

**T**HE TRANSFORMATION of the Swedish Husqvarna factory is almost complete with the 1985 range of CR motocrossers – they've followed the trend which became a stampede and fitted monoshock rear suspension. But in typical European fashion, they've searched for, and found, a way that allows them still to be different from the Japanese.

Look at the Husqvarna 125CR's main frame. According to British importer Steve Daniels, Huskies are the only bikes with this single massive backbone tube off which all the other bits are hung, with

a lightweight double cradle under the motor. It took a five-man team from the Swedish suspension factory of Ohlins to design and perfect the chassis, led by former GP rider Torlief Hansen. Torlief is now production manager at Ohlins and also their main test rider. Which other factory can claim a pedigree like that?

The rear chassis was a result of co-operation between Husqvarna and Ohlins who obviously had some definite ideas how they thought their fully sealed piggyback shock absorber should be used. It's operated at the lower end by the usual lever system, connected to an all new alloy swing arm. Obviously, this

new chassis and suspension was in our rider's minds during the DBR test session. To help regular test rider Chris Maindonald, who's a bit big and heavy for a 125, we recruited 16 year old Clifford Prescott who you may remember won the Experts class of the DBR



Champion of Champions last September.

Both riders were very enthusiastic, saying the rear end stayed well under control even on fast downhill stretches, braking over stutter bumps and some fairly big steps. Both felt the Husqvarna forks needed heavier oil and were too soft but the handling and rear suspension proved excellent. Despite heavy mud conditions, the CR had that

European 'feel' which gives confident cornering, no doubt helped by the Pirelli Sandcross tyres which were a good choice for the day.

Over jumps and whoops, the back end also coped admirably, pulling back in line and absorbing considerable punishment. The fork action was also good, just a bit soft but that's really tuned to suit.

But while the chassis was promising, the motor didn't receive such praise. It's quick enough at the top end but without any form of power valve to broaden the spread of torque. It revs really strongly but you've just got to nail the throttle to the stop and leave it there - while most 125 riders claim that's what they do anyway, a little bit more tractability would be an asset.

It wasn't helped by the newness of the bike, and the muddy conditions - a problem we have to endure in winter testing. Both the clutch action and the gear selection was a bit stiff so keeping the revs up was made harder. The clutch lever was heavy as well as a bit stiff but examining the actuating lever on top of the gearbox showed that a modified, longer arm might fit and help considerably.

The gear shift was hampered by great gollups of mud hanging off the chain - the mudflap to the rear of the monoshock fell off when a bolt came loose and it didn't take long to show how useful that item was. However, we did note that the distance the gearlever has to move is more than on most Japanese bikes, particularly between first to second, crossing neutral. Apart from that, there were no false neutrals or other aberrations.

For heavyweight Maindonald, starts were in first gear on dry bits but second ►



# STILL DIFFERENT

Husky's '85 125CR has a new chassis complete with monoshock rear end.

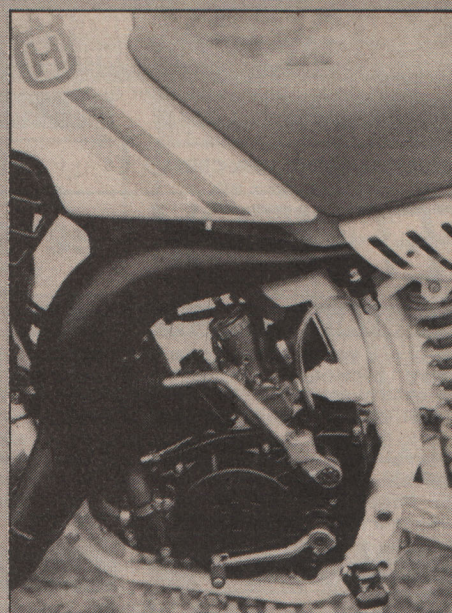
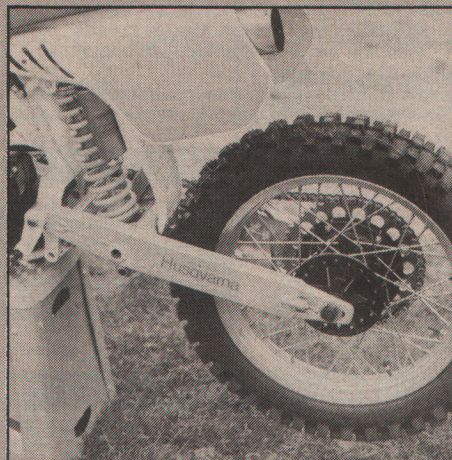
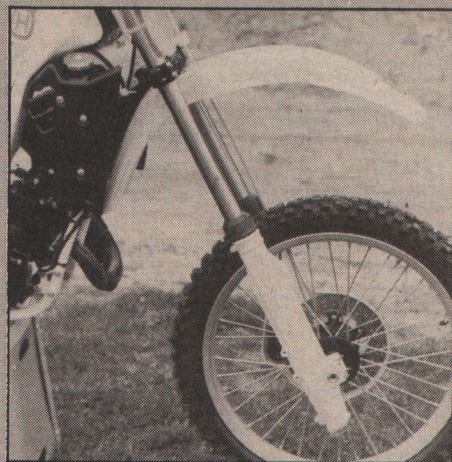
on slippery, greasy areas. Lighter Clifford used second but he's also more used to 125s. Both found the bike fitted them well - the 125's dimensions bridge the youth to adult gap. You can see from the photos how Maindonald could move it around in the air, table tops were a piss of, er, cake, he said. Clifford watched but declined to try them. Sensible lad, obviously got brains...

Both felt the motor would have benefitted with a few more motos on its bores to loosen up, and also with leaner jetting - it was gassing up a bit coming out of turns. But it started easy enough, hot or cold, and though the kickstart lever looks oddly tucked in on the left, it proved easy to use. All the controls apart from the clutch were fine - levers are Maguras as is the throttle.

Up front, the stopping action is courtesy of the Italian Brembo company with an enclosed hydraulic disc. It's progressive and very powerful, needing just one finger for most occasions leaving the rest of your digits where they should be - on the bars. Master cylinder on the bars looks vulnerable though, like an off the shelf road bike item. Honda, in particular, have shown what can be done to protect items like this.

Not so bad is the watercooling system, now with two rads which enable them to be placed closer to the headstock. Hoses to the waterpump are well covered by the U-bend of the exhaust.

All round the bike are signs of the intense attention Husqvarna have been paying to their dirt bikes the last year few years. Access to the air filter is excellent



ABOVE: Note the single main frame tube - air filter is wedged in close but there's good access to the carb and Ohlins shock.

TOP LEFT: Disc is enclosed in Acerbis plastic. Exhaust pipe looks vulnerable from this angle.

LEFT: Alloy swing arm is new and was part of the Ohlins design package.

# HUSQVARNA

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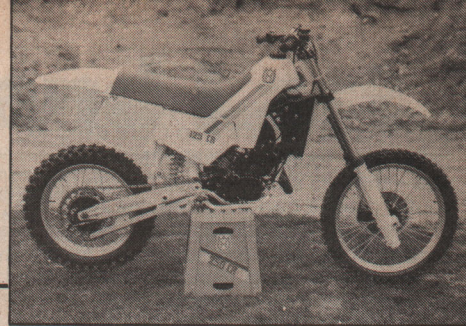
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as is the shock – two bolts for the seat and side panel. The bodywork is distinctive but practical, with the ten litre fuel tank fitting neatly with the safety seat. Rear drive chain is another quality item – a gold Regina.

All in all, the Husqvarna 125CR is impressive with its new chassis. it's

distinctive, unusual but handicapped by the lack of a power valve. Husky has shown themselves to be serious about this class – they must see the need for development of the motor.



## TECHFAX

### HUSQVARNA 125CR

THE 125CR has basically the same straight forward 124cc watercooled piston-port controlled motor as in 1984 with revised cylinder, piston, exhaust pipe and a different angle to the ports. But it lacks a power valve system of any sort and consequently doesn't develop the mid-range power of most other 125s. However, it proved as quick as Yamaha's YZ125 in a back to back test so it's probably producing a maximum output of around 32bhp.

Watercooling system is similar to the Yamaha with a waterpump on the left end of the crank and two radiators mounted just below the steering head. It breathes through a 36mm Mikuni carb and an odd shaped airbox snuggled up close to the main frame tube.

The frame is completely new to take the monoshock system introduced for the first time by Husky. The shock is an Ohlins, naturally, and the Swedish suspension company helped develop the whole rear chassis. Frame is unusual with a single massive tube acting as a backbone. This runs from the steering head, with an additional bracing strut to the swing arm pivot. A double cradle under the engine meets the backbone at the pivot.

An all-new alloy swing arm uses needle roller bearings for the suspension linkage. The fully sealed shock has adjustable compression and

rebound damping. There's 350mm travel.

Up front, steering angle has been changed from 28½° to 27° and longer springs used in the forks. A small change is the use of waisted allen bolts in the triple clamps. Taper roller bearings are used in the steering head. Husky's own fork gives 300mm travel.

The 230mm diameter front disc comes enclosed in Acerbis plastic with a neat Brembo caliper behind the fork leg. Master cylinder and reservoir are also Brembo with beautifully crafted Magura levers.

Tyres as supplied are Pirelli Sandcross which proved acceptable in Golding Barn's mud.

### SPECIFICATIONS

Price (inc VAT)..... £1623  
 Engine..... single cyl 2-str liquid cooled  
 Bore x stroke..... 55 x 52mm  
 Capacity..... 124cc  
 Carburation..... 36mm Mikuni  
 Ignition..... Motoplant CDI  
 No power figures available  
 Gears..... 6 speed

### CYCLE PARTS

Tyres..... Pirelli Sandcross  
 Front..... 3.00 x 21in  
 Rear..... 4.25 x 18in

### Brakes

Front..... 230mm disc  
 Rear..... 160mm drum  
 Suspension  
 Front..... Husqvarna 300mm travel  
 Rear..... Monoshock, Ohlins Piggyback, 350mm travel

### DIMENSIONS

Weight (dry)..... 92kg (202lb)  
 Wheelbase..... N/A  
 Seat height..... 975mm (38.4in)  
 Fuel capacity..... 10 litres

### SPARE PARTS (inc VAT)

Air filter..... £6.47  
 Piston kit..... £55.26  
 Ring only..... £10.89  
 Small end bearing..... £3.72  
 Head gasket..... £4.01  
 Rear sprocket..... £13.74  
 Front sprocket..... £11.09  
 Exhaust pipe..... N/A  
 Rear mudguard..... £11.96  
 Front mudguard..... £17.72  
 Throttle cable..... £5.63  
 Complete front lever ass..... £63.82

Machine supplied by Pro Circuit UK Ltd., Unit 7, Bumpers Farm Industrial Estate, Chippenham, Wiltshire. Tel: 0249 656547.

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