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21 29

*EPA estimates for comparison with standard 5-speed. Actual mileage may differ depending on speed, trip length and weather. Highway mileage will probably be less. California estimates: **20** 28.

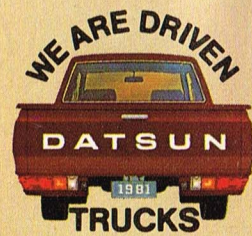
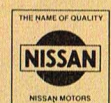
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WPS 34355

FIRST TEST: 1982 KAWASAKI KX125!

DIRT BIKE

NOVEMBER 1981 • \$1.50 UK80P

SUZUKI RM80: BUDGET BUILD-UP

760 MAICO: MONSTER BIKE

BULLETPROOF CLUTCH TRICKS



HONDA XR200 ENDURO: SHOCKING CHANGES FOR '82?



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SUZUKI. PERFORMANCE ABOVE ALL



RM-80

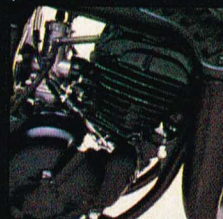
For young riders who want to win, riding the 1982 RM-80 is the way to do it. The reason: It's built like the big RMs.

The RM-80 is all new. Start with improved engine performance. Add a Full Floater suspension, leading-axle air forks, box-type swing arm, straight-pull hubs, and AMA number plates. Subtract a few pounds.

The result is the most competitive 80cc motocrosser in its class.

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For 1982, it has improved power throughout the powerband.



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The most effective rear suspension available. Keeps you straight and smooth like no other.



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Offers smoother, surer maneuvering through the roughest corners and whoops.



HONDA XR200R



IT TRICKERY



SIDEHACKS



SUZUKI PE250

On the cover: — David Bailey at work on the all-new '82 KX water-cooler. Photo by Rick Sieman.

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MONTESA 414G MOTOCROSSER

THE BARCELONA BERMSHOT EXPRESS!

By the Staff of Dirt Bike

It's been almost four years since *Dirt Bike* has tested a Montesa of any sort. Forty-eight months. Sort of makes you wonder what and why. Has the Spanish motorcycle industry fallen that far behind? Have all of the bikes become dated? Noncompetitive? Or is there still something stirring in the factories of Barcelona and Madrid?

To satisfy our curiosity, we received, for a test, a brand-new Montesa 414-VG motocrosser from Cosmopolitan Motors, the United States distributors.

It was delivered to us at Indian Dunes and immediately drew a crowd of curious onlookers.

"What is that thing?" "Wow, haven't seen one of those for a long time." "What'll she do?" "Looks spiffy; is it fast?"

We were curious, too, so we suited up for a few warm-up laps. The bike needed rejetting badly, so we pulled into the pits and delved into the innards of the massive, 40mm Bing carb to sort things out.

Getting the bike to run clean was fairly straightforward. We leaned the pilot jet way down and moved the needle down to full lean. The 185 main was left alone for break-in, then switched to a 180. This demanded that we move the needle back to the center position. You'll have to experiment for your local area, as a 20-degree drop in temperature can require a change in the carburetion.

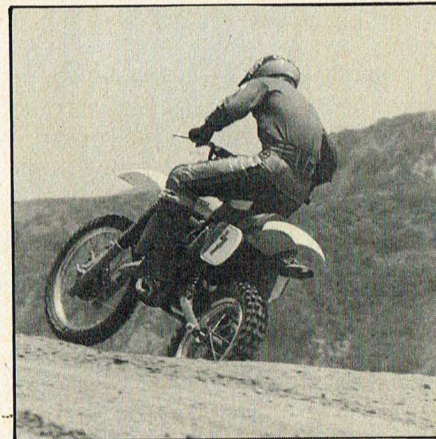
Anyway, after an hour or so, we had the 414VG running as crisp and cleanly as it was ever going to run with a Bing carb.

FACTS, FIGURES, ODDITIES AND DETAILS

First off, the Montesa 414 is a four-speed. Oddly enough, the only other bike on the market sharing that trait is the Honda 450 motocrosser. Some things stand out about the 414:

- The top speed, with stock gearing, is about the same as a 125 motocrosser—in the 55- to 58-mph range.
- It turns sharper and with more precision than any other 1981 bike we've ridden.
- The suspension is not right. Those Marzocchi forks are on the harsh

Searching for another gear in Valencia



The 414 was an easy bike to move around on. At first, the ultra-firm saddle feels uncomfortable, but when riding, it isn't noticeable. Pirelli tires hooked up well on hard-packed surfaces, but they slithered around in sand.

side and need work to feel in the ballpark.

- Dated Corte & Cosso shocks with remote reservoirs are hooked to a wide and sturdy swingarm. Too much compression and too little rebound damping were our initial impressions.
- That kickstarter is quite possibly the most gruesome device ever foisted off on the dirt bike world, rivaled only by a Greeves with grease on the shaft.
- Even though the bike is down on power compared to the current crop of superbikes, the power is correct and very useable.
- It's an easy bike to ride and you can turn competitive lap times, once you get over being last in the first turn.
- The thing hooks up and refuses to slide, slip out or slither through the most severe S-turns imaginable.
- Layout of the 414 is correct and our test riders adapted easily. The initial feel is odd, with a very stiff saddle and a forward seating position being the most natural. After ten minutes of riding, the testers were able to relax and the position became "normal."

- It's down on power for an open bike and, in fact, it feels more like a nicely powered 250.
- Shifting through the gears takes a deliberate prod on the oddly shaped lever. Brakes at both ends were smooth and chatter-free, even when cramping them all the way home for a panic stop.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Because of the mild power delivery, one gets the feeling of not going very fast. This is deceptive. Even though the Montesa will not win any drag races to the first turn, it can turn good lap times on a tight and twisty track. That is, if the track is not overly rough and there are no long straights on it. On the Indian Dunes International track (in Valencia, California), we were constantly looking for another gear on the back straight. As delivered, most properly geared 125s have a higher top speed than the 414.

With a properly spaced gearbox and a super-strong motor, a four-speed Open class motocrosser can work. Many works bikes have only four speeds. Often, this is achieved by simply eliminating fifth gear in a standard gearbox and changing the gearing in the primary or secondary drive.

On the Montesa, first gear is very tall and fourth is too close to first, leaving, in effect, a close-ratio four-speed. It's possible to gear the 414 for a greater top speed, but then you'd have to resort to slipping the clutch in low gear on tight corners. As it was, we had to use low a few times on the small Dunes course. On most other big bikes, second gear will do the job on the tightest corners conceivable, and third will often work just fine.

TURNING IMPRESSIONS

Some initial disappointment went away once we found out how the Montesa worked in the turns. Simply put, it was the sharpest-turning machine we have ridden this year... by a long shot. There was nothing magical in the rake and trail—that we could find—and while the Pirelli tires were good, they weren't the whole answer. Finally, the official *Dirt Bike* tape measure (accurate to plus or minus .001 furlong)



Sitting very tall, even for a new-generation, long-travel bike, the 414VG has a short wheelbase. The combination of these two things makes directional changes easy, but this sacrifices high-speed stability over rough tracks.

MONTESA 414G

gave us a clue. With only a 56-inch wheelbase, the VG is as short as bikes of the mid-1970s. When combining this short wheelbase with a low ground clearance of 12.9 inches, it helps the turning. Still, that tallish 39-inch saddle height gives the rider the feeling that he'll topple over if the bike is leaned too far.

Whatever made the Montesa turn as well as it did must be a combination of many small things all working together, because none of the things we mentioned can, by themselves, make that much difference. As long as the corners weren't all chopped up and bumpy, the 414 could literally be ridden through with an almost crazy aban-



MONTESA 414VG

NAME AND MODEL	Montesa 414VG
ENGINE TYPE	Single-cylinder, two-stroke, piston port
BORE AND STROKE	88mmx68mm
DISPLACEMENT	413.5cc
HORSEPOWER	N/A
CARBURETION	40mm Bing, type 54-2
FACTORY RECOMMENDED JETTING:	
MAIN JET	185
NEEDLE JET	286
JET NEEDLE	No. G3
PILOT JET	50
SLIDE NUMBER	23
RECOMMENDED GASOLINE	Premium, 90-plus octane
FUEL TANK CAPACITY	2.12 gallons (8.1 liters)
FUEL TANK MATERIAL	Fiberglass
LUBRICATION	Oil in gas, pre-mix
RECOMMENDED OIL	Castrol Super T.T. / Bardahl VBA 20-1
OIL CAPACITY	N/A
AIR FILTRATION	Oiled foam in still air box
CLUTCH TYPE	Wet, multi-plate
TRANSMISSION	Four-speed, left side shift
GEARBOX RATIOS:	
1	1.833
2	1.428
3	1.125
4	0.941
GEARING, FRONT/REAR	12/52
IGNITION	Motoplant, CDI 96001941
PRIMARY KICK SYSTEM?	No
RECOMMENDED SPARK PLUG	Bosch 270
SILENCER/SPARK ARRESTOR/QUALITY	Silencer only, fairly quiet
EXHAUST SYSTEM	High-pipe, right side exit
FRAME TYPE	Double downtube, full cradle

don. Just find the right gear, scream the engine and pitch that sucker in there. When it did start to break loose, the rear end would go first, only a little bit at a time. The front end would only break loose when the bars were cranked fully to the locks, then the front tire would gently wiggle outward. Perfectly balanced and very easy to control.

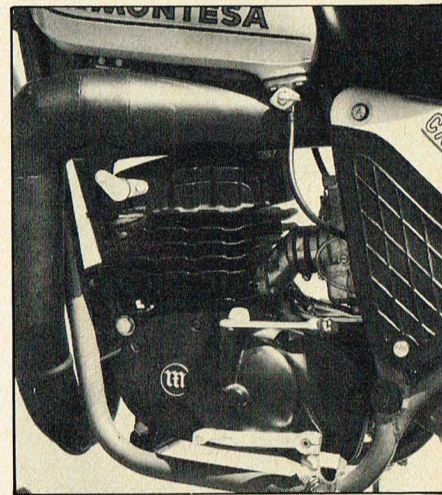
Problems were encountered when the turns were rough, but the hassles were not related to the chassis; rather, it was the result of mediocre suspension... front and rear.

FOLLOW THE BOUNCING IMPRESSIONS

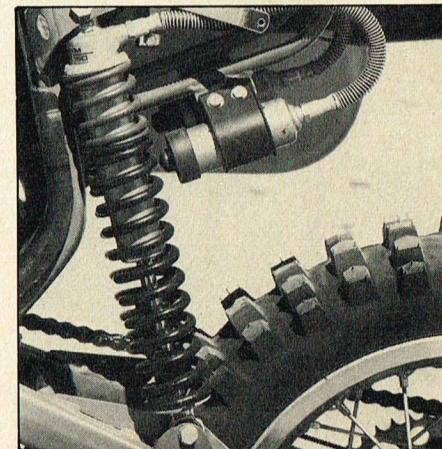
At the rear end, you'll find, basically, a set of two-year-old Corte & Cosso remote reservoir shocks. These units delivered a harsh ride, even though they came with the preload set at the

softest slot. While they worked reasonably well on the smoother, less demanding tracks, whoops simply slayed them. Here, the combination of the short wheelbase and oversprung shocks made for a miserable ride. The rear end would pogo straight up when any sort of a square bump was hit. And if the bike was not perfectly vertical through the whoops, a vicious side-hop reared its head now and then. We slipped on a set of Fox shocks that we had in the *Dirt Bike* shop—just as an experiment. They improved the rear end by exactly a million percent.

Up front, we diddled around with a few oils in the Marzocchi forks, but we eventually lost interest. At best, this particular type of Zokes delivered painfully average performance. We ended up with five-weight oil and no air in the



Black, wrinkle-finned engine has small-ish barrel. Forty-millimeter Bing carb feeds the gas to the non-reeded engine. Every time we ran the bike hard and hot, we got midrange detonation. Rejetting to the point of blubbering reduced, but didn't completely eliminate, this ping.



Remote reservoir Corte & Cosso shocks are mounted far forward and are really vertical. They felt harsh, even though the preload was set on full soft. A neat hanger holds the left reservoir behind the shock, but the right mount allows the hose to make contact with the tail-pipe and the muffler.

legs. The manual recommends 8 psi of air, but we found this very harsh. We raised the oil level a bit over what the manual called for, adding 35cc's more oil than the 365cc's called for. With the Foxes at the rear, and oil change up front, our VG then took the bumps in a reasonable manner. With those stock shocks at the rear, it could not be ridden aggressively on a fairly rough track.

BITS AND PIECES

Here and there, you can find some neat engineering on the Montesa. Cable adjusters are rubber covered but can be worked without pulling back the rubber covers. The air box is roomy and well protected, with a simple strap arrangement holding everything in place.

The kickstarter setup had to be rated gruesome. If you didn't have a nearby crate, it was almost impossible to place your right instep properly over the starting lever. And it took a fast and snappy kick to get the fire lit. Not the ideal thing for a dead-engine start. There's no primary kickstarting, which means that you have to hunt for neutral if you stall the bike during a race.

There are no decent guides on the front brake cable and it'll bend into the knobs once in a while.

Brakes were slightly mushy feeling but would haul the bike down from speed with no fuss.

At 241.25 pounds with no gas in the tank, the Montesa is not a light bike.

Styling left us with mixed emotions: flashbacks of the late '60s and early '70s, combined with bits of '80s technology.

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Right now, you have to be asking yourself the musical question: How does it stack up? After all, there are a lot of trick, big-inch bikes out this year. Before we answer that, consider this for a moment. The Montesa 414VG sells for right about \$2700 plus tax and title. It's in the same price range as the Husky, Maico and KTM, which is a very exclusive country club.

This means that you would have to truly value that small edge in cornering the Montesa offers. Because, in every other department, these other European bikes have the 414 beat, hands down. Then consider that several excellent Japanese racers sell for anywhere from \$500-\$700 less.

Still, a handful of motocrossers will buy a 414 this year, mostly out of brand loyalty or the urge to ride something different. Well, it is different. □

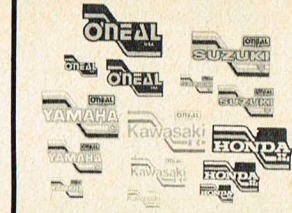
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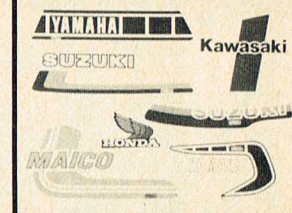
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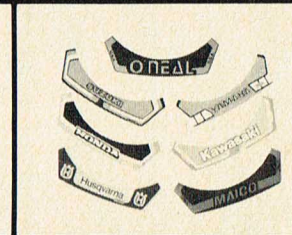
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