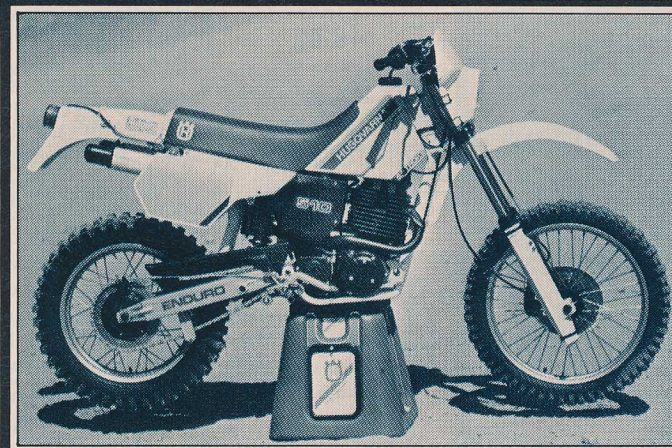
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WARNING: Much of the action depicted in this magazine is potentially dangerous. Virtually all of the riders seen in our photos are experienced experts or professionals. Do not attempt to duplicate any stunts that are beyond your own capabilities. Always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

INTERIOR COLOR PHOTOGRAPHY:—Pages 22, 39, 45, 61, 64, 65—Fran Kuhn; Honda Four Trax, page 65—David Gerig.



THUNDER IN THE WOODS!

Could it be the best four-stroke ever?

By the Staff of DIRT BIKE

The first Husqvarna four-strokes hit the American market like a bombshell. Amid a sea of controversy, the Swedish thumper was proclaimed by many to be the first "competitively valved" machine. Others labeled the odd engine design "archaic" or "untested." Racers loved the lightweight chassis and the advanced trackside manners of the four-banger Husky. Trail riders spat vicious threats about the machine, sorry they ever laid out the big chunk of change for the miserable-starting Swedemobile. After a series of customer-related starting problems, the four-stroke was recalled, and ignitions were updated in an attempt to cure the starting dilemma. Still, they sold like wildfire.

For 1986, Husqvarna has introduced three new single-shock T-model four-strokes. We played our cards right and have the very first single-shock, enduro version of the highly touted Husqvarna four-stroke—the 510TE Husky.

LAY DOWN YOUR CARDS

The 510 Husky engine has been refined since its introduction in the States. It's still a reed-activated oil-flow system with the lubrication carried via the camshaft chain. When the piston creates a vacuum, the oil is transferred from the left-side galley to the crank. There, an oil mist lubricates the crank pin, the bearing and the wrist pin. As the piston descends, the bottom end pressurizes and forces a reed valve to open. This in turn forces the oil back into the side case, where it starts back up the cam chain.

A dual exhaust system lets the engine breathe and is well muffled through twin spark arrester/silencers. The TE uses a different ignition from its longer-legged brothers; the SEM provides a hot spark and excellent voltage for the lighting system. Carburetion is handled by a 36mm Dellorto, and the new single-shock chassis features a right-side airbox, slightly reminiscent of the old J.N. Roberts Huskys.

SLIM JIM

The big news with the new-generation Husky four-stroke is the single-shock chassis. Sitting on the TE brings new meaning to



the word "sleek." By losing the dual-shock rear end, the Husky has also lost nearly six inches of width across the middle. The single-shock system is handled by a completely revalved (from the '85 model) Ohlins

▲ *With a long stance, the TE is stable and responds with very little rider input. It never does anything scary or odd, and it plows through the woods like a polished competitor—an expensive competitor.*



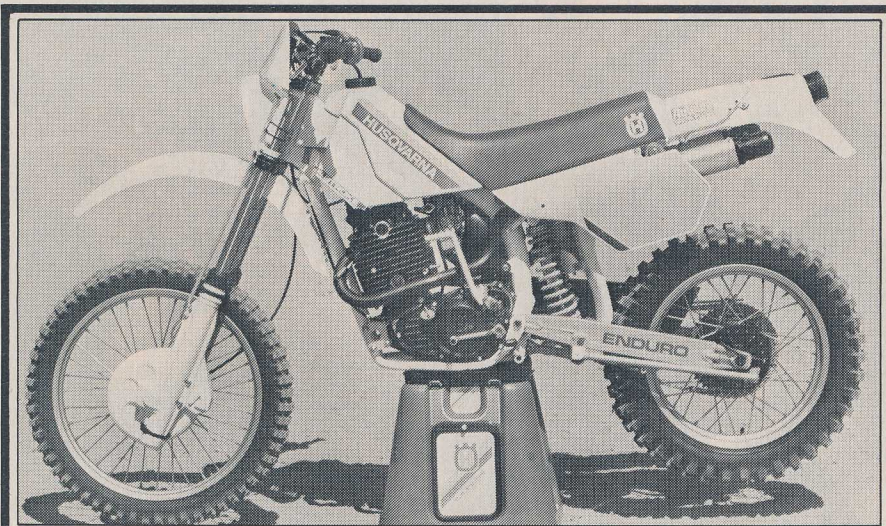
HUSQVARNA 510TE



Husky concentrated on refining the four-stroke lineup. The carburetion has been revised with separate floats and individual pilot circuits. These updates, along with a new ignition system, have removed the "random" starting manners from the four-stroke.



We never really fiddled with the suspension on the TE; out of the crate it's set up dead-on. Over harsh ripple bumps it's compliant, yet it will soak up the monster hits without a snivel. Good stuff.



HUSQVARNA 510TE

Engine type	Single 4-valve, OHC 4-stroke
Bore and stroke	91.5mm x 76.4mm
Displacement	503cc
Carburetion	Dellorto
Factory recommended jetting:	
Main jet	150
Jet needle	AB265
Needle jet	52
Pilot jet	60
Slide number	50
Needle position	3
Mixture control	1 3/4 turn
Fuel tank capacity	9 L (2.4 gals.)
Lubrication	Reed-activated
Gearbox ratios:	
1	20.67:1
2	14.28:1
3	10.8:1
4	8.21:1
5	6.94:1
6	5.84:1
Gearing front/rear	48/14
Transmission	6-speed, constant mesh
Ignition	SEM

Recommended spark plug	NGK D8
Silencer/spark arrester	Yes/yes
Wheelbase	1512mm (59.5 in.)
Ground clearance	390mm (15.3 in.)
Seat height	975mm (38.3 in.)
Rake/trail	27°/120mm (4.7 in.)
Claimed weight, dry	251 lbs.
Tire, size/type:	
Front	300x21 Metzeler
Rear	4.50x18 Metzeler
Suspension:	
Front	Husqvarna, 270mm (10.6 in.)
Rear	Ohlins, piggyback single shock, 290mm (12.2 in.)
Brakes:	
Front	Disc, 230mm (9.6 in.)
Rear	Drum, 160mm (6.3 in.)
Intended use	Off-road
Country of origin	Sweden
Suggested retail price	\$3175
Distributor/Manufacturer:	
Husqvarna Motorcycle Company	
4925 Mercury St.	
San Diego, CA 92111	

shock fitted with both compression and rebound adjusters. A long, slim aluminum swingarm carries the Husky linkage and has 12.2 inches of travel.

Up front a typical pair of Husky 40mm forks with 10.6 inches of air between the tire and fender handle the boinger chores. This year a disc finds its way to the four-stroke line, along with a pair of Metzeler tires. The rear brake is similar to past units, but now the backing plate uses a slip-fit lug setup, rather than the floating arm to hold it in line. This makes rear tire changes much easier.

A new, very thin gas tank is mated to a streamlined seat, and the combination complements the slim new tail section of the Husky. The seat flows nicely up onto the tank, and there is nothing that hinders the rider, as there has been in years past. Actually, this might be the skinniest model in the Husky lineup!

START ME UP!

Here's the procedure Husky gave us for starting the TE when it's cold: Choke on, no throttle, turn the idle screw a couple of notches, find top dead center, bring the kick-starter down 5mm and whammo! Oddly enough, our TE snorted to life on the first wallop. Once we'd let the virgin engine idle for a few minutes, we thumped off.

It took us less than one mile on the trail to realize an important fact: This is far and away the best-handling Husky we've ever ridden! Somehow the combination of the new seat/tank arrangement, slim rear end, plush forks and superior tail-end damping made the TE carve through a corner quicker than a jack rabbit with a mountain lion glued to his fanny. It tackled whoops, holes, ruts and bumps like a finely honed instrument. At speed it held a line like an aircraft carrier, and it never once bothered us with ugly headshake when coming down from speed. We couldn't believe it!

Our machine had a big fat zero on the odometer when we received it. For the first 20 miles we really took it easy on the engine and tried to be nice during the initial break-in period. Oddly enough, the bike felt slow. Real slow. We knew it was jetted close, since there was no telltale gurgle, but there was a noticeable hitch, actually a bog, when the throttle was tagged full open. It liked to accelerate slowly, with a smooth throttle application.

Back at the truck we checked all the bolts, spokes and hardware, then let the machine cool down. It was on the second outing that the 510 started to come to life. The full-throttle hitch nearly evaporated, and the overall voltage of the machine felt about 20 percent stronger. It was also on this trip that a starting gremlin zapped our heads.

We'd already fallen under the spell of the healthy rasp put out by the TE; it ripped and snarled up, over and through obstacles like a tank. It felt like it was geared too high for tight enduro work, and sixth gear tapped the century mark on the speedo. Still, the four-stroke would plonk quite comfortably, conquering every bit of scenery it crossed. Until we stalled. No problem, find top dead cen-

(continued on page 74)

SHOOTOUT

(continued from page 48)

STEPPING AHEAD—TO 1971

After a ride on the Lito, the 1971 Husky looks and feels like a works machine. The main advantage of the "newer" bike is its relatively low weight: While the Lito weighs in at 330, the Husky is an absolute flyweight at just 231 pounds. Much of the weight savings is in the engine department—the Husky's two-stroke mill weighs about half as much as the Lito's 500 thumper.

The suspension on the Husky, while nowhere near as sophisticated as that of the CR500 Honda, is still improved quite a bit from that found on the Lito. The Husqvarna telescopic forks offer six inches of movement, and the rear Girlings compress a total of 4½ inches. Like the Litograph machine, Husqvarna's 1971 Open class CR shifts on the right and brakes on the left.

The 400cc motor makes surprisingly good power over a very broad range. This engine, bolted in a 1985 chassis, would be competitive against most of today's bikes. With a five-speed transmission the Husky would be better suited to high-speed desert work, but back in '71, lots of riders simply geared up the four-speeders and won on them anyway.

Over the rough the machine is quickly pushed to its limits, but it's stable enough to move at a surprisingly quick pace with a good rider aboard. The reasonably light weight allows for some modern-day aerial maneuvers and perhaps an occasional small set of doubles.

One area where the Husky really excels is in the corners. The low overall height allows the rider to plow the machine deeply into corners without struggling against a high center of gravity. This technique is especially effective when really soft, deep sand is encountered—it's a simple matter to get the bars dragging in the dirt. On smooth, slick corners the 400 is a slidin' fool. Once again, the relatively low overall height combines with a controllable powerband to allow the rider to dial in just the right amount of side-ways movement. This kind of maneuvering can be especially difficult on a machine with a 36-inch saddle height.

BACK TO THE PRESENT

Comparing either the Lito or the Husky to Honda's 1985 CR500 is like comparing a crossbow to a .44 Magnum. If a fast intermediate had the Honda, say, ten years ago, there's a good chance he'd have been able to win a World Championship on it. There's just no substitute for the great power, suspension and handling we've come to expect from our beloved 1985 motocrossers.

On a two-minute lap over typical MX terrain, the Honda is capable of running at least 20 seconds faster than the Husky, which in turn is another 20 seconds ahead of the Lito—which comes as absolutely no surprise.

One thing we did find, however, was a new respect for the men who raced motorcycles like the Lito and the Husky, and as much admiration for the machines of the past as for the technology of the present. □

HUSQVARNA 510TE

(continued from page 62)

ter, down 5mm, ki. . .ck. Once again, top dead center, down five and—brick wall. After a good 15 attempts, the air suddenly got thinner, the bike heavier and our bodies weaker. Finally, a last, gasping, wimpy boot at the kickstarter brought the TE roaring to life!

The Husky people tell us there's a technique to starting the four-strokes. We tried their method, a couple hundred others, bribes, coaxing and elixirs. Nothing worked! Until suddenly we found the right combination and it barely required more than a sneeze to light up.

Our Husky was brand new, and we found that the more we rode the big Swede, the easier it got to start. The big thumper required at least ten hours of break-in time to loosen up the mill, which could account for the initial starting difficulty. By the end of the third day we had the Hooska starting psychology wired, and while it never got to be "first kick every time," it improved a great deal.

BITS AND PIECES

We slipped on a pair of nifty Husky Products fork and disc guards. They help keep the forks from getting dinged and sewage from entering the disc brake.

At first our front brake felt pathetic. As time and miles wore on, the stopping power increased. In the end we felt the unit was efficient, progressive, but not brutally strong. The rear stopper performed flawlessly and, though it's affected by water, does an excellent job of hauling the machine down from speed.

The speedo cable is a joke. It whipped and fluttered like a piece of dental floss and finally got caught in the front wheel. We zipped it to the forks and ended the problem.

Husky's new side-breather airbox is easy to service, filters well, and is high enough to keep the machine very waterproof. We like it.

We never fiddled with the forks. In stock trim they performed excellently and never bottomed with a harsh clanging. The rear Ohlins was magical. Just set the sag (rider on the machine) to 3.5 inches, and the straight-line stability and cornering tactics of the TE are fiendish. As we said, it's the best-handling Hooska we've ever ridden!

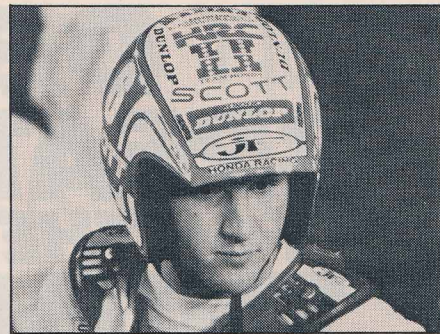
The air scoops mounted to the tank look trick and help direct a cooling flow to the cylinder. Our machine seems to have a long throw on the shifter, but was smooth and precise. The clutch action never faltered, and it seemed to crave abuse.

MAGIC IN THE NIGHT

Although the 510TE Husky is not the fastest four-stroke around, or the easiest to start, it is an enchanting piece of machinery. Its handling manners are unsurpassed; it consumes vicious terrain and spits out stability, turns like a motocrosser, and in the end, is a plain gas to ride. Both the four-stroke enthusiast and the Husky devotee will love the big Swedish thumper. It could be the best four-stroke ever. □

BITS & PIECES

(continued from page 15)



Ron earned the 125cc National Championship number one plate as a team Honda rider, but has signed with Kawasaki for the '86 season. Good luck on Team Green, Ronnie!

LECHIEN TO RIDE FOR KAWASAKI

Rumors, rumors, rumors, that's all we hear around contract time from the Big Four Japanese manufacturers. However, this is no rumor! Ron "the Machine" Lechien has signed to ride for Kawasaki in 1986 for an undisclosed amount of long greenbacks. Lechien, who has just had the crown fitted for his first-ever National title (which he won while riding for Honda) will take his Number One Plate over to Team Green and contest the '86 season on the KX production bikes. The proposed AMA racing format would allow Ron to ride half the season on 250s and the other half on 500cc machinery. It will be interesting to see how the '85 125cc National Champion fares on the middle-weight and big-bore machinery.

□ □ □

1986 AMA RACING FORMAT CHANGE

The AMA is considering changing the racing format for 1986 in hopes of making the points chase closer. The plan was originally drafted three years ago in an attempt to improve spectator interest and attendance at the outdoor motocross Nationals. Under the proposal, there would be a series of five 250cc events, followed by five 500cc races, each with a 125 class. The 125 class would be open to Pro-Am, Junior and Expert riders, with the overall series winner moving to the 250/500 Nationals the following year.

Implementation of this plan would force all of the currently established big-name riders to compete in 250/500 National races together, with a resulting increase in the intensity of competition. The lineup at the outdoor Nationals would closely resemble that of a stadium Supercross, and hopefully this will result in greater spectator interest and attendance. Because all of the major manufacturers do not currently offer 500cc machines, there will be no combined 250/500 points to determine a Grand National Champion. The AMA will meet with manufacturers' representatives, promoters and the media on September 27 to consider this and other proposals. Stay tuned for more developments. □