



# CUT PRICE COTA

I'M no stranger to Montesas, having ridden for Jim Sandiford in the British Championship, Scottish Six Days and selected nationals after retiring from the World Championship series and factory SWMs.

Even before then I'd often exchange bikes with Mont rider Malcolm Rathmell during practise sessions to compare whose did what and when. That was as early as 1975 (bloody hell that's 10 years ago) when Malc first went to the Spanish factory.

I first rode the 242 Cota at the 1983 Allan Jefferies, achieving a respectable fifth in a close finish, continuing with it for a couple of months after that.

Now I've never been a small bike fan, but must say that the early 242s were

**Importer Jim Sandiford has chopped the Montesa Cota 242's price to £999, making it appear very good value for money. Martin Lampkin reports . . .**

good and competitive on the Yorkshire rocks.

I struggled a bit in the mud though, because my technique in the sticky going is a bit hamfisted. I relied upon power, and the 242 is good at the top end until you are really struggling and then there isn't a lot left.

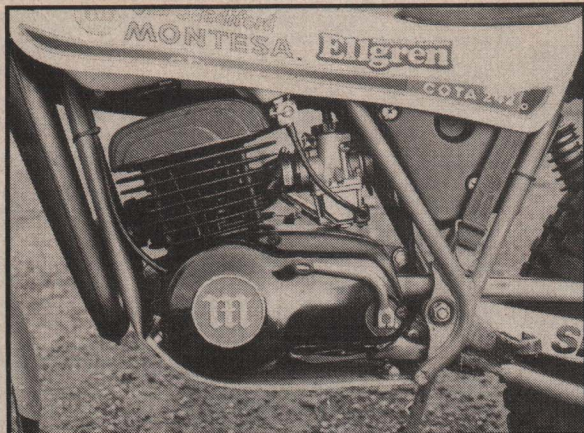
There have been some improvements to the Cota since then, and this is what I found with the bike that Jim Sandiford is currently selling for £999.

On some new testing ground near my pub I put the smart little bike through its paces in streams, on loose rocks, steps and one very steep climb on which it never faltered. When hit right it would even pop a wheelie out of the top; although another 20 yards and it would have died when a bigger bike would have managed.

At the bottom end the engine excelled. In fact it was sharper and quicker to respond than the admittedly smaller capacity Fantic 240 I tested a couple of issues ago. Main problem I found is that the middle range lacked the torque necessary to pull higher gears when slippery conditions meant they were needed.

At 237.5cc the two-stroke engine must ►





**Above:** 237.5cc two-stroke power unit produces good top-end performance for its size.

**Left:** Cota's proven front suspension works satisfactorily. Front mudguard is well positioned to give decent clearance.



**Right:** Rear end layout is uncluttered and there's not much to get snagged by undergrowth or protruding rocks. Note top and bottom chain protection.

be one of the best for its class. A 27mm Amal carburettor with a large, easy to maintain air filter box, plus a lengthy exhaust and small bore tailpipe all contribute to the smooth, snappy performance.

Styling-wise the 242 looks okay with the traditional tank/seat unit which has served Montesa well over the years. Although I can't help thinking that a styling update might be worthwhile. All the other bits and pieces like mudguards, stays, forks, yokes and frame are well proven over the years and make up for a robust bike.

Main criticism I had was with the handling. The idea of smaller bikes is to make life easy on modern type tight sections. However, on loose, small rocks and stream beds I found the 242 difficult to keep in a straight line. It wandered and made the approach to corners or steps difficult and I really had to concentrate overtime to correct my line.

That was the only real fault on what is still a possible national winner in the right hands.

Summing up, the Montesa is slightly old fashioned in appearance and performance. The Spanish company, probably due to their financial position, have done little to change the styling, although they have tried with the engine. The gearbox is more positive and it now has a primary kickstart, which is a must for novice riders.

In terms of value for money, the Cota 242, along with the Montesa-Hondas, has got to rate among the best available in the country. As I have said, it is still a potential national winner, but fashion plus a few more pound notes floating about has meant that Montesas aren't as prominent as they were a few years ago. It's hard to believe that people are paying nearly twice as much for some more fashionable bikes that certainly aren't twice as good.



## TECHFAX

### MONTESA COTA 242

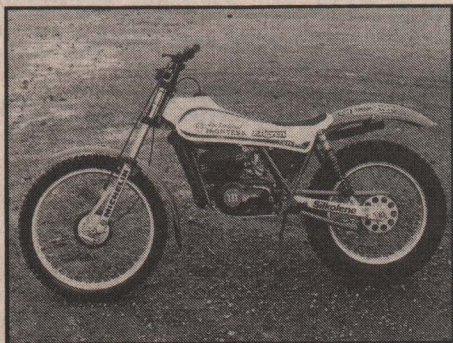
COTA 242 it may be, but the Montesa's actual engine capacity is 237.5cc. Its air-cooled, single cylinder two-stroke engine has bore and stroke of 71mm and 60mm respectively. Compression ratio is 11.4:1 and the light alloy cylinder barrel is 'sleeveless' with nickel-silicon coating.

Transmission is six-speed and the Mont's clutch is multi-plate oil bath type. It has a primary kickstart, permitting starting in gear after pulling in the clutch. Unusually for a trials bike, both top and bottom runs of the rear drive chain are protected by guards.

Overall design is good, with exhaust and chain tensioner plus rear brake and gear levers positioned well out of harm's way.

Dry weight is a commendable 86kg, which compares with the Fantic 240's 88kg. The open double cradle steel frame has a metal sump shield providing its bottom link. The lightweight aluminium swing arm is rectangular section and standard rear shocks are Betor with 107mm travel. Our test bike, which had previously been used by Peter Cartwright, was fitted with a pair of Falcons. Front Comec forks have 170mm travel.

Overall access for maintenance is good, made easier by the one-piece tank/seat unit.



### SPECIFICATIONS

Price (inc VAT)	£999
Engine	2 str, air-cooled, single cylinder
Capacity	237.5cc
Bore & stroke	71mm x 60mm
Carburation	27mm Amal
Ignition	Motoplaf flywheel magneto
Max power (claimed)	N/A
Max torque (claimed)	N/A
Transmission	Six speed
Clutch	wet, multi-plate

### CYCLE PARTS

Tyres:	
Front	Michelin 2.75 x 21
Rear	Michelin 4.00 x 18
Brakes:	
Front	125mm drum
Rear	110mm drum
Suspension:	
Front	telescopic forks, 170mm travel
Rear	twin Betor shocks, 107mm travel

### DIMENSIONS

Weight (dry)	86kg
Wheelbase	1340mm
Ground clearance	355mm
Seat height	775mm
Fuel capacity	5.5 litres

### SPARE PARTS (inc. VAT)

Air filter	£4.03
Piston kit	£54.34
Rings only	£6.33 (each)
Base gasket	£0.52
Front sprocket	£6.24
Rear sprocket	£8.50
Front mudguard	£7.66
Rear mudguard	£9.40
Throttle cable	£2.75
Clutch cable	£3.57
Test machines supplied by: Jim Sandiford (Imports) Ltd., 38 Walmersley Road, Bury, Lancs., BL9 6DP. Tel: 061-764 8204.	



