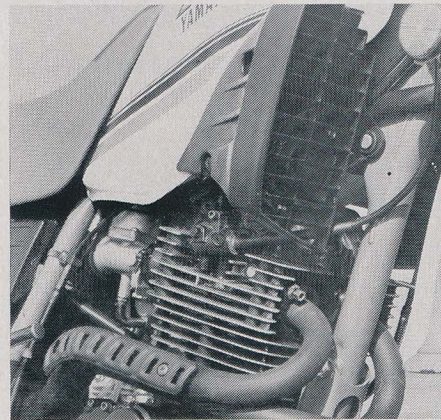
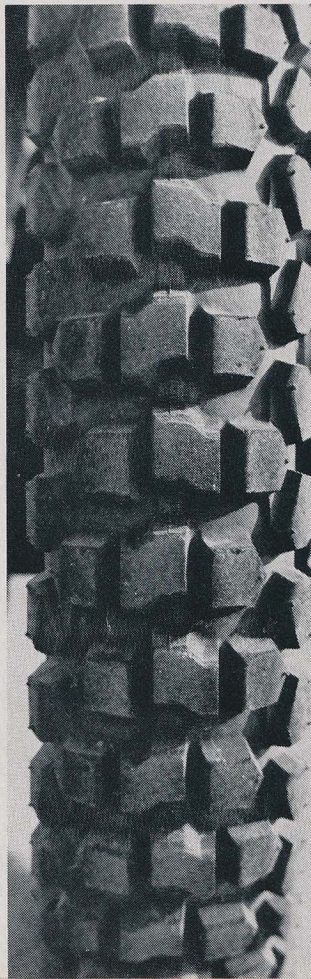


# YAMAHA XT 600L AND XT 250L

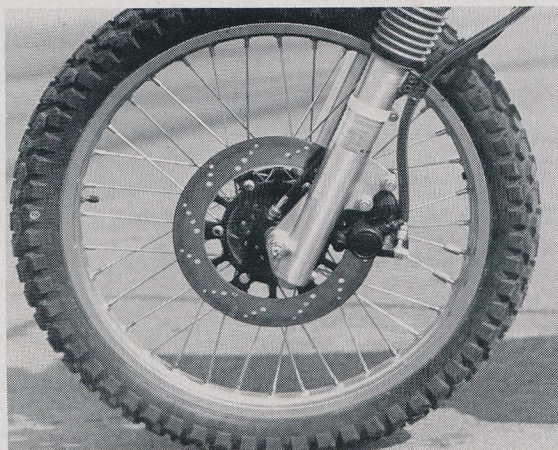
A quick look at Yamaha's new dual-purpose bikes



The Yamaha XT600 has seen many changes to keep it on line with the Honda XL600R. The seat now goes up onto the tank (below) for comfort, while a front disc brake (bottom) brings the 600K down to a safe speed on street or dirt. The tires (below right) didn't impress us on the dirt.



Shrouds (top) that look suspiciously like radiator covers direct air onto the head for additional cooling. Should you decide to take a buddy along, the XT600K (above) has buddy pegs.



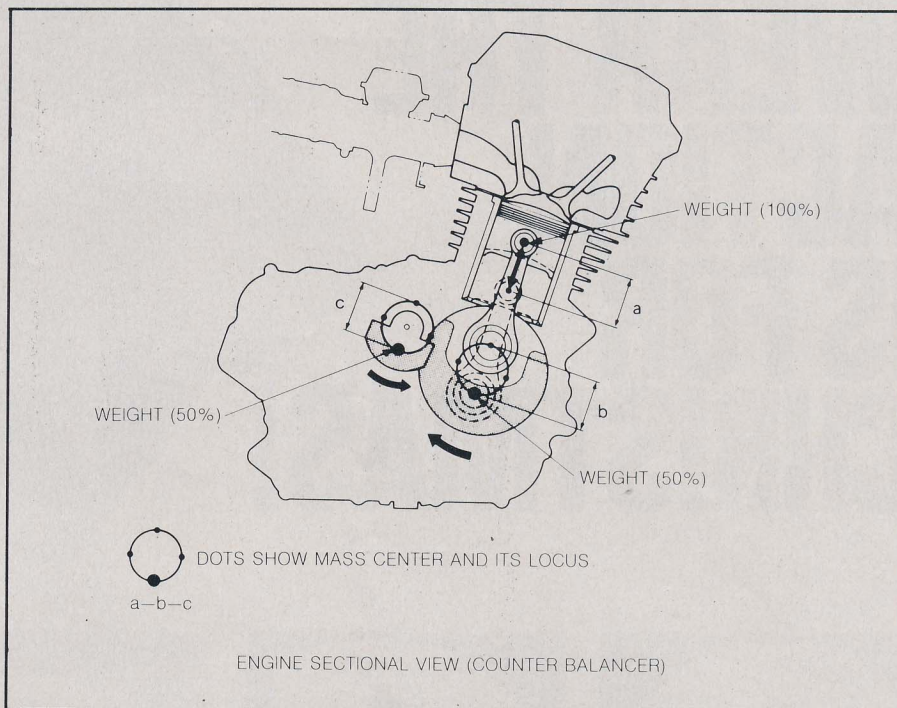


a handful on a big bike like the XT600L. We weren't very pleased with the tires on the dirt, but can't criticize them too heavily since the bike was set up to be subjected to fast laps around a local road-race course. Speed freaks will be pleased to hear that the XT600L will do at least 100 mph on the asphalt with stock gearing.

The new XT250L features a dual-overhead cam engine with four valves. Yamaha's YDIS is used on the 250 as well. It also uses a cable-operated slide on the primary carburetor, with a constant-velocity secondary carburetor. This engine also incorporates a gear-driven counterbalancer.

The newly designed six-speed gearbox has a gear for every purpose, it seems. We found first gear plenty low for plonking around on deserted hills, but were able to get it up to about 80 mph on the roadrace track. That's a pretty healthy amount of speed for a 250cc bike. Like its bigger brother, the XT250L has a safety seat that extends up onto the gas tank. It was comfortable and will most likely get used several times if you try to do your Brad Lackey impersonations in the dirt with it.

The XT250L just isn't a great dirt bike. On the street, it can be flipped around easily. On the dirt, the bike will flip *you* around. The fork needs a little more strength to keep everything in line. Of course, you should always keep in mind that a dual-purpose bike is not intended to be a replica of a motocross bike. You

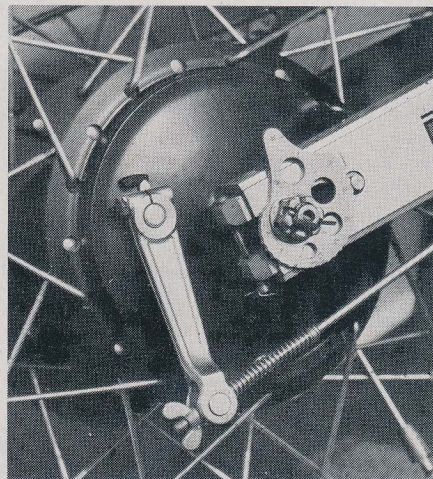
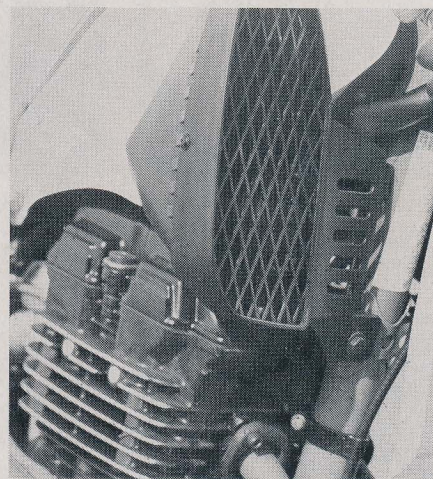
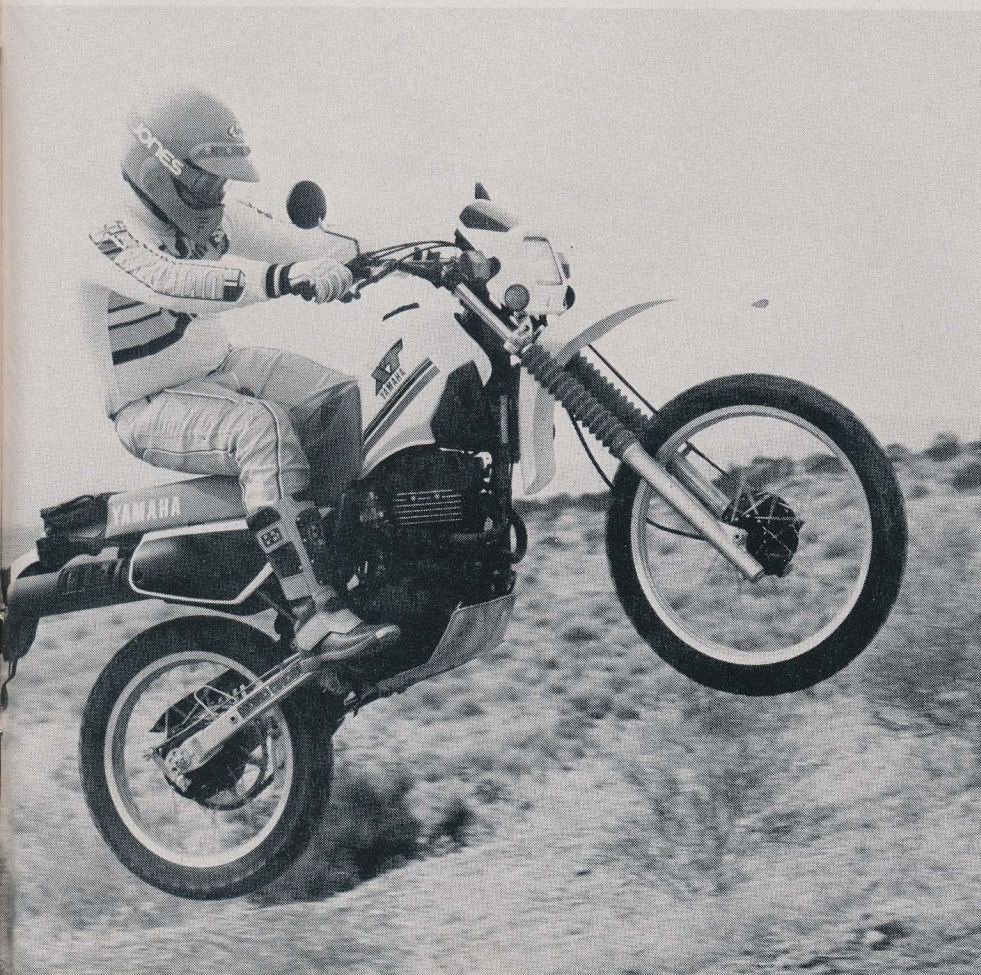


*This drawing shows how the engine's gear-driven counterbalancer reduces vibration.*

just can't expect the same handling or safety once on the dirt. Still, we feel the Honda line of dual-purpose bikes has better suspension and doesn't pound you as much when landing off jumps or attacking hills.

It's simply a matter of which riding form you're more serious about—dirt or street.

**DR**



*The XT250L also sports the "water-cooled faker" shrouds (top) that direct air to the motor. Snail-type chain adjusters (above) continue to make chain adjustments on the XTs a snap.*