

# YAMAHA

THE LONG-running DT175 originally changed the whole philosophy of dual-role bikes. As it developed, becoming equally adept on the city street or in the dirt, it also became the definitive trail bike.

Its ability to make compromises without being comprom-

ised accounts for much of its popularity among riders who needed a sensible weekday commuter but wanted something more exciting at weekends.

Readers who answered our survey on this model nearly always gave variations on this

theme as their reason for choosing the DT.

There was a high proportion of used bikes in our sample — over two-thirds — which roughly tallied with the type of insurance. Four-fifths opted for Third Party Fire and Theft cover, paying an average pre-

mium of £92. Fully comprehensive cover ranged from £49 to £256. Only a handful had bikes recent enough to enjoy Yamaha's free insurance offer.

The average age among riders was 22 and only 10 per cent hadn't passed their test, although quite a few had taken

## PERFORMANCE

NEARLY all the DTs were used for local journeys and weekend fun rides, although quite a few riders regularly made long journeys and carried passengers. Comments on performance therefore covered the widest possible spectrum: off-road it was considered to be very good; short-haul road performance was good; longer trips varied between tolerable and not-so-good; everyone who carried a passenger also had a complaint — either about the short seat or about the footrests mounted on the swing-arm.

Most said the acceleration was good and some thought the 72 to 75 mph top speed was adequate, while others had raised the gearing in an attempt to improve it. On the whole they weren't successful, although several found that taller gearing did give them better fuel consumption.

Claims here varied from 45 to 87 mpg with the majority centering on the 50 to 60 mpg region. There were many comments to the effect that gentle use could give very good economy.

Chris Dell said that he had weakened off the part-throttle carburation to get an extra 10

mpg. This involved lowering the needle one notch, enlarging the air slide cutaway and weakening the pilot setting by half a turn.

A few readers complained that the small tank size restricted the bike's range.



Plenty of protection for the headlamp on the DT175.

## HANDLING AND BRAKING

OPINIONS here were varied. Once again — and as with most topics — the DT was generally thought to be better in the dirt than on tarmac. In its favour, Neil Gilder said it was "a good compromise between off-road and on-road" while others said

that the brakes and handling were surprisingly good, for a trail bike.

Many were not too sure about the tyres' wet grip and pretty well everybody agreed that the tyres wore out too quickly considering the level of performance and weight.

## SUSPENSION AND COMFORT

THE upright riding position was appreciated for low-speed manoeuvring in traffic and handling in the dirt although it wasn't too comfortable for longer runs.

Several readers put a limit of less than 100 miles as the bike's comfortable limit. Martin McCarthy seemed to sum up the general feeling when he wrote, "70 miles solo, 40 miles two-up".

Passengers usually had a pretty bad time on the DT and the cramped position they caused didn't help the rider either. In mitigation, the DT is neither styled nor powered for long journeys two-up.

The suspension, particularly the rear monoshock, got all-round praise. It was the "bike's best point" according to J. Keohane and there seemed to be very few readers who would have argued with him.

## DETAIL DESIGN AND MODIFICATIONS

THE rudimentary, 6V electrics were considered, at best, to be only just acceptable and most readers wanted a more powerful headlamp beam.

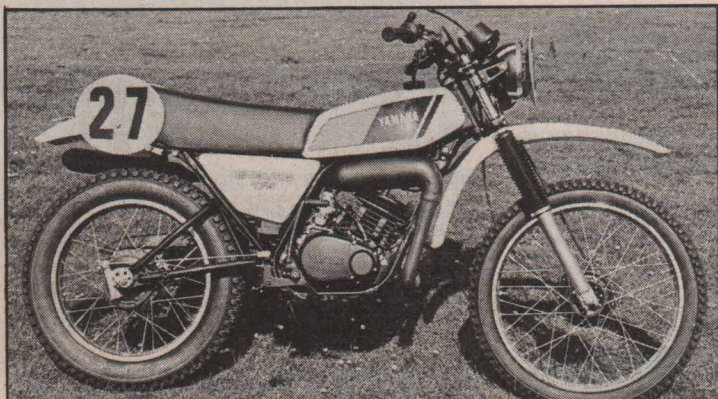
There were quite a few complaints about vibration, all through the rev range, and readers occasionally associated this with uneven chain wear or bad adjustment. On this topic, most readers appreciated the ease of using the snail-cam wheel adjusters, although they were critical of the rapid way in which the chain and sprockets would wear.

The only other parts which seemed to need regular replacement were tail bulbs, spark plugs, plug covers and number plates (which get wrapped up in the wheel if the bike is used enthusiastically off-road.)

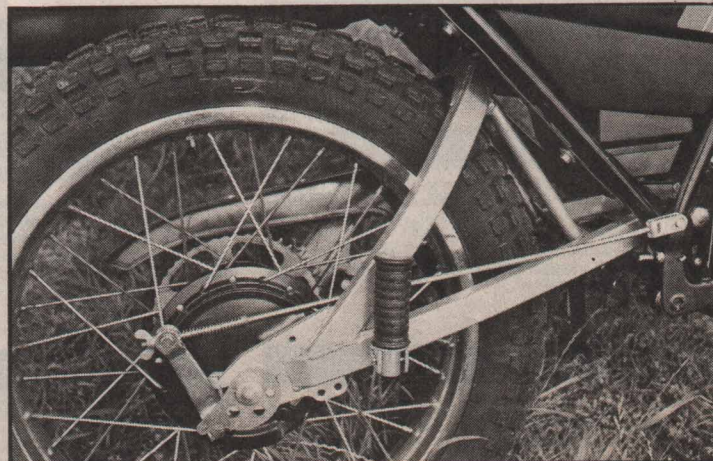
Major criticism was directed at the exhaust for its short, if colourful life.

Most modifications seemed to be aimed at improving the bike's off-road performance with changes like repositioning the tail

*The footrests mounted on the swing-arm came in for criticism.*



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# DT 175



the test on their 175s.

Just over half preferred to do their own maintenance and, of those who left the work to a dealer, many said that this was only during the warranty period.

The length of ownership varied from two months to

18 months with an average annual mileage of 7400 and pretty well all of the readers were happy enough with the DT — they would recommend it to a friend or they would buy the same bike again under the same circumstances.

For their next bikes, most

readers were looking at Japanese machines in the 350 to 550 bracket; alternatively if the DT had fired up some serious dirt bike instincts, they were thinking of more specialised equipment like the IT175 or 175 Trial.

● Below:  
Watching  
the clocks —  
the dials on  
the DT175.

light and number plate, fitting mudflaps or Stilmotor mudguards and removing the seat strap. Some road-oriented riders had fitted longer grab rails and had raised the overall gearing.

## CONCLUSIONS

HOURS of fun added to the basic role of runaround (and cheap) transport made sure that most owners were very satisfied with their DTs. It was "twice as good as the 125 and the insurance is the same", according to Robert Ireland.

That seemed to be the general consensus and there were very

few complaints or disillusioned riders among the Yamaha owners.

## Tell us what you think

How do you rate your bike? What problems have you had? What are its best points? In the next few issues we'll be producing readers' tests on:

- Yamaha XS750/850
- Kawasaki Z550

If you've owned one of these models, send us a large SAE and we'll return it with our questionnaire.

Write to MCM Reader Test, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough.

