

# **MOTOR CYCLE MECHANIC**

**AUGUST  
1978  
50p**

**WIN A  
YAMAHA  
DT175 MX**



**Fairing  
wobbles?  
We've been  
investigating  
24 hours at Spa  
Turbochargers-  
blowing in the wind?**

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EDITOR:

DEPUTY EDITOR:

FEATURES EDITOR:

TECHNICAL EDITOR:

ART EDITOR:

DESIGNER:

PHOTOGRAPHER:

ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER:

Colin Mayo

John Robinson

Brian Crichton

Dave Walker

Dave Stirling

Mike Burton

Rod Sloane

Peter Crew

REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS:

Frank Melling

John Hartley

Brian Lecomber

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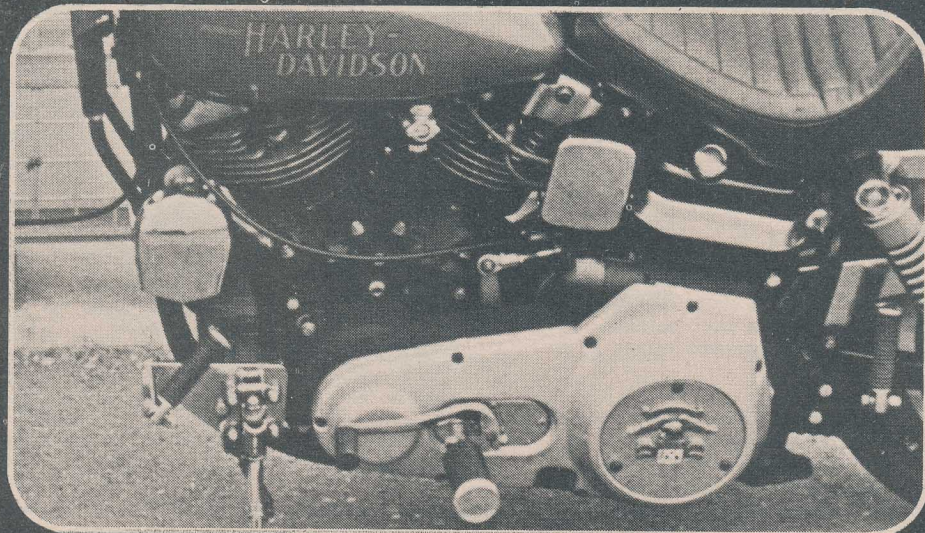
YOU ASK

We answer.

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see page 15.  
**WIN A  
YAMAHA  
DT175 MX**

# The new 'Ton-up' Suzuki GT 250 X7

## A 250 has never looked so good

The latest Suzuki 250 doesn't exactly hang about. Its top speed is around 100mph. But speed is only half the story. Our new 250 has got a lot more going for it. Like superb handling. (Back at the factory, Suzuki engineers have got weight distribution down to a fine art). What else? An all-new "Power Reed" engine. Pointless ignition.

Spot-on braking with beefy discs up front. 6-speed gearbox. Lightweight frame. Alloy wheels. Totally new styling. See the quickest-ever 250 at your Suzuki Dealer. And get away from the pack. Yes, you can believe your eyes. The getaway bike has never looked so good. Or performed so well.

Superbly balanced frame.  
Lightweight yet very strong

Alloy wheels

Pointless ignition  
for faultless performance

6-speed gearbox

All-new "Power Reed" 2-stroke twin



**HERON SUZUKI**



*the getaway bike*

## MCM ROAD TEST

# SUZUKI GT250 X7



## THE X FACTOR MUST BE SPEED

**by Colin Mayo**

Suzuki's new GT250 X7 is the first stock 250 to blast through MCM's radar speed trap at over 100mph. A fantastic and exciting sports mount it is probably the first 250 roadster to be genuinely capable of 100mph.

The X7 actually made 101mph and takes Suzuki's tradition of speed in the quarter litre class a step beyond previous Suzuki pace setters such as the Super Six, the Hustler and the GT250A.

Retaining the prestige of a six speed gearbox the Suzuki comes

on so strong in all its ratios that it is a match for many bikes with twice its displacement.

The beautifully shaped chrome silencers exude a harsh racing type blast. Finished in fiery red it has a waisted fuel tank and a completely new look from the previous GT model. A completely new feature is a matt grey finish to the engine. But most of all it has performance with a capital P.



## MCM ROAD TEST

### SUZUKI GT250 X7

NOT SINCE the passing of the long-lamented Super Six have Suzuki built a 250 which has stood head and shoulders above its competitors. The Super Six was quick enough to give machines of twice its capacity a tough time. In recent years, though, riders looking for the ultimate in 250 sports performance and handling have turned to Yamaha's highly successful RD250 and, to a lesser extent, the Kawasaki KH250.

Now Suzuki are back in the hunt with their X7 model, a sporting 250 if ever there was one, with its claimed top speed of 100 mph and styling to match.

Completely redesigned, the X7 looks as quick as it is. Gone is the fussy, top heavy styling of the old series models and in comes a new sleek line in design, accentuated by the long, low 3.3 gallon tank, lower and flatter handlebars, neater instrumentation and the now mandatory seat hump required for any machine with sporting pretensions. Other obvious styling improvements include a change to cast wheels and a very neat but at the same time, practical, matt finish to the crankcase of the reed induction engine.

The Suzuki looks considerably smaller than other 250s but this can't all be put down to clever styling for there is a lot less of it. In fact the X7 weighs in at an astonishing 282 lb dry — exactly 40 lb lighter than the model it replaces, 52 lb less than the RD250 Yamaha and an incredible 110 lb lighter than the Honda CB250 Dream.

It is the Suzuki's weight, or lack of it which makes a contribution to its potent performance. Our test model fully justified the manufacturer's claim for its three-figure top speed by going through our radar trap at 101 mph — making it the fastest road 250 we have tested.

As with most high-performance two-strokes the Suzuki needed some coaxing

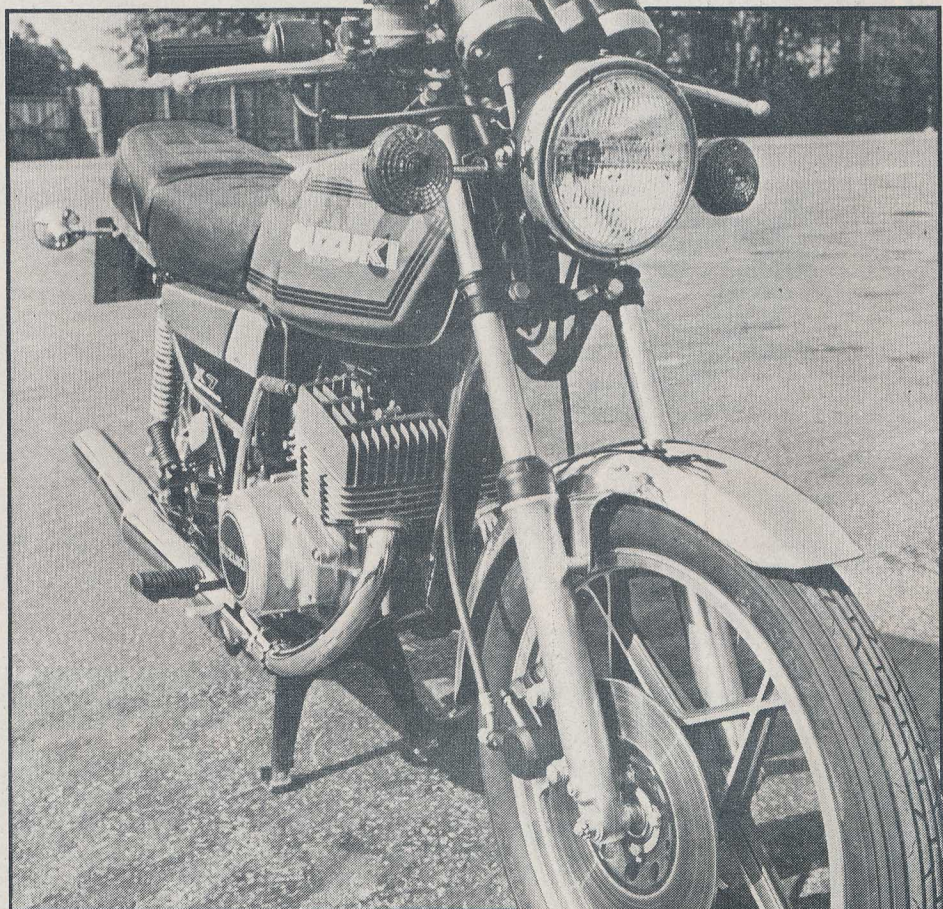
to get the best out of it. Its power band demands a lot of revs before the motor will deliver the goods. Not until the needle got to 6,000 did things begin to happen with any urgency and it wasn't until 7,000 that the motor really moved into its power band. At this point the effect was rather like throwing an electric switch, the revs building up so rapidly that it was all too easy to over-rev the motor. It is redlined at 8,500 but soon after the power peak the load drops off as dramatically as it arrives, so there would be no gain in buzzing the twin beyond its limits.

While the X7 was definitely at its most responsive in the top 1,500 rpm of the rev range, the reed valve engine was still flexible enough to provide adequate mid-range power. Useful performance came in as low as 3,000 rpm, without the need for constant gear changing and the two-stroke would potter around happily without gassing up.

The six-speed gearbox was only needed to keep the engine speed up in the power band but even then the gearshift action was smooth and sweet — adding rather than detracting from the fun of riding the Suzuki. Its only real fault was that it was occasionally difficult to find neutral and the green warning light only added to the problem as it frequently failed to light up

at the appropriate time.

For road use, sixth gear is something of an overdrive but it wasn't too high for the little engine to pull for, say, motorway cruising. In favourable conditions it would give a very relaxed 70 to 75 mph cruise speed but faced with gradients or headwinds the Suzuki was soon making heavy work of it. With a rider wearing leathers and crouching low, the gearing was, in fact, perfectly matched to the engine — on this sort of machine a full riding suit and upright riding position has to be worth about 10 mph. High performance two-strokes are notorious for their thirst for fuel and the X7 proved to be no exception. At its worst it would dispose of a gallon of fuel within 32 miles and on a two-up, 150-mile trip, fuel consumption plunged to 29 mpg. Given steady riding and making a lot of use of fifth and sixth gears it was possible to get a much more reasonable 46 mpg but the Suzuki is hardly likely to be ridden like that by many of its owners. An average of 35 mpg over the whole test is much closer to the figure most owners can expect. At that rate of consumption the tank carries enough petrol for 100 miles, with reserve good for a further 15 or so miles. Just over one pint of oil was needed to top up the tank after 500 miles — a pretty fair achievement considering the

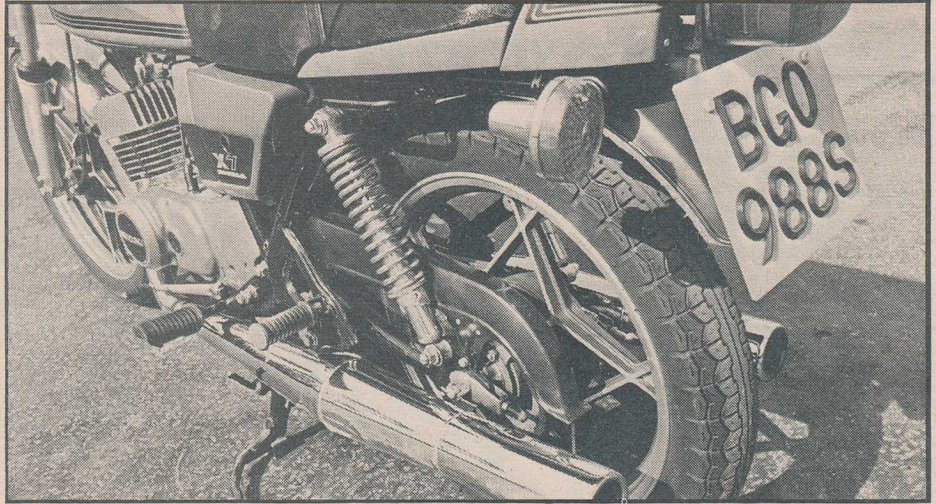


Styling to match its performance is one of the X7's strongest points.

performance of the engine. The oil tank has a sight glass set in the left hand side panel.

If the Suzuki's light weight helped its lively acceleration, it also had an effect on its handling. This only seemed to be beneficial up to a point — the X7's cornering ability was remarkably good but unfortunately the same can't be said of its straight-line stability. The bike was delivered with a soft front tyre — 19 psi — which was enough to provoke dramatic wobbles at high speeds or when it had to cope with bumps and camber changes. Re-setting the pressures improved things considerably but left the steering very light and very sensitive. The faster the Suzuki was ridden, the more twitchy it got. This front end lightness also made itself felt when riding on exposed roads in moderate cross winds and particularly when riding through the turbulence kicked up by fast-moving trucks. The roads stayed dry for the test period so there was no chance to see how the X7 behaved in the wet.

If the Suzuki's straight-line steering was open to some doubt, there can be no question about its superb cornering ability. The 250 would tuck itself into bends just like a racer, staying rock steady even over bumps and changes in road surface. And it was in conditions like this that the



Forward angled rear shockers give emphasis to the Suzuki's performance character.

light steering paid off. Changes of direction seemed to be a result of a thought process rather than any physical effort on the part of the rider. It could be flicked safely and quickly through S-bends and gave the rider a better margin for mistakes by responding instantly to changes of line.

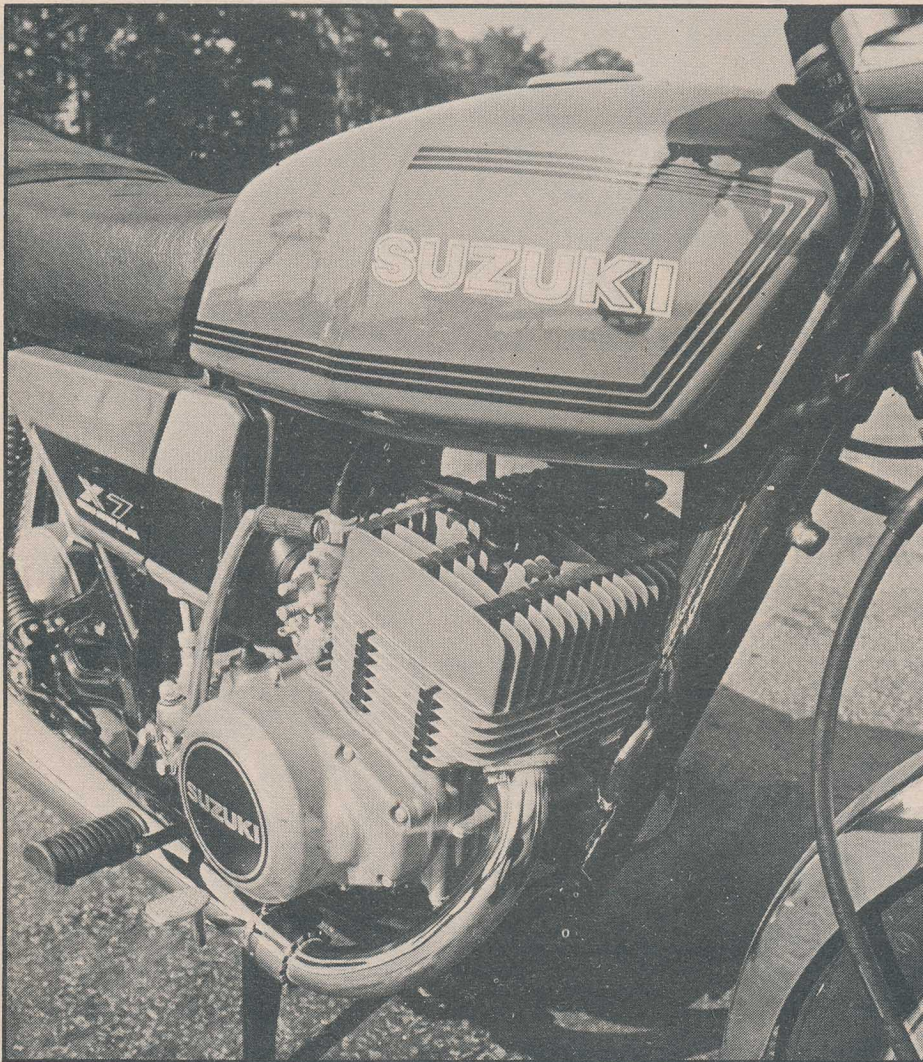
Suzuki have not been tempted to go for all-round disc brakes and their conservatism has paid off, for the rider has the comfort of knowing that at least one brake will work instantly in the wet. He also gets a disc and drum combination which provides very safe and very progressive braking. Front brake lever pressure was about average and the set-up provided enough feel for it to take a very insensitive rider to lock the brake inadvertently. The same goes for the rear drum which had more than enough feel to make a nicely balanced combination.

The standard of riding comfort was good. A well-padded and roomy seat, together with sensibly-positioned footrests meant that longer journeys could be made in reasonable comfort. Two factors upset this — high frequency vibration through both sets of footrests and a rear view mirror that was totally useless.

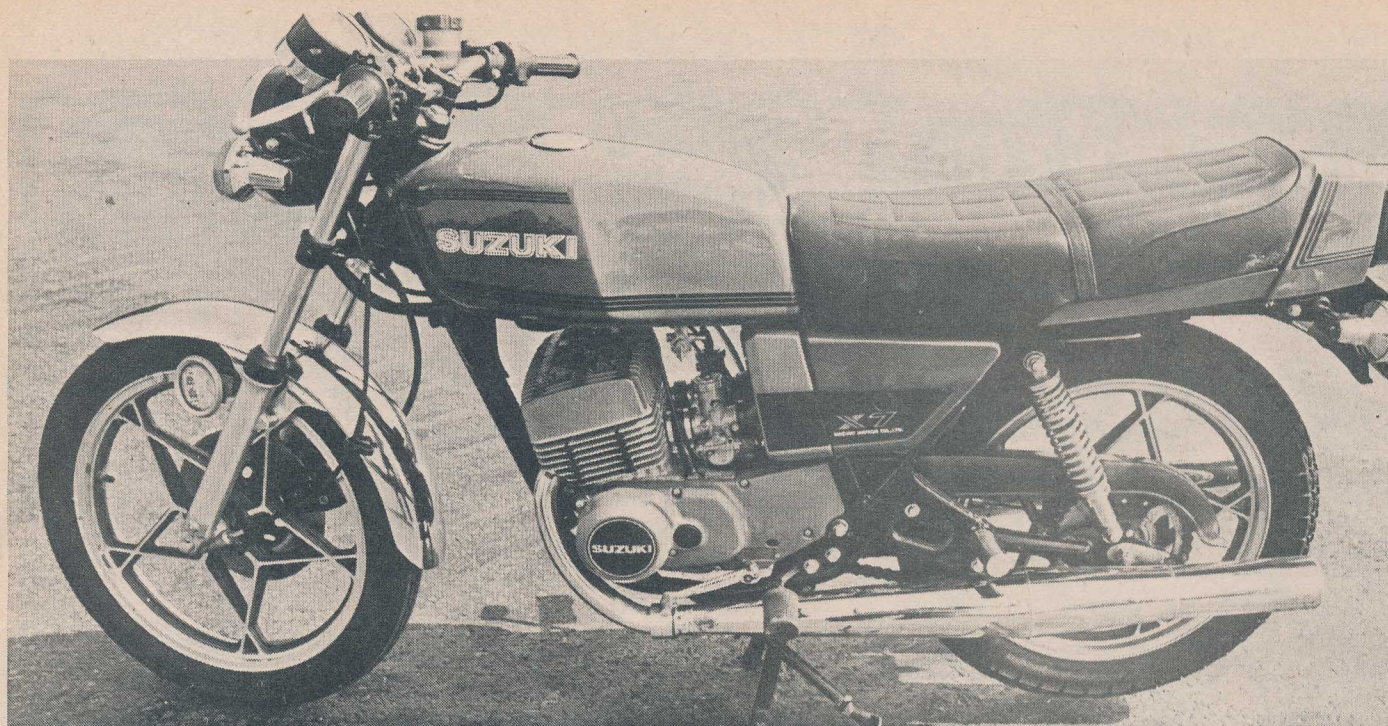
The 35W headlamp is a bit underpowered by general standard but it gave a reasonable penetration on main beam and a useful wide pattern in the dipped position. By 250 standards the lighting was about average, allowing safe cruising speeds of about 60 mph.

As a sports 250 the Suzuki is clearly going to take some beating. It is surely one of the most exciting lightweights now on the market and there can be little doubt that it will be extremely popular with riders looking for lightweight sports performance. It scores well on appearance, it will cope with short daily journeys or long runs and in terms of sheer speed and overall performance it is able to match most machines in the 400 cc class.

*Specification details on page 21.*



**Completely redesigned, the new 250 twin is smaller, more compact than its predecessors and offers very lively performance. The complete machine is considerably lighter than its competitors.**



## Performance & specification

### ENGINE

Two-stroke twin, reed valve induction, two VM26SS Mikuni carburetors, Suzuki CCI lubrication, point-less electronic ignition, 12V alternator, 5 Ah battery.  
 displacement..... 247 ccm  
 bore x stroke..... 54 x 54 mm  
 compression ratio..... 6.7:1

### TRANSMISSION

Gear primary drive to six-speed gearbox, final drive by chain.  
 primary reduction..... 3.100  
 final reduction..... 2.733  
 gearbox ratios: 2.50; 1.625; 1.210; 1.00; 0.863; 0.782.

### CHASSIS

front tyre..... 3.00 x 18  
 rear tyre..... 3.50 x 18  
 wheelbase..... 51.6 in  
 castor..... 62.5 deg  
 trail..... 4.2 in  
 overall length..... 78.9 in  
 overall width..... 29.1 in  
 dry weight..... 282 lb  
 fuel tank..... 3.3 gal  
 oil-tank..... 2.6 pint

### PARTS PRICES inc VAT

front mudguard..... £ 19.39  
 handlebar..... 6.85  
 speedo cable..... 1.76  
 exhaust system..... 74.28

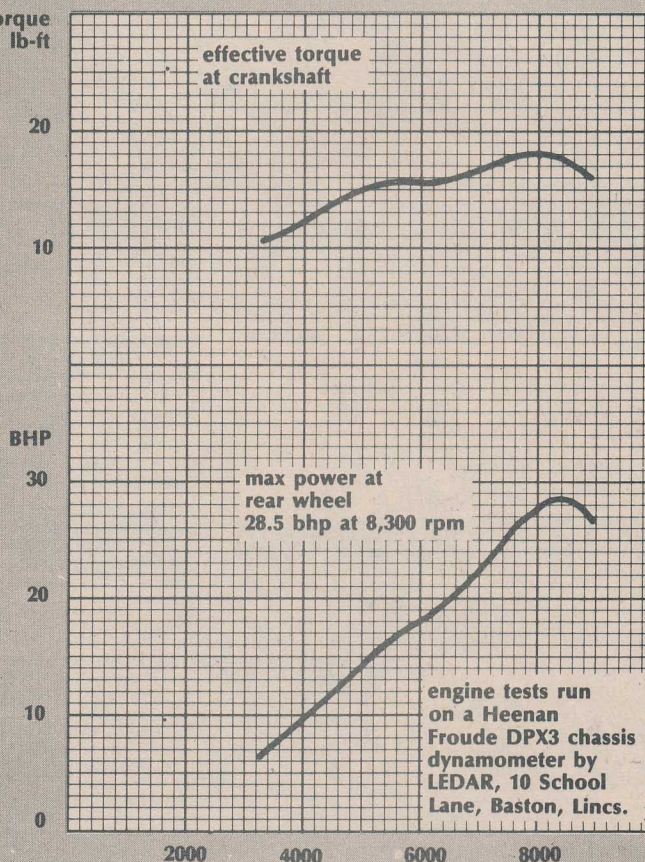
piston/ring set (2)..... 17.81  
 list price inc delivery..... 763.50  
 warranty: 6 months/10,000 miles  
 Importer: Heron Suzuki GB Ltd.,  
 Beddington Lane, Croydon, Surrey.

MAX SPEED		SS¼ mile	Speed in gears at 8,500 rpm					
101 mph		15.0 sec	1st 30	2nd 46	3rd 61	4th 73	5th 85	6th 97
Fuel consumption				Oil used	Brakes from 30 mph			
Best 46 mpg	worst 29 mpg	average 35 mpg	range to reserve 100 miles			499 mpp	25 feet	

How it compares					
model	price £	max speed	av. mpg	SS¼	bhp*
Suzuki GT250X7	750	101	35	15.0	28.5
Yamaha RD250C	735	91	47	15.9	25.0
Kawasaki KH250	699	85	38	16.5	21.5
Honda CB250T	769	89	59	17.2	22

\*At the back wheel, measured on a Heenan Froude DPX3 chassis dynamometer.

torque  
lb-ft



engine speed — rpm