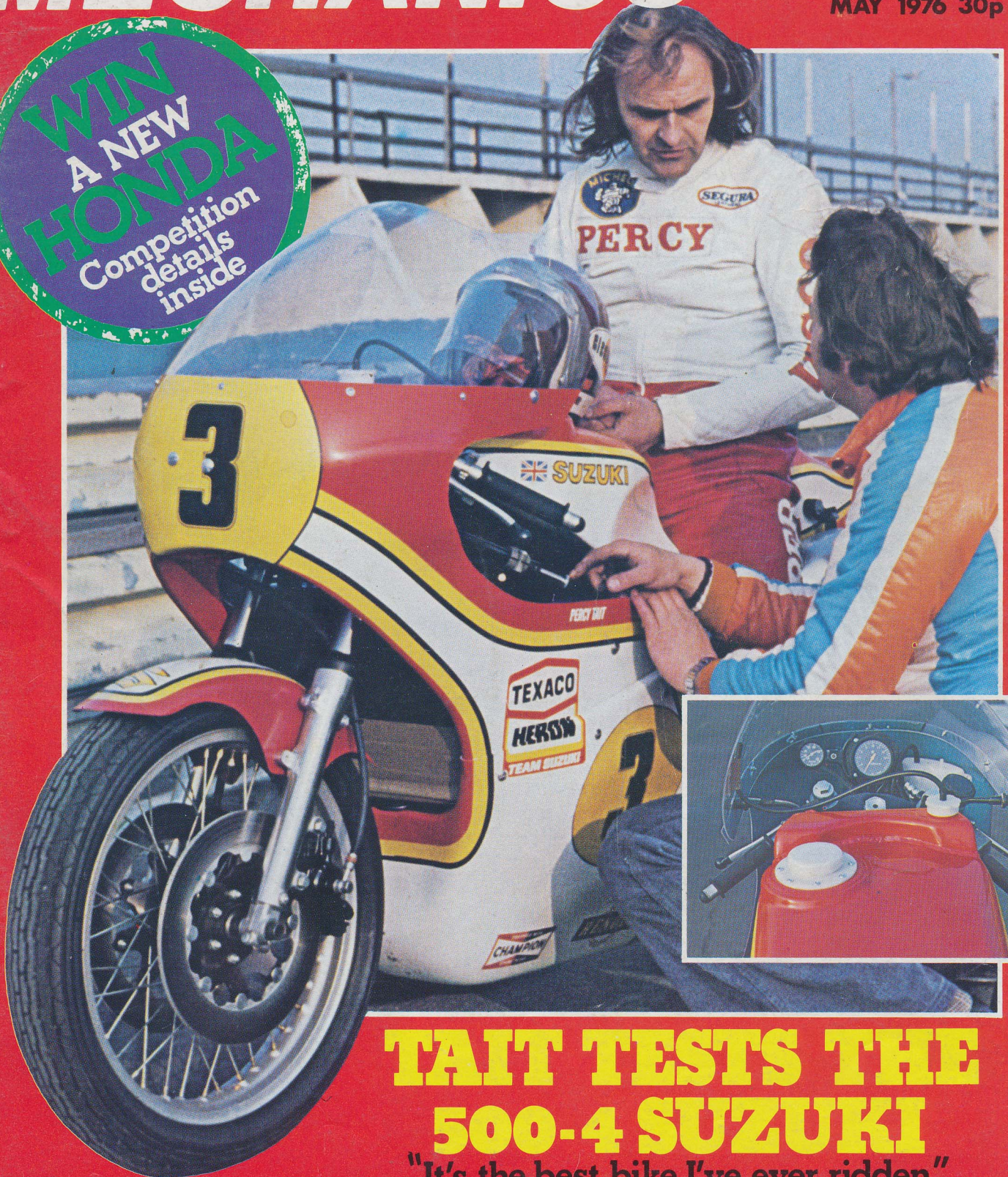


MOTOR CYCLE MECHANICS

Road Tests
KAWASAKI KH250 & BMW R60/6
DAYTONA '76
Alex George's inside story
HONDA 125 ENGINE REBUILD

MAY 1976 30p

**WIN
A NEW
HONDA**
Competition
details
inside

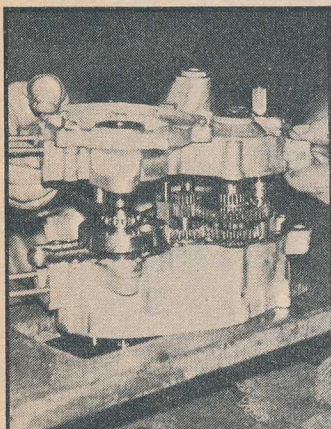


TAIT TESTS THE 500-4 SUZUKI

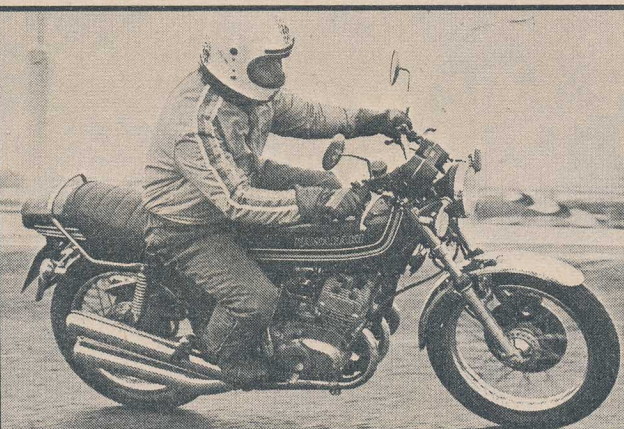
"It's the best bike I've ever ridden"

MAY

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WIN A HONDA
LATEST CB125S
TOP TEN COMPETITION
DETAILS — PAGE 15

PERCY'S "ARMCHAIR"

THE TA

"It's no skin off my nose if I say there is something wrong with the bike, and I shall treat it like any other racer test," said Perce as his mechanic Dave, and Suzuki's Rex White set about preparing the brand new GP replica racer for its first ever run.

The radiator had already been filled with a special cooling fluid, and all that remained was to fill the frame with 450 cc of castor-based oil — this feeds the crankshafts' bearings via a pump — fit the screen, and set the rear brake and gear levers to Percy's requirements. Dave adjusted the twist grip so that none of the four throttle cables fouled the fairing, and re-routed the clutch cable.

With a 30:1 petrol mix in the tank, Dave wheeled the sparkling Suzuki in its '76 race colours out on to the Snetterton track, and after a 20-yard push the motor crackled into life, and he set about getting the water gauge up to the 75 degree C running temperature. 350 main jets had been fitted into

the mix for running in, and to suit the cold conditions.

Although the sun was attempting to peer through the thin Norfolk clouds and the weather was bright and dry, the cold wind was causing all kinds of problems with the water temperature. After sheltering the bike behind a wall and wrapping the radiator in a blanket while Dave blipped the throttle, the needle eventually reached 75 degrees and Percy plopped into the glove-fit seat and set off for the first lap with instructions to keep it under 9,000 rpm until tightness eased.

But the exhaust note as he sped along the back straight sounded decidedly flat, and after one lap he was back in. The cold and big jets had dropped the motor temperature too low — and the Suzuki's temperature must be just right for correct running. Out came the 350 jets and 320s went in while Dave blanked off half the radiator with tape, and Percy shivered in the van.

A fresh set of plugs and Percy was out again, this time everything was spot on, and we were treated to some real music as Percy and the bike got used to each other and lap speeds and revs increased. Despite the cold winds — the normal limiting factor in February test sessions — Percy circulated until the tank was nearly dry, obviously enjoying every minute of it. His smile when he finally pulled in said it all.

"It is the most fabulous motorcycle I have ever ridden," he beamed emphatically.

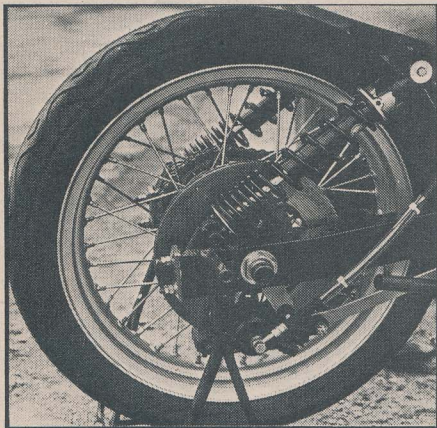
"The riding position is so right and so

The RG500 square four Suzuki tested here by Percy Tait, is his own works-supplied racer, but before anybody starts jumping to the wrong conclusions about Percy being bound to praise a Suzuki because of his racing contract, we'd like to make of couple of points. First

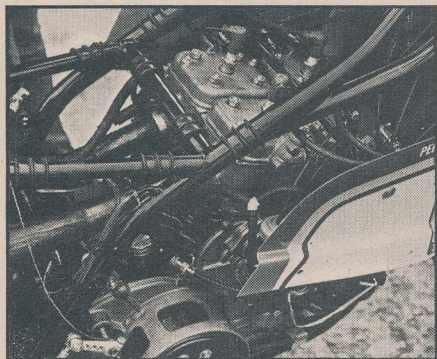
comfortable it's like an armchair racer — and performance and handling are so good it must be a super bike for the Isle of Man this summer. The only thing I had to do was turn the damper up one notch. Pouring the power on coming out of a bend the front wheel lifts off the road, and the front wheel was just flapping about. One notch on the damper kept it straight.

"It's definitely the best bike I've ever ridden. The 750 Suzuki is very good, but this is a lot better. It's lighter and much easier to manoeuvre in corners. The 750's power comes in about 6,500 and goes up to 8,500

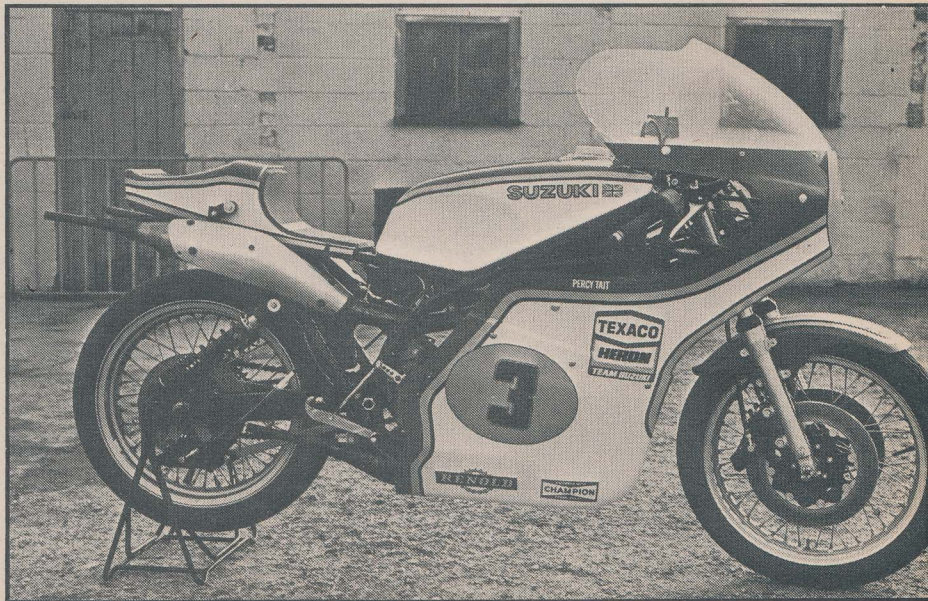
In its full 1976 works colours, the Suzuki is also backed by finance company Forward Trust.



The multi-position cantilevered rear suspension units give seven inches of wheel movement.



Despite lots of cylinders, expansion chambers and carburetors, the engine unit is neatly laid out and compact.



167 mph "R" RACER

WIND TEST

Percy had never ridden an RG500 before, so he had no pre-formed opinions on it. Second, he has spent a life-time of frankly telling employers and others what is wrong with their machines and he's not shy about telling them the bad news if something is wrong.

while the 500 really comes on strong at 7,500 — although I only took it to 10,000 because the motor is new. Maximum power is at 11,000 so there is a wider powerband.

"Power doesn't come in with a bang, it's quite progressive — mind you, you really have to hang on when it does come in because it really puts you in the back of the seat. It felt as though it was quicker than the 750, but it still seemed a bit rich — it wasn't as crisp as I thought it should be — so there is even more power in there waiting to get out."

A replica and not quite so powerful as the

Enjoying every minute of his first exploratory laps, Percy hurls the RG500 into the left hander of Russells.

pukka works 500, Percy's bike produces 95 bhp, as compared to the 110 churned out by those of Sheene and Williams. The '76 GP racers also have magnesium wheels and crankcases, titanium nuts and bolts and air sprung front forks, but it is likely that Percy's bike will be brought up to top specification through the season.

Percy's only grumble was confined to the front brake. "It's a little bit spongy and needs softer pads fitting. I found I had to apply a lot of lever pressure to get it on hard.

"The Suzuki is dead steady through corners, and I didn't have any bothers at all apart from a front wheel slide at the right hand hairpin of the Esses where there was some loose asphalt rubble on the surface. The rear suspension with its forward sloping dampers gives about seven inches of rear wheel travel which soaks up all the bumps and gives perfect handling.

"Even bends like Riches where I know there are bumps seemed completely smooth — in fact I found myself going through Riches so fast I was approaching Sears much too quickly. The Japanese Dunlops fitted were very good round here, but the English Dunlops with a softer compound should grip better and these will be fitted with mag alloy wheels. Other than that, I shall race it exactly as it is — I feel one hundred per cent happy.

"It seems to have a high bottom gear, but even so I could go round the slow right hander at the Esses without using the clutch. The bike just pulled away from the

bend in bottom from 3,000 rpm as I fed the throttle on until it reached 7,500 and it all happened very quickly from then on.

"It is a very relaxing bike to ride. You fit in between the seat and tank perfectly and it stops you from sliding about under braking and acceleration. The handlebars and foot-rests are just right."

"I feel that if you have to think about where something is or what you do in a race, then the machine is not set up properly, but with the Suzuki I never had to think about a thing from the moment I got on board."

SPECIFICATION

Engine: Water cooled four cylinder two stroke, with rotary disc valves. Bore and stroke 56mm x 50.5mm giving 497 cc capacity. Corrected compression ratio 7.71:1. Four V M 34SS carburetors. Lubrication by pump feed to crankshaft bearings and 30:1 petrol mix to cylinders. Maximum claimed output between 95-100 bhp.

Electrical Equipment: Suzuki PEI electronic ignition, 19.5 degrees BTDC, NGK B 10EP plugs.

Transmission: Dry multi-plate clutch, geared primary drive with 2.5:1 reduction, six gears — one up five down — final drive by chain.

Frame: Front suspension telescopic fork, rear swing arm with pneumo-hydraulic dampers five position pre-load. Steering angle 21 degrees, castor 61 degrees, trail 4.9 ins.

Brakes: Front floating twin disc, rear single disc.

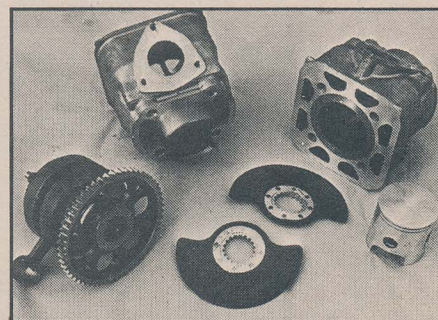
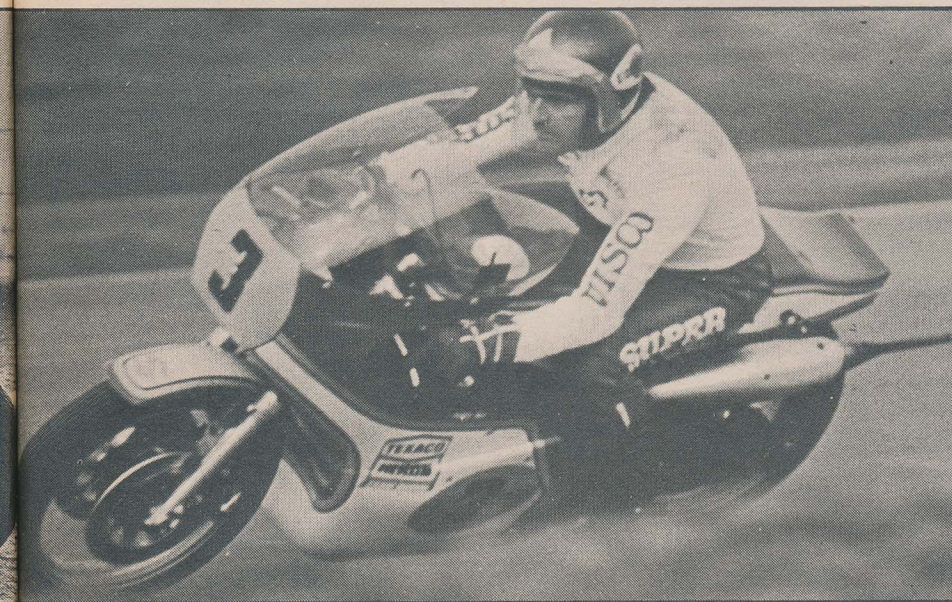
Tyres: 3.25 x 18 Dunlop racing front, 3.50-5.25 x 18 Dunlop racing rear.

Dimensions: Length 79.1 ins, width 24 ins, height 47.1 ins, wheelbase 54.7 ins, ground clearance 4.5 ins, dry weight 315 lbs.

Claimed performance: 167 mph or over.

Capacities: Fuel tank 6.9 gallons, engine oil tank 450 cc, front fork 170 cc, cooling solution 5.8 pints, transmission oil 1.5 pints.

Importer: Suzuki (GB) Ltd, Beddington Lane, Croydon, Surrey.



Part of the extensive spares kit with the bike. It includes one crank and coupling gear, disc valves, piston and water-cooled cylinders.