

STARTING OUT, AUTOMATICALLY

Micro mini

By the Dirt Bike Staff

The littlest Suzuki should not be confused with other minis offered by the makers of RMs. It is most assuredly *not* a racer in the least stretch of imagination. The JR50 is strictly a learner's bike.

This micro bike is designed to prevent intimidating even the most cautious beginner. To make sure of this, the JR comes in two stages of tune: mild and milder. A small baffle restricts the exhaust and slaughters the power. With the plate in (stock condition) the JR will barely pull a rider on hard-packed, level ground.

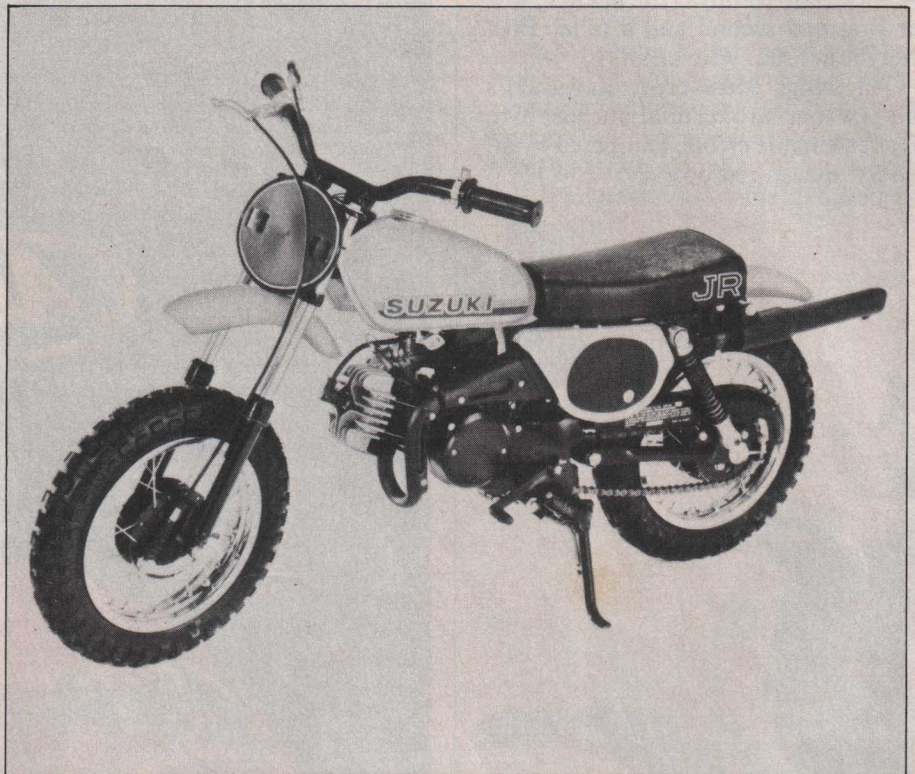
This is just fine for super young riders. With any sort of blast of power, a first-time rider often gets in trouble and dumps the bike, leaving a bad initial taste in his or her mouth.

With the JR, acceleration is so slow and predictable that, after a short period of time, the beginning rider is often *asking* for more power. That's when the reducing plate should be removed. Then the JR has a bit more snap. Still not enough to get the youngster in trouble, but probably enough to satisfy them for the period needed to acquire the basic learning skills.

Aiding the learning process is the fact that there's no clutch or gears to hassle with. The kid can concentrate on going forward, seering around obstacles and stopping when panic sets in.

The JR is very low. Perhaps too low for some six- or seven-year-olds. Seat height is a mere 19 inches. A nine- or ten-year-old will be cramped on the JR.

Starting is easy, with the extra-long kickstarter letting even the weakest leg spin the engine over fast enough. We had some problems keeping the automatic clutch in adjustment. Without the proper adjustment, the kickstarter would not engage cleanly, and starting would become difficult.



This was the only problem encountered, however. The rest of the time the JR could be ridden without any sort of maintenance. Just add gas, and once a month or so check the level in the oil injection bag. Spokes never came loose and nuts and bolts stayed snug.

There's not much suspension on the JR, but at the first stage of riding skill, none of the riders even noticed this. They seemed to accept the odd bump as normal.

At a ready-to-ride weight of around 80 pounds, the JR can be easily lifted by an adult and slipped into the trunk of a normal-sized car.

With four tenths of a gallon of gas, the JR will still putt around all day without refilling. The exhaust is quiet enough for a kid to ride in his backyard without the neighbors even knowing that a crazed biker is in action.

It's a snappy looking machine with a high fun factor. Still, we feel that most kids will tend to outgrow the JR

after a year or so, and will be taking long, hard looks at a much more serious RM60. □

SUZUKI JR50X Specifications

Engine type	Single-cylinder, air-cooled, two-stroke
Bore and stroke	41.0mm x 37.8mm
Displacement	49cc
Horsepower (claimed)	N/A
Carburetion	12mm Mikuni
Ignition	Magneto, points
Transmission	Single-speed constant mesh w/neutral gear
Fuel tank capacity	0.4-gallon (1.5 liters)
Wheelbase	33.7 inches (855mm)
Ground clearance	4.5 inches (115mm)
Seat height	19 inches
Weight (claimed)	82 pounds
Suspension:	
Front	Telescopic fork
Rear	Swingarm, shocks
Tires:	
Front	2.50x102PR
Rear	2.50x102PR
Intended use	Off-road
Approx. retail price	\$479
Country of origin	Japan
Distributor:	
U.S. Suzuki	
3251 E. Imperial Hwy.	
P.O. Box 1100	
Brea, California 92621	