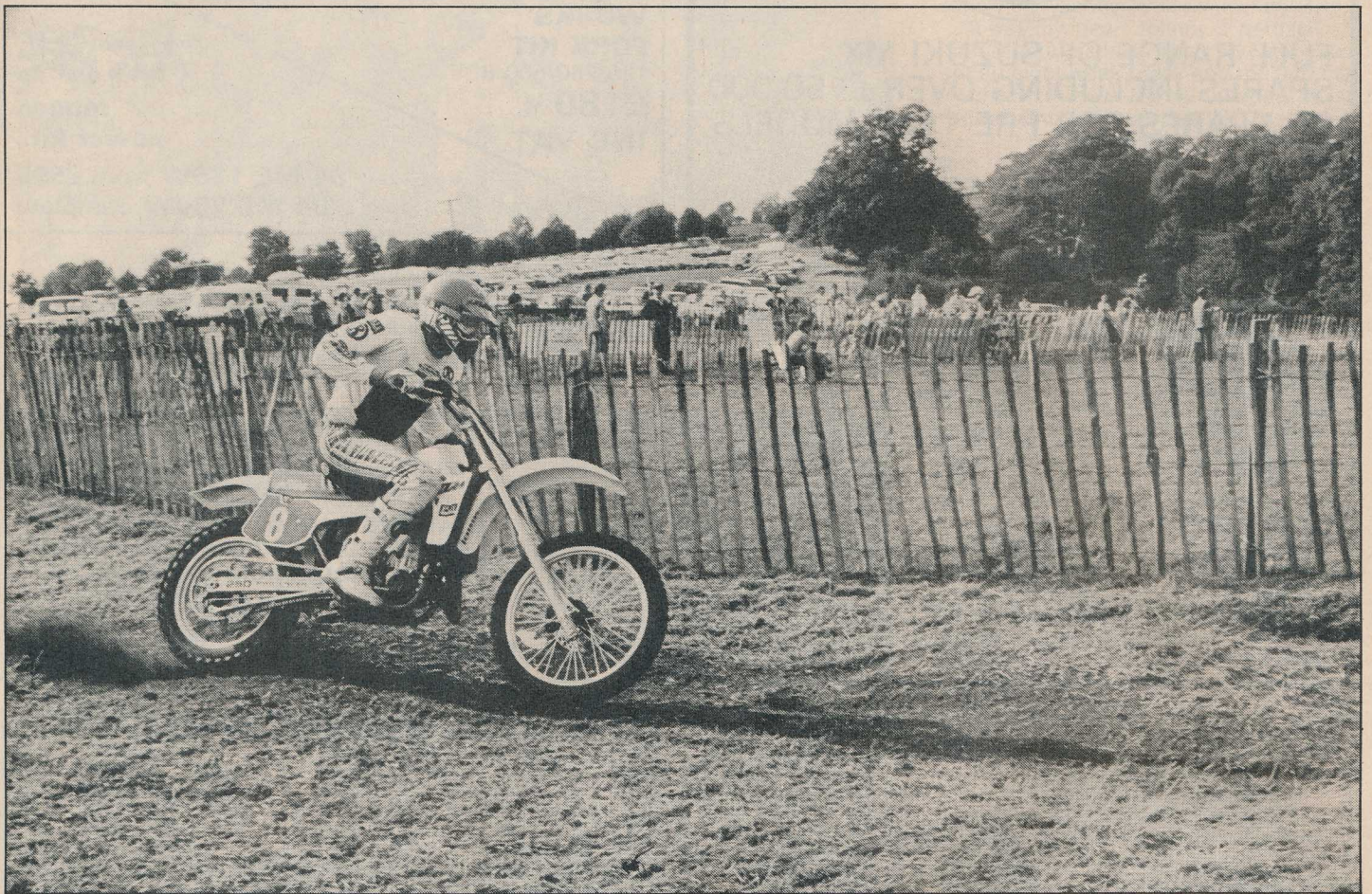


Winning Winner

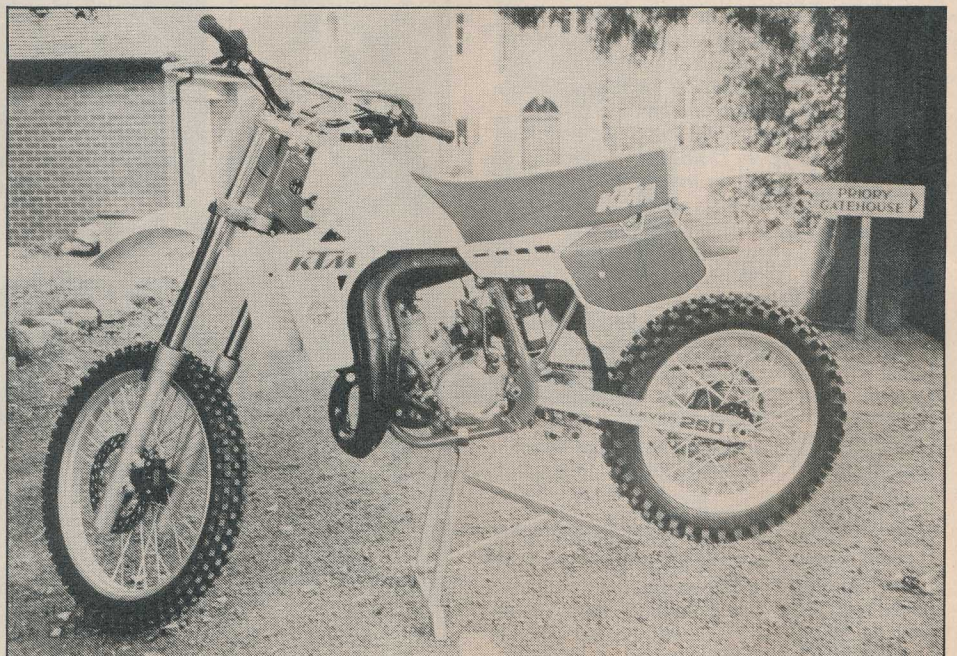


On his own out front; Kurt Nicoll takes the 1985 KTM250 to its debut win in the 250 Championship round at Nympsfield.

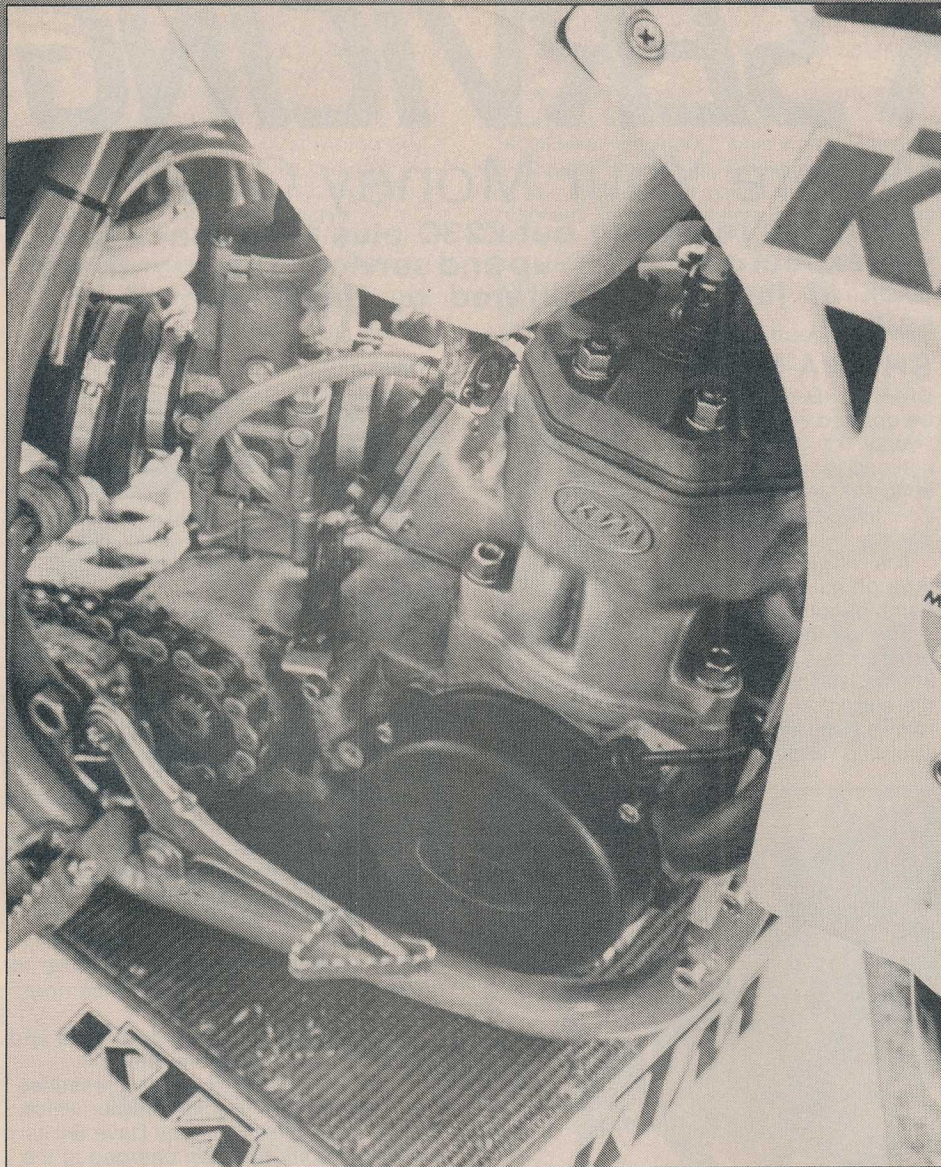
Externally the '84 KTM 250 certainly looked the same as the bike which carried Heinz Kinigadner to the World Championship. But . . . Now the '85 model is here, complete with an uprated technical inventory. The day after the new bikes arrived in Britain, Team DBR swung a leg over the new KatieM. Our first impressions are related below.

Dateline: Thursday, August 13, 1984.
Location: Ledbury, Herefordshire.
Mission: Have a blast on the new KTM 250, take some pictures of it and form an impression of the first of the '85 production bikes to hit these shores.

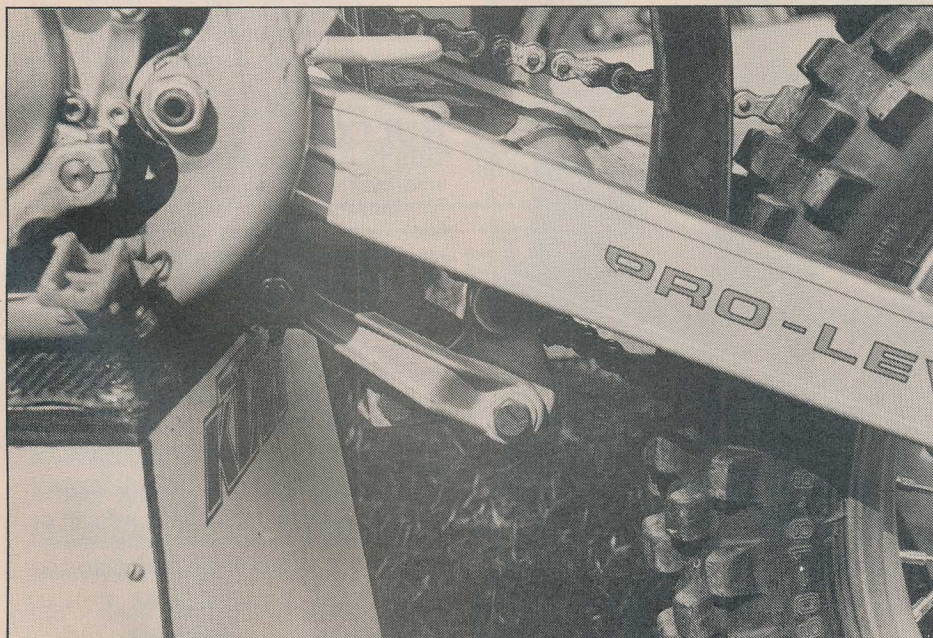
Bikes almost always leave their little mark in one's memory. The '84 KTM 250



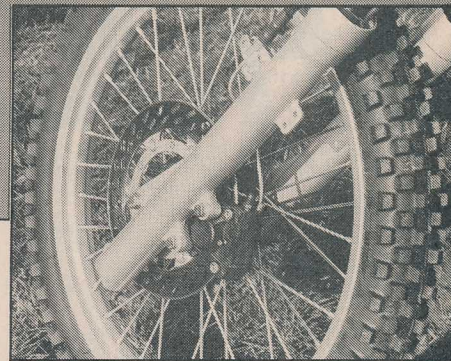
Subtle but significant; that's the way to describe changes to this season's KTM250.



KTM engineers have delved into the depths of the engine and inserted a longer stroke, new crankshaft, piston and nikasil bore. Clutch has also been updated, along with the expansion chamber.



Rear suspension has come in for revision. There's a new White Power shock, revised linkages and a frame redesign. According to Kurt Nicoll, it works.



Up front there's plenty of change; Brembo supplies the caliper, KTM the 240mm disc and Marzocchi the new 43mm forks.

seemed a fairly reasonable machine, "a gutsy little bike which will please anyone" was the way **Team DBR** summed up the machine (**DBR** August '84).

The '85 offering is an improved machine. Subtle but significant – there was no need to dramatically change an already excellent product. Instead, the KTM engineers devoted time to improving specific areas.

Rear suspension has been revised by altering the Pro Lever linkages so they compress the piggy-back White Power single suspension strut with a different mechanical advantage.

The front twin leading shoe brake has been junked, replaced by a Magura master cylinder operating a Brembo disc caliper. The combination works well when fitted up to new Marzocchi 43mm forks.

Throw the new 250 into a turn and your knees notice another important change. The junction of the radiator cowls and the fuel tank have been smoothed out to remove the lip which, last year, tended to fret the knee pads of your riding pants.

Screw the power on to exit the turn and the other changes becomes apparent. The engine bore and stroke dimensions have been altered to make the engine slightly longer in the stroke.

The bore size is down from 71mm to 69mm and the stroke is up from 62mm to 65.6mm. The result is an engine with more mid-range grunt. Inside there's a new crank, piston, nikasil bore and clutch.

An indication of the new bike's potential came just a couple of days later when Kurt Nicoll took in to a debut win in the Nympsfield round of the 250 Championship. The KTM's been up there this year; next year it's shaping as the Big Threat.

Nicoll later gave his impressions of the '85 KTM. "This is the first time I've ridden a 250 since about April, but the differences over the 1984 model are quite noticeable.

"There's more in the middle range. It's much better. Last year's seemed sluggish," he said. "The rear suspension is better. It's a bit soft for me straight out of the crate, but doesn't jar like last year. And there's not so much flex in the forks."

First impressions are lasting ones, so the adage goes. On that basis we have a feeling the '85 KTM is going to cause something of a stir in next season's quarter litre class. Watch for our full test coming up shortly.

