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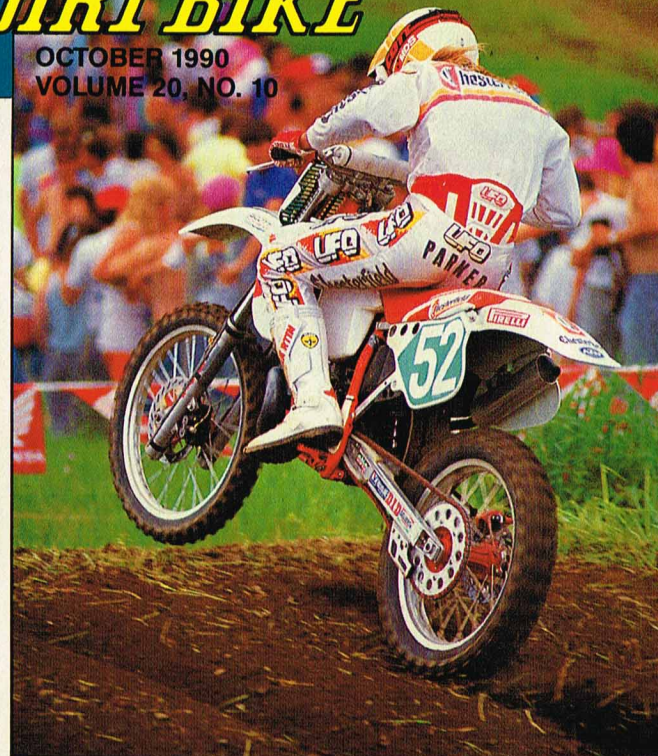
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DIRT BIKE

OCTOBER 1990
 VOLUME 20, NO. 10



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. *Dirt Bike* does all of its testing and photography legally on public land, or private land with permission from the owner(s), and we abide by the local laws concerning vehicle registration and muffler/spark arrester requirements. We are not responsible for quality of aftermarket accessories we use.

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ON THE COVER: Shane Trittler explodes a L.A. County Raceway berm for the lens of Torquin' Tim, while Christie Martin puts her best leg forward for Pat Carrigan's Nikon. KTM provided the photo of the "Mint Condition" 1991 540DXC. Cover design by Dennis West; color separations by Valley Film.

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Normally located right about here, our front disc brake has been lightened and features a new slot pattern to better dissipate mud & water.

High-impact plastic parts help to fend off foreign debris like rocks, dirt and tomatoes chucked by envious onlookers.

New aluminum alloy rims have been lightened, resulting in less unsprung weight. So you'll experience less riding stress. Same goes for the suspension.

New parallel flow radiators keep the KX cool, heat after heat.

43mm upside-down cartridge forks deliver over 12" of travel, and the triple crown utilizes tapered roller bearings. No cheap stuff here, folks.

Beefy front brake offers superb brake feel.

This space-age hunk of plastic keeps dirt and mud from landing on the front brake.

Fuel tank tucks down within the perimeter frame for lower CG. So the KX feels lighter and handles better.

Exclusive anti-flex perimeter frame is made from a virtually indestructible grade of high-tensile steel.

Remote reservoir rear shock absorber offers up to 13" of travel, without reservations. And yes, optional springs are available.

New, bigger master cylinder and improved brake hose make for stronger, more progressive braking.



The taper of our seat lets you slide up for better bite in the turns, while improved foam padding offers ample protection for you... well, you know.

Carbon fiber reed petals lessen back pressure and provide better crankcase filling for more low-end power.

Aluminum square tube rear frame can be easily unbolted for quick access to airbox and Unitrak.

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Aluminum swing arm is part of our adjustable rising-rate Unitrak® Suspension. This lets you swallow humongous bumps and enjoy gobs of wheel bite.

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Microcomputer-controlled digital ignition fires a perfectly timed spark. We're talking Africa hot.

The parts below and to the left make the knobby pictured on the right produce the kind of traction to keep you on top.

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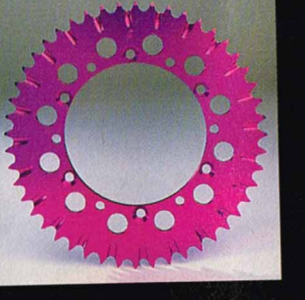
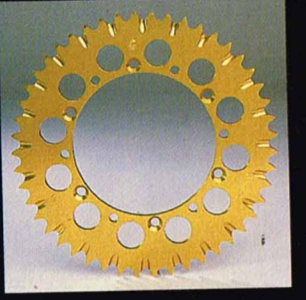
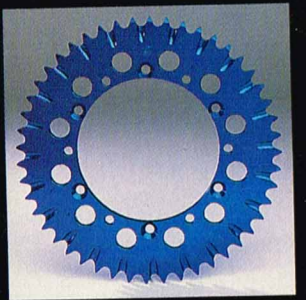
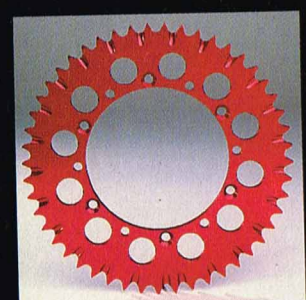


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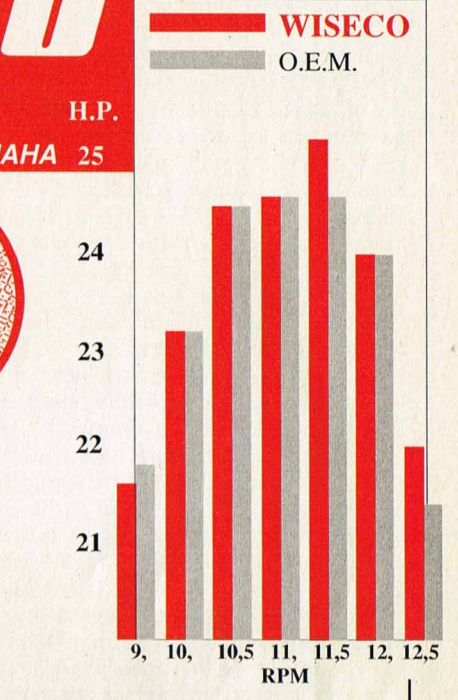
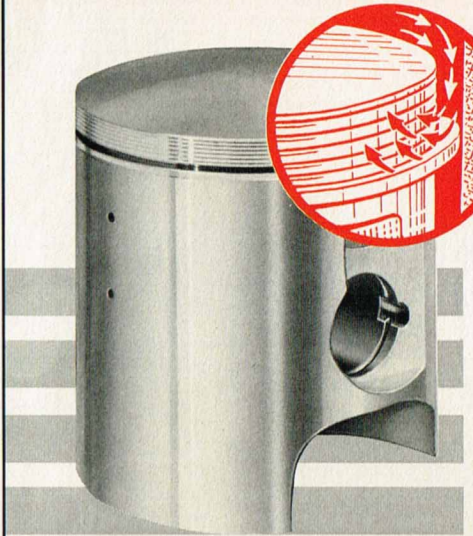
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FROM THE SADDLE

Ron Lawson will be coming aboard here at *Dirt Bike* next month, taking over the helm as Editor, a position I've enjoyed, unofficially, for the past nine months. Ron was Managing Editor of *Cycle World*, where he wrote most of their off-road articles, and he is a heck of a good dirt bike rider and racer. Lawson competed in the '89 ISDE, where he earned a silver medal, and most recently won the Mauna Kea 200 enduro. We feel that having Ron heading our staff will make *DB* a stronger, better magazine.

So Ron will be writing "From the Saddle" next month, making this my last editorial. Being Acting Editor has been a blast, mostly, but it's been an awesome responsibility. It's easy to cover a race or write a test report—the bike practically writes it for you—but choosing and executing a column topic isn't nearly as simple. Writing "From the Saddle" is somewhat like pushing towards the edge on a dirt bike—sometimes it feels great and sometimes you end up on your head.

It's kind of like my recent experiences at Mammoth Mountain, California. A ski resort by winter and a hiking/fishing/equestrian mecca most of the summer, the town of Mammoth Lakes also serves as a motocross hotspot during two weeks in June. Nestled among breathtaking mountains and tall pines, Mammoth Mountain Motocross is the premier track in America. Rolling hills and *primo* soil, along with an excellent crew and watering system, make Mammoth the epitome of MX. There are no double jumps, just natural terrain, ruts, rocks and about a million whoops. It's an absolute blast to ride—once you get used to the high altitude and get your bike jettied properly.

The track is so *primo* that Rick Johnson passed up a chance to ride the 500 USGP last year to race Mammoth. In fact, about the only thing that keeps this track from being on the National circuit is the tightness of the layout. Being in a valley, it doesn't have the room for spectator seating and parking. Instead, it's *the* place to be in June for motocross racers.

During the first weekend of racing, the Old Timers and Over The Hill Gang take to the track for two days of racing with two 20-minute motos each day. This year we had a tad under 400 entries. Then there are four days of racing under the regular program, with 125s, 250s, 500s and vets each getting a day under the crisp mountain sky. The four-day race program drew 1400 riders this year. We're talking 1800 entries here! Most came away pumped at having been lucky enough to have experienced Mammoth, but a few got bit by the track. I experienced both. The track was awesome and racing intense, but the track bit me—twice.

Riding with a foot injury, I went with the electric-start ATK604 as the weapon of

Mammoth Mountain memories

By Tim Tolleson



choice. The bike was phenomenal. Pitching that thumper into a turn and power-sliding out like a girthy Jay Springsteen was the thrill of a lifetime. I felt I could do no wrong, although the ATK wasn't as fast as two-stroke 500s on the big uphill. Everywhere else the bike held its own, and there was one section, back in the sticks, where it had a clear advantage.

There was a dogleg left, then a dropaway dogleg right into a muddy basin. This led to a jump and a sharp left. Most people were taking the far right over the dropaway, and a huge kicker had formed, forcing everyone to shut off. I'd swing outside to miss the kicker, grab fourth gear, let the guy in front pick his line, pin it and go either left or right to make the pass. It felt great!

In my second moto, I was making a pass to the right (a move I'd used several times), but this time the front wheel washed out—wide open in fourth! It stuck in a hole, pitching me over the bars. *Way* over the bars. Luckily the bike didn't hit me as we cartwheeled down the track. Tom White was standing there, checking out lines, and he said it was one of the ugliest crashes he'd ever seen. The bars looked like clip-ons, and the front rim looked like a taco.

Tom didn't use that line in his next moto. I borrowed Horst Leitner's CR500R for the second day of racing and wasn't nearly as comfortable on the two-stroke, but it was fun nonetheless. Once again, I found that the only place where I had a speed advantage was the basin where I crashed the day before. Hey, it wouldn't bite me twice, right? Like lightning—or editorials. Wrong! In my second moto, I lost the front end in the exact same section and did a faceplant right

into the embankment bordering the track. No wonder nobody else was using that line.

I've been racing the over-30 class for four years now, and I've never seen that level of intensity, that level of bar-banging. There were guys out there in the Old Timers races, guys 60 and 70 years old, stretching the throttle cable and having fun. Mammoth proves that this just isn't a young man's sport.

Take the Expert classes, where you had the young guns going against the seasoned veterans. Johnny O'Mara, at the ripe old age of 29, took the Shootout award, a \$5000 prize going to the pro with the best combined scores in the 125, 250 and 500 classes.

Mammoth is digging down deep, no matter how old or far behind the leader you are, and pushing yourself to your absolute limit. Rick Johnson came back from what many said was a career-ending wrist injury to win all three classes and the \$5000 Top Pro award in 1989.

Mammoth is also being a factory rider for a few days. Team Green was there for the Old Timer weekend, helping Kawasaki riders jet and set up their bikes. This paid off well for the folks in Green, as they took the win in the OT Masters and Gang Experts. The manufacturers were all there the next weekend, providing support for the racers. Sinisalo USA was there, giving pants to any racer interested in trying their new Kevlar-strengthened pants. It was a blast being a factory rider for a day or two.

Doing "From the Saddle" was fun for me, like Mammoth, although I landed on my face a couple of times. Hopefully, I provided a smile or two and provoked some thought along the way. □

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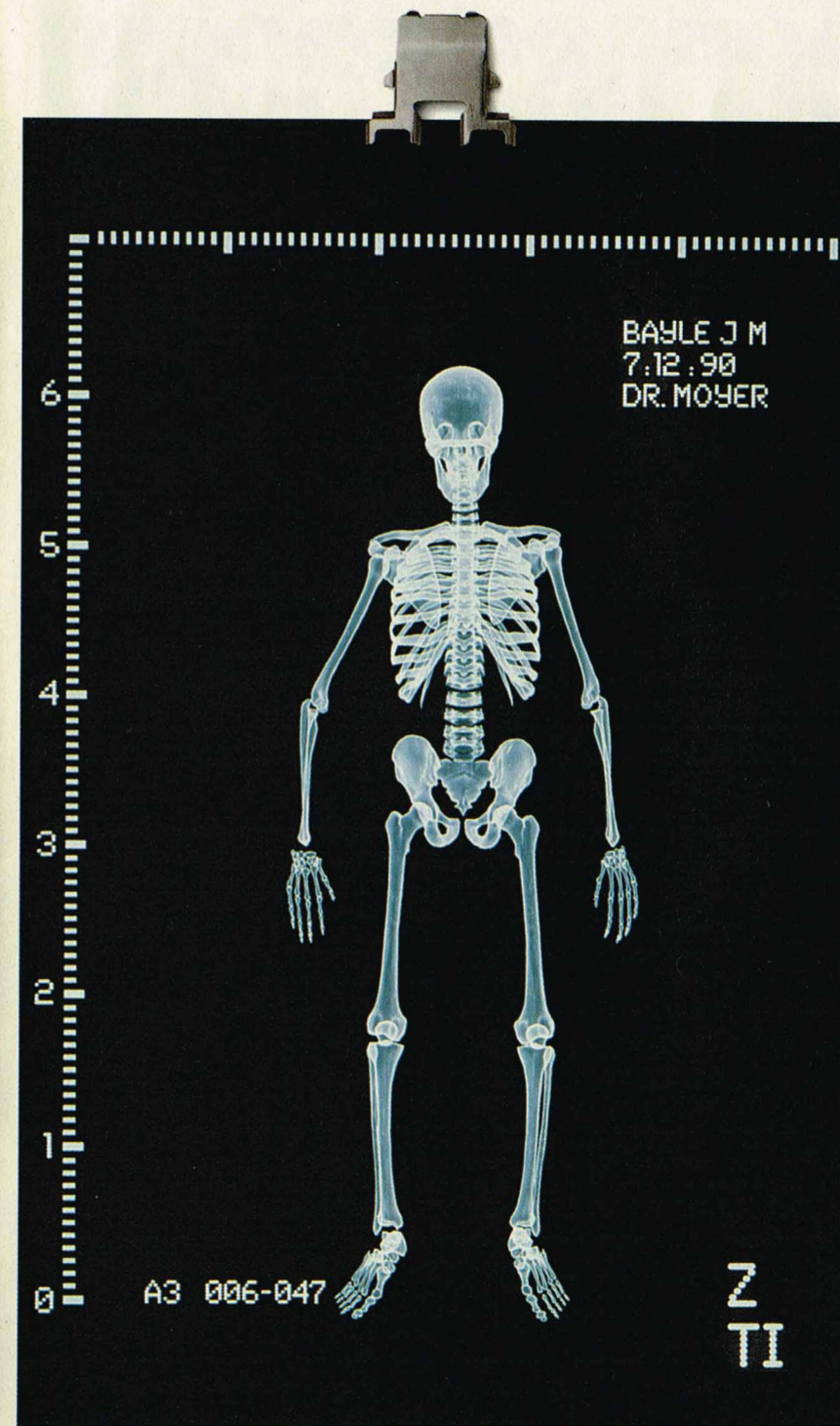
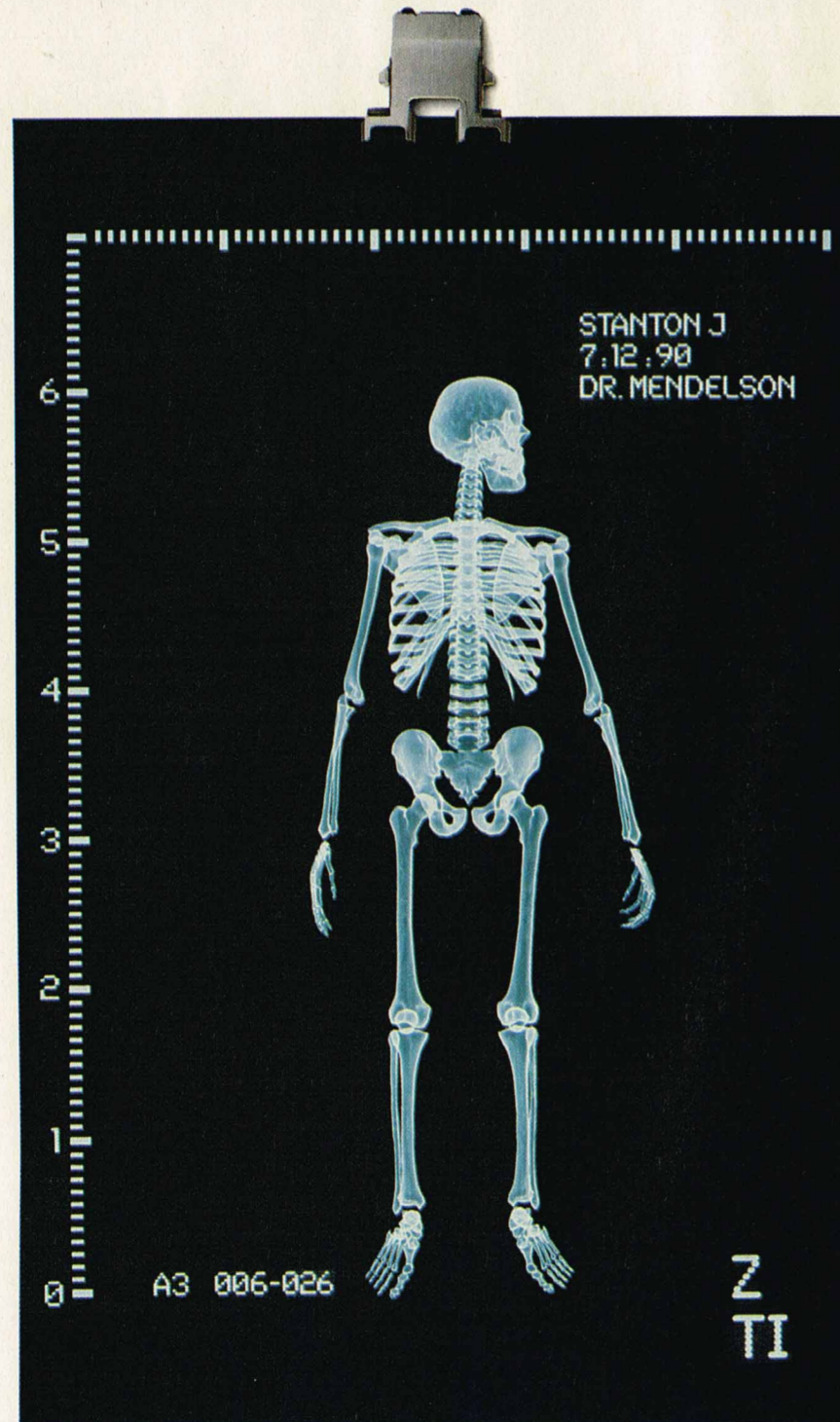
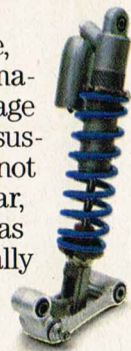
All of this leading to a fork that works better over a broader range of terrain. A fork that's more precise. And less fatiguing.

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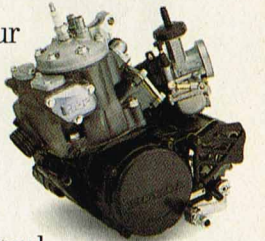
And furthermore, because of the dramatically reduced linkage friction in our rear-suspension system, you not only get reduced wear, but smoother action as well. After all, we really hate to see our riders take a beating.



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80 10-11	125 AMT	ADULT SEN
80 12-13	250 NOV	SUPER SEN
80 14-15	250 AMT	SENIOR EXP
125 NOV	OPEN AMT	+25

Professional:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$150
125 PRO EXP	250 PRO EXP	500 PRO EXP

AMA WINTER NATIONAL OLYMPICS

2 Events x 23 Classes—\$43,700

Amateur:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$150
85 STK 7-11	250 B STK	
85 MOD 7-11	250 B MOD	
85 STK 12-13	125 C STK	
85 MOD 12-13	125 C MOD	
85 STK 14-15	250 C STK	
85 MOD 14-15	250 C MOD	
125 STK 12-15	250/500 A STK	
125 MOD 12-15	EXP/PRO-AM	
125 A STK	250/500 A MOD	
EXP/PRO-AM	EXP/PRO-AM	
125 A MOD	500 NOV	
EXP/PRO-AM	PLUS 25	
125 B STK	PLUS 30 SEN	
125 B MOD		

CMC GOLDEN STATE NATIONAL SERIES

8 Events x 24 Classes—\$312,000

Amateur:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$150
80 OPEN	125 INT	VET JUN
80 BEG	250 BEG	VET INT
80 JUN	250 JUN	VET MAS
80 INT	250 INT	OT JUN
80 EXP	500 BEG	OT INT
125 BEG	500 JUN	OT MAS
125 JUN	500 INT	

Professional:

1st \$3000	2nd \$1500	3rd \$500
125 PRO	250 PRO	500 PRO
		VET PRO

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN MX

1 Event x 18 Classes—\$11,575

Amateur:

1st \$300	2nd \$150	3rd \$75
80 JUN	125 INT	VET JUN
80 INT	250 JUN	VET INT
80 EXP	250 INT	SENIOR
125 JUN	500 JUN	WOMEN JUN
	500 INT	

Professional:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$150
125 EXP	500 EXP	VET EXP
250 EXP		WOMEN EXP

CMC DESERT STATE CLASSIC/ MID-SUMMER NIGHT CLASSIC & COPPER STATE CLASSIC SERIES

24 Events x 24 Classes—\$302,400

Amateur:

1st \$300	2nd \$150	3rd \$75
80 9-11	125 INT	VET JUN
80 BEG	250 BEG	VET INT
80 JUN	250 JUN	VET MAS
80 INT	250 INT	OT JUN
80 EXP	500 BEG	OT INT
125 BEG	500 JUN	OT MAS
125 JUN	500 INT	

Professional:

1st \$300	2nd \$150	3rd \$75
125 PRO	250 PRO	500 PRO
		VET PRO

GNC REGIONALS/FINAL & GOODYEAR NATIONAL

6 Events x 21 Classes—\$119,700

Amateur:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$150
85 7-11 MOD	250 NOV MOD	
85 7-11 STK	250 NOV STK	
85 12-13 MOD	250 INT MOD	
85 12-13 STK	250 INT STK	
85 14-16 MOD	OPEN	
85 14-16 STK	+30 NOV	
125 NOV MOD	+30 INT	
125 NOV STK	+30 MAS	
125 INT MOD	+40	
125 INT STK		

Professional:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$150
125 EXP	250 EXP	

NMA GRAND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP & WORLD MINI GRAND PRIX

2 Events x 26 Classes—\$49,400

Amateur:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$150
83 STK 9-11	125 STK BEG	
83 MOD 9-11	125 STK NOV	
83 STK BEG 12-16	125 MOD NOV	
83 STK NOV 12-16	125 STK INT	
83 MOD NOV 12-16	125 MOD INT	
83 STK INT 12-16	250 STK NOV	
83 MOD INT 12-16	250 MOD NOV	
83 STK EXP 12-16	250 STK INT	
83 MOD EXP 12-16	250 MOD INT	
105 MOD 9-11	500 MOD AM	
105 MOD 12-18	VET	

Professional:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$150
125 STK PRO	250 STK PRO	
125 MOD PRO	250 MOD PRO	

GFI WINTER SERIES

12 Events x 20 Classes—\$146,400

Amateur:

1st \$300	2nd \$150	3rd \$75
80 BEG	125 NOV	500 NOV
80 NOV	125 INT	500 INT
80 INT	250 BEG	VET NOV
80 EXP	250 NOV	VET INT
125 BEG	250 INT	OLD TIMERS
	500 BEG	

Professional:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$150
125 PRO	250 PRO	500 PRO
		VET PRO

MMDA SILVERDOME INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR SUPERCROSS SERIES

8 Events x 15 Classes—\$114,000

Amateur:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$75
80 7-11	125 A	
80 12-15	125 B	
80 C 12-15	125 C	
125 JR 12-15	250 A	
WOODS 30+	250 B	
SENIOR 40+	250/OPEN C	
SENIOR 50+	OPEN A/B	
	+25	

NESC SERIES

36 Events x 13 Classes—\$276,300

Amateur:

1st \$300	2nd \$150	3rd \$75
85 JUN	125 AM	OPEN AM
85 SEN	250 NOV	VET
125 JUN	250 AM	S. VET
125 SEN		+40 VET

Professional:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$150
125 EXP	250 EXP	

AMA FLORIDA WINTER AM SERIES

5 Events x 17 Classes—\$121,250

Amateur:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$150
85 7-11	125 A	PLUS 25
85 12-13	125 YOUTH 12-15	PLUS 30
85 14-15	250 C	PLUS 35
125 C	250 B	PLUS 40
125 B	250/500 A	500 NOV

Professional:

1st \$3000	2nd \$1500	3rd \$500
125 PRO	250/500 PRO	

AMA AMATEUR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP SUPERCROSS SERIES

17 Events x 15 Classes—\$242,250

Amateur:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$150
85 7-11	125 A	PLUS 25
85 12-13	125 YOUTH 12-15	PLUS 30
85 14-15	250 C	PLUS 35
125 C	250 B	PLUS 40
125 B	250/500 A	500 NOV

AMA OUTDOOR NATIONALS

13 Events x 3 Classes—\$405,000

Professional:

1st \$5000	2nd \$4000	3rd \$3000	4th \$2000	5th \$1000
125 PRO — 14 events				
250 PRO — 7 events				
500 PRO — 6 events				

AMA SUPERCROSS SERIES

17 Events x 2 Classes—\$663,000

Professional:

1st \$5000	1st \$10000
2nd \$4000	2nd \$ 5000
3rd \$3000	3rd \$ 4000
4th \$2000	4th \$ 3000
5th \$1000	5th \$ 2000
125 PRO	250 PRO

CMC PAC WEST/SPRING CLASSIC/ TRANS CAL & SUMMER SERIES

32 Events x 24 Classes—\$457,600

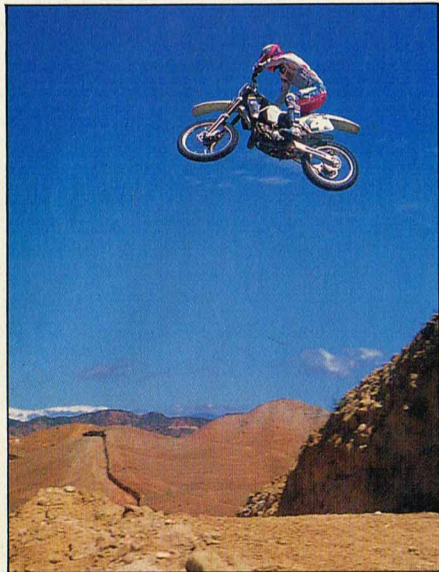
Amateur:

1st \$300	2nd \$150	3rd \$75
80 9-11	125 INT	VET JUN
80 BEG	250 BEG	VET INT
80 JUN	250 JUN	VET MAS
80 INT	250 INT	OT JUN
80 EXP	500 BEG	OT INT
125 BEG	500 JUN	OT MAS
125 JUN	500 INT	

Professional:

1st \$500	2nd \$300	3rd \$150
125 PRO	250 PRO	500 PRO
		VET PRO

BITS & PIECES



1991 DIRT BIKE/MOTOCROSS ACTION CALENDAR

Be sure to pick up the 1991 *Dirt Bike/Motocross Action* calendar, which goes on sale September 27 at your local newsstand. Not only does the calendar offer you 12 of the wildest color action photos of the year, it features an autographed Damon Bradshaw race poster, the *DB/MXA* Yellow Pages, the complete 1991 dirt bike buyer's guide, plenty of facts and the birthdays of your favorite stars. It'll be the best \$2.95 you spend all year!

HONDA'S Z50 BACK FOR 1991

What is the best-selling dirt bike of all time? No, not the KDX200, CR250R, CZ360/400, DT-1 or YZ250. More people have ridden a Honda Z50R than any other motorcycle, and Honda has sold a half-million of them since the Z50 was introduced in 1968. Its 2.4 inches of front and rear wheel travel, three-speed transmis-



sion with auto clutch and 22.6-inch seat height make it a great trail bike for kids aged four to eight. Suggested retail price is \$898.

SUMMERS WINS HARE SCRAMBLES TITLE

Floods threatened to wash out round seven of the AMA National Championship Hare Scrambles series, held at Millville, MN, but race promoter Johnny Martin scrambled to remove hopelessly flooded portions of the course and run the event. Yamaha's Ed Lojak made a last-turn stuff on Kawasaki's Duane Conner to take the win, but the big news was the guy who finished fifth. Honda XR600R-mounted Scott Summers clinched the overall championship with a fifth-place finish at the next-to-last round and wrestled the #1 plate from Kawasaki's Scott Plessinger, the '89 Champ. Riding an almost stock XR600R with White Bros.-tuned WP suspension, Summers proved that four-strokes can snake the quicker two-strokes in the woods. Check out the May '90 issue of *DB* for Summers' Thumper secrets.

ENDURO SEASON HEATS UP

Mother Nature had drenched the first three rounds of the AMA National Championship Enduro Series, and Kevin Hines had slithered into the points lead over '88 and '89 Champ Randy Hawkins. Things dried out a bit for round four in Traverse City, Michigan, and Hawkins took the victory over Hines but failed to overtake the KTM star in points. Going into round five in Colorado, Hines had an 11-point lead over the Javelin, but Hawkins smoked the competition during the grueling event, while Hines had odometer problems and finished an uncharacteristic seventh. The 199-mile Colorado National took seven hours to complete despite speed averages as high as 36 mph, and it took its toll on local favorite Fritz Kadlec, four-time champ Terry Cunningham, Dave Bertram and Jeff Russell. With three rounds to go in the series, Hawkins leads Hines by two points.



MOTOCROSS DES NATIONS TEAM CHOSEN

Amid controversy, the American Motorcyclist Association has chosen the U.S. team for the Motocross des Nations, a team that may or may not bring America its tenth straight des Nations title. Jeff Ward (Kaw 500), Jeff Stanton (Hon 250) and Damon Bradshaw (Yam 125) will represent the United States in Vimmerby, Sweden, with Rick Johnson as the alternate.

So what's controversial about that? Well, Bradshaw is certainly fast and a winner, but he also crashes a lot, and Rick Johnson hasn't proven he has put his injuries behind him. Also, there is a new twist in the des Nations format for 1990.

Team USA sewed up the last two MX des Nations victories before the final moto was run, so the FIM changed the scoring for 1990. Instead of four of six moto scores counting, now five of six scores decide the outcome of the team competition. This puts more pressure on each team to be consistently fast, yet the AMA chose Bradshaw over more consistent 125 pilots like last year's 125 des Nations Champ Mike Kiedrowski, current 125 points leader Jean-Michel Bayle and Guy Cooper, who has won five 125 motos this year and is second in points. Instead of two throwaway motos, we only have one, so we need three consistent riders to win. Let's hear what the players have to say:

Roy Janson, manager of professional motocross and supercross for the AMA—"The AMA based its selection, to a great extent, on a statistical analysis of the riders' performance. We did this to put all the riders on common ground with respect to eligibility. Damon Bradshaw has won 28 percent of the races he has entered since becoming a pro, making him the second winningest rider in the program. Jeff Stanton's win percentage is fractionally higher. Bradshaw's performance makes him a better choice than some others we considered. We offered Bayle to France, because we have a strong program and don't need to rob talent from other countries. Stanton was an obvious choice, as was Jeff Ward. We did look at more

than numbers, but the win percentage counted heavily. We think we've made fair, intelligent choices that will result in a winning team."

Roger DeCoster, U.S. Team Manager—"I would have liked to have been asked about the choices but the AMA prefers to ask for my input after they have made their decisions. I think the team is good, however. Stanton and Ward have to be in there, and Damon Bradshaw has the speed, though he falls more often than some riders who are at his pace. He wins often, too, but he is not as clear a choice as the others. I will work with the riders in Sweden and ride with them. I believe the team can win."

Mike Kiedrowski, last year's 125 Champ—"I wish I could go along but I wasn't expecting anything. The choices are always a bit of a surprise. It is odd that the AMA would pick Damon for the 125s since he hasn't ridden them all year. I'm sure the team will do well. I'll be cheering for them!"

Guy Cooper, current threat for the 125 National title—"It's not the riders' choice; the AMA decides who goes. Damon beat me last year in the 125s by one position, so he's definitely fast on a 125. I would have liked to have gone and represent Suzuki in Sweden; we have a good combination, and I could have held up my end. Stanton won the 250 title last year, and Ward won the 500s, so, on that basis, Kiedrowski would have been a good choice, because he won the 125 title. Damon is one of the stronger 125 riders, though. I'm not so sure about Rick Johnson as the alternate, because he hasn't proved himself to be strong this year."

Ron Heben, Suzuki Team Manager—"I wish AMA would choose a set of guidelines for selecting the team, announce it and stick to it. As it is, there's always a question of favoritism."

Keith McCarty, Yamaha Team Manager—"Damon's being chosen wasn't a surprise to us; he's the most competitive rider out there, and he'll be on the '91 Yamaha YZ125, which is quite a step forward from the '90 YZ125. I have no doubt that Damon and the YZ will be competitive and a valuable addition."

Clothes may make the man. They can also save him.



Nobody wants to bail on their dirt bike, but even the best riders occasionally have an encounter with nature that's a little closer than they planned.

That's why they always wear a helmet, eye protection and protective clothing.

Reading your owner's manual helps too. And of course, never ride while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

The best-dressed riders know protective apparel isn't just a matter of fashion. It's common sense.

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KTM IN MINT CONDITION FOR 1991

All-new White Power components and extensive motor modifications highlight the 1991 KTM model lineup, a fleet of MX and off-road (see page 38) machines dubbed "Mint Condition" after the mint seat cover and graphics. Reducing stiction and valving for American riding styles were the goals for the WP and KTM engineers. New damper cartridges, seals,

wipers, bottoming cones and Teflon-impregnated bushing and Pro-Stage valving with revised spring rates reduce friction and harshness in the 4054 forks on all models (except the LC4). Likewise, the shock was reworked to cut stiction, fight fade and provide a smooth, progressive stroke for better traction and comfort.

Although the 125s didn't get the "reverse" motor of the '90 250/300s, they

did receive 250-style plastic and subframe, along with a new exhaust pipe and silencer. The 250s and 300s received major ignition, pipe and porting changes for a broader power spread, a stronger clutch and larger airbox. Both the 500MX and 540DXC got revised porting, an improved ignition curve and a low-boy pipe. Look for a full test on the '91 KTM 250MX in next month's issue.

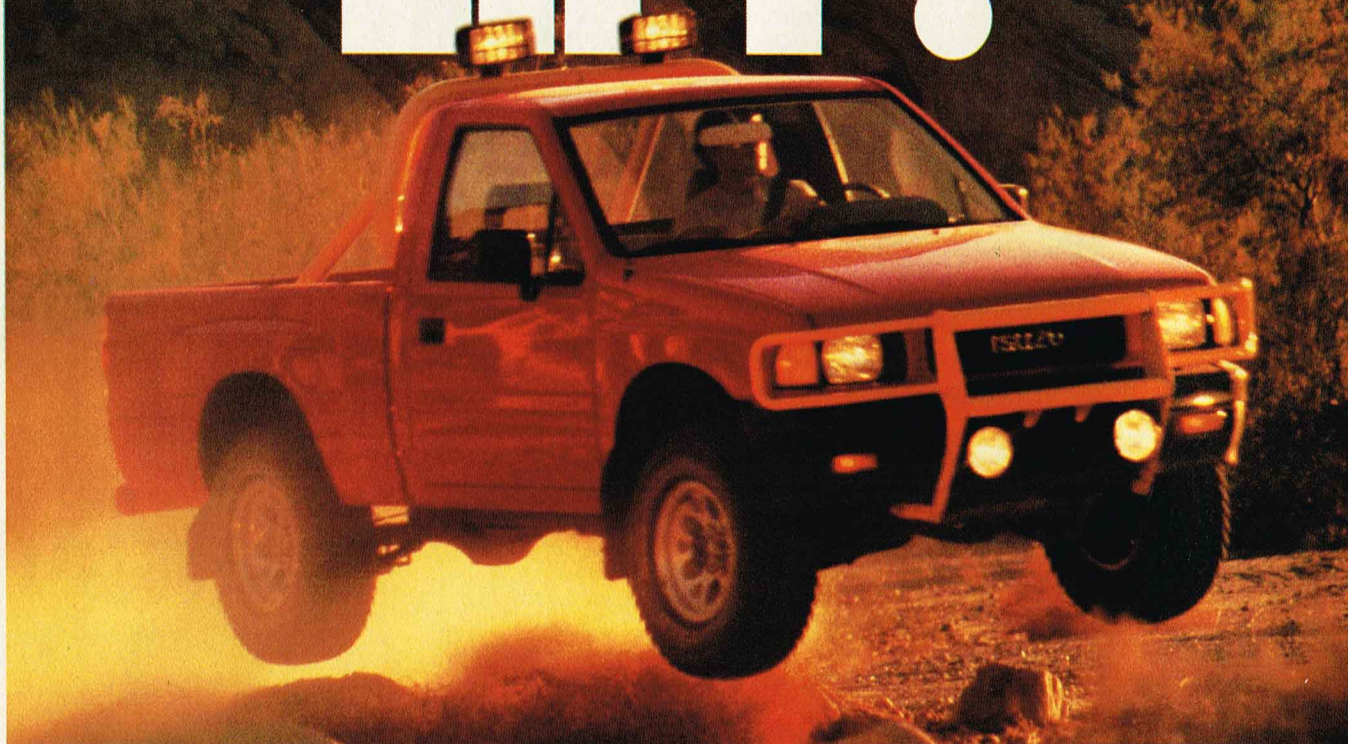


Katoom had the motor of doom in the 125 class last year, so they were wise not to mess with that. Instead, they worked on dialing the suspension and strengthening the few weak areas in the chassis.



Last year's 250 KTM was all midrange, so the emphasis was on getting a Honda-like powerband for the '91s. This, with stronger brakes, front axle and chainguide and revised suspension, should make the KTM a rocket.

NEED A LIFT?



We know. Mom said, "Never take rides from strangers." So we want you to know exactly what you'll be getting into. Namely, a ruggedly handsome 4x4 unsurpassed in overall owner satisfaction.* With all the standard features that make it the "Official Vehicle of SRO/Pace Indoor Supercross." Like a durable double-wall cargo bed for hauling bikes. Triple skid plates. And, unlike Toyota, standard four-wheel disc brakes with a rear Anti-lock Brake System. It's so much more for your money, even your mother will approve.

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*Car and Driver Magazine. †MSRP excluding tax, license and transp. fee as of 7/1/90. Prices start at \$10,999.



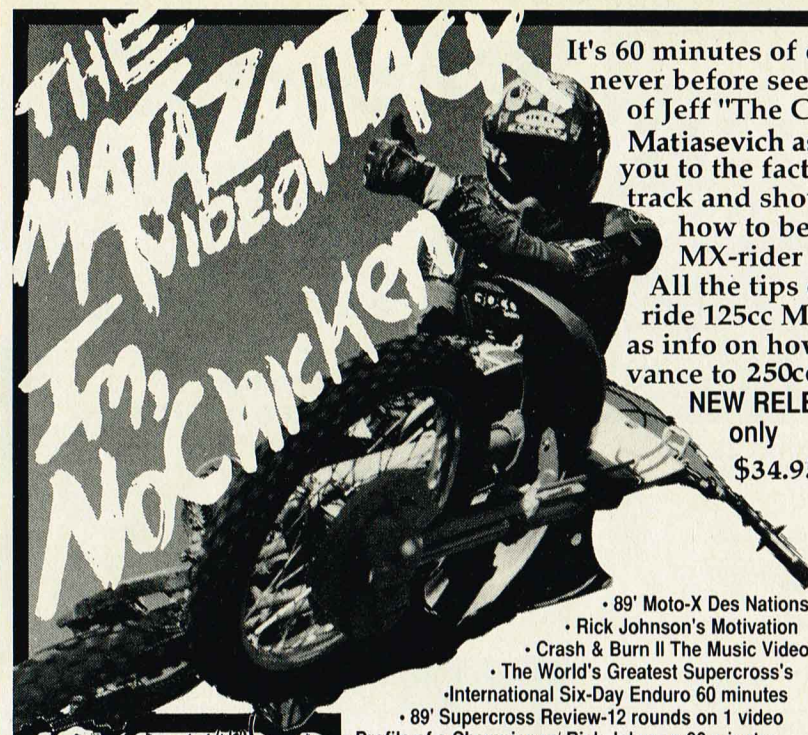
BITS

GEBOERS SET TO TIE DeCOSTER

Eric Geboers has extended his 500 GP points lead, which he inherited when American Billy Liles broke his leg in a practice crash in Italy, and can clinch his fifth World Championship at round ten of the 12-race series.

ATK'S TOP-SECRET DIRTRACK MOTOR

While at ATK to pick up the 350MX for testing, we saw something we weren't supposed to—a dual-overhead-cam, four-valve, three-spark-plug, liquid-cooled Rotax 604 motor. This super-trick mill can set the dirttrack world on its ear, with an ATK- or Ron Wood-built 600 going up against the conventional Rotax-motored Harley of Team H-D's Chris Carr, the current points leader. KTM is also getting into the dirttrack game; they have contracted the White Bros. to develop an LC4 600-based C&J-framed dirttracker. Will this renewed interest in TT racing prod the Japanese into developing race machines based on their big dual-sport models, or are they going to sit on their haunches and watch Austria and America rule the sport? □



It's 60 minutes of exciting never before seen footage of Jeff "The Chicken" Matiasevich as he takes you to the factory test track and shows you how to be a better MX-rider and racer. All the tips on how to ride 125cc MX as well as info on how to advance to 250cc racing
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- International Six-Day Enduro 60 minutes \$29.95 + \$3 post.
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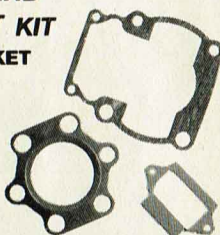
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RM 125/250 (1981-90) . . . 14.60 ea.
Indicate right or left

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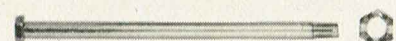
ALL RM'S AND PE'S \$35.00 + PARTS

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RM 250 (1989-90)	29.95
PE 175/250/400 (all yrs)	15.95



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RM 100/125 (1975-80)	4.99
RM 125 (1981-90)	7.50
RM 250/370/400/465/500 (1976-90)	7.95
PE 175/250/400 (all yrs)	7.95



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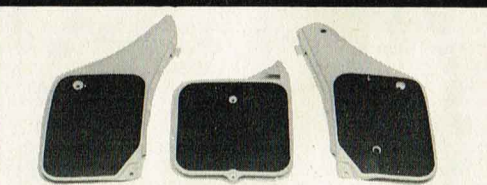
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RM 125 (1990)	31.10
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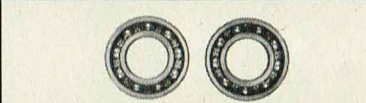
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RM 125/250 (1985-90)	18.85 pr.
PE 175/250/400 (all yrs)	15.45 pr.

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RM 80 (1977-83)	\$15.85 pr.
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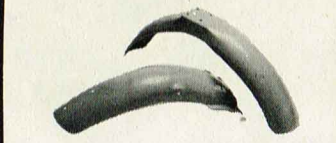
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RM 80 (1980-90)	\$28.95
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RM 125 (1975-84)	13.95 pr.
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RM 250/400 (1979)	18.70 pr.
RM 250/400 (1980)	16.95 pr.
RM 250/465/500 (1976-82)	16.55 pr.
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CHECKPOINT

“Frankly, I don’t see where we have a chance of beating him. The man—if you can call him that—has won every single race this year—and every moto,” grumbled the American motocross team manager, looking worried.

The team doctor shook his head from side to side. “Technically, he’s still a human. He has more than half of his brain intact, but, as you well know, everything else he has came off the laboratory shelf. The strange thing is that this, this . . . man, is the result of an accident.”

Dan Hannah, USA Team Manager and grandson of legendary Bob Hannah, looked surprised. “Accident? I thought the Russians ‘built’ this man as part of a program.”

“No,” said the doctor, “Orloff was already a superb rider when he got into that horrifying car accident on the way to the Nigerian GP. Remember? Back in the spring of 2039? Or was it ’40? Either way, Orloff was a National hero, so they took what was left of his body to Gorbachev Memorial Hospital and turned their best people loose on him.

“Both legs were replaced with those new lightweight units, and all of his internal organs were useless, so he got one of those self-contained, radium-powered packages installed in the torso that handles all of his functions. At first they thought they could keep his torso, but the tissue rejected the organ package and they had to make a torso out of those new flexible synthetic titanium hybrids. Naturally, the arms couldn’t be grafted to that, so he got a pair of ultra-hydraulic arms.

“At this point, all he had was a neck and head sitting on a completely synthetic body. Zelinsky and Crobov figured their work was done then, but you know the rest: the first time Orloff tried to walk, he turned right instead of left and strolled off a balcony, then fell six stories and landed on a Skoda sedan. The only thing that saved his life was that the back seat of the Skoda was full of beets and that broke his fall after he went through the roof. That’s why his riding gear and his bike are beet-colored.”

Hannah let out a low whistle. “I didn’t know that! I thought he had everything that blood-looking color to intimidate all the other riders.”

The doctor continued: “Now you have a great trivia question for a party. You owe me one, Dan. Anyway, when they got him back up to the laboratory, they found out that his control circuits had been wired backwards; that’s why he thought he was turning left when he went right and fell off that balcony like a set of car keys.

“Naturally, his head was a mess and half of his brain was all wadded up with beets and upholstery. They figured the best thing to do was make a new head and put the re-

The sixty-million-dollar man

By Rick Sieman

maintaining parts of his brain in that. In the space that was left over, they added a small but powerful computer. Now you know why Orloff reacts so quickly. He’s thinking in nanoseconds while our riders are thinking in partial seconds.

“To play it safe, they called in some experts from England. A technician named Lucas spent about two months going over all the circuits, modifying things here and there, and then pronounced him virtually perfect.

“Then they started the testing. Orloff can run a 100-meter dash in 3.2 seconds, and do it time after time without getting tired. They say he can bench-press over 1000 pounds, but that’s all the weight they had in the lab, so he can probably do more. He doesn’t have to eat, drink or go to the bathroom. Once every year they open up a panel in his torso and slip in a new pair of those radium batteries.

“I remember seeing the holotapes of the first time Orloff rode his motocross bike after the operation. It only took him a half-hour or so to get his old thought reflexes to match his new computer brain, and then the man started to fly! No mistakes, no bobbles . . . nothing flashy. Just pure riding right at the very limit. Lap, after lap, after boring lap. He doesn’t even look like he’s going fast . . . but no one can touch him!”

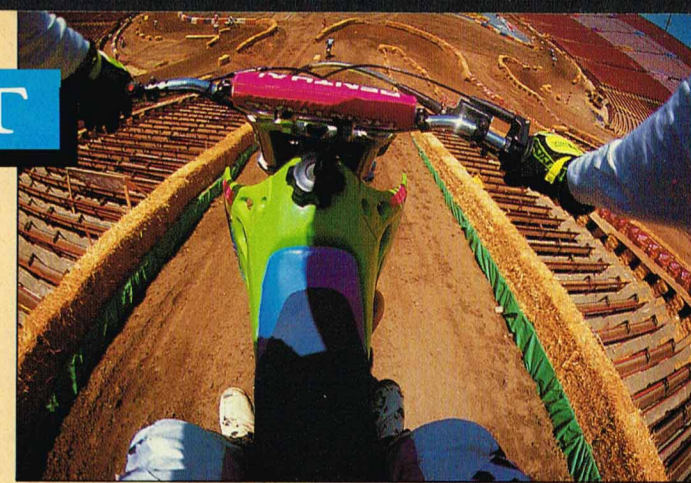
Hannah frowned. “Yeah. I know. That’s why I think we’re going to lose the Motocross des Nations for the first time in over 60 years. Still, we can hope for a mechanical problem on the bike . . .”

“Ha! When’s the last time you ever heard of a Maico breaking?”

Hannah looked worried. “You’re right. Ever since the Swiss bought the factory in ’02, those things have been virtually bullet-proof. Well, one good thing; at least our Moto-Islos are as fast and reliable as the Maicos. We’re not giving anything away in horsepower and handling! Whatever . . . we’ll just go out and do the best that we can.”

☆☆☆

Raceday was cool, with no wind and a slight gray overcast. On the previous day in timed practice, Orloff had been consistently four seconds a lap faster than the best American, young Mickey DeCoster. On one lap, DeCoster had let it all hang out and was only one second a lap slower, but came into the pits looking pale and shaken. “Man, I



can’t ride at that pace! I thought I was going to lose it in every corner. Maybe I should dial in a little bit more suspension travel.”

Hannah shook his head. “No. We tried every setting from 23 inches to 34 inches; you turned your best lap times with 28 inches up front and 31 at the rear end. There’s nothing else we can do to the bike. You’ll just have to go out and ride it as hard as you can and hope for the best.”

Hope dimmed when Orloff ran off with a win in the 500 class, with DeCoster finishing nearly two minutes behind in second overall.

The next round was no better. Orloff once again pulled the holeshot and simply disappeared. Things started to look gloomy, but then, so did the sky. The sky that started out gray turned darker and darker; then the first few raindrops fell. Then fat raindrops splattered down, followed by a pleasant steady shower.

The riders barely slowed their pace. In fact, they welcomed the cooling rain, as it kept the dust down and lowered the temperature of their hard-working bodies. No puddles gathered and the course did not turn to mud, as it was built on a sandy base. Traction improved and the entire field picked up the pace.

Ten minutes after the rain started, Orloff slowed dramatically. The Russian coach went nuts and held out a lap board. His lead was being whittled away, and soon young Mickey DeCoster was right on his tail . . . and moments later the young American passed the sixty-million-dollar man on a bumpy short straight.

The crowd gasped! What was happening? A few moments later, Orloff was riding at a walking pace, then the Maico came to a halt and flopped over on its side like a dead carp, with Orloff still sitting on the seat.

Pandemonium broke loose as the American team went on to win its 63rd straight Motocross des Nations, with Belgium in second and Ethiopia taking a well-earned third.

Magnums of champagne were popped open and jubilation reigned in the American camp. It was only later that evening that they found out what happened to the sixty-million-dollar man. It seems that the British doctor had installed some Lucas Electrics in his brain computer and when the rain came down . . . well, history simply repeated itself. □

RIDERS WRITE



problem. Another guy we ride with uses a cheap oil he buys at an auto parts store and he just seized his bike.

Michael McNeilly
Gilbert, AZ

Mike, most of today's two-stroke motorcycle oils, like the PJ1 you use, are excellent products. Some may offer slightly more protection than others, some may run cleaner, but none is clearly better than the rest. Any major-label racing motorcycle oil will provide better protection and performance than general-use two-cycle oils. The difference in protection, performance and price is the result of the motorcycle racing oils' containing additives which are not used in general-purpose two-stroke oils. The oiliness of your engine's internal parts is caused by the temperature-resistant additives in PJ1. They prevent the oil from burning off areas that require a slippery film. In the long run, it costs more to run a racing engine on cheap oil than on racing oil. If you're lucky enough not to experience a major engine failure, you will spend more time and money servicing your engine (changing plugs, decarbonizing, replacing worn parts).

BACK IN STYLE

Dear Dirt Bike,

I'm in the process of getting back into racing. After getting married I was unable to afford the sport; joining the navy didn't help either. Ten years have passed since I last raced my '78 Honda CR250R.

I've noticed you've got all these articles about people racing older bikes but nothing on older people racing the new bikes against the younger kids!

I also have some questions about equipment. What would be the best boots, pants, chest protector and gloves to get? I don't want to go overboard with cost but I don't want junk!

Bill Schafer
Harriman, TN

Bill, you'll want to look at the story we did on riding secrets for vets in our December '89 issue. It was part of a special section of how-to-ride stories in that issue, a must for racers of any age. As for gear, wait for the new styles to come out (it won't be long now), then go for the top-of-the-line quality outfits in LAST season's designs. If you can't wait, check out the low-cost package specials many of our advertisers offer, the inexpensive gear lines from the major apparel companies or the economical items from Donelson Cycles ([800] 325-4144, [314] 427-5523) or Chaparral ([800] 841-2960, [800] 221-2479, [714] 889-2761). You'll save a bundle. As for the brand, you can't go wrong with anyone's gear these days, but you'll find, just as with other clothes, that some

manufacturers' cuts and styles suit you better. Visit your dealer and spend some time trying on gear; it won't take long before you find what you like and don't like.

THE TRUTH WILL WIN OUT

Dear Dirt Bike,

Why is it that of the four or so major publications that test dirt bikes, no two can agree on a shootout winner? Sure there are exceptions, but without fail the hands-down winner of one mag's shootout is the hands-down loser of another's. I'm not talking about subtle differences in opinion, either. I'm talking about completely opposite reviews on identical bikes. Whether it's descriptions of the powerband, suspension, handling or reliability, there is always an incredible lack of consistency.

I smell a skunk! Do the manufacturers/advertisers have anything to do with this? As dirt biking's #1 authority, I look to you for the answer.

Rome Tobin
Marysville, CA

Rome, you answered your question at the end of your letter. We are dirt biking's #1 authority. We've earned this position by telling our readers the truth about everything from bikes to brake pads. We think our motorcycle tests are the most thorough and accurate because we test each bike with more knowledgeable testers of every skill level and put the bikes and testers in a wider variety of riding conditions than any of our competitors. You may notice that we frequently evaluate motocross bikes on and off the track. This is because we know our readers use their motocross bikes for more than motocross. There's nothing odd about the results of a track and off-road test being different than the results of a track-only test; ours is a different test entirely. We're not surprised that other magazines get different results than we do regardless of the type of test they do. Test results are only as good as the test, and we know of no magazine that tests bikes as seriously as we do. As for pressure from manufacturers or advertisers, we can only say it doesn't affect our opinion in any way. We've had manufacturers, advertisers and readers mad at us every month for more than 20 years for telling the proven facts, but it's well worth it because everyone comes to grips with the truth eventually and our readers stay with us. □

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BROTHER, CAN YOU SPARE A MILLION?

Dear Dirt Bike,

I see very little dealer, distributor and manufacturer help in the money end of our land use problems. Why can't the motorcycle manufacturers and clothing companies donate some of the money they make from the sport back into preserving it? It seems possible that individually or as a group these millionaires could simply buy land for us to ride on rather than fooling with a political tug-o-war for public land with the environmentalists.

Walt Schmidt
Philadelphia, PA

Industry contributions in the interest of keeping riding lands open are generous but small in comparison to the better-funded environmentalists' efforts. At present, fighting for permission to ride on public lands is more cost-effective than purchasing, staffing and maintaining our own riding areas. Then there's the larger issue of the fact that public land is supposed to be open for use by the public—the dirt bike riding public included!

LIQUID INSURANCE

Dear Dirt Bike,

I have a CR80 and am wondering what the best kind of pre-mix oil is. I have been using PJ1 and the inside of my engine is covered with oil when I take it apart. The problem is that the oil is expensive. My dad uses outboard oil in his 125 and has never had any problems. My friend uses Valvoline in his KX80 and has never had a

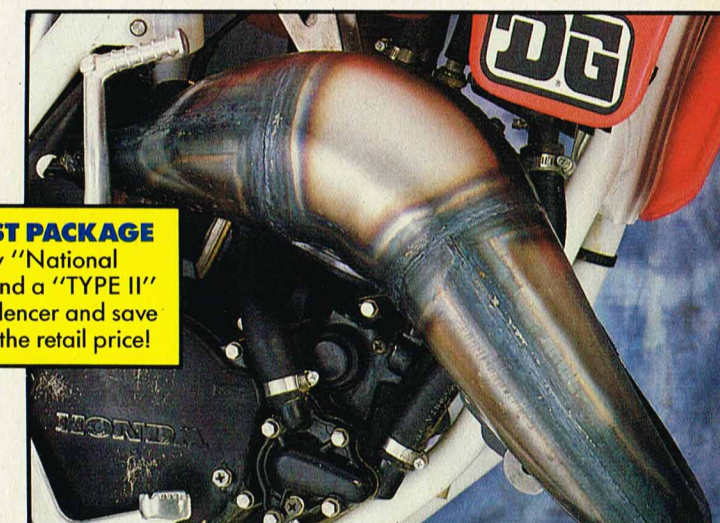
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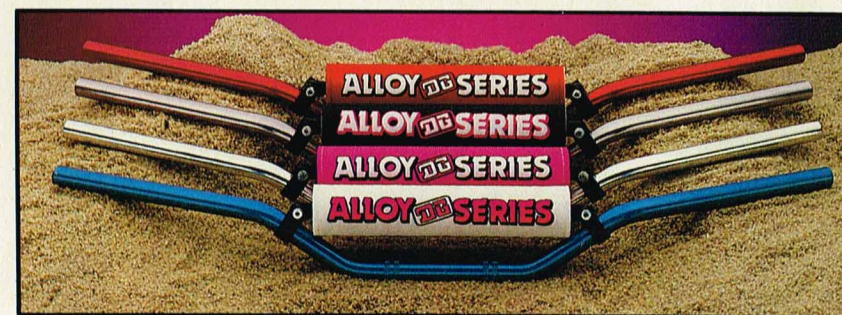
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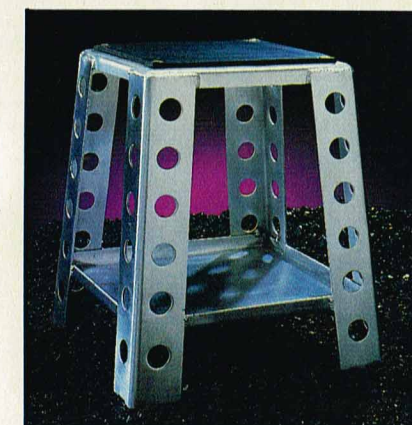
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Alas and alack, as Rondo is wont to say, Honda has finally put to rest one of the great truths of the dirt bike world. No, they've demolished it, blew it into pieces smaller than Pee-Wee piston circlips. Finally, the head honchos over in Japan bowed to pressure and produced a CR with suspension that Americans want and demand, one that soaks up small bumps as well as it absorbs leaps of doom.

Gone is the concept of light spring rates with lots of preload and heavy damping curves to fight bottoming. Every dirt biker worth his salt knows that this leads to stiction on small jolts, forks diving into harsh damping territory in corners, headshake and a gaggle of other foul-handling traits. Yep, for 1991, Honda has turned a turkey into an osprey, an albatross into a red-tailed hawk.

What they've done is try to put aftermarket suspension specialists out of business, giving the '91 CR owner about \$400 worth of revalving and springs without raising the cost of the CR250R one cent. The 1991 CR250 costs \$3998, the same as the '90, but the improvements have turned the bike into a totally different beast, one that's infinitely more fun to ride.

HOW CAN IT BE SO GOOD?

Contamination plagued the old inverted fork design, where the springs rode at the bottom of the tubes and a funky bottoming cone rode on top. Wear was common on the inside of the upper fork tubes, and aluminum flakes fouled the compression valve stack. Honda tapered the springs and changed bottoming cones. The fouling persisted, and most aftermarket specialists requested the

original cones when revalving. This on top of too light springs and too much preload.

Honda practically threw away the whole fork design and had Showa build an internally all-new inverted fork. The springs ride at the top of the fork now and the bottoming cone is history. A White Power-type bottoming system is used and the cartridge diameter increased from 20mm to 25mm for better response. The upper tubes are coated with Alumite on the inside to fight contamination from internal friction. Spring rate went from 0.38 kg to 0.40, standard (0.38 and 0.42 are optional rates this year). Compression damping is revised for the new rates. Compression damping is 14-position adjustable, but rebound isn't externally adjustable.

Past CRs weren't noted for their rear suspension, at least positively. Honda axed the Showa shock in favor of a Kayaba unit and mated it with a linkage featuring totally revised pivot points. Teflon-coated Heim joints and thrust washers reduce friction by a claimed 50 percent and extend life. Linkage ratios are unchanged and the KYB shock offers 22 compression and 20 rebound clicks of adjustment. Spring rate is .50 kg.

RIDING THE ALL-NEW BEAST

For wafer-thin Shane Trittler, who tips the scales at 132 pounds soaking wet, and Scott Wallenberg, who weighs 153 pounds, the forks were set at eight out and the shock was set at 12 compression and ten rebound. Sag is an even 100mm. For 220-pound Torquin

Tim, the forks were cranked in to five out and compression and rebound were cranked in two clicks. However, bike sag was nonexistent when the sag was set properly, so a heavier rear spring (0.54 kg) was installed (10/14 on the clickers). Riders under 190 pounds won't have to change the rear spring.

Despite the frame and motor being identical to the '90, the new CR is light-years better on the track. The forks are phenomenal. They soak up everything from ripples to square-edged stadium whoops without deflecting. Even landings in rock-strewn holes didn't wrench the bars from the hands. The only situation where any jolt was felt at the wrists was when slapping down from a front-wheel-high jump onto flat ground.

In other words, pilot error. These forks are the best to ever grace a production Honda dirt bike. Scott Wallenberg summed it up best: "We messed around with the '90 CR250 forks for three months, trying to eliminate the harshness and bottoming. Finally, I gave up and started riding Kawasakis. These forks are at least as good as KX forks, and the '91 feels like a totally different bike!"

HONDA'S SHOCKER

Finally, a red machine with dialed suspension!

By the DIRT BIKE Staff

Honda's changes for the '91 CR250R were intended to make it more visible on televised supercross coverage and more fun to ride. You may never ride your CR on a supercross track, much less on TV, but the suspension changes make the '91 much more precise and pleasurable. Mike Kiedrowski demonstrates.



No headshake or vagueness on choppy surfaces. No kicking on acceleration bumps. No spikes to the wrists. No rapid deterioration of fork action. The forks rebound a tad quickly, and that's the only bad thing we could find to say about them. We couldn't find anything bad to say about the rear, except that it's been too long in coming. This bike hugs the inside line tighter than an Earth Firster hugs a redwood in a hurricane. It'll brake or power slide with abandon. It laughs at choppy, sandy sweepers where the '90 was unpredictable, at best. The new CR is quick-handling yet rock-steady.

BITS & PIECES

Honda tested several different chassis and motor combinations but couldn't come up with any that could outperform the '90 combo, so it carries over to '91. A tighter-sealing carb slide and different jet block (tower) are the only motor-related changes for 1991. Response in the low- and midrange is much more crisp, allowing for a harder hit out of turns. Combine this with better hookup and you're definitely going places in a hurry.

• Heated discussion in Japan and America raged over 18-inch vs. 19-inch rear tires. The 18-inch forces won out—this year. For 1992, who knows?

• As you can see by the photos, white radiator shrouds, a paint-splashed seat and bold new graphics make a new styling statement. Much better-looking than the Suzukis, to say the least.

• The bars are white this year, but the bend is the same. Ergonomics are typical Honda—excellent. Nothing pokes out or snags the rider's boots. Taller riders may want a CEET foam/cover kit to raise seat height a bit. Shorter riders can order a half-inch-lower seat.

• We fouled a few plugs during testing and photography, usually when warming up the bike. Moose Racing ([800] MOOSE-IT) modifies (leans out) the choke circuit for less fouling problems. We left jetting standard (at 3000 feet)—#55 pilot, #175 main, #R1369NS needle on the third groove and 2.0 turns out on the airscrew. At sea level (80°-100°F), we went to a #172 main for crisper response.

• As always, the Roger DeCoster-written owner's manual is excellent and guides the mechanic from suspension disassembly/tuning and carb tuning to power valve cleaning and general maintenance. It also covers chassis tuning for different tracks or conditions (see "Changing Your Bike's Handling" in this issue).

• Brakes are awesome—strong but not overly sensitive.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Honda has long had a stranglehold on the motor and handling departments of the 250-class motocrossers. For the past two years, they've enjoyed the motor of doom—an awesome clutch and transmission, decent torque, a strong hit in the midrange and more top-end than the competition. A couple of changes in the Keihin flat-slide carb have added even more snap from turn to turn. The other guys will have their work cut out for them to match the CR's power output and spread (we've only ridden the pre-production '91 YZ250, which signed off sooner on top than the CR).

In years past, Honda has set the standard for quick handling. Chassis geometry has been excellent, and the low-riding, too-soft

It's amazing how a revised fork and KYB shock can turn the same chassis/motor combination from a good handler to a mind reader. The new CR does everything the rider asks it to do without demanding a whole lot of mental or physical input. Also, the improved midrange bark will give Kawasakis fits.

forks have aided turning but also brought on headshake and hydraulic lock-induced vagueness in choppy turns. Likewise, slow initial reaction time has made the rear end skittish on chop. For '91, the suspension action is much more subtle, making the bike quicker and easier to ride. It turns more precisely and doesn't tire the rider prematurely with headshake and other now-defunct Honda traits. Riders from 130 to 190 pounds will only have to set sag and play with the clickers a bit to dial their '91 CR250R. It's about time! □



1991 HONDA CR250R

Engine type	Reed- and power-valved, liquid-cooled 2-stroke	Suspension:	
Displacement	249cc	Front	45mm inverted Showa cartridge, adj. comp., 12 in. (304mm) travel
Bore and stroke	66.4mm x 72mm	Rear	Pro-Link, KYB hard-anodized aluminum piggyback, adj. comp./reb., 13 in. (330mm) travel
Carburetion	38mm PJ Keihin	Replacement parts cost:	
Fuel tank capacity	2 gal.	Piston	\$ 37.13
Gearing	14/51	Ring	22.07
Lighting coil	No	Clutch plate (m)	6.18 (7)
Spark arrester	No	Clutch plate (f)	6.26 (8)
Green sticker legal in stock trim	No	Countershaft sprocket	11.90
Claimed dry weight	214.4 lb.	Rear sprocket	54.80
Running weight w/no fuel	224 lb.	Front brake pads	19.80
Noise output (20" MIC test)	98 dB	Rear brake pads	20.96
Wheelbase	58.6 in. (1488mm)	Country of origin	Japan
Ground clearance	13.8 in. (645mm)	Suggested retail price	\$3998
Seat height	38.2 in. (970mm)	Distributor/Manufacturer:	
Tire size and type:		Front	80/100 x 21 Dunlop K490
		Rear	110/100 x 18 Dunlop K695
			American Honda Motor Corp. 100 W. Alondra Blvd. Gardena, CA 90247

CHANGE YOUR BIKE'S HANDLING FOR FREE

Fine-tune your general-purpose bike for special-purpose riding

By the DIRT BIKE Staff

Have you ever felt that most of the people you ride with or race against have such an advantage in machinery or riding talent that you'll never catch them? Have you considered that those riders may not have an advantage in either area? It's possible that the only thing separating you from the riders ahead of you is proper machine setup. Many riders look to the more expensive, less accessible sources for speed and neglect the simple, free things that can make a difference that any rider on any bike can really use and feel. Most dirt bikes work so well in so many conditions that they mask the need for fine-tuning, but you can extract a great deal of usable performance with careful setup for your type of riding. A properly set-up bike is easier to control, less tiring to ride, a joy to operate and, best of all, faster than one that's left untouched or improperly adjusted. We'll give you the correct settings for motocross, enduro, hare scrambles and cross-country riding in this article.

KNOWLEDGE IS CONTROL

You have to know what type of riding you do and what adjustments are available on your bike to get the best handling out of your machine for any type of riding. It's a bit like fine-tuning a television set: it's impossible to get the picture you want if you're pounding on the set, twisting knobs and pushing buttons at random, hoping to get the color to come back, when you're tuned to a black-and-white broadcast.

Defining the type of riding you do is more complex than simply identifying the form of competition in which you participate. You have to consider the terrain you ride on, your

Hard-pack conditions require setting up the bike for maximum traction. Tires with short, closely spaced knobs, taller gearing and running less compression and rebound damping will provide better hook-up on slick hard-pack. A tad less preload can provide more rear-wheel traction as well. ▶



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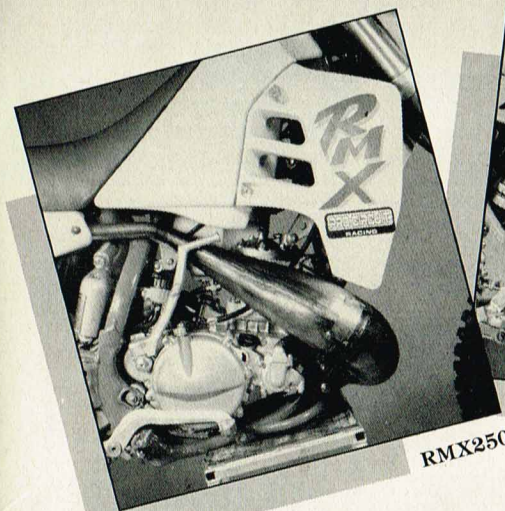
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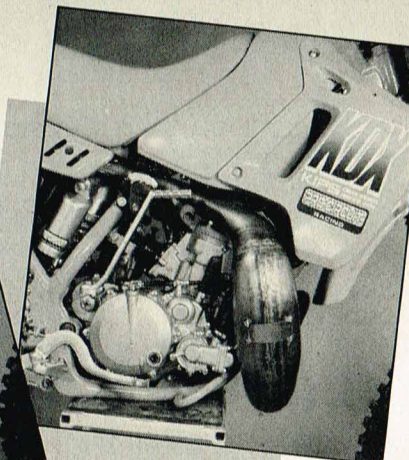
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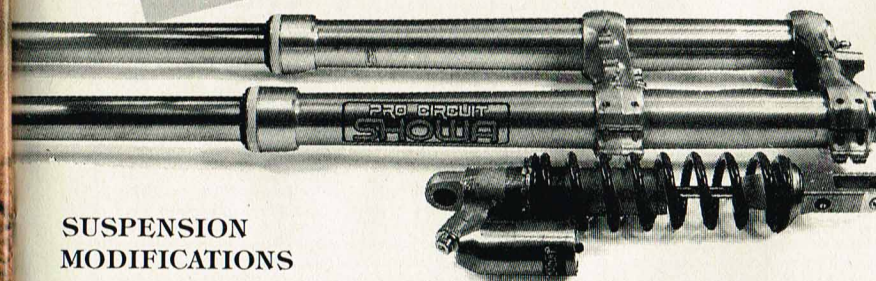
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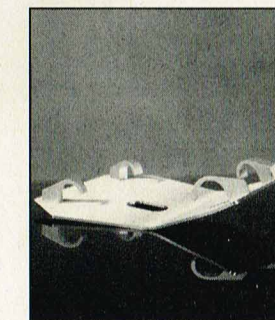
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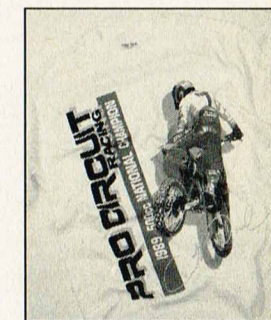
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HANDLING

present skill level and physical proportions. Knowing your bike is equally important. Newer machines offer more potential for adjustment than ever. Fortunately, older bikes, including dual-sport machines and competition enduros, offer most of the adjustments today's sophisticated race bikes do. We'll start at the front of a typical bike and discuss the changes you can make and where they'd be of most value. By the time we reach the back tire, you'll know everything you need to arrive at a good basic setup for your machine and type of riding.

FRONT-END FREEBIES

Take a look at your front tire. It's among the most important parts on your motorcycle in terms of overall feel, handling and control. No matter what type of bike you have or what kind of riding you do, you've got to begin with the proper tire. Yes, we know that we said we would explore no-cost ways to change your bike's handling and nobody ever gave you a free tire, but, as we see it, the cost of a front tire is something you have to accept as part of dirt biking—nobody rides very far without one, does he? At any rate, you can do worlds of good for your bike's handling simply by choosing the correct tire.

To pick the correct tire for your use, head out to your favorite track or riding area and check it out. If it is mostly baked hard clay or dirt, choose a hard-terrain tire. These

have short knobs made of a soft compound that stick to the slick surface. The low knobs prevent excessive flex for sharp, direct steering. Is the terrain soft and loamy or sand? Choose a soft-terrain tire. They have tall knobs made of firm rubber to dig into deep, loose terrain. Is your riding area a mixture of each? Go with the best intermediate (all-terrain tire) you can find. Check with the winning local pro racers for their advice as to the brand that performs best for your area.

Can't bring yourself to take the original front tire off your bike because it still has decent knobs after nearly two years of riding? Do it anyway. Even if your bike came with the ideal tire for your use when it was new, it has probably lost the flexibility that made it perform well before it aged and dried. You may not have felt the slow decrease in performance, but you will feel a noticeable gain in cornering power and overall handling when you fit a new tire.

Proper inflation pressure is important, regardless of your tire choice. Run the lowest pressure you can without risking flats. Hard motocross tracks usually require 12 to 14 pounds. You can get by with as little as 11 pounds on soft or muddy tracks. It's best to sacrifice a bit of control for flat protection by running 13 to 16 pounds in enduro or hare scrambles riding. Desert terrain may require pressures as high as 17 pounds.

Odds are that your bike came with a low-cost, low-performance, original-equipment tire in a less-than-ideal compound for your

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 400x18 52.95
 450x18 49.95
 300x21 Front 44.95
 325x21 Front 48.95
MULTI-CROSS
 Medium Terrain
 410x14 \$32.95
 410x17 51.95
 450x17 54.95
 510x17 58.95
 410x18 52.95
 450x18 58.95
MXR 196/296 HT
 Hard Terrain
 120/80x18 \$58.95
 130/80x18 63.95
 140/80x18 65.95
 90/90x21 Front 49.95
MXR SOFT-CROSS
 110/90x18 \$60.95
 120/90x18 63.95
 100/90x19 62.95
 120/80x19 65.95
 130/80x19 69.95
 90/90x21 Front 62.95

BRIDGESTONE
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M22/23 — Med./Hard Terrain
 410x14 \$21.95
 300x16 22.95
 510x17 41.95
 400x18 41.95
 110/100x18 46.95
 410x18 38.95
 510x18 46.95
 300x21 Front 32.95
 80/100x21 Front 32.95
M39/40 — Soft Terrain
 110/90x14 \$26.95
 120/90x18 43.95
 130/90x18 45.95
 80/90x17 Front 22.95
 90/90x21 Front 31.95
M41/42 — Intermediate Terrain
 100/100x18 \$44.95
 110/100x18 50.95
M51/52 — Hard Terrain
 100/90x19 \$56.95
 110/90x19 62.95
 80/100x21 Front 38.95

IRC
 M5A M2E
M5A/M2E — Hard Terrain
 110/80x14 \$28.95
 120/80x18 37.95
 130/80x18 43.95
 90/90x21 M2E Front 28.95
 100/80x21 M2E Front 29.95
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 R/C BOOT \$169.95
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 SERIES 40 GLOVES \$37.95
 SERIES 36 GLOVES \$31.95
 SERIES 21 GLOVES \$20.95
 SUPER JERSEYS \$25.95
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 TYPE 'S' JERSEYS \$33.95
 SERIES 100 PANTS \$69.95
 SERIES 125 PANTS \$118.95
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 BULLET BOOTS \$148.95
 TRAIL PRO BOOTS \$113.95
 BULLET GLOVES \$29.95
 BULLET JERSEYS \$30.95
 BULLET PANTS \$108.95
 ROK BLOK \$88.95

SINISALO
 SCD II GLOVES \$24.95
 SCD II GLOVES \$31.95
 WORLD JERSEYS \$24.95
 WORLD GP JERSEYS \$33.95
 JET PANTS \$88.95
 SCD PANTS \$113.95

HALLMAN
 MACH 5 ARMOR \$89.95
 MACH 5 ELBOW GUARDS \$18.95
 VERTABELT \$29.95

BELL
 MOTO 4 SL \$98.95
 MOTO 5 \$179.95
 MOTO 5 JOHNSON \$198.95

SHOEI
 VX-3V \$209.95
 VX5V Solid Color \$244.95
 VX5V Team Color \$244.95
 VX3V Solid Color \$154.95
 VX3V Team Color \$204.95

Arai
 MX-PRO \$169.95
 MX PRO Solid Color \$194.95
 MX PRO Team Color \$209.95
 MX PRO Dayglow \$209.95

ANSWER
 ROOST BOOST \$45.95
 S/A PRO SILENCER/ARR. \$69.95
 OVAL PRO SILENCER \$52.95
 LEGALIZER \$29.95
 ALUMILITE BARS \$52.95
 TEAM PANTS \$88.95
 PRO FORM PANTS \$117.95

SUPERTRAPP
 PRO SERIES \$124.95
 RACING SERIES \$84.95
 STREET TRAIL \$69.95
 Prices may vary for some models.

Boyesen
 AC III CHEST PROTECTOR \$89.95
 SPECIAL CROSS GLOVES \$39.95
 PRO GLOW A-2 GLOVES \$26.95
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Barnett
 HIGH-PERFORMANCE CLUTCH KITS from \$29.95

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 RK 520KS \$33.95
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 K-490IT — Medium Terrain
 300x12 \$16.95
 410x14 22.95
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K-595 — Hard Terrain
 100/100x18 \$52.95
 110/100x18 60.95
 100/90x19 55.95
 110/90x19 60.95

K-695 — Medium Terrain
 100/100x18 \$52.95
 110/100x18 56.95
 120/100x18 60.95
 100/90x19 59.95
 110/90x19 64.95

K-990 — Soft Terrain
 90/100x16 \$29.95
 100/100x18 52.95
 110/100x18 56.95
 120/100x18 60.95
 100/90x19 59.95
 110/90x19 64.95

HENG SHIN
 C-761 C-183 C-703 C-755 C-760
C-755 Metzeler MX Copy
 410x14 \$18.95
 460x17 29.95
 530x17 31.95
 350x18 20.95
 410x18 21.95
 460x18 26.95
 530x18 31.95
 300x21 16.95
 325/350x21 20.95

C-760 Metzeler Multi-X Copy
 560x17 \$33.95
 560x18 33.95
 325x21 20.95

C-183D/703 DEVASTOR
 385x14 \$17.95
 500x17 C-703 30.95
 360x18 19.95
 410x18 23.95
 460x18 29.95
 500x18 C-703 30.95
 530x18 C-703 34.95
 300x21 Front 19.95
 300x23 Front 21.95

C-761 BERM MASTER
 110/80x14 \$16.95
 130/80x17 26.95
 150/80x17 33.95
 120/80x18 23.95
 130/80x18 25.95
 140/80x18 29.95
 150/80x18 36.95

WISECO
 PISTON KITS from \$29.95

HANDLING

terrain anyway. A thin front tire (3.00 or 80/100) generally provides sharper turning, while a larger (3.25) knobby will provide better flotation on sand at a cost of some turning ability.

SPIN SOME WRENCHES

Next, look at the wheel. Is the rim true? A bent front rim will ruin steering precision and feel. Are the spokes tight? Loose spokes will create a vague feeling at the bars and increase the chance of rim damage. Are the wheel bearings lubed and in good condition? Steering and braking can suffer if bearings are sloppy.

Handlebar position and shape can greatly affect control and comfort. One's choice as to handlebar positions or bends is best guided by personal preference. The only rules here are that it's always worth the trouble to try different bars if the ones on your bike don't deliver a comfortable, natural feel. Riding that requires more standing, like motocross, generally calls for a more forward bar position than enduro riding, where it's necessary to sit frequently, and damaged bars can reduce comfort dramatically.

Steering head bearing adjustment can have a great effect on handling and stability. The bearings should be snug enough to eliminate any play at the steering head. You can tighten the bearing adjustment collars to put extra pressure on the bearings to add some resistance to the steering for high-speed cross-country riding. This is a crude way to get some of the effect of a steering damper. Scotts Performance ([818] 248-BIKE) and DeVol Engineering ([206] 937-0341) sell hydraulic steering dampers for dirt bikes.

TUNING FOR TURNING

Next, check the forks. Are both tubes at the same height in the triple clamps? They should be. If they're not, the fork may bind and its ability to absorb bumps could suffer. Check the fork tube height by measuring the distance from the sealing edge of the fork cap to the top of the upper fork clamp. Raising the tubes in the clamps can quicken your bike's steering for riding that requires frequent sharp turning, like supercross or enduros. Usually, you lose some straight-line stability when the forks are raised in the clamps. Raising the forks lowers your machine slightly, which may be of some help to shorter riders.

Lowering the tubes in the clamps adds straight-line, high-speed stability and raises the machine slightly, increasing ground clearance. This is a useful setting for cross-country riders. It's wise to remove the tubes occasionally to clean them and the clamping surfaces at the axle and triple clamps of oil. Oil residue from sloppy fork service or spilled premix can allow the clamps to slip slightly, creating the same steering imprecision as fork flex. While you've got the forks off, check them for straightness and dings.

Most off-road machines have the same forks as their MX brethren, but, as a rule of thumb, off-road bikes run lower fork oil level than motocross bikes. You'll want to



Top riders adjust their chassis for individual tracks to get the most from their machine. Here Jeff Stanton has moved his rear wheel as far back as it'll go and dropped the forks to their minimum height for more stability. On a tight track, raise the forks in the triple clamps and shorten the wheelbase.

add oil to reduce bottoming for high-speed riding or for jump-filled motocross tracks. Remove oil to make the final part of the travel softer. Fork performance depends heavily on the freshness and viscosity of the oil. Cartridge forks require special cartridge fork oil to work properly, and it's important to keep the oil fresh. Average woods riders will find they get better control at the lighter compression settings, but fast riders tend to run firmer motocross-like settings in almost any terrain.

If your enduro bike fork springs are too soft and you plan to race some high-speed events, you can increase spring rate cheaply with a torch and grinder. To get an approximate ten percent increase, cut off ten percent of the active (the ones touching each other on the end are not active) coils, flatten the last coil against its neighbor (making it inactive), then grind it flat. Use a section of PVC pipe of the proper diameter to replace the section of spring you cut out. You can achieve plusher initial travel and better weight transfer for turning by using less preload (a shorter PVC spacer). More preload gives you more high-speed stability and active travel with less prowess in turning. Huge changes in fork response are available through changes to spring rates, preload and valving, but these are best done after you've found out what kind of performance you can get out of the stock suspension.

REAR-END TUNING TIPS

Rear suspension action depends heavily on the condition of the load-bearing parts in the system. Proper lubrication is the only way to get full performance from a linkage-type rear suspension. A linkage system can move freely when you bounce on the bike in your garage but bind severely under the much higher loads incurred in actual riding. Regular linkage disassembly, cleaning and lubrication only costs time. If your time is valuable, you should replace the stock linkage pivot bolts on your bike with a Cancel-


la Products ([408] 258-2412) zerk fitting-equipped linkage bolt set.

Once your suspension linkage is in good working order, you should look at your ride height (sag) setting. A properly set-up rear suspension will use about one-third of its total travel when the rider is seated on the bike in his normal riding position. Tighten the spring preload collar to raise the ride height. Loosen the collar to lower it. Just as with fork height adjustments, movement in either direction will affect steering quickness, stability and, to some extent, seat height and ground clearance. The higher the rear of the bike, the quicker it will steer because you are bringing the fork to a more straight-up position. Lowering the rear of the bike puts the fork at a shallower angle with the ground, slowing the steering.

PLAYING THE SLOTS

Rear axle position is another simple, free, often overlooked adjustment. On most bikes, the axle can be moved more than an inch with the stock chain adjusters. This means you can change your machine's wheelbase at will. Set the axle to its forward-most position to shorten the wheelbase for quicker turning and easier wheeling, but be prepared for slightly less stability in straight-line riding, especially at high speeds. The rear-most axle position lengthens the wheelbase for greater high-speed stability and slows steering somewhat. When adding to the wheelbase, you'll need to go to a longer chain or add a link, and vice versa.

The same rules for tire selection, inflation and wheel maintenance that apply to the front tire also apply to the rear, though rear tire pressures are generally a pound higher than front tires. A lower-profile tire aids turning, and greater tire width positively affects your bike's handling to some extent, through better ability to hook up. The overall goal, like the goal of all the modifications we've discussed, is the same—perfect setup for the type of riding to be done. □



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OFF-ROADERS FOR '91

Photos, facts & rumors for trail riders

By the DIRT BIKE Staff

YAMAHA WR



Yamaha's WR250Z received all of the motor, chassis, styling and suspension changes of the '91 YZ250 plus a few of its own. The WR has its own damping rates, jetting, 18" rear wheel and lighting capable ignition, and third and fourth gear ratios are spread out to eliminate the big jump to fifth the '90 model had. Yamaha also has three new models in the wings, possibly a YZ490 with the YZ250 chassis, a WR490 and/or new-generation thumper(s). We'll have the scoop next month.

KAWASAKI KDX



Kawasaki didn't change a thing on the 1991 KDX200, aside from "bold new graphics." This is good, because the '90 KDX is a reliable, economical enduro weapon and because it frees the R&D department to work on new off-road Kawasakis for 1991. We've heard reliable reports that Kawasaki is testing a KX-based KDX250 for release later in '91 and there have been rumors of a high-performance mid-sized four-stroke. Looks like the folks in green are aiming to blow Suzuki's updated '91 RMX and DRs out of the water.

HONDA XRs



Aside from front and rear disc changes on the XR250R, the only changes to the 250cc-and-below XR line are cosmetic. The bikes carry the same suggested retail as the '90 models, but the big news is the lack of the successful XR600R in the '91 lineup. Honda isn't talking until after their dealer show, but we'll bet our paychecks that 1991 is the year for the long-awaited liquid-cooled XR650R. Could it have an electric starter to boot?



Honda expanded its contingency program to \$3.8 million and included XRs for 1991. A win in the AMA ISDE Qualifiers, Enduro, Hare Scrambles, Cross-Country and Hare & Hound series events, Blackwater 100, Barstow-to-Vegas, SCORE Baja 500 and 1000, Alligator Enduro, SETRA, NETRA and ECEA series will bring XR riders cash or gift certificates. If you don't like the '91 graphics/colors, you can pick up a '90 for big savings (\$100-\$300).

KTM MX, DXC & EXC



◀ KTM's new color scheme is labeled "Mint Condition," no doubt spurred by their most successful year ever. The LC4 600s received head modifications, a close-ratio five-speed transmission and different ignition curve for more power, and a powder-coated motor and revised circulation system for better cooling. Price is \$4759.



◀ All three 125 models have 250-like styling for 1991, aluminum subframe, lighter rear hub, stronger frame, lowboy exhaust and a new kickstarter. All '91 KTMs get completely revised White Power components with less stiction and more American-style damping, stronger Brembo brakes, a larger front axle and quieter exhaust.



◀ Both the 300cc and 250cc lines have extensive motor mods to get stronger power and better throttle response. They get a new two-ring piston, pipe, porting, power-valve, clutch and ignition mated with a larger airbox for better flow. DXC and EXC models have a 3.3-gal. tank, 18" rear tire and lighting ignition. □

It's possible to ride a dirt bike wearing something other than off-road motorcycle boots, but without them you won't ride very fast. A motorcycle boot gives you a sensitive control of the bike, protects you from it and the forces it generates and keeps your feet dry in adverse riding conditions. Only a boot designed specifically for this complex job can do it well. Boots for dirt biking are sophisticated, high-tech pieces of equipment and boot shoppers must face the fact that there's a fairly direct relationship between price and performance. The more expensive boots are going to be more comfortable to wear, especially for fast riding and racing. They'll also be more protective and durable because they're designed better, are made of better materials and are manufactured with greater care. There's no such thing as a cheap generic boot with the quality and features of the best boots, but there are many good, less expensive boots.

We've listed the better boots in this guide and divided them into two categories—pro-level boots, which represent boot manufacturers' top-of-the-line offerings, and intermediate-level boots, which are of racing quality, but lack some of the features and the premium price of the best boots. We've provided an overview describing features common to

the boots in each category and a brief individual description of the interesting and important details unique to each model. Beginner-level boots are no longer made. Dealers found they didn't sell well because riders who were serious enough to invest in riding boots wanted the real thing. You really can't go wrong if you choose any of the boots in this guide. Certain boots will suit some riders better than others. With these guidelines you will be able to make the best choice for your needs.

PERSONAL BEST

Think about what you really need from your riding boots before you buy. Every boot in this guide will provide the comfort and protection required for every form of riding from casual trail riding to motocross racing (see description for Alpinestars trial). If you race regularly, the level you race at and your views on protection and appearance will make your boot choice for you. Serious racers almost always buy the most expensive boots. Not every rider needs the best boots offered. If you're not a racer, you may never really need the extra measure of ankle support and impact protection better boots offer. If you're a young, growing rider who doesn't race seriously, you might do well to choose less expensive boots because you'll

grow out of them long before you wear them out. If the looks of your riding outfit aren't a major priority, you can choose a less stylish brand to save money.

PRO CLASS

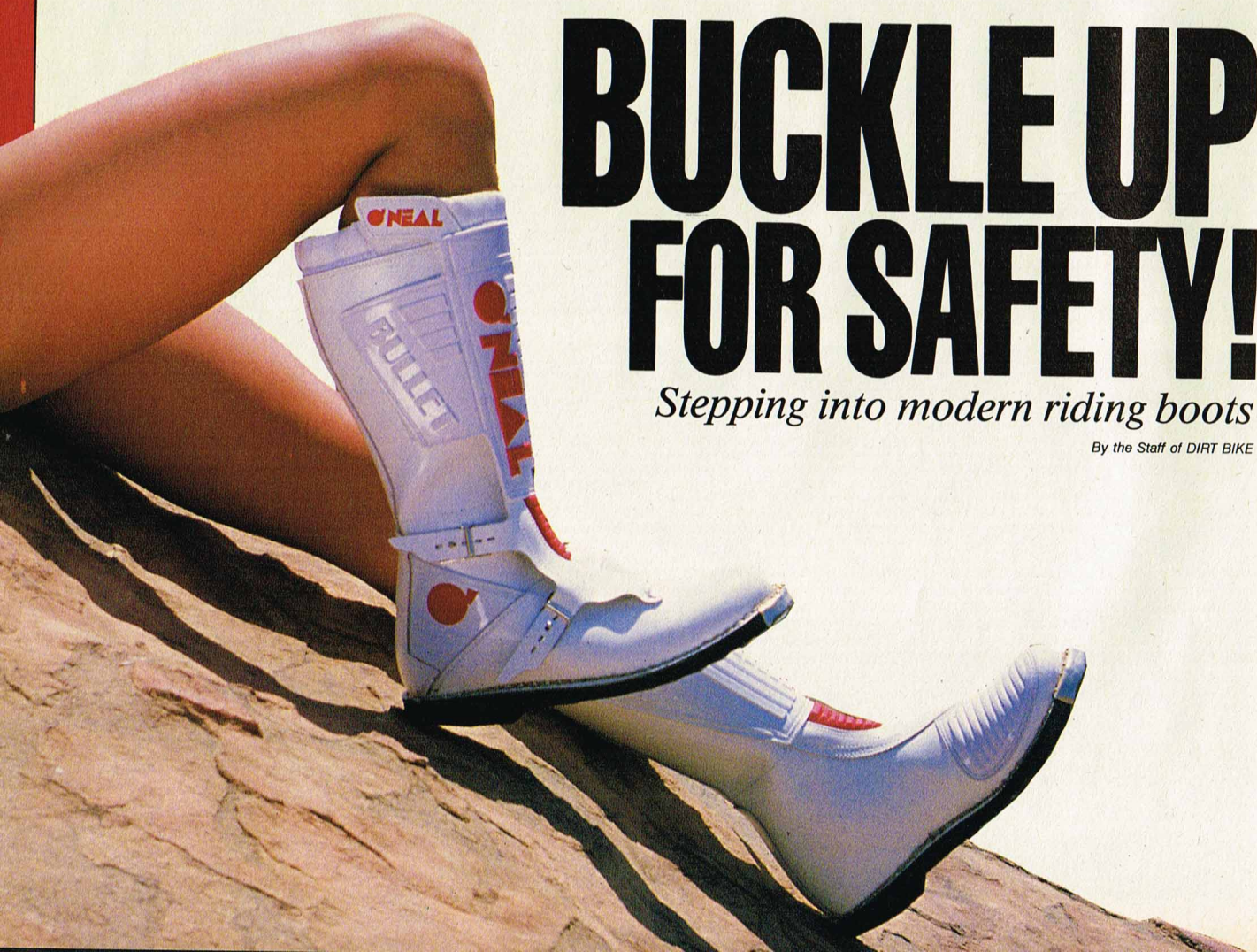
Choosing from the boots in this group is fairly simple. Every pro-class boot has all of the most important features in one form or another. The only differences are in the manufacturers' individual choices of design details, like the use of internal or external plastic guards, types of buckles and styling. These boots have better uppers, closures and soles than less expensive boots.

The upper on every boot in our pro category is at least 15 inches tall (in adult sizes) for greater support and coverage. They are made from the best and thickest boot leather available (4mm-thick top-grain leather), which lets the boot builder put the tough, tightly grouped cells of the hide's outermost skin at the outside of the boot for greater strength, abrasion resistance and waterproofing. The less expensive split-grain hides, which are what's left after the top grain is sliced off the hide, are inherently less dense and more porous. Split-grain leather typically has a machine-textured surface so that it looks like top-grain leather. The quality and thickness of top-grain leather gives pro-

BUCKLE UP FOR SAFETY!

Stepping into modern riding boots

By the Staff of DIRT BIKE



Alpinestars Rick Johnson Tech-4

JT Alpinestars Tech-1

Alpinestars Tech-4

JT Alpinestars Tech-4

Alpinestars Tech-4 "Wild"

Alpinestars "No Stop" trials

AXO Kevlar Turbo RC

TUF AXO Turbo RC

class boots a smooth outer finish like fine shoes and firmness that offers excellent impact protection and support.

Guards are built into or onto these boots at the shin (with padding behind it), shifter contact area, toe, ankle, heel, arch and inner calf. You'll also find a padded gaiter at the top of the boot to stop water and dirt from falling in and a water barrier behind the closures. Some pro-level boots lack shifter contact area guards on the right boot, which can be a problem for riders of right-side-shift vintage machines. Other than this small oversight, pro-level boots are extremely comfortable to ride in because their close fit and rigidity braces your ankles from shock and twisting. Because of their firmness, you'll find they're not much fun to walk in, so don't go to your dealer, try on a pair and walk around the showroom expecting them to feel like bedroom slippers.

Lever-type closures are better than notched belt designs and are common on this class of boot. They are more convenient to use and tighten the boot as well as close it. Some boots are tightened and closed with a combination of lever-type buckles, Velcro and speed laces that are joined at the top so they can be drawn tight with a single quick pull and then held tight with a lockable tab which slides along both laces.

Soles on the best boots are typically three layers of material chosen for wear resistance, shock absorption and strength. Steel shank supports are used in every top-quality boot



Some boot manufacturers make their boots in small sizes. For really small feet, you'll want to check out O'Neal's Trail Pro children's boots and Mr. Motorcycle's children's boots.

to spread the load of jump landings across the floor of the boot for comfort and protection. The tread on the soles is a one-way grip sawtooth design that allows enough traction to push a bike but slides without snagging on the ground when you put your foot down in turns.

Alpinestars Bad Boy Tech-4. Price: \$235. Color: White/blue/red scheme only. Sizes: 7-14. **Notable features:** The Bad Boy boot is more than just a Tech-4 with special graphics. All the Tech-4's outstanding fit and protection features are there; the ankle area is even more supportive than the standard Tech-

4, which is among the most supportive boots sold. If pro-level motocross or insane jumps are your bag, or if you've injured your ankle or want to do everything you can to avoid ankle injury, you should consider this boot.

Alpinestars Tech-1 and JT/Alpinestars Tech-1. Price: \$189.95 (both models). Colors: White/red and white/blue. Sizes: 7-14. **Notable features:** Alpinestars's next-to-top-of-the-line model is so supportive and is made so well it can be considered a pro boot. This boot is closed by three lever-type buckles rather than four, and less extensive guards than the Tech-4, but all the pro-level basics are there. The special made-for-JT model differs only in that it has a JT logo on the ankle.

Alpinestars Tech-4, JT/Alpinestars Tech-4 and Alpinestars Tech-4 "Wild." Price: \$235. Colors: White/red and white/blue. Sizes: 7-14. **Notable features:** The Tech-4 has four lever-type buckles so the boot can be precisely adjusted to nearly any rider's ankle and calf size. The latest Tech-4s have the buckles positioned for better ankle-area tension adjustment. Every guard on the boot is well placed and well designed. There isn't a single gimmicky or just-for-looks feature on these boots. The special made-for-JT model differs only in that it has a JT logo on the ankle. The "Wild" model is identical to the Tech-4 but for its colorful graphics.

Alpinestars Trial. Price: \$199. Color: Blue, red/white only. Sizes: 7-14. **Notable features:** This is the only off-road motorcy-

**BOOT
BUYER'S
GUIDE**



Fox Comp-2

Gaerne SX Pro

**Hondaline
Gaerne TX-10**

**Hondaline AXO
Turbo Plus TX-10**

Hi-Point Pro-GP

JT Dalmation

O'Neal Bullet

Sidi Tracker

cle boot in our guide designed for trials riding. It's more flexible and waterproof than typical motocross boots but has good support because of the three lever-type buckles. It also has a smooth sole for easy foot positioning on the pegs. These boots would be fine for general riding but they excel in their own environment.

AXO Kevlar Turbo RC, Kawasaki/AXO Turbo RC, TUF/AXO Turbo RC, Yamaha/AXO Turbo RC: Price: \$195. Colors: Blue/white, gray/pink, white/blue, red/white, black/white. Kawasaki and Yamaha (see your dealer) have special color arrangements to match their motocross bikes. TUF has exclusive blue/red, blue/neon green and blue/yellow color combinations. Sizes: 6-13, child sizes available by special order. **Notable features:** Lever-type buckles with ratchet-type adjustment make it easy to tighten the boot. The Turbo RC, at 15.5 inches from the floor of the boot to the top of its back, is among the tallest boots sold. Taller is better because the boot can't protect what it doesn't cover. AXO has slimmed the cut of the ankle area for better support and armor-plated most of the boot with sturdy plastic. AXO's latest model of the Turbo RC, the Kevlar Turbo RC, has a wear guard made of flexible heat- and abrasion-proof Kevlar on the top part of the boot that contacts the bike. No more melted plastic on your pipe!

Fox Comp-2. Price: \$199. Colors: Red, white, blue, black. Sizes: 4-13. **Notable features:** Fox's Comp-2 boot is built by Alpine-

stars, a company that builds top-quality boots only. The Comp-2 gets all of the features that make riders who wear Alpinestars products so loyal to them—the lever action buckle, the snug, supportive ankle area and excellent materials and construction. Fox has added speed laces and Velcro closures to the top of the boot and hard plastic to the outer ankle for impact protection.

Gaerne/Answer SX Pro and Gaerne/Answer/Kawasaki SX Pro, and Gaerne/Answer/Suzuki SX Pro. (Editor's Note: Gaerne/Answer will have a radically updated version of the SX Pro shortly. It's going to cost a bit more [probably \$220 to \$235], but Gaerne/Answer claims it's stronger, better-fitting and better-looking than the current SX Pro. It will also have a redesigned buckle system. Look for it in DIRT BIKE's November "New Products" department!) Price: \$199.95. Colors: Blue, white, gray/pink, gray/green, gray/red. Sizes: 7-12. **Notable features:** Answer's latest boot by Gaerne has two easily adjustable ski boot-type buckles, speed laces and Velcro as a closure system and extensive external plastic guards. Its special sole has more shock-absorbing ability than most.

Hondaline TX-10. Gaerne/Answer Super ETX. Price: \$199.95. Colors: White/gray/red, white blue/pink. **Notable features:** Hondaline TX-10 Gaerne boots are the model that preceded Gaerne's new SX-pro. It's a pro-level boot as far as fit, protection and support, but it has a speed lace/roller buck-

le/Velcro closure system rather than the new lever closure.

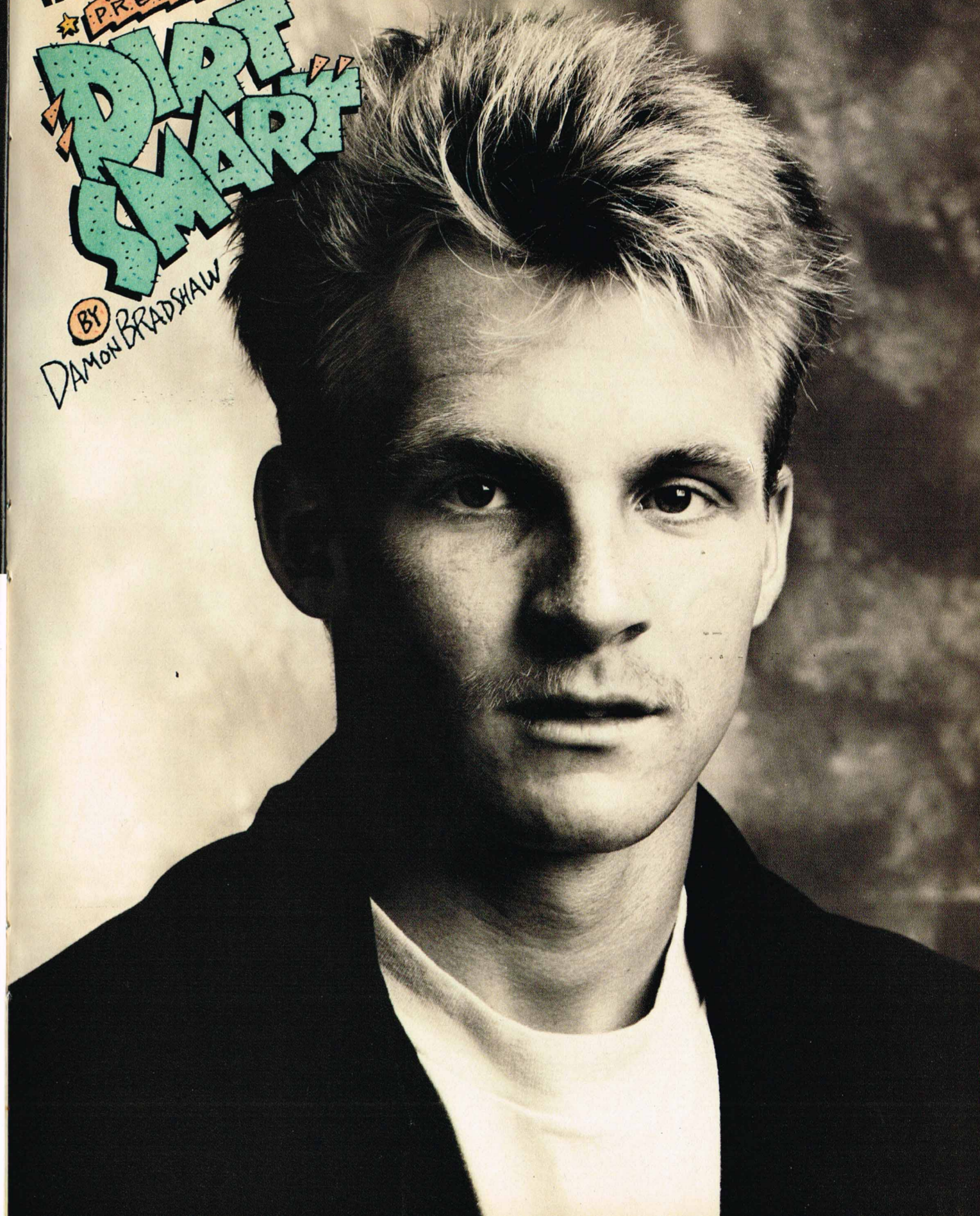
Hondaline TX-10/AXO Turbo Plus. Price: \$199. Colors: White/red, red/white. **Notable features:** This made-for-Honda AXO boot is the model which preceded AXO's new Turbo RC. It's a bit shorter, less snug-fitting and has roller buckles, speed laces and Velcro rather than the lever-type closures on the latest AXO offering but it's still a stylish, well-made boot worthy of pro-level competition.

Hi-Point Pro GP. Price: \$239.95. Colors: Red, white, blue, black. Sizes: Youth, 1-7, adult, 6-15. **Notable features:** This is another Alpinestar-made boot and it's one of their finest products. It's very similar in construction to the Tech-4 but for its distinctive stainless steel shin plate. The Pro-GP's price and performance are in the high end of the pro-class boots.

JT Dalmation. Price: \$215. Color: Dalmation black spots on white only. Sizes: 6-13. **Notable features:** This is a special made-for-JT Alpinestar boot. It's got the snug, supportive ankle fit and a full complement of internal guards that make Alpinestar boots so desirable with a two-lever buckle, speed lace and Velcro closure system.

O'Neal Bullet. Price: \$184.95. Colors: Red, white, blue, black. Sizes: 6-13. **Notable features:** O'Neal's Bullet boot is extremely popular because it offers support, fine materials and snug ankle area fit at the low end of the pro-class price range. It uses roller

**YAMAHA
PRESENTS**
**DIRT
SMART**
BY
DAMON BRADSHAW



HOT IN THE DIRT

TO CLEAN UP

I've been cleaning up in the dirt for over ten years. Here's how. First, I learned the hard way that the only thing to do when another rider gets in your face on the track is to roost him. And second, to do that, you've got to have the hot setup when it comes to equipment and support.

Like Yamaha's new YZ250. I helped develop this bike so it would respond more like a works machine. We started by increasing the engine's performance through the entire power band. It has a new ceramic-plated cylinder for better heat dissipation, longer wear and less weight. We increased the stroke for 3cc's more displacement, gave it new port timing, a new YPVS valve shape and timing, and redesigned the exhaust pipe shape. All to help produce awesome 250 power.

We added a new ratchet-type shifter. You can really feel the difference. Shifting's a lot lighter, more precise and quicker.

The new computer-designed Deltabox swingarm is lighter and more rigid. Combined with a new rear link ratio



YZ250

and shock absorber valving, you get a more progressive ride—from stutter bumps to the most radical Supercross jumps. In the front, inverted works-type cartridge forks with 43mm tubes give more rigidity and less stiction.

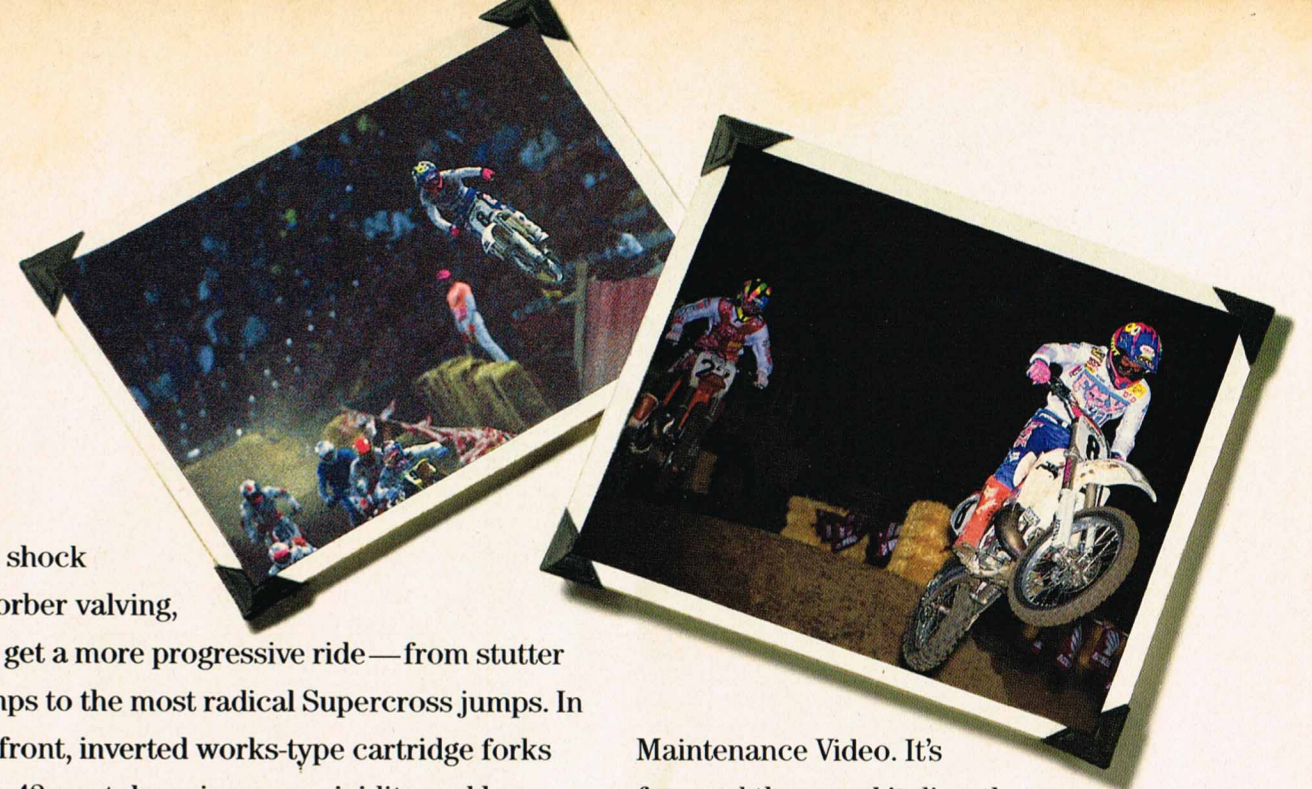


On the YZ125, we pumped up engine performance for more mid-range to top-end power. We also gave the 125 the same ratchet-type shifter as the YZ250 and dialed in the front and rear suspensions just as we did on the 250.

At Yamaha, making you competitive doesn't stop with the bike. When you buy a new YZ, Yamaha keeps you on the track with things like a special YZ



YZ125

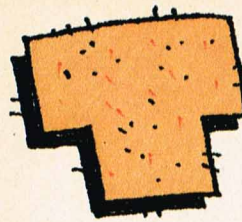


Maintenance Video. It's free and they send it directly to you at home.* They've also got an ongoing series of Wrench Reports available from your dealer that are designed to keep you updated on developments and performance tips for your YZ. Topping all of this off, Yamaha is introducing their new Dirt Smart Contingency Program. Talk about rad! They've added more than one million dollars to their program for 1991. You clean up in the dirt and you get paid.

That's what's so great about Yamaha. You don't just have the best bike under you. Yamaha's behind you as well. And that's why I've never competed on anything else. 🏍️🏍️

*Maintenance Video will be sent by Yamaha Motor Corporation to those who purchase a 1991 YZ by December 31, 1990.

YAMAHA PRESENTS DIRT SMART



The Bikes That Make It All Possible.

ENGINE

Type Liquid-cooled 2-stroke Single
 Displacement 249.8cc
 Bore and Stroke 68.0 x 68.8mm
 Compression Ratio 8.8-10.6:1
 Carburetion Mikuni TM38SS/1
 Ignition CDI
 Starting Kick
 Lubrication Premix
 Transmission 5-speed

CHASSIS

Overall Length 86.4"
 Overall Width 33.5"
 Overall Height 48.2"
 Seat Height 38.2"
 Wheelbase 58.9"
 Ground Clearance 13.4"
 Dry Weight 218 lbs.
 Fuel Tank Capacity 2.25 gals.

SUSPENSION

Front Inverted Telescopic Fork
 Rear Swingarm (New Monocross)

BRAKES

Front 245mm Disc
 Rear 220mm Disc

TIRES

Front 80' 100-21
 Rear 110' 90-19

COLORING

. White/Magenta

YZ250



ENGINE

Type Liquid-cooled 2-stroke Single
 Displacement 124.8cc
 Bore and Stroke 56.0 x 50.7mm
 Compression Ratio 9.2-10.7:1
 Carburetion Mikuni TM35SS/1
 Ignition CDI
 Starting Kick
 Lubrication Premix
 Transmission 6-speed

CHASSIS

Overall Length 85.2"
 Overall Width 33.5"
 Overall Height 48.2"
 Seat Height 37.2"
 Wheelbase 57.9"
 Ground Clearance 14"
 Dry Weight 197 lbs.
 Fuel Tank Capacity 2.11 gals.

SUSPENSION

Front Inverted Telescopic Fork
 Rear Swingarm (New Monocross)

BRAKES

Front 245mm Disc
 Rear 220mm Disc

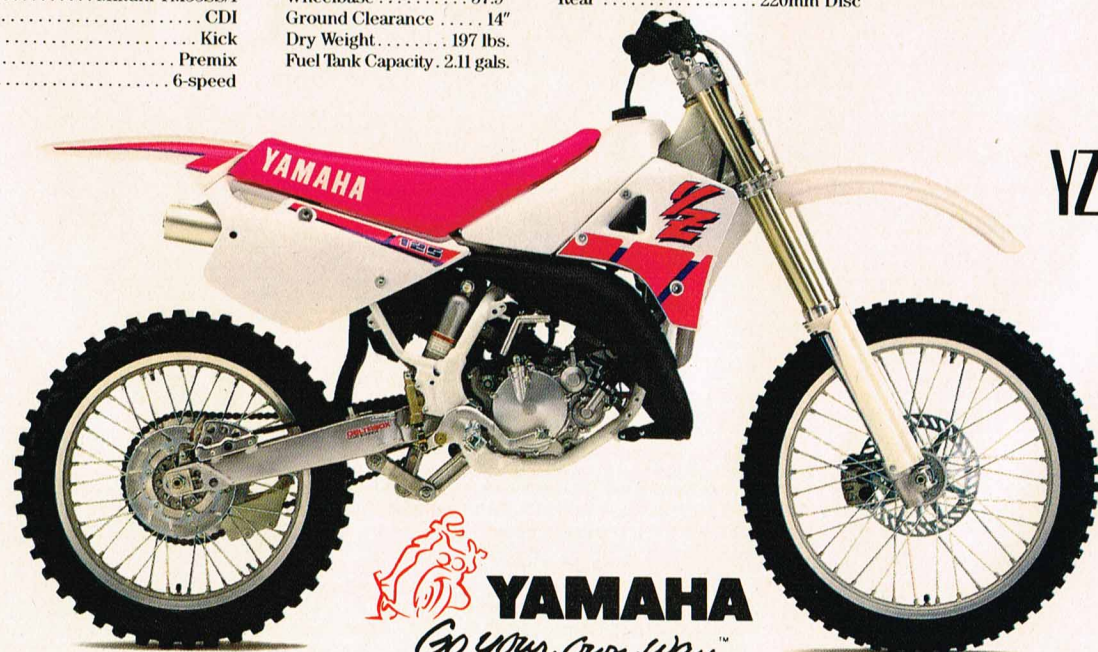
TIRES

Front 80' 100-21
 Rear 100' 90-19

COLORING

. White/Magenta

YZ125



Remember to "Tread Lightly" and respect the environment. 30-day limited warranty. Warranty terms are limited. See your Yamaha dealer for details. Information subject to change. Yamaha logo must be prominently displayed on all machines. Yamaha will pay contingency upon confirmation from promoter that rider competed on a properly qualified Yamaha motorcycle. For further information, contact your local Yamaha Dealer, event promoter or Yamaha Motor Corporation, U.S.A., 714-761-7512. Rider must file a 1991 Yamaha Contingency form to be eligible. Dress properly for your ride with a helmet, eye protection, long-sleeved shirt, long trousers, gloves and boots. Yamaha and the Motorcycle Safety Foundation encourage you to ride safely and respect the environment. For further information regarding the MSF rider course, please call 1-800-447-4700. Do not drink and drive. It is illegal and dangerous. Specifications subject to change without notice. © 1990 Yamaha Motor Corporation, U.S.A. (Cypress, CA 90630)



BOOT BUYER'S GUIDE

Mr. Motorcycle Trophy Line

Mr. Motorcycle Gold Cup

O'Neal Trail Pro

Sidi Carla

Suzuki Gaerne MX

Thor Racing

USA MX

Yamaha SMX

buckles (a belt-type buckle with a roller on the buckle to help the belt glide through the buckle so you can tighten it more easily) rather than the convenient lever-type buckles of the other boots in this category but is pro class in every other respect.

Sidi Tracker. Price: \$219. Colors: White, white/lime, gray/red, aqua/royal, white/pink. Sizes: 6-13. **Notable features:** Sidi Tracker boots use a single lever-type buckle with speed laces and Velcro as a closure-tightening system. These boots use extensive plastic guards which protrude through the leather. The "shock absorbers" that stick out above the surface of the boot are hollow so that they can crush somewhat upon impact to absorb the energy of the blow.

INTERMEDIATE-LEVEL BOOTS

Intermediate-level boots have all the basic features of racing boots with less emphasis on appearance (color choices in this category are red, white, blue and black except where noted), protection for extreme riding conditions and convenience. There is more variety in the construction of this class of boot in terms of the total list of features each boot has. To choose the best boot for you from this group, consider which features are really important to you and find the boot that has the greatest number of them. Top-grain leather is used for the heavily abused front of the uppers on most boots in our intermediate category, but it's not 4mm thick on every boot. Split-grain leather is used in low-stress parts of some of the boots. You'll

find impact guards at the shin, shifter contact area (on most) and ankle, but most don't have them at the heel, toe and inner calf. The lack of firm plastic in the ankle area and the shape and firmness of the leather used there make for boots that are less snug and, as a result, less supportive than a pro-level boot.

Closures on our intermediate category boots are roller buckles, belt-type buckles, speed laces and Velcro, so you can't adjust these boots to be as tight as the more expensive boots with lever-type closures.

Soles on most intermediate-class boots are the sawtooth type, though a few have a hiking boot-type sole. Sole construction is less sophisticated. A single layer of sole material is bonded to the plate that attaches to the bottom of the boot. Not all of these boots have steel shank supports, which means they'll offer less protection from impacts through the sole, and they'll be a bit nicer to walk in because the sole will give like a shoe, rather than feeling solid-bottomed like ski boots.

Mr. Motorcycle Trophy Line. Price: \$89.95. Colors: Red, white, blue, black. **Notable features:** This is the least expensive racing-quality boot we know of. They've got ankle guards and a padded shin guard, a tough, reinforced one-way sole with a sole tip to prevent separation and speed lace and Velcro closures, all for less than a good pair of sneakers!

Mr. Motorcycle Gold Cup. Price: \$139.95.

Sizes: 6-16. **Notable features:** This boot has extensive plastic guards, including a large one-piece plate that protects the entire inner ankle area, plus three roller-type buckles, speed laces and Velcro closures for near pro-level adjustment. It's a remarkable value for the price and the availability of super-large sizes will let really big riders experience true racing boot protection for the first time ever.

Mr. Motorcycle Children's. Price: \$79.95. **Sizes:** Child's 10-11 and adult 1-6. **Notable features:** A real riding boot with buckle closures in sizes to fit the smallest riders. The sole is sturdy and is lugged like a hiking boot.

O'Neal Trail Pro. Price: \$144.95. **Sizes:** 6-13. **Notable features:** O'Neal's Trail Pro is another near-pro-level offering. Clean O'Neal styling and all the necessary guards make this a very desirable boot. The boot is tightened by speed laces and closed by Velcro.

O'Neal Mini Pro. Price: \$126.95. **Sizes:** 1-6. **Notable features:** This is a mid-priced kid's boot but O'Neal styling and quality make it worth it. This boot is a miniature replica of O'Neal's Trail Pro, right down to the speed lace/Velcro closure system reinforced stitching and the one-way racing sole.

Sidi Carla. Price: \$149. Colors: Red/white, blue/white, black/yellow. **Sizes:** 8-15 including half sizes. **Notable features:** Sidi's Carla is a slightly dated version of a pro-level (continued on page 66)

1991 YAMAHA YZ125-B1

MAGENTA MISSILE?

Wild styling, great suspension & a better motor
By the DIRT BIKE Staff



Railing berms is much easier on the '91 YZ125, due to totally revised suspension settings which provide smoother action and better traction. The downside to this is that you have to rail the berms, keeping momentum at a maximum, to offset the lack of power from the revised motor.

When we first rode the pre-production YZ125-B1 (September '90), the bike was impressive in every way. Every complaint riders had with the '90 YZ125 was dealt with for '91, and the B1 prototype was so fast that it promised to bomb the competition right off the track. It was superior in every way to the '90, the intermediate/pro-level bike that had won our 125 shootout (March '90), so we were pumped to get our hands on the first production model, which had undergone a couple of changes between the final prototype and final production.

Something was lost in the translation to production, at least for our test unit. We thought at first that the final gearing had been changed. Nope—13/51, just like the pre-production model. The B1 had lost the

potent midrange we'd experienced in testing, but it was better than the '90 in every way.

Hmmm, something was lost between the hand-carved pre-pro cylinder and the production-line cylinder, or something like that, but the rest of the bike was simply awesome—great handling, cornering, suspension, brakes, shifting and ergonomics.

In 1989, Yamaha had a similar drop in performance between prototype and production. The problem lay in the exhaust port, and Yamaha put out a Wrench Report to bring production performance to the level of the prototype. Adding radius to the upper corners of the exhaust port boosted power considerably. Look for a similar Wrench Report for 1991.

B-1 BOMBER CHASSIS CHANGES

A new linkage is mated with a new frame, which has a more laid-down shock angle, and a new swingarm. The swingarm length is unchanged, but the tapered Delta Box arm is more sturdy and rigid than previous units. Shock valving was revised to complement the new linkage ratios and provide more plushness on stutter bumps and a smoother mid-stroke. The stroke has increased 13mm and wheel travel is up 5mm. Yamaha testing wizard Ed Scheidler set up our shock with 250mm spring set length, which translates to 97mm sag with a 145- to 155-pound rider aboard. During testing, we cranked in rebound two clicks, from the standard setting of 14/10 (compression/rebound, counted clockwise from full in) to 14/8.

Works-style 43mm forks replace the old 41mm units. The KYB cartridge forks have both valve stacks on the top of the cartridge, like a shock. Both adjusters ride on top of the fork cap, along with an air bleed screw. To adjust the compression, simply turn the clicker with a flat-blade screwdriver, but adjusting the rebound also turns the compression screw, unless you hold the compression screw with the screwdriver as you adjust rebound with a 17mm wrench. We dialed in a tad more compression for 132-pound Shane Trittler and 152-pound Jimmy Lewis, from 12/14 to 11/14, with the standard oil level. The lower legs are identical to the works units Team Yamaha uses.

Brakes at both ends are new Nissin units and stopping power is excellent. ISDE team

member Jimmy Lewis commented, "The brakes are great—they fall in between the almost-too-powerful KTM 125 and perfect-feeling CR125 brakes." The rear disc rotor has fewer slots, to reduce brake wear. Overall gearing was lowered slightly, from 13/50 to 13/51, to give the bike better acceleration out of turns. On a soft-terrain track, we'd go to 13/52, as our motor bogged in power-sapping situations. Wheels and tires were unchanged for 1991.

To finally rid themselves of the stigma of snagged boots, Yamaha went to totally new side panels, which extend all the way to the new, lower radiator shrouds and feature grab holes that allow the subframe to be used as a lift bar. The rear fender has a lower, thinner profile and blends with the side panels,

which blend with the shrouds. Magenta striping extends from the shrouds back to the fender. If you don't like the new-wave stickers, they peel off easily enough with a hair dryer. The rumored space-age front fender and aerodynamic front number plate didn't make production. Bars are the same bend as last year, only they're now silver. Also, the seat base has been raised 15mm to let more air into the airbox.

MANIACAL MOTOR MODIFICATIONS

A works-inspired shorter silencer and pipe, totally revised power-valve shape and actuation system, flat-top Alumite-coated piston, new head (less volume, compression varies from 8.9:1 to 10.3:1) and porting (larger exhaust and YPVS) and revised carburetor settings provide a potent midrange hit



1991 YAMAHA YZ125-B1

Engine type	Case reed- and power-valved, liquid-cooled 2-stroke
Displacement	124cc
Bore and stroke	56mm x 50.7mm
Carburetion	35mm TM Mikuni
Fuel tank capacity	2.1 gal.
Running weight w/no fuel	199.5 lb.
Sound output (20" MIC test)	95 dB
Gearing	13/51
Lighting coil	No
Spark arrester	No
Green sticker legal in stock trim	No
Wheelbase	57.9 in. (1470mm)
Rake/trail	27°/4.72 in.
Ground clearance	14 in. (355mm)
Seat height	37.2 in. (945mm)
Tire size and type:	
Front	80/100 x 21 Dunlop K490
Rear	100/90 x 19 Dunlop K695
Suspension:	
Front	Inverted 43mm KYB cartridge, adj. comp./reb./prel., 11.8 in. (300mm) travel
Rear	Monocross, KYB aluminum piggyback, adj. comp./reb./prel., 12.4 in. (315mm) travel
Country of origin	Japan
Suggested retail price	\$3499
Distributor/Manufacturer:	
	Yamaha Motors Corp.
	6555 Katella Ave.
	Cypress, CA 90630

◀ *Whipping the YZ125-B1 is more fun than past models because of improved side panels that eliminate snagged boots, and more forgiving suspension settings. Shifting and clutch action are also much improved. Like last year, the YZ125 is a bike for fast intermediates and pros.*

and improved top-end over rev on our pre-production machine, but our test unit was nowhere as hard-hitting as the prototype. Scheidler changed the carb needle and ignition timing (from a #6EN15-55 to a #6EN15-56 and from 1mm BTDC to 1.2mm). This cleaned up throttle response a bit but didn't transform the bike into the magenta missile we rode last month.

Our 125 tended to bog off the bottom in sand and loam, but decent lap times could be cut with a pinned throttle and serious clutch abuse. The clutch, which is larger in diameter and has revised plate materials, held up well to the fanning and slipping, and the revised shifter makes the YZ shift—dare we say it?—like a Honda. The new shifter is a ratchet-type with more leverage ratio than the scrapped design. Now shifting is slicker than Wayne Newton's hair. Transmission shafts were increased in diameter for more strength, as well.

KNIFE HANDLES

Before we cranked the fork compression damping a click, the B1 tended to knife (oversteer) in corners with loose soil. Up-ping the compression a click lessened weight

transfer in turns and made the YZ125 corner like a hungry cheetah. It'll carve a tight arc almost as well as a Honda but it's not twitchy quick, like an RM. The YZ is predictable and confidence-inspiring but exacts the toll of making the rider work at turning—and keeping the motor wound tight.

One click on the fork compression adjuster made a big difference, as did the clickers on the shock. It only takes a few seconds to dial the suspension for sand or hard-packed conditions, which is a testament to the closeness of the standard settings and the range of adjustability of the components. Neither end does anything twitchy in holes or chop, and both ends soak up big jolts without fighting back or sending nasty vibes to the

rider. Jimmy Lewis feels the YZ suspension "works as well as anything I've ever ridden." Shane Trittler, who weighs 20-odd pounds less than Lewis, complained of kicking until we set the shock at 16/8. Shane says the new YZ forks feel at least as good as the '91 CR250R forks.

THE FINAL ANALYSIS

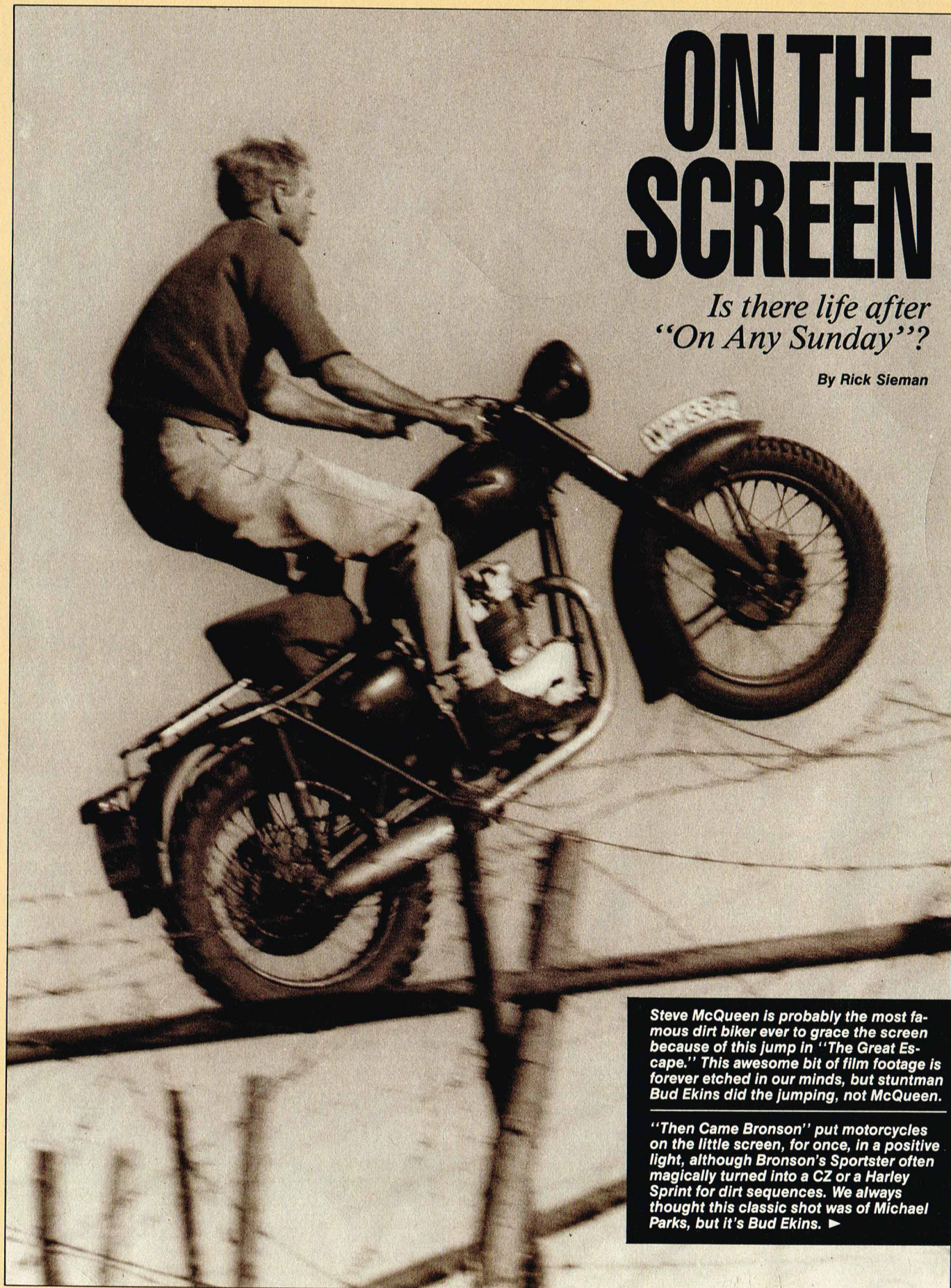
What we have here is an almost perfect package. It turns and handles well, has great brakes, ergonomics and shifting, is plush and predictable on the nastiest whoops or braking bumps, flies predictably and isolates the landings from the pilot. You no longer have to worry about hanging your boot on the seat or catching the next upshift under power. The YZ does it all, except impress the rider with a killer midrange punch and top-end like the '90 KTM—or the prototype 91 YZ125-B1 we rode earlier.

It can be coerced into going fast at the able hands of a fast intermediate or pro, but the magic midrange promised by the pre-production model is missing from the production bike, and so is the ease of riding for dirt bikers on the lower side of the learning curve. This deficiency is easily corrected, but it shouldn't have to be. As it is, a racer can win on the '91 YZ125-B1, but he may have to work a bit harder to do it, compared to some of the other '91s. We'll have to wait until we ride the other 125s before we call the YZ125 a loser, but KTM and Honda would have to mess up their '90 motors to produce a '91 that couldn't out-power a stock YZ125-B1. □

ON THE SCREEN

Is there life after "On Any Sunday"?

By Rick Sieman



Steve McQueen is probably the most famous dirt biker ever to grace the screen because of this jump in "The Great Escape." This awesome bit of film footage is forever etched in our minds, but stuntman Bud Ekins did the jumping, not McQueen.

"Then Came Bronson" put motorcycles on the little screen, for once, in a positive light, although Bronson's Sportster often magically turned into a CZ or a Harley Sprint for dirt sequences. We always thought this classic shot was of Michael Parks, but it's Bud Ekins. ▶

Steve McQueen looked right into the camera and uttered those famous words: "Dirt bikers are good people."

We rejoiced. Finally, someone—and someone with clout—had said what we all knew. The movie was *On Any Sunday*, filmed and narrated by Bruce Brown, and it holds a firm notch in the wild and somewhat rocky history of dirt bikes as the best film ever made.

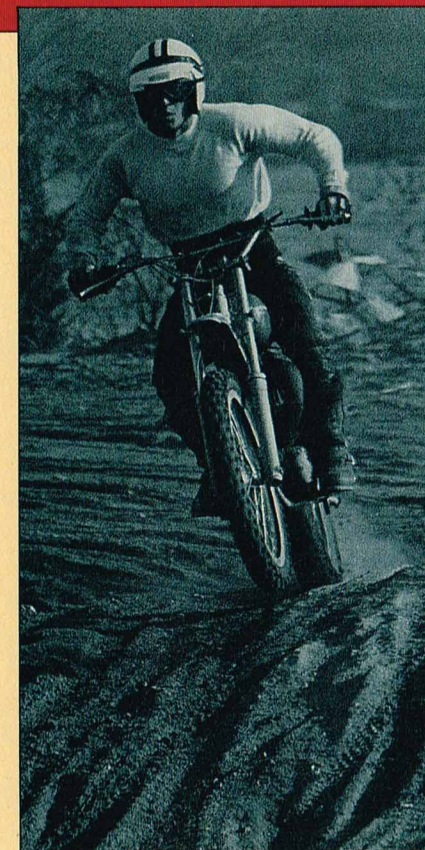
On Any Sunday was released in 1971, and crowds flocked to see this minor masterpiece of understatement and pure insight. Before "Sunday" (BS), we didn't have much to point to, and since, we haven't seen anything that came close.

Oh, there have been some highs and lows, and a few glimmers of fun, but most of it has been awkward, exploitive, poorly done or all of the above. So just for the heck of it, let's take a trip through television and the big screen, and look at some of the more memorable highs and lows that the entertainment industry has seen proper to foist off on us.

THE PITS!

We don't mean the place where you work on your bike between races. Nope, we mean the sludge, the bottom of the cinematic barrel, the dumping grounds for film and tape that should have never seen the light of day.

Surely, one of the front runners for the Trash Award must go to the film *CC & Company*, starring Joe Namath. This gem had the ex-quarterback racing his chopper against a bad guy around Ascot Park at night, lurching through the turns like a land crab on drugs. As Joe and his rival slammed and banged into each other, Ann-Margret



◀ Without a doubt, the definitive dirt bike movie of all time is "On Any Sunday." Who could ever forget the great racing footage and commentating that captured what two-wheelers are all about or the classic sequences of McQueen racing the Elsinore GP under an alias?

Not quite as bad was *Big Fauss and Little Halsey* (or was it *Little Fauss and Big Halsey*?), starring Robert Redford and Michael J. Pollard as a pair of run-down motocrossers. One immortal line lives from this hopeless flick, where Pollard limps in, dusts himself off and sadly says: "Man, I was goin' faster than I ever did in my whole life, then I fell off."

The stars raced around on a gaggle of sad-looking Yamaha DT-1 MXs and indulged in a lot of crashes for no apparent reason. Example? Our hero Redford is racing along a smooth straightaway, dicing with the local hotshoe, and he simply crashes his brains out. No bumps, no rocks, no slick spots . . . just a giant whammo into the dirt.

Making the dirt bike community look even sorer was the "family" of Pollard, which made the "cousins" in *Deliverance* look like rocket scientists. The film footage was also pieced together in a seemingly random pattern. The race would start at Bay Mare, then the first turn would suddenly be at Indian Dunes, while the back straight would look like the desert. Some track!

Another abysmal loser was called *Winner Take All*, which was ballyhooed as having real racers in the movie. Most of the roles of the real racers consisted of having Lackey and Glover wave at the hero and say things like, "Nice ride, Ace." Glover did speak a few lines, but appeared to be suffering from dysentery as he forced the words out.

squealed and jiggled up and down, giving her ample bosom more travel than the two "racers." Joe's acting had all the charm of a slab of rancid pork and the plot was thinner than the Sierra Club's racing budget. One interesting side note: all of the stunt riding for Joe Namath was done by John DeSoto. John was chosen because his skin tone and hair was similar to Namath's.

Photos courtesy of stuntmen Bud Ekins & Richard Epper



Besides being an avid dirt bike fan, Steve McQueen was into collecting and restoring antique motorcycles, a hobby shared with another tough guy of the screen, James Garner, who played a 1900s-era biker in "Nichols." This photo was taken during filming of "The Great Escape."



Motorcyclists are Hollywood's favorite bad guys, and we'd love to have a buck for every time one has been splattered on television (no doubt, we could buy California with the proceeds). Whenever ratings started to slip, the writers always stuck in a few bad-guys-crashing-on-getaway-bikes scenes.



"Knight Rider" was probably one of the worst television series for making us look bad—then the spinoff "Street Hawk," starring a hokey rocket-powered, computerized crime-fighting bike, made us look even worse. Sort of like "CHiPs" meets "RoboCop."



In between all of the stereotyping and hideous dubbing, we were occasionally treated to some gut-wrenching, jaw-dropping stunts by some of the sport's bravest riders. Behind these awesome jumps were names like Ekins, DeSoto, J.N. Roberts, Gary Hymes, Hal Needham and the Eppers.



Could you imagine doing this stunt, not once, but several times? Stuntmen are the unsung heroes of the screen, making the actors look like supermen and often taking a few lumps along the way. The bad guys seldom take the time to don a helmet, so the stuntmen usually have to do stunts helmetless.

ON THE SCREEN

The racing sequences were laughable, as the competitors slammed and banged into each other like demolition derby cars and scenes would switch randomly from dated six-year-old footage to the Daytona supercross, back to a 500 world GP and then back to a track in Long Beach.

Winner Take All had a plot that was convoluted, clumsy and beyond belief in many parts, and tried to make up for it by showing a large number of airhead bimbos throwing tantrums and bawling lines like: "You love that bike more than you love me!" Sadly, *Winner Take All* was not nominated for an Academy Award.

Famed jumper Evel Knievel tried to cash in on his moment in the spotlight and starred in a wretched movie called *Viva Knievel*, which had him fighting crime by running criminal types down on his bike. More often than not, Evel would deliver the knockout punch to the bad guy by jumping over a handy mound of dirt and knocking him senseless until the cops arrived.

Stallone made a fortune knocking people out on film, then built another mountain of money shooting people in the Rambo movies. In *First Blood*, Sly was being chased by the bad-guy cops all over town on what looked like an XT250. You can bet that "Rocky" did not do the stunt riding for that one.

The teen-oriented rock and dance music "beach party" movies stand out as a compost heap of bad taste, and one of the worst was *How to Stuff a Wild Bikini*, starring Frankie Avalon and Annette (former Mousketeer) Funicello. In this wretched flick, the bad guys on bikes terrorized the surfin' good guys, with realistic scenes of choppers blasting through the sand. Real bikers gagged over this gobble.

MIXED BAGS

A few things hit the big and small screens that offered a combination of silliness with a touch of class. Who could forget Michael Parks in *Then Came Bronson*, a TV series in the early '70s? Bronson would sit on his Harley Sportster blipping the throttle and respond to the dullard citizen in a car next to him with the classic line, "Well, hang in there," then roar off to adventure only dreamed of by the nine-to-five citizen.

When Bronson ran out of money, he'd simply enter his Sportster in a race, or a hillclimb, and win all the money. Do you remember the one hillclimb scene wherein his Sportster magically turned into a CZ half-way up the nasty hill, and turned right back into a Sportster after he crested the hill? The dirt bikers in the audience howled and slapped their thighs, while a huge segment of Americans really believed that you could go out and win races on a Harley just by taking your headlight off and slapping on some number plates.

Still, for a while there, the series was enor-



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89-90	37.13
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89-90	75.32

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85-90	4.82
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CR 80, 83-90	\$6.86-7.58
CR 125, 83-90	7.34-9.90
CR 250, 83-90	7.58-9.90
CR 480/500, 83-90	7.58-9.90

CLUTCH CABLES	
CR 80, 83-90	\$6.76
CR 125, 83-84	9.70
85-90	8.36
CR 250/500, 83-84	9.05
85-90	7.20

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CR 125, 83	9.12
CR 250/480	7.87

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CR 125/250/500, 84-87	66.36
88-89	60.27
90	56.05

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CR 125/250/500, 84-90	129.46

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CR 250/500, 83	47.10
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CR 80, 83-90	\$24.36
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CR 250/500, 83	34.92
CR 250/500, 84-90	32.48

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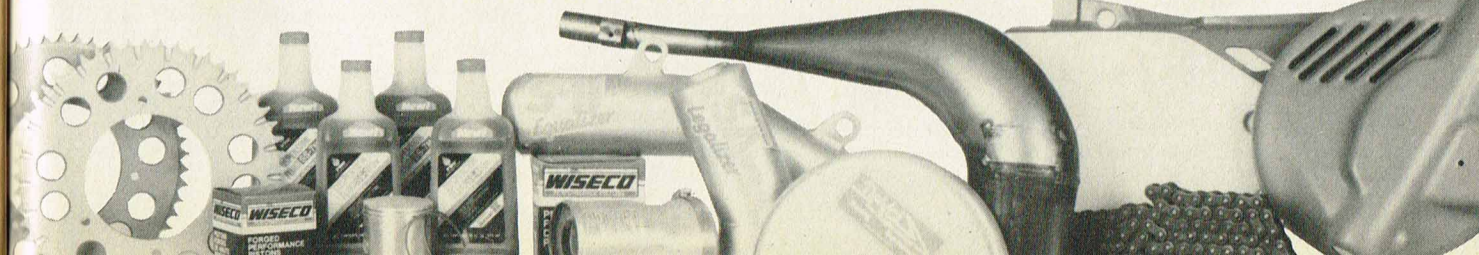
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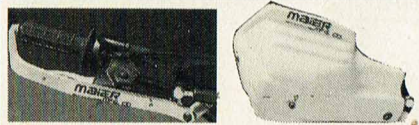


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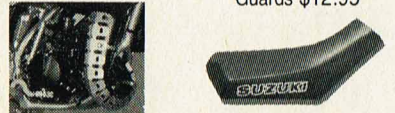
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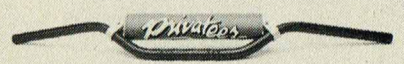
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ON THE SCREEN

mously popular, and no doubt had a great deal to do with the motorcycle boom of the early '70s. However, the series eventually got bogged down with more and more non-bike plots and the public (and the enthusiasts) lost interest—and "Then Went Bronson," off into the final sunset of re-runs and TV history.

Time Rider hit the big screen in the early '80s, and it featured a Baja racer who got his XR500 into a time warp and ended up, bike and all, back in the time of the Old West. Some of the racing footage was excellent and truly captured what it feels like to let it all hang out at high speeds, but credibility was stretched to the breaking point during the movie, and most audiences left the theaters shaking their heads, chuckling.

In the late '70s, Michael Parks and Marjoe Gortner joined up in what was billed as a real racing movie called *Sidewinder I*. The special effects people took a slew of Maicos, painted them blue, slapped mag wheels and Buck Rogers plastic on them and mixed real racing footage in with hokey staged races. The result was a flick that could have worked but didn't. Still, the dirt biking crowd took it, because we were hungry for something. Anything.

Numerous James Bond movies have had some wild motorcycle stunts in them, but one in particular was outrageous. It had dirt bikes chasing the fleeing James Bond on skis down a bobsled run.

A Dutch film called *Spetters* had some excellent MX footage in it, but the movie itself is dark and brooding. Then there were several Australian-made flicks that featured side-car racing, both road and dirt, that had stunning racing footage, marred only by marginal plots and dull acting.

NICE TRIES

Since we didn't have much to brag about since the original *On Any Sunday*, the news of *Any Sunday II* was warmly received. Joe Parkhurst and friends helped launch this noble effort. While *Sunday II* had some great footage and incredible racing scenes, it lacked a cogent theme. It didn't carry a punch. Something was missing, and after viewing *Sunday II*, most moviegoers left the theater feeling empty.

Peter Starr made quite a few good documentaries, including a good short on enduro riding, but his biggest effort to try to make a film with the impact of *On Any Sunday* fell a bit short. *Take It To The Limit* was a serious film and has some stunning footage, but was never warmly received. Still, it's worth renting and viewing. Trivia tip: Peter Starr is not his real name.

MAD DOGS, PSEUDO BIKES & NIGHTMARE LANDSCAPES

Think back at all of the movies we've seen of late in which dirt bikes are given weird shells, decked out with rocket launchers, machine guns and death rays and then rip

across the landscape to chase or be chased.

Mad Max and *The Road Warrior*... grim, foreboding movies that yanked us into a world after WW III and gave us roving bands of dirt bike-riding marauders. Real dirt bikers made a game out of it, trying to identify what kind of bike was under the fiberglass trash. Oddly, RM125s were a favorite of the studio special effects people.

Then there was James Caan in *Rollerball*, a science-fiction piece that combined roller derby with two-wheeled mayhem. The bikes were XL100s, disguised as usual, with a weird-looking shell. In this movie, the bikes looked a great deal like Hoover vacuum cleaners and seemed to handle about the same, as they slid out and exploded like cheap cherry bombs.

Still, *Rollerball* was a powerful film with a heavy-handed message. If you run across it late at night, chances are you'll get hooked and watch it to the end, in spite of having seen it before.

After seeing innumerable movies with the pseudo-bikes being ridden by bad-guy mutants, the public started getting the impression that all bikes would immediately explode when they crashed. Now I don't know about you, but I have never had a bike go off like a crate of dynamite when I flipped and nosed it into a dirt bank.

It would be interesting to see just how many dirt bikes have been blown to shreds and set on fire in the quest for cinematic thrills. Oddly, in well over 20 years of real race-watching, I've seen only one bike catch fire and burn to the ground: the H-D of Mark Brelsford at a Daytona road race in 1975. Maybe we're not doing something right. Or wrong.

A partial list of "aftermath" movies with weird dirt bikes in it reads like a collection of real groaners. Consider these titles: *City Limits*, *Damnation Alley*, *Death Race 2000*, *Deathsport*, *Endgame*, *Exterminators of the Year 3000*, *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome*, *Megaforce*, *The Bronx Warriors*, *The Ultimate Warrior*, *Warlords of the 21st Century*, *Wired to Kill*, *Cherry 2000* and *Zone Troopers*. A noble list, to be sure.

CLASSIC BITS

Who could forget the Triumph jumping over the POW camp fence in *The Great Escape*, starring Steve McQueen? Most people think that McQueen did the jump, but Bud Ekins doubled for Steve in that particular stunt. No matter who did it, the jump was superbly executed, brilliantly filmed and remains unforgettably etched in our minds.

Then there was a film that's become a cult classic, *The Wild One*. When the film was made, there were no pure dirt bikes *per se*, and there was a lot of slithering around on dirt roads, so we'll take it. Many a trophy has been duct-taped to handlebars just because of that black-and-white film.

Ahhh yes, who can forget *Lawrence of Arabia*, that magnificent epic starring Peter O'Toole? At the beginning of the film, Lawrence is shown blasting down a narrow English road on a Brough Superior and crashes spectacularly, losing his life in the process.

This gut-wrenching scene remains part of the lore of motorcycling.

Easy Rider, starring Peter Fonda and Dennis Hopper, gave the chopper craze of the late '60s/early '70s a big push. It certainly didn't help our image, as the two used their dirt bikes to smuggle dope into the States from Mexico.

TV THROWAWAYS

We've had more junk appear on the small screen than space allows us to talk about. How many episodes of *CHiPS* have had the two California Highway Patrolmen racing motocross?

Even The Fonz from *Happy Days* slipped on a helmet and went racing now and then to boost the ratings as the show wound down to the end. There was even one sequence where Richie is reading an issue of *Dirt Bike*, turns to the "From The Saddle" column, and asks the Fonz: "Do you think you can beat this guy?" Wow! Instant fame. Not much fortune.

The basement was hit with a series called *Street Hawk*, featuring a super-duper bike that fought crime, bolstered by some of the worst acting since the first snake oil salesmen of the Old West. The *Street Hawk* bike could do over 300 mph on the street, and then moments later take 80-foot jumps like a works Honda. Yes, the *Street Hawk* bike would turn into yet another RM 125 when airborne.

Another bit of fleeting fame happened to this writer, when the *Simon & Simon* detective show had a motocross racing scene and the announcer was babbling: "Rick Simon is leading the race!" My dad called me up and demanded to know why I didn't tell him I was going to be on the tube. Sorry, Dad. Right pronunciation, wrong spelling.

THREE-STROKE SOUNDS?

Nothing rangles a real dirt biker as much as when they show a four-stroke racing along in the dirt and a two-stroke sound is dubbed in—or vice-versa. Or worse—the hero is flat-out on a straightaway, and the sound of the engine is going vroom-vroom-vroom, like someone getting ready to pull a hot start.

REAL-LIFE RACERS

Some movie people have been real-racers and enthusiasts, other than Steve McQueen. Jack Palance and his family could be regularly seen at the bike shops in Santa Monica getting their DT-1s serviced.

Bud Ekins, the man who did the terrifying bike-under-a-semi skid in *Bullitt*, was a tough desert racer before he hit the movie stunt circuit.

In fact, most of the current crop of stunt men were genuine racers before they made it in the movies. Two of the best come to mind: J.N. Roberts, the man who was once King of the Desert, has been in literally hundreds of movies. Gary Hymes, a former *Dirt Bike* test rider, is a member of Stunts Unlimited and can be seen on the big and small screens constantly.

Other ex-racers include Buddy Joe Hooker (*Hooper*), Hal Needham and Wally Albright (*The Wild One*). Many ex-racers have

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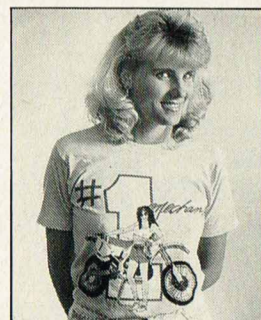
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CR500	1985-90	29.21-31.38

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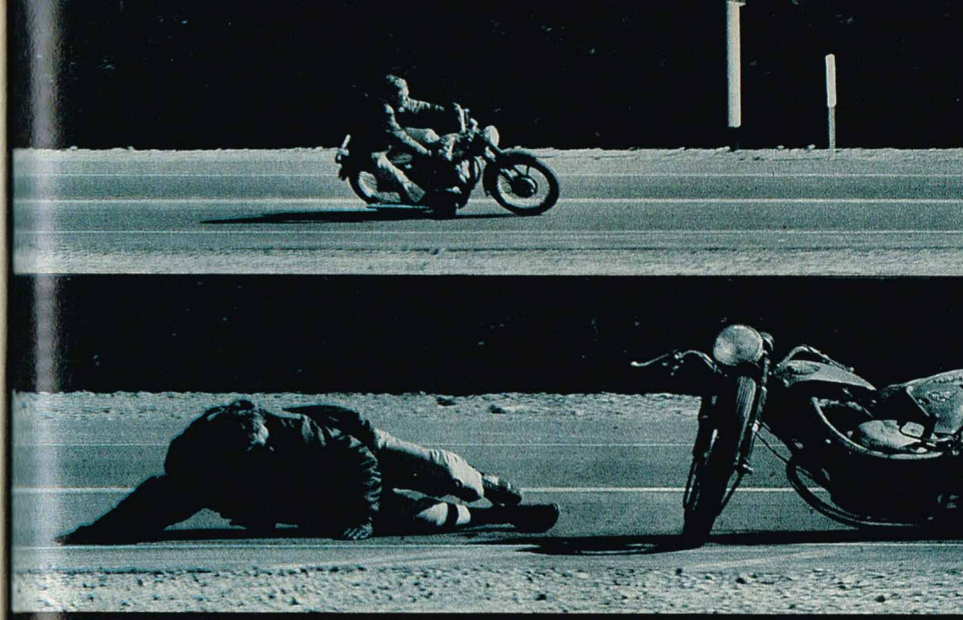
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Although it had nothing to do with dirt bikes on the surface, "Bullitt" is noted as the grandfather of chase scenes. When the bad guys forced this biker (Ekins) off the road during the epic chase, McQueen waited until he saw the rider was all right before continuing.



The '60s produced literally tons of exploitation films, from the Beach Party flicks to a whole slew of Hell's Angels movies, that drew on America's fatal attraction for the motorcycling mystique. This stunt is from "Hell's Angels '69," with Ekins at the helm.

worked off and on throughout the years just to earn some extra pocket money. Some of them, however, have shown an alarming lack of values by appearing in scenes that denigrate motorcycle people and keep contributing to our ever-decreasing image. There must be a point where money cannot be that important, and perhaps some of these stuntmen might do a bit of introspective thinking about what they're doing.

Other actors who were real-life dirt bikers included Lee Marvin (a former desert racer), Clark Gable, Charles Bronson, Sidney Poitier and Keenan Wynn. The most famous, of course, was Steve McQueen, who rode desert, motocross and enduro. Steve's favorite bike of all time? The old red tank 250 CZ.

ON THE SCREEN

During this era and well into the '50s, motorcycle riders were considered daring, adventurous souls. However, with the film *The Wild One*, we received a jolt that the motorcycling community has never recovered from. This film made us look like uncouth trash, and it's doubtful if we can ever live that damage down. Thanks a lot, Marlon!

From that point onward, movies depended on the stereotype Evil Biker as the bad guy.

We had a halt in the slide when *On Any Sunday* came out, but mostly enthusiasts went to see it. The general public simply did not want to see a documentary about dirt bikes.

Which brings us to today. You can turn on the TV set and see daring supercross racers jumping 70 feet, side by side. It's blood-curdling to the non-rider and impressive to the enthusiast. The plus side of racing action on the tube is that the viewing public at least knows that there are differing types of motorcycling.

Our job should be to point out those differences and, while we're at it, to put some pressure on the movie industry to back off the stereotypes of the Evil Biker. Why not? Every other special interest group around can get their way.

While we're at it, maybe we ought to try to talk Bruce Brown out of retirement to give it one last shot. I'd pay to see *On Any Sunday III* if he did it . . . and I think you would, too. Until then, when I want to watch a good movie about dirt bikes, I'll have to reach up on the shelf and replay the original *On Any Sunday* for the 100th time . . . and still enjoy it! □

Yeah? Well . . . hang in there.



Unadilla. The United States 250 Grand Prix. With the prestige of the 250 class growing each season it's easy to see why this is arguably the single most important motocross race of the year. Unadilla is the one race that pits the world's best 250 riders against America's finest. None of the other Grands Prix receive the attention afforded Unadilla—reporters from 25 countries cover the event—and no Grand Prix takes place on a finer track. Unadilla is a real happening. It's history in the making.

For these reasons every rider wants to win at Unadilla. They all have their own personal reasons, as well. While Rick Johnson had expected to make his return to competition at Unadilla, anxious to continue his three-straight USGP win streak, and to prove to the world he is still a threat, his recovering wrist was hurting too much for the Bad Boy to chance it. Another Unadilla favorite who failed to show was the O'Show. The 1985 event winner, Johnny O'Mara chose to ride the 500 GP instead, giving himself more time to enjoy the prize money he'd earned at Mammoth Mountain only the week before.

Another noteworthy American not found on the entry list was Damon Bradshaw. Damon's wild go-for-it 125 riding style combined with Unadilla's infamous "Gravity Cavity" and "Screw-U Gulch" would be unreal to see on a 250 . . . but he was four days short of his 18th birthday—the minimum age to compete in a Grand Prix. Next year for sure, promises Damon.

So who did show up? Newly crowned supercross champion Jeff Stanton, of course. After winning the toughest supercross series in history, Jeff had little to fear from anyone on a 250—and he wanted to win. Having won the 125 support class last year and watching Rick Johnson trounce the Europeans for the third straight time, Jeff want-

ed his chance. The American Honda rider had tough company, too. The young lions from Suzuki, Larry Ward and Mike LaRocco, both had reputations to build upon, and Unadilla is the place to build a reputation.

THE EUROPEAN CONTENDERS

Of the riders competing for the World Championship, Alessandro Puzar, the super-fast Italian aboard a Chesterfield/Suzuki, topped the field. Puzar held a whopping 100-point lead in the series standings over his Dutch teammate John Van de Berk and could easily wrap up the world title at Unadilla. Puzar completely dominated the series from the beginning, winning moto after moto in much the same way as Jean-Michele Bayle had the year before. To Alessandro, winning Unadilla would be the icing on the cake of an already very successful season. Winning for John Van de Berk would help assure his second place for the season and prove he's still very much a threat for future titles; the 1988 World Champion doesn't give up easily.

Trampas Parker, the 1989 125 World Champion and also of Team Chesterfield but riding a factory KTM, had much to prove. Having been the first American 125 World Champ, Trampas (who is now an Italian citizen) had never raced a GP in his homeland and there were many of his fans who'd never seen him compete. More importantly, his first season riding 250s had not gone well. A stomach virus and broken collarbone suffered at the fifth race in Czechoslovakia had ended his title hopes early. With his recovery and overall win at the ninth race in Switzerland, Trampas re-established himself as a winner, and he came to New York to prove the point in front of his American fans for the first time.

Another rider determined to do well at Unadilla was Englishman Rob Herring. The

factory Suzuki rider had terrible luck at the two previous USGPs, suffering a hand injury while leading the first moto in 1988, and in 1989 he sustained a broken neck(!) at the track he considers to be one of his favorites.

SETTING THE PACE

Jeff Stanton set the fastest qualifying time on Saturday, followed by Van de Berk and Herring. Larry Ward, French Kawasaki rider Yannig Kervella and Mike LaRocco rounded out the top six. It was an indicator of what was to come as Ward took the lead in moto one, followed closely by Stanton, Kervella, LaRocco and Sweden's Peter Johansson riding a 1991 Yamaha. By lap two, Stanton took the lead from Ward but Larry refused to give up. He held right on Stanton's tail for several laps, looking for the opening that never came. Ten minutes into the moto, Stanton had a slight three-second lead on Ward with a charging Mike LaRocco having moved up to third.

Kervella was several yards behind fending

Jeff Stanton handily beat the best 250 riders in the world, just as he'd done at the '89 Motocross des Nations, at the Unadilla 250 USGP. Good starts and a torrid pace put Stanton out front in both motos, way ahead of the Europeans. A Euro hasn't won Unadilla since Kees van der Ven did it in 1982. ▶



UNADILLA 250 USGP

STANTON STEAMROLLS EUROPE

*The USGP goes to the USA,
Italy wins the war*

By Alan R. Wise



Originally destined to sit out the USGP, Trampas Parker decided to race Unadilla after scoring a win in Switzerland. This gave him confidence to return to his home country following a shoulder injury, but Parker dislocated the shoulder during the first Unadilla moto and retired for the day.



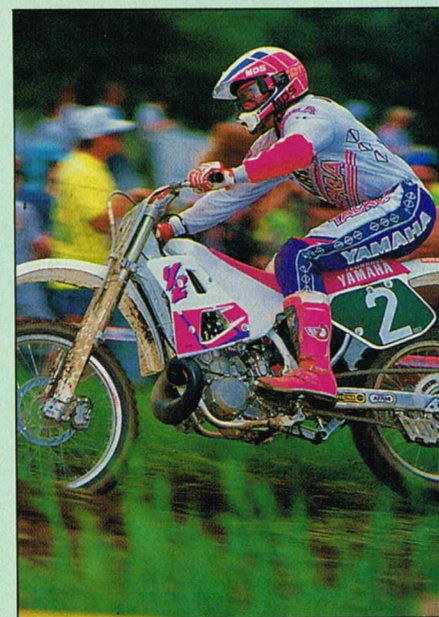
Puzar (hidden) made a few moves on Stanton until the Honda star motored away; then LaRocco moved up to make the Chesterfield Suzuki rider work for his championship. Puzar decided to ride conservatively and clinched the 250 World Championship with two rounds to go.

off a charging Van de Berk, Johansson, Trampas Parker, Pekka Vehkonen, Herring and points leader Puzar. They were all locked in a tight group. Four laps later a tre-



Alan Wise

Britain's Rob Herring battled with Mike LaRocco during most of the second moto, and their battle carried them past Vehkonen and Puzar. LaRocco broke and Herring passed a tiring Berky for second in moto two. A crash in the first moto dropped the Brit out of the top three.



Pekka Vehkonen finished third at the 250 USGP and gained a couple of points on second-place points holder John Van de Berk. Vehkonen battled with Berky and Brit Rob Herring at Unadilla, while Italian Alessandro Puzar clinched the 250 World Championship with a 6-5.

ing conditions, with only Larry Ward suffering a crash just past the mechanic's signal area. The fall combined with fatigue from over-extending himself in the first moto

dropped him to eighth. At the same time Van de Berk charged passed Puzar to take second and LaRocco and Herring both gassed their Suzukis past Vehkonen's Yamaha to take over the fourth and fifth spots, respectively. The rain subsided after only a few laps and as the track continued to get rougher the LaRocco/Herring duo passed Puzar and then a fading Vehkonen.

LaRocco's determined charge was impressive as he set his sights on the leader. He managed to close the gap on Stanton considerably and it appeared as though a mid-moto battle was in the making. For five laps LaRocco reeled Stanton in closer and closer. The crowd went crazy, cheering on the Suzuki factory rider from LaPorte, Indiana. Then the unthinkable happened—LaRocco's RM250 lost all of its compression on the back part of the course. Dejectedly, the young rider stood holding his bike next to the course, watching in disbelief as Stanton circled the course. It could have been his moto. Unadilla has a way with riders, however, and their luck. Just ask Bob Hannah.

With LaRocco out, Rob Herring moved into second, even after dropping his Suzuki in the same spot as Ward had on a tight section of the course. He was followed in third by Pekka Vehkonen, and a distant John Van de Berk in fourth. Puzar, having assured himself of the title in the first moto, was holding fifth. On the final lap of moto two, Puzar passed Van de Berk for fourth while Stanton, Herring and Vehkonen held

their first three positions comfortably.

Jeff Stanton had decisively won both motos and perhaps has begun a challenge to Rick Johnson's domination of the infamous course. Perhaps Bob Hannah's naming of Johnson as the King of Unadilla was a year too soon?

Rob Herring's second-moto runner-up spot created a major upset in the final results, for he tied in moto points with both Vehkonen and Van de Berk. He had earned the second overall spot, though, for having bested them in moto two. An excited Herring stated, "I felt tight in the first race and just loosened up for the second. I felt great!" Pekka came out third, with John in fourth. Larry Ward's impressive first GP ride earned him fifth, followed by new World Champion Alessandro Puzar and Mike LaRocco, whose official finishes were 2-26. □

RESULTS: UNADILLA USGP

1. Jeff Stanton (Hon)	USA	(1-1)
2. Rob Herring (Suz)	Britain	(7-2)
3. Pekka Vehkonen (Yam)	Finland	(5-3)
4. John Van de Berk (Suz)	Holland	(4-4)
5. Larry Ward (Suz)	USA	(3-7)
6. Alessandro Puzar (Suz)	Italy	(6-5)
7. Mike LaRocco (Suz)	USA	(2-26)
8. Yannig Kervella (Kaw)	France	(8-9)
9. Marnicq Bervoets (Kaw)	Belgium	(13-6)
10. Ray Sommo (Suz)	USA	(18-8)

WORLD 250 POINTS STANDINGS

1. Alessandro Puzar	305
2. John Van de Berk	210
3. Pekka Vehkonen	185
4. Michele Fanton	157
5. Rob Herring	120

125 SUPPORT

1. Jean-Michel Bayle (Hon)	(2-1)
2. Guy Cooper (Suz)	(1-2)
3. Rodney Smith (Suz)	(3-3)
4. Steve Lamson (Suz)	(4-4)
5. Doug Henry (Yam)	(5-8)
6. Tallon Vohland (Kaw)	(9-5)
7. B. Stratton (Yam)	(12-6)
8. Thomas Rice (Kaw)	(8-11)
9. Andy Stacy (Suz)	(7-12)
10. Pat Barton (Suz)	(11-9)

PAST 250 USGP CHAMPIONS

1978	Marty Tripes	Honda	USA
1979	Kent Howerton	Suzuki	USA
1980	Kent Howerton	Suzuki	USA
1981	Neil Hudson	Yamaha	GB
1982	Kees Van Der Ven	KTM	Holland
1983	David Bailey	Honda	USA
1984	Ron Lechien	Honda	USA
1985	John O'Mara	Honda	USA
1986	Bob Hannah	Suzuki	USA
1987	Rick Johnson	Honda	USA
1988	Rick Johnson	Honda	USA
1989	Rick Johnson	Honda	USA
1990	Jeff Stanton	Honda	USA

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1991 ATK 350MX

AMERICA'S ANSWER TO THE DR350

Starting easier & going faster than Suzukis

By the DIRT BIKE Staff

The ATK people got their start in the motorcycle manufacturing industry building lightweight frames for XR600s, and producing their own Rotax-powered 560s. The bikes were lighter than most big thumpers and went like stink. People snapped up the ATK 560s and, later, 604s as fast as ATK could roll them off the assembly line. The big thumper business was booming, with Husqvarna, KTM and a new player, Husaberg, gearing up to topple ATK from its throne.

Then Suzuki rocked the thumper world with their DR350s and 250s and the buying public went absolutely ape. There hadn't been a decent mid-sized four-stroke since Honda dropped the phenomenal XR350, and off-roaders cleaned the bikes off showroom floors as fast as Suzuki could stock them. This opened the eyes of other manufacturers. Many started scrambling to come up with a DR-beating mid-sized thumper.

Husqvarna and Husaberg already had downsized versions of their 500s in Europe, and Honda and Yamaha are playing their cards close to the chest, but we've heard rumors of a new-generation mid-sized TT and new models coming from Honda. A new-generation XR400, perhaps? ATK beat the other players to the punch with their new 350, which is powered by a de-bored and de-stroked 560-based Rotax mill. Everything else is the same, so all they had to do was import a batch of 350 powerplants, dial carburetion, and go looking for heavier, slower DR350s to roost.

ATK got its first 350 motor just in time to burn the midnight oil and get a prototype assembled the night before the White Bros. World Four-Stroke Championships. Greg Zitterkopf and the ATK went head-to-head

◀ *A steeper head angle and super-slim tank/seat make the '91 ATK 350MX a rocket in the turns. It'll slide, pivot or rail with little effort, but the bike sometimes falls on its face coming out of corners, due to over-carburetion.*

Like its 604 big brother, the 350 is tuned for an insane top-end at the expense of some low-end smoothness. It will launch out of turns much harder than a DR350, but not with the authority of the 604, Husky 510 or Husaberg 501. ▶





1991 ATK 350MX

Engine type	SOHC, air-cooled, 4-valve 4-stroke
Displacement	349.5cc
Bore and stroke	79.5mmx70.4mm
Carburetion	38mm TMX Mikuni
Fuel tank capacity	2.3 gal. (XC 4.7 gal.)
Gearing	15/50
Lighting coil	Yes
Spark arrester	Yes
Green sticker legal in stock trim	Yes
Running weight w/no fuel	248 lbs.
Wheelbase	57 in. (1448mm)
Rake/trail	27°/4.6 in.
Ground clearance	13.5 in. (343mm)
Seat height	37.5 in. (950mm)
Tire size and type:	
Front	90/90x21 Pirelli Lagunacross
Rear	100/100x18 Pirelli Lagunacross
Suspension:	
Front	Inverted WP aluminum piggyback, comp./reb., 11.8 in. (300mm) travel
Rear	A-Trak, WP aluminum piggyback, adj. comp./reb./prel., 13 in. (330mm) travel
Country of origin	U.S.A.
Suggested retail price	\$4995
Distributor/Manufacturer:	
	ATK Motorcycles, USA
	5430 Union Pacific Ave.
	City of Commerce, CA 90022
	(213) 722-8880

with Craig Davis on a White Bros. DR441. The new ATK suffered from teething problems (jetting) but showed it was capable, stock, of running with a fully modified 441cc DR. We could barely contain ourselves as the first magazine test bike rolled off the assembly line and into our calloused hands.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

We requested the kickstart model because a 350 is easier to kick, and we're planning to use the ATK in a shootout with the other mid-sized offerings later in the year. The electric starter and battery add a good 15 pounds of heft and \$1000 to the price tag. The cases are identical to the 604 cases, but the 350 has a six-speed transmission in place of the bigger bike's five-speed box. Cylinder bore is 79.5mm, as opposed to the 604's 94mm diameter. Stroke is 70.4mm, compared to the 604's 81mm stroke. ATK takes the stan-

dard Rotax mill and massages the four-valve head, then slips the motor into the nickel-plated frame.

WRAPPED AROUND THE SWINGARM

Our MX version has a 1.5-degree steeper head angle that the 350XC, plus the fuel tank is much more narrow and holds only 2.3 gallons of high-test gas. The XC tank holds 4.7 gallons and is considerably wider and taller. The MX tank is so narrow that some test riders didn't like the feel. They could get so far forward on the seat that the pegs felt like road racer rear sets. A chromoly swingarm provides 13 inches of wheel travel via a White Power Super-Adjuster shock and A-Trak chain-torque elimination system. White Power Multi-Adjuster forks mate the frame with a KTM front wheel. Brakes are by Grimeca.

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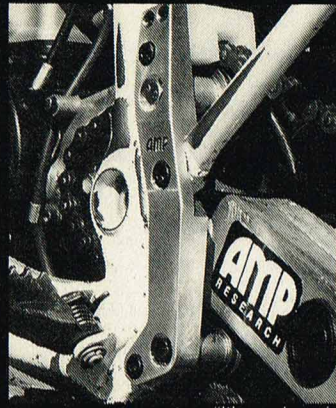
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ATK 350MX

RIDING THE MIDSIZED MONSTER

Starting the ATK 350 is easier than the DR350 or old XR350. Simply choke it and kick. If it's warm, forget the choke. Clutch pull is heavy, compared to a J-model, but not obscenely so. Shifting is positive but not very smooth. We never missed a shift, but it takes more toe pressure than the '90 DR350.

Power is phenomenal on top-end, but the bike will sometimes load up and try to die when wicked out of a slow corner. This is due to the 38mm flatslide Mikuni, which is the same carb as the 604 uses, and it's simply too much carb for a 350. We'd like to see a 35mm or 36mm Keihin, which would give the 350 a ton of low-end and still provide a decent top-end. Mind you, this is the first production model, so there may be some changes in the later production bikes. As is, the bike will run with a 250 two-stroke on top-end but must be ridden like a 125 in tight sections.

Handling is awesome. The bike feels as light as the Husaberg 501 in the air and on the trail (whereas the '90 DR350 feels like a Honda XR600R). The 350MX brakeslides, powerslides, rails or squares corners with almost criminal ease, due to the light weight and centralized mass. It's stable on choppy sweepers and doesn't do anything to startle the pilot. Some testers did need some initiation time to get used to the lack of chain torque, though.

Suspension action is plush throughout the stroke at both ends. We liked the forks best at #4 compression and #6 rebound. This provided a solid cornering stance and just a hint of bottoming on bigger jumps. With these settings, the forks deliver a plush ride on the small stutter bumps, roots and rocks. Adjusting the compression on the shock is a pain. There's a little hole you stick a screwdriver through and coax the knurled knob to the next setting. We left it at #3, and the rebound clicker on #8 with 2.5 inches of sag. For more high-speed work, we liked three inches of sag better. The action was excellent—plush and smooth throughout the travel. We only bottomed the shock on insane leaps.

START OF A WHOLE NEW GENERATION

Clearly, the ATK outshines the Suzuki DR350. For 1600 extra clams, it better provide better power, suspension, handling, starting and ease of riding than the \$3300 DR. If ATK drops carb size to provide cleaner throttle response, they'll have an awesome package. How it stacks up to the all-new Husqvarna and Husaberg, the '91 DR350, and the yet-unseen Yamaha and Honda mystery bikes is anyone's guess at this point. ATK, being a cottage industry, has the advantage of being able to make changes throughout their production run to meet challenges, so competition in the 400 four-stroke class is going to be hot and heavy for 1991. □

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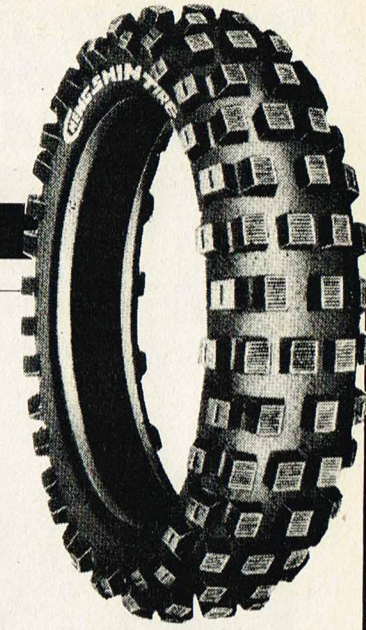
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BOOT BUYERS GUIDE

(continued from page 43)

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Alpinestars Trial. Cosmopolitan Motors, 301 Jacksonville Rd., Hatboro, PA 19040; (800) 523-2522.

AXO Sport America, 24950 Anza Dr., Valencia, CA 91355; (805) 257-0474.

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Hi-Point. Malcolm Smith, 850 Marlborough, Riverside, CA 92507; (714) 686-1006.

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SIDI Carla (See Alpinestars Trial/Cosmopolitan Motors).

Suzuki Accessories. Contact your Suzuki dealer.

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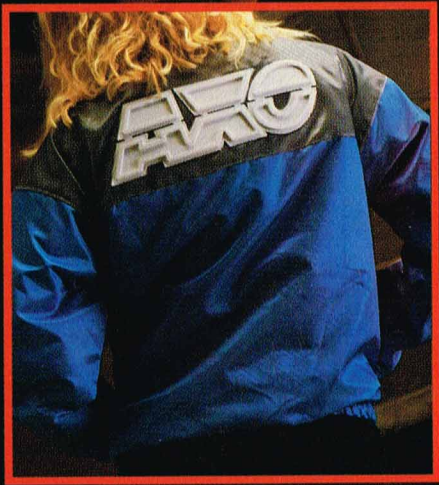


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MESSER-SCHMIT!

DONNY SCHMIT INTERVIEW

From privateer to top American in Europe

Matt Hilgenberg

By Alex Hodgkinson

Donny Schmit has had a roller-coaster racing career. In '85 and '86 he was a hot property, taking the '85 AMA Amateur 125 and 250 A Stock titles, the '86 125cc Western Supercross title and AMA Amateur National 250/Open Pro-Am Championship aboard Kawasakis. Schmit jumped ship to Suzuki in '87 but only scored fifth in the 125 Nationals. Suzuki responded by dropping his salary, a definite downer. Schmit came back in '88, battling the Honda duo of ex-teammate George Holland and Guy Cooper. Holland took the title and Schmit edged out Cooper for second. Suzuki wanted to pay Schmit less for '89, so the roller coaster once again plummeted for the Bloomington, Minnesota, resident.

Schmit and Suzuki parted ways, so Donny bought a couple of Hondas and raced as a privateer, finishing fourth in the 125 Nationals against the factories. Looking at another year without factory support in America, Schmit packed his bags and headed for

Europe. Donny landed a ride and looks to be the next 125 World Champion. As the GPs are winding into the home stretch, Schmit has a comfortable points lead over fellow Yanks Bob Moore and Mike Healey. Here's his story.

Dirt Bike: How did it come about that you came to race in Europe?

Schmit: Last year I was a privateer in the U.S., having lost my factory Suzuki ride. I bought some bikes and my girlfriend and I drove around the National circuit. Towards the end of last season, I got vibrations that there were no openings on any of the teams in America, even though I'd finished fourth as a privateer.

It had always been a goal, kind of a dream, to ride the GPs, so I called Mitch Payton at Pro Circuit and Dave Zampierion at Bieffe Helmets. I knew they both had contracts in Europe, so I asked them if they knew anybody who had any openings or would be interested in me. Dave called me

GP points leader Donny Schmit was 2.5 seconds faster than anyone in qualifying for the British 125 GP, but rain before the first moto turned the track into a quagmire and Schmit crashed several times. The Bieffe Suzuki rider came back in the second moto for the win and third overall.

back and said there might be something for me. He said there were a couple of opportunities, the strongest with the Bieffe Suzuki team. We summed everything up at the Bologna and Genoa Supercrosses, which I had already contracted to come over and ride. I had previously been to Japan, independently, to test the new Suzukis, and I liked them, so I signed the contract at Genoa.

Actually, when I was in the airport at Tokyo, I met my new team manager, Sylvain Geboers, for the first time. He and the team took a gamble on me, and it's been a great boost that they've shown such confidence. They did call around, asking what kind of

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rider I was and what I was like to work with. They must have gotten good answers, because we met in Japan again to test the bikes, and here I am!

DB: Where do you live here in Europe?

DS: I'm based in Mol, Belgium, which is the home town of Sylvain and Eric Geboers. The race shop is really close, in Tielen, and we have a nice apartment, which was part of the deal, too. I think both the team and I knew that they'd have to help me out with a lot of things this year, as I'm new to the way things work in Europe. I had heard from a lot of people that it was hard to adjust to life here, but, after a year as a privateer, it couldn't be much harder. I had spent a year driving from race to race and working on my bikes, so I didn't have much time to practice. It is very difficult over here, but I think that this is the right team for me.

Sylvain has been excellent—he's been such a great help. I mean, I arrived here and didn't know what you have to do at the national borders; I wouldn't have known where I needed a visa. Sylvain is like a second father to me, keeping me headed in the right direction.

My mechanic Harry Nolte also has a wealth of experience. He was with John Van den Berk when Berky was champion for the first time and knows all of the tracks very well. He can tell me where to start on the gate. I might look at a start and think a certain spot looks good, but every track has its own little peculiarities and Harry knows where the holeshots have come from over the years. He knows what sort of track we are going to next and can suggest somewhere to practice the week before, someplace with similar terrain. He's a great mechanic, so I don't have to worry about mechanical trouble.

DB: Is the racing so different between Europe and the States?

DS: I think the biggest difference is you have to pace yourself, because the races are longer in Europe. I think I had the conditioning, but there is always a time when it can be useful to have a little bit extra which will win you another place. There are no doubles here, and the tracks are a bit more wide-open than in the States.

DB: You got hurt in training at the beginning of March. What happened?

DS: I was testing in Italy with the Japanese Showa technicians, and I had just finished testing my race bike. I decided to try a 45-minute moto and was about 30 minutes into it when I came down this hill. It had been muddy two weeks before at a race, and they hadn't touched the track, so there were two ruts going off a jump. It was now hard-packed from two weeks of sunshine.

My front wheel took one rut. I had hit some braking bumps coming down the hill, and my back end kicked over into the other rut. It really pitched me sideways off of the jump and I went down hard. I didn't know I'd broken the scaphoid [navicular] until I got to the hospital. It felt at first like it was my thumb that was hurt most. There aren't a lot of nerves in the area and not a very good blood supply, so you can't feel it very well.

It can be a bad bone to break, but I was really lucky. The break was nice and clean, and it didn't affect the blood supply. I had to have a full arm cast but was back on the bike in five weeks. A lot of people are out much longer than that. My teammate, Pedro Tragter, broke his last year, had some complications with the healing and missed most of the season. I was in the States while I couldn't ride. I have a really good health

Under the watchful eye of team manager Sylvain Geboers, Donny Schmit has overcome the culture shock between Belgium and Bloomington, Minnesota, to lead an American sweep of the top three series points positions, with three rounds to go.

club and a good doctor there. It was also good to be able to train with friends to keep in condition. That made the time go quicker.

The Italian GP was my first race after the crash, so I was lucky that the South American GPs were canceled.

DB: You didn't expect to win the Italian GP, then?

DS: No, I had only been able to ride a bike again four days earlier. I took it fairly easy the first day, then rode each day to build myself up enough to take a few points. I would have been really happy with a fifth place and that was my goal when I arrived at Monteverichi. I found myself leading! In fact, if I had needed it, I even had a little in reserve.

DB: Then you were sick before Holland?

DS: I had a stomach virus. It had started on the Saturday a week before. I'd been out riding that day and ate something in the evening. I'd planned to go out Sunday, too. I drove out to the track and told Harry to load the bike back up because I just didn't feel well enough to ride. For the next week, all I had was soup and water; I couldn't eat anything. I couldn't run or train, but I felt better by Friday.

I saved my energy throughout Saturday and Sunday morning and only did two laps to qualify on Saturday, then did the minimum five timed laps Sunday morning so I'd have something left for the race. I had a good start and actually started to pull away a little bit for the first two laps. Then Pedro [Tragter] caught up and I let him pass. I

MESSER-SCHMIT!

planned to just sit behind him, but he didn't jump this step, and I landed right next to him, so I decided it was better for me to stay in front again for a while. I was getting tired near the end so I let him pass again. I was getting hot and dehydrated and knew I had a big lead over the rest of the guys, so I let Pedro go.

It was only three laps into the second moto when I started feeling as tired as I was at the end of the first moto. I was running down the leaderboard and was really close to two guys in front of me when the two-lap board came out. I wicked it up and got past them fairly quickly, but that really finished me off. I wasn't going much harder than I should have been, but I just fell over at the finish, after leaning my bike against a fence. I don't remember much after that, but I would like to thank Bobby Moore. People were handing him water, and he was handing it to me and pouring it on my wrists and feet to cool me off. He was as hot as I was, and that is really something for another rider to help me out like that. I recovered fairly quickly after that, when they got me to the ambulance.

DB: What has the rest of the season been like for you?

DS: I had some problems in Czechoslovakia [round three], going 7-4 after bad starts and crashes, but Pedro, Vohland and Moore DNF'd the second moto, so I stretched my lead over Pedro. In France I felt good and won both motos easily. I won the first moto in East Germany but bent the brake pedal under the case in the second moto while leading. Moore and Vohland picked up some points there. At round six, in the British GP, I was the fastest qualifier by 2.5 seconds, but it rained heavily before the first moto. I crashed a bunch of times and only scored five points but came back to win the second moto. It was muddy again in Ireland. I won the first moto but lost power in the second moto and faded to fourth. Bob Moore won, but I've got a 19-point lead over him.

DB: Prior to your year as a privateer, you had been a factory Suzuki rider Stateside for two years. What was the reason for the split?

DS: It was purely financial. In my first year with Suzuki I'd finished fifth, and they dropped my salary \$10,000. Then, in '88, I finished second and expected to pick up that \$10,000, but they wanted to drop it \$10,000 again. I told them I'd rather be a poor privateer and ride what I wanted to. I didn't care for supercross in the States at that time because they weren't my style of tracks, and they were getting very dangerous. Riding as a privateer last year was my most satisfying season in America.

DB: Why do so many American riders come to Europe now?

DS: There are so many cutbacks in the States, and a lot of them come over thinking



Rags to riches: Schmit's roller-coaster career almost bottomed out after finishing fourth in the 125 Nationals as a privateer. Even though he'd proven himself and beat most of the factory riders, he had to go to Europe to find a factory ride.

that it'll be easier to win a world title here than winning a National title in America.

DB: Is it?

DS: In certain ways, maybe it is. I don't think there are as many really fast riders over here. I can only speak of the 125 class, but the fast guys in the GPs are just as fast as the fast guys in America. There are some exceptions. Bayle is fast in America now, but he was dominating here last year.

DB: What does the future hold for Donny Schmit?

DS: I have a two-year contract with Bieffe

Suzuki and I can hopefully win the 125 World Championship. It looks good for this year, and I hope 1991 will also be a good season for me. Then I'll just take it from there. I love racing—it's what I've always wanted to do—but I can never really look further ahead than the next race. Motocross is my life at the moment, and I'm totally devoted to racing and winning, but if there comes a time when I can't get a ride, I'm not going to dwell on it. I'm going to be able to look back on my career and say, "I was around the whole country and was second in the Nationals. I was a Grand National Amateur Champion. I've been all over Europe. Hopefully, I will have been a World Champion. I've been on works bikes and seen the hard life of a privateer. I made it." □

A bad start doesn't have to mean a bad finish

By the DIRT BIKE Staff

Two of the great truths of motocross are that only one person gets the holeshot and only one person crosses the finish line first. While getting the holeshot doesn't always secure the lead, guys who get stuck in the gate or fall in the first turn usually don't figure in the final results because they simply give up on that moto.

Not Mike Kiedrowski, defending 125 National Champion and MX des Nations 125 World Champion. The MX Kied earned those titles by never giving up after a bad start. Mike charges through the pack, against the best riders in the world, to take the checkered flag. At the '89 des Nations he blew by some of Europe's best 250 riders—on his CR125! How does The Kied slice through the pack after a bad start? Here are his secrets.

BEFORE THE RACE

Training hard allows Kiedrowski to keep a torrid pace throughout a 30-minute moto. After a bad start, you'll be going past slower riders early in the moto, but you'll have to keep up the pace to catch and pass the fast guys up front, who may slow towards the end of the moto. "Training is very important, and I'm not going to give up all my training secrets to the competition. Basic-



a whole moto. You have to settle into a pace you can carry throughout the race."

THE GATE DROPS

Mike likes to line up towards the inside of the gate, because that's usually where the holeshot comes from—the shortest distance to the first turn. If you do get there first, you stand less of a chance of being cut off as the pack swings wide in the first turn, as opposed to being outside on the gate. If you don't get a good start, or get knocked down, now is the time to *banzai*, while the pack is sorting itself out. "The guys up front are on the gas, but the backmarkers are just riding along until things clear out a bit. If you get on the edge of the track and go for it, you can pick off several riders at a time, plus you won't let the front-runners get away from you. Get by as many people as you can right away, but don't do anything stupid.

How do the top riders slice through the pack after a bad start or a fall early in the race? Some riders never get back up to speed, but Mike Kiedrowski earned the 125 National Championship by wicking it up and charging. Here are his secrets.

to swing to the side and take a low line to get back on the ground quicker and out-accelerate your target. If it's a big double and you can safely do it without landing on someone, go for it. "The guys up front are doing it, so you have to or they'll get away from you. You don't want to be stupid and try to clear a jump where you haven't tried it in practice, but you always want to go for it if it's possible to do so.

"On a rough track like Gainesville, you want to get on the edge of the track, where it's smoothest, as much as possible. You can hook up better and brake or accelerate hard-

SLICIN' THROUGH THE PACK

ly, I ride my bicycle a few hours a day, spend some time on my trampoline or do something to get both an aerobic and anaerobic workout. I ride my practice bike in the afternoon for a couple of hours whenever possible. I train so hard during the week that, when the weekend comes, it's like time off. I know I can go hard the whole moto and I'm psyched up to win.

"During practice, look for passing lines on the track. Check out inside lines, outside lines, skirt the edge of the track, look for low lines over jumps. Always try different things in practice, like inside-outside or outside-inside moves in corners, and watch for lines other racers are using. You're psyched to win, but you may have to do some passing, or lapping slower riders, and you have to be prepared. I psych up to win, not work through the pack, so I make my emotions work for me if I gate 11th or whatever. Also, the weather and toughness of the track can dictate your strategy. If it's really hot and rough, you know nobody can go all-out for

"Attitude has a lot to do with it at this point. You're psyched to win, so you're mad that you got a bad start or went down. Don't think about why you crashed or dogged the start. After the race, you can think about that stuff. Now, every second counts. Get up and get your mind on working the pack to get back up front. You're mad, so you're going hard, letting it all hang out. Use that aggression to your advantage. If someone took you out in the first turn, don't think about catching that guy and getting him back—concentrate on your race.

"If another fast guy is back there with you, it pays to drop in behind him, to freight train past other riders. He'll pull you through the pack, make it easier for you to work the pack. Say he passes a guy on the inside. If you're right on his rear tire, the slower guy can't cut you off, so you make the pass, too. Or maybe the slow guy cuts him off; you swing out and pass both of them.

"Jumps are another place to make passes. Depending on the jump, you may want

er. On a ratty track, the inside lines are usually the deepest, the ones that drag your pegs and slow you down. Take the outside ruts and keep your momentum high. It may be longer but you can carry your momentum to make the pass down the next straight. Midpack riders always take the inside line, so you have to go outside. Drive deep into the corners and brake as late as possible to carry your momentum and pass the backmarkers as quickly as possible. This may take a couple of laps or more."

PASSING SOMEONE AS FAST AS YOU

As you get towards the front of the pack, passes are naturally harder to make. You have an advantage, though. "The leaders haven't been working as hard as you, because you've been fighting to get past the slower guys, but you've got momentum going, and you know where you've made your passes. The leaders don't. This can give you an edge, a place to get around someone as quick as you, because they've been riding along with the leaders, while you've got mo-



Psych job: Kiedrowski was chosen for the des Nations team for his ability to psych up for the task at hand and to work the pack. "You psych yourself up to win and, if you get a bad start, you get mad. You've got to make that emotion work for you, not against you," says the MX Kied.

mentum and an attitude. You're on the guy, watching his lines. Look for a mistake or a place where you're faster and capitalize on it.

"If your passing spots don't work right away, you may have to watch the guy in front of you a lap to find a place where you can set him up for the pass. Sometimes I'll show the guy my front wheel to let him know I'm there. I'll go to the outside coming into a turn to pull him outside. He'll swing out to try to block my line; then I get on the brakes



Chosen at the last minute for the 1989 MX des Nations, Kiedrowski came through with the overall 125 title and contributed to Team USA's perfect score. In the process, the Kied humbled some of the best 250 and 500 riders in the world on a wide-open track!

hard and cut inside. By that time he can't move back in, because he's got too much speed, and I've got him."

This may not always work. It may take some intimidation to make the pass: "On a ratty track, sometimes I'll come into the rut and tag the guy's rear tire, when we're both accelerating, just to let him know I'm there. It gets him worried. Or I'll go inside just to show him my front fender. It gets him thinking about you, what you're doing, rather than what he's doing. That helps out a lot. Then the mistake comes, sooner or later. It's not a good idea to ram people, because you can go down and lose what you've gained. On the last lap a desperation move may be necessary for the points.

"Block passing is another option. Say the guy is taking the outside line coming into a turn. You can cut inside and block his line exiting the turn. He has to let off and you've got him. If you pass a guy and he passes you back, you've got to get him right back in the next turn or two, or he'll think he's accomplished something and he'll stop your charge. In this case I may come in on the inside and

give him my shoulder in a turn to intimidate him and make the pass. He'll be pushing hard, so you've got to push harder.

"Most of the passing in supercross this year was in the corners. Riders would just come up and slam you right into the hay bales. You're taking the berm, and someone goes straight in and bumps you. Some passing was done in whoops, too. Take Wardy at Atlanta. There was this whoop section and right-hand turn where everyone was going wide, taking one line in the whoops and railing the berm. Jeff would swing inside over the last few whoops and block-pass in the turn. He knew he was faster there, so he made his move in the last two laps, zapping Cooper and Johnson for the win."

PASSING A FASTER RIDER

Say you're up against someone on a faster bike. In the des Nations and the vet or combined classes, you may have to get around a guy on a bigger, more powerful bike. What then? "At the des Nations, the track was really smooth and slippery. The only place I could do anything against 250s or 500s was in the turns. I'd come in harder, brake harder and get on the gas sooner. I actually would draft them, swing out and brake later and harder to make the pass. If I didn't pass them coming in, I'd put my wheel inside them and they'd get worried. I could get on the gas sooner, and they could hear that, so they'd pin it and start spinning and get all sideways. I'd usually get them right there. If they stayed with me, I'd move over on them and they'd have to get off the gas.

"At a race like that, where you're up against riders who aren't in your class, it helps to have your mechanic giving you pit-board signals. He'll give you your position and the gap between you and the next guy you have to pass. This lets you know where you are and gives you incentive to catch the next guy. It calms you down a bit, too, because you know where you're at and can think more about what you're doing. That was a big help at the des Nations, and it's very important when you're in a points race with someone. Every pass is a point, or more." □

WANT TO SEE R.J. BACK ON TRACK
Dear Rick,

I would just like to say that you're the greatest and that you'll always be #1 in my heart, no matter what the series points show. I've traveled to Mammoth to watch you race these last two years, and you've never ignored or denied anyone's questions or requests for autographs. You're an outstanding person and a big influence on all of us racers and fans. Keep on striving for the win and to keep the Bad Boy on top.

Todd Hofford
Ashland, OR

Dear Rick,

Have you forgotten that you're the best? You're not old like Ward and O'Mara. I don't know what you're thinking, but you can win again! I know it. Everyone knows it. You give advice to everyone else—now use it yourself! Do it! If you're not going to blow those youngsters and the others off the track, like you've done so many times before, then retire, withdraw, get out. Do you want that? Think of all your fans—we don't want that! We want to see you win, win, win. Come on Rick, you can do it! We're all behind you. *Semper fi*—do or die! Make the others eat your roost and breathe your exhaust!

Travis "Fan to the End" Brux
Salinas, CA

Dear Rick,

Good luck with your wrist, and I'll be rooting for you to win the 500cc Championship!

Gary Sampo
Kirkville, NY

Dear Rick,

I'm very sorry to hear about your hand, and the rumor of your retirement is really bad. Man, you just can't—the sport, in my eyes, would die.

Martin Booth
Froncysyllbe, North Wales
Great Britain

Dear Rick,

I heard about your crash at Daytona and am very sorry you hurt your hand again. You were on a comeback trail, too! I've been to most of your races in the area, and I've rooted for you the whole time. You're my favorite rider and nothing can change that. Heal quickly and do me a favor—don't break any more bones!

Ben Dawson
Vacaville, CA

To everyone: Thank you for standing behind me through the bad times, and I'm working hard to put them behind me.



My goals are to win the 500cc National title, then come back stronger than ever in '91. To do that I've been working on a pyramid method of training, building a good base of easy workouts and making them harder each day, until I reach peak physical conditioning. I'm running, bicycling, swimming, lifting weights and riding motos. It's not going to be easy, but anything that is isn't worth having anyway. Thanks again.—R.J.

CAN RELATE TO R.J.

Dear Rick,

Racing has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. It's been a lifelong dream and goal—all I've ever wanted to do. I just moved up to the 125 pros and wasn't doing too badly, but in the last race I crashed on the triples and thrashed my knee. I've had arthroscopic surgery and they said the damage was too serious for their abilities, so they're sending me to Omaha to rebuild my knee. They said I'd never ride again and, if I planned to, they wouldn't fix it, because I'd just bang it up again. This crushed me; it was like they tore a part of me away. It hurts more to think that I'd never be roosting loam again, so I can identify with what you're going through. You really aren't going to retire, are you?

Jamie Bodfield
Lexington, NE

I can't tell you to go against your doctor's wishes, but, if you want it badly enough, you can come back from a serious setback, as I'm doing now. Good luck.

SAND TECHNIQUE

Dear Rick,

Last year I saw you at the Lima En-

duro. I'm racing it this year and have trouble with sand. How do you handle deep sand?

Aaron Barnett
Parker, CO

Momentum and smoothness are the keys to riding sand tracks or sections. You want to carry as much speed as possible without blowing over berms or overshooting corners. That's where smoothness comes into play. Because the sand naturally saps speed, you don't have to use nearly as much braking to slow down for corners in sand. In fact, I rarely use the front brake in deep sand. I slide in with the rear brake and pitch the bike into the berm with the gas on. Concentrate on rolling on the power instead of grabbing a handful of throttle, on carrying your speed through the turn, on keeping up your momentum. In sandy berms, you want to sit a little farther back on the bike to keep the front wheel from knifing into the sand. Keep it light with rearward weighting and the throttle, and keep your feet on the pegs. Of course, you'll want good sand tires on the bike for optimum traction. Good luck, Aaron, I know you'll have fun.

WRIST BRACES?

Dear Rick,

I'm writing to find out if anyone offers a wrist brace that works well when riding. I broke my wrist a couple of years ago and, when I ride really hard for a long period of time, it really bothers me. If you have any advice or information, I'd really appreciate it.

Scott Catrette
Montgomery, AL

Scott, with the rotation needed to twist the throttle, you absolutely cannot use a brace on your right hand, which is the hand I've injured. A small plastic support may be usable for the left wrist, but most I've seen extend to the palm of the hand, which can affect your grip on the handlebars. Your best bet is to tape the wrist before a long ride. Use the white cloth type of one-inch tape, and start with a strip running across the back of your hand from the wrist, between your thumb and index finger, and across your palm to the wrist. Run another strip beside the first one, then run strips lengthwise across the palm and back of your hand to the wrist. Now run strips around your wrist and forearm, working towards the hand. You want to provide support but not cut off blood circulation or cut into your range of motion to the point where you can't control the bike. Aspirin helps thin the blood as well as fight pain, so take some before your ride to keep the area oxygenated. □



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ALL CRACKED UP IN VENEZUELA

Dear Mr. Know-It-All,

I do not know why I said "Dear," because you're not very endearing, but heck, I am writing to you because of your erudition in technical matters, not your diplomacy. Now, down to business.

I have a 1988 XR 250 with the 280cc kit from Mr. Baker, including many extras. As a result of the installation job, a hairline crack developed in the valve cover starting from one hex nut. It is about 1-1/2 inches long and barely visible. I realized it was there because a small oil seepage developed. Any suggestions on how to eliminate the crack without welding?

My carb is a flat slide Mikuni 34. May I kindly have any suggestions for optimal jetting? I usually ride the bike at 3000 feet at a temperature of 25°-30°C. I currently run with eight discs in my SuperTrapp. Should I go to 12 or 15 discs?

I know there are many questions in this letter, but how many times have you received a letter from the wilderness in Latin America?

Marcos Agosti
Caracas, Venezuela

P.S. Look it up on a map. It is there. *Senor Agosti, since you displayed a modicum of respect, I shall supply you with straightforward and accurate answers. First, if your XR is running slightly rich (I assume it was jetted for approximately sea level), you will have to lean it out as the altitude increases. A good rule of thumb for your bike is a 2-1/2 to three percent reduction in jetting for each 1000 feet of altitude gain.*

However, since your bike has a lot of hop-up equipment on it, I would make the changes slowly. For openers, drop one on the main jet, lower the needle one notch and possibly lean out the pilot one size. Then ride the bike and check the plug for a "nice tan" reading. If it's still rich, go one more step lean, but do this carefully and make sure that you run the bike hard to assure that you do not get too lean at any time.

As to the exhaust, by all means add a few discs, but be advised that the more discs you use, the louder the exhaust will be. I would also make sure that the air-box/filter combo will flow well; drill or cut the box as needed.

As for the crack, there are options, of course. If you buy a new cover, this will eliminate the need for welding. If you want a fix-'em-up trick, try this: Remove the cover and clean it thoroughly in Stoddard solvent or hexane. Then clean the cracked area with plug and contact cleaner. Now, take a small grinder and notch

the hairline crack on both sides, then clean the area again with the contact cleaner. You are now ready to apply a good aluminum epoxy repair to the wounded area. I prefer JB weld that's made for aluminum repair. Mix the two tubes per directions (50/50 mix) and apply it smoothly, then let it dry overnight. Do not grind or sand the metal epoxy smooth; let it stand as is.

Done correctly, this sort of repair will last indefinitely. I've done this on magnesium case covers and assorted aluminum parts, and the repair has held for years.

A hearty P.P.S. to my friends in Caracas. There used to be a great steak house there run by a man named Raul. It's near the center of downtown. Ask for the steak with charred green onions, with the grilled corn on the side. A Guatemalan beer (Gallo) will complement the meal in a noble fashion. Raul had several good Central American beers in stock, if I recall correctly . . . and chances are that I do.

COOKING, HUSKY STYLE

Dear Mr. Know-It-All,

I just bought a 1988 Husky 510 TX and have only put about ten hours of average riding on the bike. Of the various problems the beast has given me, the most serious one is that the coolant return hose from the radiator to the water pump gets cooked and burned through by the exhaust.

The Swedes must have thought this was a good location to roast coolant hoses. I have asked the dealer whether this is a common problem, and the response was ten bucks for a new hose. Would you hose-heads know a fix to this problem?

Steve Palmer
Oceanside, CA

Sir, you have a basically good dirt bike that suffered from inept detailing. It's almost as if the Swedes expended all their energy building a good frame and engine, and let the janitor complete the bike.

You have two choices: shield the hose with an asbestos-type protective sheath (available from Baker Products, Long Beach, CA; [213] 595-7208), or fix the problem by re-routing the hose properly like the factory should have. I feel that it's a genuine shame that the Husqvarna engineers/owners let an unfinished product out on the market. As you know, Husky sold the company to Cagiva and they've been working hard to get rid of the stigma of building glitches into the product.

The Swedish firm brought their own grief upon their stubborn shoulders, and

the Italian Cagiva firm has been working overtime to correct the problems. In fact, the Italian product has superior quality control compared to the bike that the Swedes sold. The bike you bought was a model from the transitional years. Dial that bike in, get rid of the bugs and you'll have a fine mount.

HOPEFULLY, THIS LETTER IS A JOKE

Dear Mr. Know-Nothing,

I am 17 years of age and I am a proud owner of a 1982 CR 80, and am considering racing it in some prestigious events like the U.S. Nationals. I feel that I have a good chance among the top pros if you could tell me some secret modifications. I am using 10:1 fuel mixture. I have taken my muffler off for added horsepower and less weight and I have boarded [sic] it up to a 125.

I am now experimenting with an electric starter to make my Beast kick over easier, and if this proves effective, I will sell my secret to only the highest bidder to incorporate this ingenious mod on all motorcross [sic] bikes. To reensure [sic] I do good in the U.S. nationals, we have turned up the idle to make it run faster. Although me and my friends are not engine specialists as it may seem, we do very good work prepping the whole bike up before a race, like our extensive experiments with the suspension on my bike. We simply took my grease gun off the wall and packed the front forks with some Mystick JT-6. This should do very well.

My friend has also told me by soaking my air filter in surgar [sic] water it will be the quickest on the track. (Pretty smart, ahhh). And last, would it be wise to drain all of the transmission oil or just most of it before a race so the gears can turn faster?

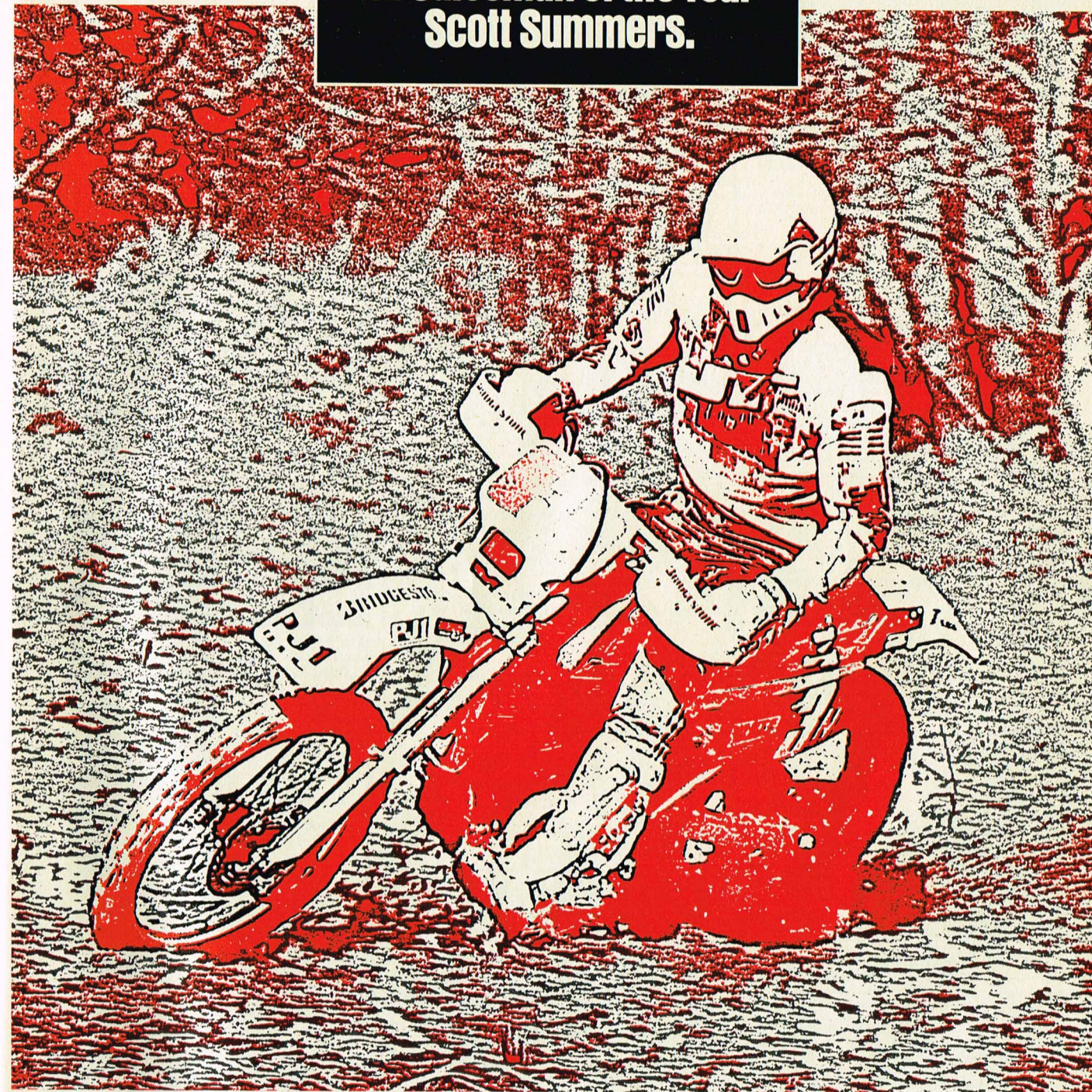
Your #1 fan,
Brian the Brain
(the New Jersey Kid)

P.S. I love your column in the *Motorcross [sic] Action* magazine each month.

Mr. Brain, I ran your letter verbatim in the hopes that it might bring a chuckle or two to our readers. The only frightening thought I have is that, in parts of it, you seem semi-serious. Hopefully, however, you can enjoy your whimsical missive, but please do not take the time out of your obviously non-busy day to write again. □

Send your pleas for enlightenment to Mr. Know-It-All, c/o *Dirt Bike*, 10600 Sepulveda Blvd., Mission Hills, CA 91345.

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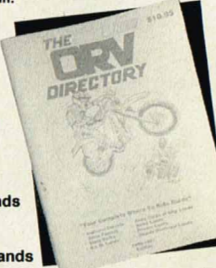
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ON THE LINE RACING CARBON/CARBON CERAMIC TOP HONDA CR250 PISTON

PRICE: \$300 (approximate). **FEATURES/PERFORMANCE:** On The Line Racing is the privateer's ticket to works parts. Admission, as you might expect, doesn't come cheap. Their latest and most tantalizing item is a carbon/carbon piston for Honda's CR250. Carbon/carbon is high-temperature-resistant carbon fiber that was developed for the tiles that form the space shuttle's heat shield. This material is 15 percent lighter than aluminum which reduces stress on the rod, bearings and crank and does not expand as much as aluminum when it is exposed to heat. As a result, the carbon/carbon piston can be set to tolerances as small as .001", even with extremely lean jetting, without danger of seizure. The tighter piston-to-cylinder fit creates a better gas seal which increases power output. Aluminum pistons need at least twice the clearance of carbon/carbon to avoid seizure due to heat expansion. The piston's ceramic top protects the carbon/carbon from the corrosive combustion byproducts. **CONTACT:** On The Line Racing, *Dirt Bike Magazine Referrals Dept.*, 30 S. Wacker Dr., Ste. #1120, Chicago, IL 60606; (708) 940-0111.

ANSWER PRODUCTS ROOST BOOST PLUS

PRICE: \$69.95. **FEATURES/PERFORMANCE:** Answer's Roost Boost Plus changes the advance curve of your motorcycle's ignition so that more advance is available earlier for strong response at low speeds. You can't create the same effect by adjusting your ignition for more advance because you would end up with too much advance at high engine speeds. The Roost Boost Plus, like the first version, has wires color-coded and fitted with connectors to match the ones on your bike's ignition to make installation easy. Our 1990 Honda CR125 ran stronger at all engine speeds with the Roost Boost than without it. The engine seemed more lively overall, even when the throttle was blipped while the bike was idling. The fins on the new Roost Boost Plus help keep the unit cool and, in theory, should extend its life but we've yet to burn out an original, unfinned Roost Boost. The finned model looks more trick but we wouldn't pass up an original Roost Boost if we had a bike that needed one—they're cheaper! **CONTACT:** Answer Products, Inc., *Dirt Bike Magazine Referrals Dept.*, 27460 Avenue Scott, Valencia, CA 91355; (805) 257-4411.

BIEFFE CARBON FIBER-KEVLAR HELMET

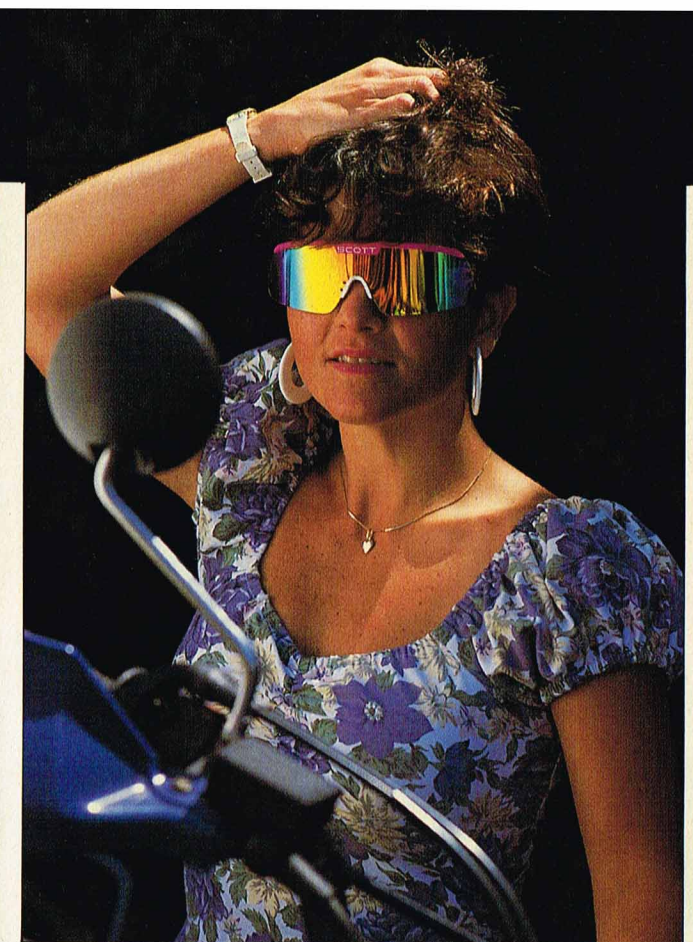
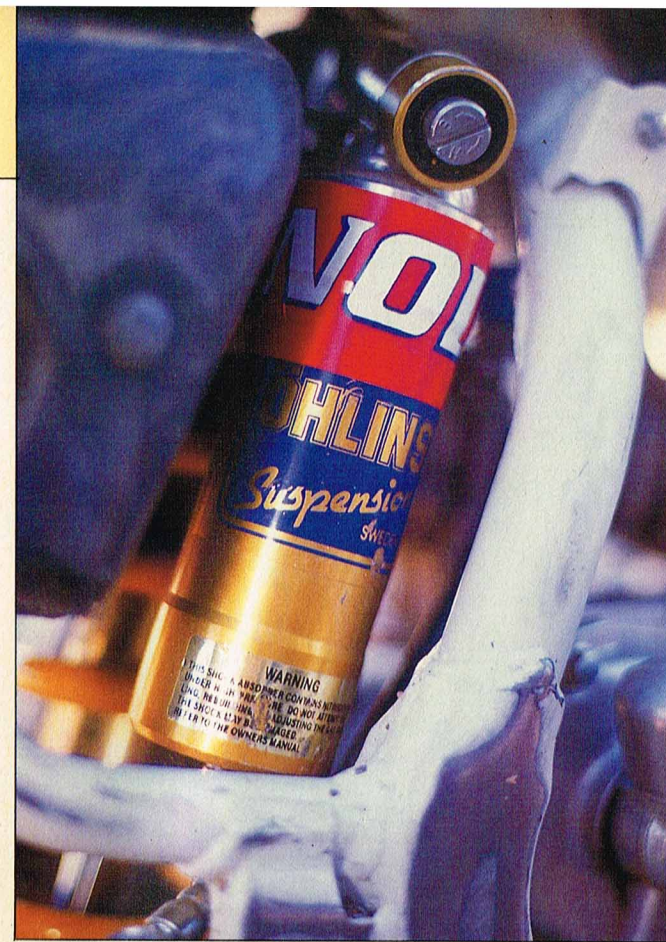
PRICE: \$249. **FEATURES/PERFORMANCE:** Bieffe is one of the most popular off-road motorcycle helmets in Europe and they're catching on with pro motocrossers in the States. Light weight and fresh contemporary styling is what makes Bieffe helmets stand out. Bieffe has used fiberglass-Kevlar composite shells for previous models to keep the weight low. They're going to release this carbon fiber-Kevlar shell model early in '91. They claim it will weigh ten ounces less than a conventional fiberglass shell helmet! It's going to have full internal venting by way of scalp and chinpiece vents and will have removable cheek pads in a variety of sizes so you can custom-fit the helmet to your head. This model will be available in solid white and three different tri-color schemes. **CONTACT:** Bieffe



USA, *Dirt Bike Magazine Referrals Dept.*, Inc., 1746 Junction Ave., Ste. E, San Jose, CA 95112; (408) 436-8098.

NOLEEN RACING YAMAHA FORK MODIFICATIONS

PRICE: Oil change for Showa, KYB and White Power forks, \$65. Showa base valve kit, \$79.95. KYB base valve kit, \$89.95. Fork springs, \$59.95. Noleen 01 cartridge fork fluid, \$8.65 per quart (two bottles are needed for most forks). SF-3 grease, \$2.95 per one-ounce container. Revalve-service-base valve installation (includes cartridge rod polishing) for Showa and KYB, \$139.95. Rebuild, includes oil change, seal replacement and tube straightening, \$80. Damper rod fork mods, \$95. White Power revalve, \$95. **FEATURES/PERFORMANCE:** Noleen Racing is well known for their suspension and engine mods for Yamahas and can legitimately claim to be Yamaha Kayaba experts. Yamaha recommends their services, which says a lot about Noleen's professional approach to their work and the good results they get from their mods. After riding a '90 YZ250 with Noleen-modified front suspension, we can recommend their work also. Their revalving mods to the 1990 YZ250 fork improve its compliance in the first part of the travel, while the mid and final parts



of the travel were made smoother and more progressive. Large bumps were absorbed without the harsh feeling the stock fork gives. Noleen has been servicing and modifying Showa and White Power suspension for as long as they've worked with KYB parts, and their Showa mods can do worlds of good to clear up the mid travel harshness and hard bottoming Honda riders find with the stock '89 and '90 forks. Noleen offers an extensive list of services, including improving the action of non-cartridge damper rod forks (like those on DRs and XTs). **CONTACT:** Noleen Racing, *Dirt Bike Magazine Referrals Dept.*, 2141 E. Philadelphia #T, Ontario, CA 91761-7742; (714) 947-5773.

WORKS CONNECTION

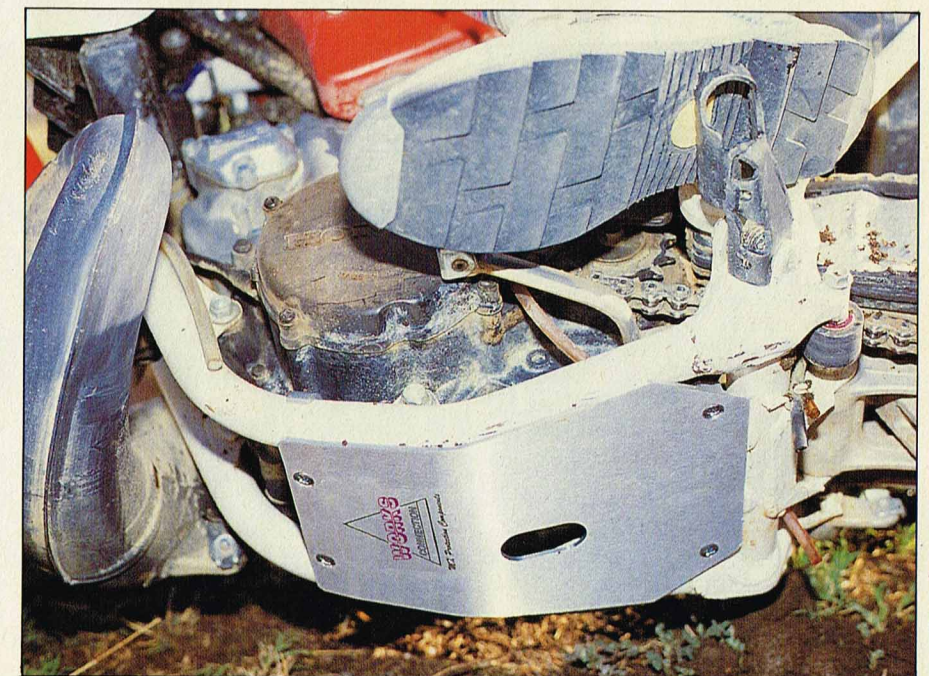
"FACTORY STYLED" SKID PLATE

PRICE: \$55. **FEATURES/PERFORMANCE:** Works Connection's "Factory Styled" skid plates have the look and fit of a factory part. The plate is cut to precisely fit the bike it's for, and the machined aluminum clamps that secure it to the frame rails are positioned to allow quick, neat installation. A transmission oil drain plug access hole is provided in the plate. This plate helps the bottom of the engine cradle slide over obstacles rather than catching on them. It provides protection for the area of the engine cases between the frame rails but doesn't extend to cover the outer cases. **CONTACT:** Works Connection, *Dirt Bike Magazine Referrals Dept.*, 6685 Long Ave., Placerville, CA 95667; (916) 621-4176.

SCOTT RAINBOW GOLD SPORTSHIELD & MICROSHIELD SUNGLASSES

PRICE: \$59.95. Sportshields and Microshields with non mirror-finish lens, \$49.95 **FEATURES/PERFORMANCE:** Scott's rainbow gold lens

screens out 100 percent of harmful ultraviolet light. The lens wraps around to offer more protection than conventional framed glasses. Three lens angle adjustments are possible, as are earpiece length adjustments. Sportshields and Microshields are available with smoke, high-contrast peach and clear lenses and black, white, pink, purple, neon yellow, green and multi-colored frames. **CONTACT:** Scott USA, *Dirt Bike Magazine Referrals Dept.*, P.O. Box 2030, Sun Valley, ID 83353; (208) 622-1000. □



CRASH & BURN



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Photos by Thom Veety

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