

SIX BIG BORES TAKE THE MX TASTE TEST

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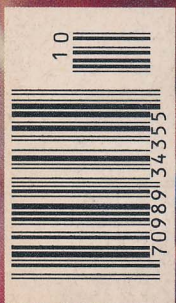
DIRT BIKE

USGP:
WOLSINK WINS

OCTOBER 1976
\$1.00
UK 50p

YZ175C
NEITHER FISH
NOR FOUL

WOMEN'S
NATIONALS



ALL DAYS OF TWO DAYS
250 NATIONAL MOTOCROSS WRAP

DIRT BIKE

VOLUME SIX NUMBER TEN OCTOBER 1976

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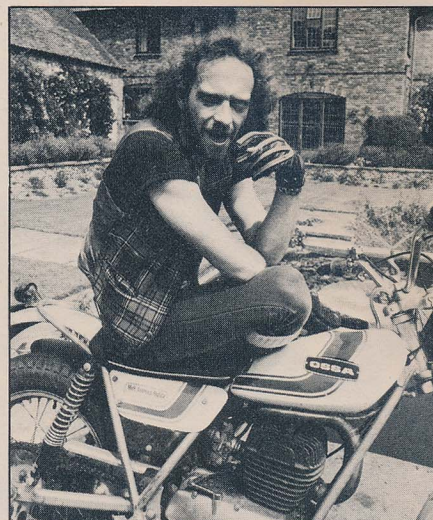
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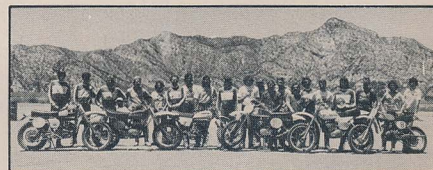
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ON THE COVER: Gary Jones shows the results of an afternoon of open class testing.
Photo by Bruce Woods.

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE OCTOBER 12

A 250 WITH VARICOSE VEINS...

YAMAHA YZ175 TEST

or a 125 with overactive glands?



Every 175cc bike we come across inspires the perpetual dilemma: Just where does a 175 fit in? Especially a 175 motocross bike.

In the west there is simply no 175 motocross class. And anyone who remembers the 200cc class, and admits it, had better start looking in the mirror for gray hairs.

Enduros, Hare Scrambles and desert races always draw many 175 riders. But this YZ is a *motocross* bike. It says so right there in the advertisements.

And in other parts of the country where the 175 class is a bit more popular in motocross, it is still far less popular than the 125 class.

Which brings us to what this bike really is. A 125 with a big engine. No one can miss this fact with the 125 and the 175 sitting next to each

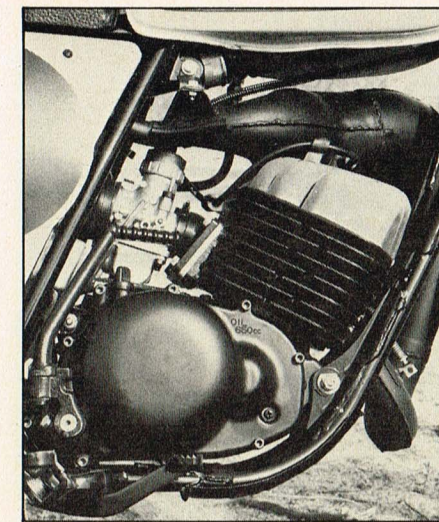


other. Ignore the gas tank and they look virtually identical. In reality there are only a couple of noteworthy differences. Early models of each "C" version will have different tires. But, by the time this reaches you, all of the smaller YZs will be coming with Bridgestones in the front and Dunlops on the rear.

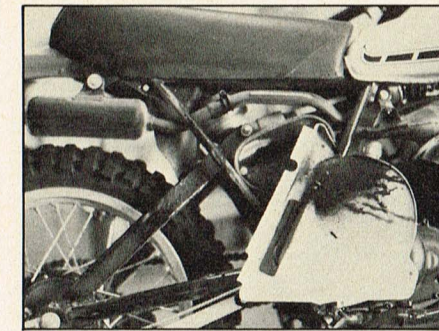
For the first time the 125 and the 175 do not have interchangeable top ends. Both have 34mm Mikuni carburetors but different exhaust pipes and, more importantly, the 175 has a different stud arrangement to hold the cylinder on. This wider stud pattern is to accommodate a larger reed valve. Pistons, of course, are of different size. Suspension, frame, details, everything else, is identical on the 125 and 175 YZs. "C" models come with the now-standard air forks and Yamaha also has available a rebuild kit for the single rear shock absorber.

So . . .

We thought there would be few surprises with a bike so nearly identical to the 125 we had ridden so extensively. Our first time out was closer to a shock than a surprise. Incredibly squirrely. Not bad in comparison to some monsters out of the past, but it did not handle like the 125. That was the only word for it. Everyone called it that. Squirrely. Sideways out of the corners



Only minor differences separate the 175YZ from the 125YZ; among them, differently designed top ends which cannot be switched.



Horrendously long stinger leaked all sorts of muck from that joint in the middle. Muck stained side panel, frame, hands.

Three-gallon tanks and sagebrush.

Of course we had to try the YZ in a desert race. Mono Yamahas have been winning almost everything in the desert for the past two years. So our desert editor took the bike to a couple of District 37 events to give it a try.

Power certainly proved to be competitive against the main competition of Huskys and Pentons. But a 13-tooth countershaft sprocket is a must.

Where the YZ really shines is in straight line handling. Sit back on the seat and gas it. The rear spring was still a bit too stiff for a 165-pound rider, but sitting back farther made the rear work harder and the stiffness was not overly objectionable.

Sand, for those of you not familiar with the substance, is traction. The Yamaha handled

accordingly. Very fine. It cornered well, even with more air pressure, and begged to be stuffed hard into the turns in the tight sandwashes.

Very few alterations are needed to make the YZ into a desert bike. Some problem will arise, however, when you try to fit a large gas tank. There are quite a few metal protrusions which hold that stock tank on. It is necessary, with most every accessory tank, to shave off these protrusions. Result: nice fitting big tank, but impossible to remount stock tank.

For other serious-type people who wish to race the YZ at night, who wish to enter it in an enduro where lights are necessary, or who wish to have lights for some other obscure reason, there is a way to install lights. A mag/flywheel setup off of an enduro bike will fit on with few modifications. If you are going to try this, go over the procedure with your shop mechanic to be sure you know what

and anxious to lose traction on fast sweepers.

We suspected the tires.

We suspected ourselves.

As it turns out, it was neither. It was our beloved adobe motocross track. No bike in existence likes adobe and this YZ liked it less than most. There is a reason for this. That bigger engine, we finally agreed, will break traction easier and quicker than the 125 when you're on hard, slick stuff. More power in the same frame alters the handling slightly.

Judgment was suspended until a better track and/or day would come.

Better days did indeed follow and we began fully evaluating the bike. Suspension, in stock configuration, needed work. Both the 125 and the 175 come with a 4.0 rear spring. (Yamaha's rating relates to kg/cm as opposed to lbs./in.) This spring is too stiff for the average rider of 140 to 170 pounds. The 4.0 is recommended for 160- to 190-pound riders, but our riders and Yamaha International both agreed that the 3.8 spring would be better for the average-weight rider. Unfortunately, we did not get to try the 3.8, but at least there is the comfort of knowing there are other weight springs available (3.4, 3.6, 3.8, 4.0 and 4.2 to be exact).

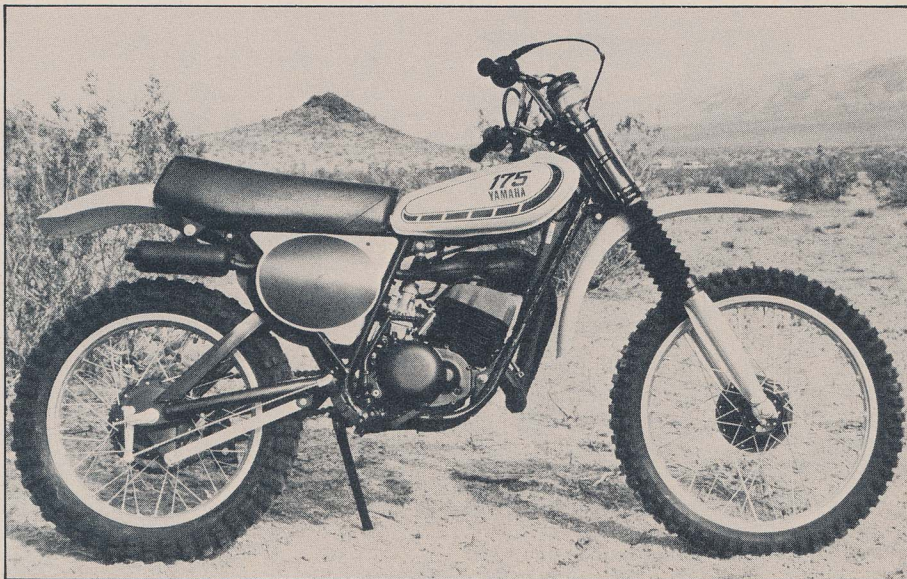
you're getting into. As far as this will relate to performance, you will find you won't be able to rev the bike quite as high and you will have a slight increase in low end performance. Better for enduros and such anyway.

While we're talking about more low end, consider the possibility of a 1976 Yamaha 175 MX two-ring piston. You'll lose about 500 rpm off the top, but there will be a noticeable increase in low end performance.

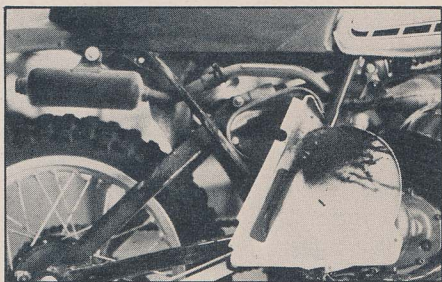
We neglected to mention our performance in the desert races. Suffice it to say the bike didn't let us down. Pilot performance was a little less than remarkable, though. (There's always next weekend.)

Conclusion from the desert: This bike is excellent. It's more of a cross-country racer than a motocrosser. Yamaha should push it as such. We liked it on the MX track. We loved it in the desert.

— Don Phillipson



Yamaha feels at home in the desert; less squirrely than on the motocross track.



Access to dual air cleaner setup is easy: remove the side panels and three Phillips head screws for the air cleaner itself. We make the standard objection to the fuzzy air cleaners.

As is, the rear suspension was excellent for our heavier riders and is also excellent for very hard riding on rough ground.

At the other end of the bike, the forks worked very well after some initial adjustments. Twenty-weight oil has proven to be the best setup for most riders, and some experimentation is required as to air pressure. After we had the forks tuned they worked very well, although they seemed to be a bit mushy in the first inch or so of travel.

Power, in subsequent days on the track, was always impressive. Matched up against a well-running, slightly modified 125, the 175 did not really tear away in a drag race. But out of the corners (if traction was to be found), the 175 was smoother (less of a sudden surge of power), and faster, especially at low rpm.

After a long, hard moto, the 175 also showed an advantage over a 125. With less radical tuning, the 175 is less prone to loss of power due to heat.

But all this talk is how it relates to a 125. Against the other competitive 175s — Pentons, Huskys, Ossas — the Yamaha still holds its own. Though a little down on top speed comparatively, it is as fast though the gears. A switch to a 13-tooth countershaft sprocket would help immensely for very fast tracks, as the YZ tops out at 58 mph (60 if you don't eat breakfast). And the 175 power will certainly pull it through sixth gear.

Overall reliability was good. We would say excellent except for one mishap. Keeping in mind the reputation, make that notoriety, of Yamaha's spokes, we were constantly checking the tightness. They didn't begin to loosen up until the fifth ride. Then they loosened every 15 minutes. Maybe we were just riding harder that day.

At any rate, two of the spokes ripped a four-inch piece out of the flange of the rear hub. This was seemingly unavoidable and would prove expensive.

Aside from this one thing, though, the bike never missed a beat, we never even had to change a plug. Nothing broke, seized or rendered itself useless.

**LITTLE GOOD (OR BAD)
THINGS THAT MAKE BIG
THINGS GOOD (OR BAD)**

Detailing on the YZ varied. Of course. From excellent to, yes, terrible. We'll work our way through in a particular order we'll let you figure out.

Those wedge-shaped ridges on the forks look trick and undoubtedly

YAMAHA YZ175C

Price (approx. retail, West Coast) \$1049
 Engine . . . Two-stroke single, reed valve
 Displacement 171cc
 Bore & Stroke 66mm x 50mm
 Compression Ratio 7.5:1
 Carburetion Mikuni 34mm
 Max. Torque . 13.96 ft./lb. at 10,000 rpm
 Horsepower N/A
 Clutch Wet, multi-plate
 Primary Drive Gear
 Transmission Ratios:
 1) 2.538:1
 2) 1.933:1
 3) 1.555:1
 4) 1.300:1
 5) 1.142:1
 6) 1.045:1
 Final Drive: Gear
 12-tooth countershaft
 44-tooth rear sprocket
 Air Filtration Fuzzy, wet foam
 Electrics C.D.I.
 Starting Primary kick
 Lubrication Pre-mix, 20:1
 Recommended Fuel Premium
 Recommended Oil Yamalube
 Fuel Tank Capacity 1.5 gallons
 Frame Double downtube, full cradle
 Suspension:
 Front: Yamaha/Kayaba air forks
 Rear: Nitrogen-filled Yamaha monoshock
 Wheels & Spokes D.I.D rims
 Tires:
 Front: Bridgestone 3.00 x 21
 Rear: Dunlop 4.10 x 18
 Dimensions:
 Wheelbase 141cm (55.5 inches)
 Swingarm length 47cm (18.7 inches)
 Ground clearance 28cm (11.0 inches)
 Bars, height 107cm (42 inches)
 width 93cm (36.5 inches)
 Pegs, height 33cm (13 inches)
 width 46cm (18 inches)
 Seat Height 89cm (35 inches)
 Fork angle 31.5 degrees
 Weight:
 Total: 209 pounds w/one gallon gas
 Front: 100 pounds
 Rear: 109 pounds
 Brakes:
 Front: Cable-operated conical drum
 Rear: Rod-operated conical drum
 Instruments None
 Lights None
 Silencer Yes, but loud
 Spark Arrestor No
 Warranty No
 Parts Prices:
 Piston: N/A
 Rings: N/A
 Clutch cable: \$5.94
 Brake pedal: \$6.27

make those fork legs stronger. We wish there was a way to test our guess. Midway up the forks are found a pair of boots that never cease to amaze us. Top-quality. On top of the forks are a pair of rubber covers that protect the air canisters. Make that *were*. They fell off during the first hard ride. Tape them on or have the satisfaction of throwing

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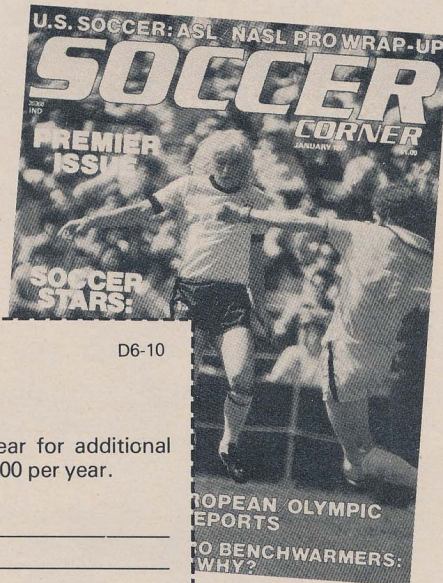
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YZ175C YAMAHA

Continued from page 60

them away yourself.

Bridgestone and Dunlop make a good combination if there is traction.

Spokes are treacherous because they are unpredictable.

Fenders and side panels are high-quality plastic. Didn't crack.

What your arms hang onto make for heap-big discrepancies. Handlebars are atrociously wide. Saw off a couple of inches. Handgrips are marginal. Throttle is excellent, levers are the same and include the dust covers in that rating.

Our exhaust pipe leaked black ooze from midway in the stinger. Further toward the cylinder on that pipe there is a bulge. It will burn your left leg when you slide forward on the seat.

Fuzzy air cleaners are fuzzy. That stuff comes off on your hands when you wash the air cleaner. (By the way, if you're counting, that's the 97th time we've made that complaint.)

Front brake is excellent, absolutely, and the rear works its way from awful to average as the brake shoes wear in.

Seat is light and comfy, the gas tank is light and allows the rider to move around.

All in all, the YZ is comfortable to ride and is of average height by today's high standards.

OUR DILEMMA'S END

If we forget for the moment that this bike has not found its niche in the racing world's classification, then it is easy to summarize. Compared to the other competitive 175s, it is right in the forefront. It is as fast and handles as well as the best. Quality of the metal used in the frame is not first-rate. The frame bends easily. But the YZ also costs a bit less than the European competition. Six of one . . .

Quality on the rest of the bike is very good. Everything works well and lasts.

But now we're back in the real world. And back here we find that the local track does not run 175s. Maybe you don't care. If not, then keep the Yamaha in mind as an excellent high-speed play-racer or cross-country bike.

As for us, we believe MX bikes should be raced in MX. But that's our dilemma.