

**DAVE THORPE CONSIDERS HAWKSTONE AND HERRING!**

# **DIRT BIKE** **RIDER**

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**BRITISH 250 GP;  
COLOUR  
COVERAGE!**

Catching the  
Richard Main  
Line



**TESTS:**

**The Practical KTM  
350 Enduro**

**The Posing Yamaha  
600 Tenere**

*slightly/abridged*  
**Mart's / SSDT Diary!**



Slipping yarns from the not so secret diary of Martin Lampkin at the Scottish Six Days Trial.

**COVER: Look out world, Jem Whatley's back on form! Jack Burnicle catches the Cagiva man in the act.**

Blasting the enduro trail, KTM's 350 arrived quietly but goes quickly.

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## Tests

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# SAVE THE <sup>Blue</sup> WHALE



The '86 Tenere's tank looks bigger than last year's but it's actually six litres smaller at 23 litres (5.06 galls). Power unit (what you can see of it) is externally similar but it's been tweaked for another three bhp.



## In these days of boring, lookalike motorcycles, the Yamaha XT600 Tenere offers something a little different. John Pearson reports...

**I**T'S BIG, beefy and outrageously styled. And the Europeans in particular just love Yamaha's XT600 Tenere.

Keen to maintain their continental smash hit sales success in the Paris-Dakar posing stakes, Yamaha has upspec'd the '86 edition with a number of mods. These include improving engine breathing, bolting on a very welcome electric starter and for the first time in this country giving it an optional funky French Gauloises style blue and yellow paint job.

Yamaha's high speed petrol tanker was always one of the easiest big inch

dirt blasters to swing into life on its kickstarter. But anyone who's stalled at the head of a traffic queue or out on a muddy trail will appreciate the convenience of pressing a button rather than heaving over 595cc of single cylinder four-stroke engine.

You'll see from our photos just how stunning that new paint job looks. But if it's a touch too OTT for your taste there's always the classic Yam white and red option.

Yamaha has upped engine performance by 3bhp to 45.3 at 6500rpm. Torque is stronger too, increasing from 5 to 5.2 kg/m at 5500rpm.

Major influences on these improvements have been the use of a larger diameter second carburettor on the Yamaha Dual Intake System (YDIS), reshaped cylinder head porting, bigger valves and a hotter cam.

Engine breathing is further aided by using a considerably larger capacity air

box tucked into some reclaimed space under the monster fuel tank.

The tank itself, while looking bigger than the one on last year's bike has actually shrunk in capacity from a mega-weight 29 litres to a still fairly obese 23 litres (5.06 gals). Reason it looks bigger is because the sides have been deepened to drop the centre of gravity, helping to reduce the effects of the fuel load.

Fuel outlets are now too low to effectively feed the carburettors so petrol is supplied to them via a vacuum operated mechanical pump.

These reasonably significant changes apart, the Tenere is otherwise much the same package as previously with air-assisted long travel front forks and Monocross rising rate rear suspension along with a disc front/drum rear braking set-up.

Thumbing the right handlebar mounted start button after pulling out the not particularly well sited choke knob gets the Yam thumping away

quickly, quietly and without fuss. You do, however, need to keep the throttle closed until it catches.

Get things moving and it's soon apparent that power delivery is noticeably smoother — and more dirt-friendly — than last year's bike. Power is nicely flexible throughout the rev range. It's best to keep it rolling at over 2000rpm, but the Tenere will twiddle along reasonably smoothly with less than that showing on the tacho — then respond fairly crisply and without fuss when asked to accelerate. Especially in the lower gears.

It's a relatively lusty mill that'll keep on pulling right up to and beyond the red line. It's probably better, however, to change up earlier rather than later for best results.

It'll cruise at higher speeds, but the blue beastie is really happy at an indicated 80 when the tacho needle is pointing towards 5000rpm. Much over that and the very sit-up-and-beg riding position can become tiring over any distance.

It is quite a lofty perch too; 885mm (34.8in) off the tarmac. No fun for shorties.

The seat itself folds up against the megatank. And it's plenty comfortable for medium range trips. Although you'll want a rest before the tank runs out — range is around 260 miles. Average fuel consumption is 51.5mpg, with best in the mid fifties and worst just under the 50 mark.

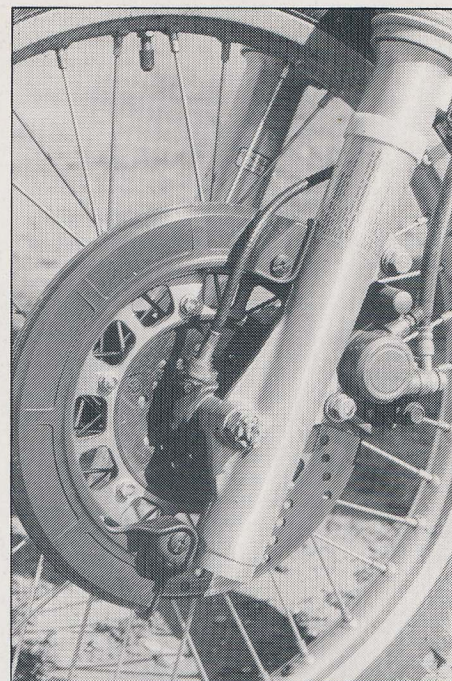
Despite that power boost, maximum speed hasn't increased significantly. It still tops out at just over 101mph.

Dual purpose posing tackle it may be, but the Tenere is probably best as a twisty lane scratcher. Keep your riding neat and precise and it'll match anything. Ground clearance is far beyond the requirements of most riders. That flexible motor means that even if you corner in the wrong gear it'll forgive you and pull out anyway. And although the long travel suspension can get flappy if you're ragged it's generally well behaved.

Steering is slightly heavy but that's no surprise considering the weight of fuel up there. Most effective cornering



It's big, heavy and offers an armchair ride but the Tenere didn't really struggle around an enduro course at our Chippenham test track.



Neat plastic protector covers the effective front disc brake. There's no anti-dive so the forks do tend to dip well under hard braking from speed.

technique seems to be to push the handlebars down into the turn, almost motocross style.

Braking is quite competent; the sintered front pads do the business in wet or dry, on and off the road. A minimum of two-finger pressure is needed on the front but feel is okay. And the back drum is more responsive than most.

There's no anti-dive system so the front end does tend to drop somewhat when hauling them on hard from speed.

You do significantly notice the difference between a full fuel tank and when it's getting low. More so, we think, than last year's bike.

That monster would loft its front wheel quite easily when full or empty. But top up the '86 model and getting some air under the front wheel isn't so easy. Shed a gallon or two though and it'll wheelie with the best of them.

The fuel load is, of course, just more

than slightly noticeable when off road riding. Make sure there's below a couple of gallons in it before you venture off the tarmac if you want an easy life.

Not that the Tenere is any great shakes as an off-roadster anyway. The suspension gives an armchair like, rather than sporting ride. And apart from feeling generally big, and slightly intimidating it is heavy up front. Having said that, we trundled it around a pukka enduro track at our regular Chippenham venue. And it took it all in its stride. There was nowhere it wouldn't go. Indeed, it became quite fun after a few laps.

So, although the Tenere is a 90 per cent roadster with 90 per cent off road looks, it does have some dirt ability.

It's big — and so will you need to be to control it — but it's a capable trail machine. Wouldn't fancy dropping it and denting that £119 petrol tank though!

## TECHFAX



### SPECIFICATIONS

Price (inc VAT) .....	£2399
Engine .....	4-stroke, air cooled single cyl, SOHC
Capacity .....	595cc
Bore & stroke .....	.95 x 84mm
Carburation .....	Y27PV Teikei
Ignition .....	CDI
Max power (claimed) .....	45bhp at 6500rpm
Max torque (claimed) .....	5.2kg/m at 5500rpm
Transmission .....	five-speed
Clutch .....	wet, multiplate

### CYCLE PARTS

Tyres:	
Front .....	3.00-S21
Rear .....	4.60-S18

### Brakes:

Front .....	267mm dia disc
Rear .....	Drum
Suspension:	
Front .....	Telescopic fork
Rear .....	Monocross

### DIMENSIONS

Weight .....	155kg
Wheelbase .....	1450mm
Ground clearance .....	265mm
Seat height .....	885mm
Fuel capacity .....	23 litres

Machine supplied by: Mitsai Machinery Sales Ltd, Oakcroft Road, Chessington, Surrey, KT9 1SA. Tel: 01-397 5111.