

FIRST TEST of the turbocharged XJ650T and XS400 in our 20-page Yamaha pull-out special

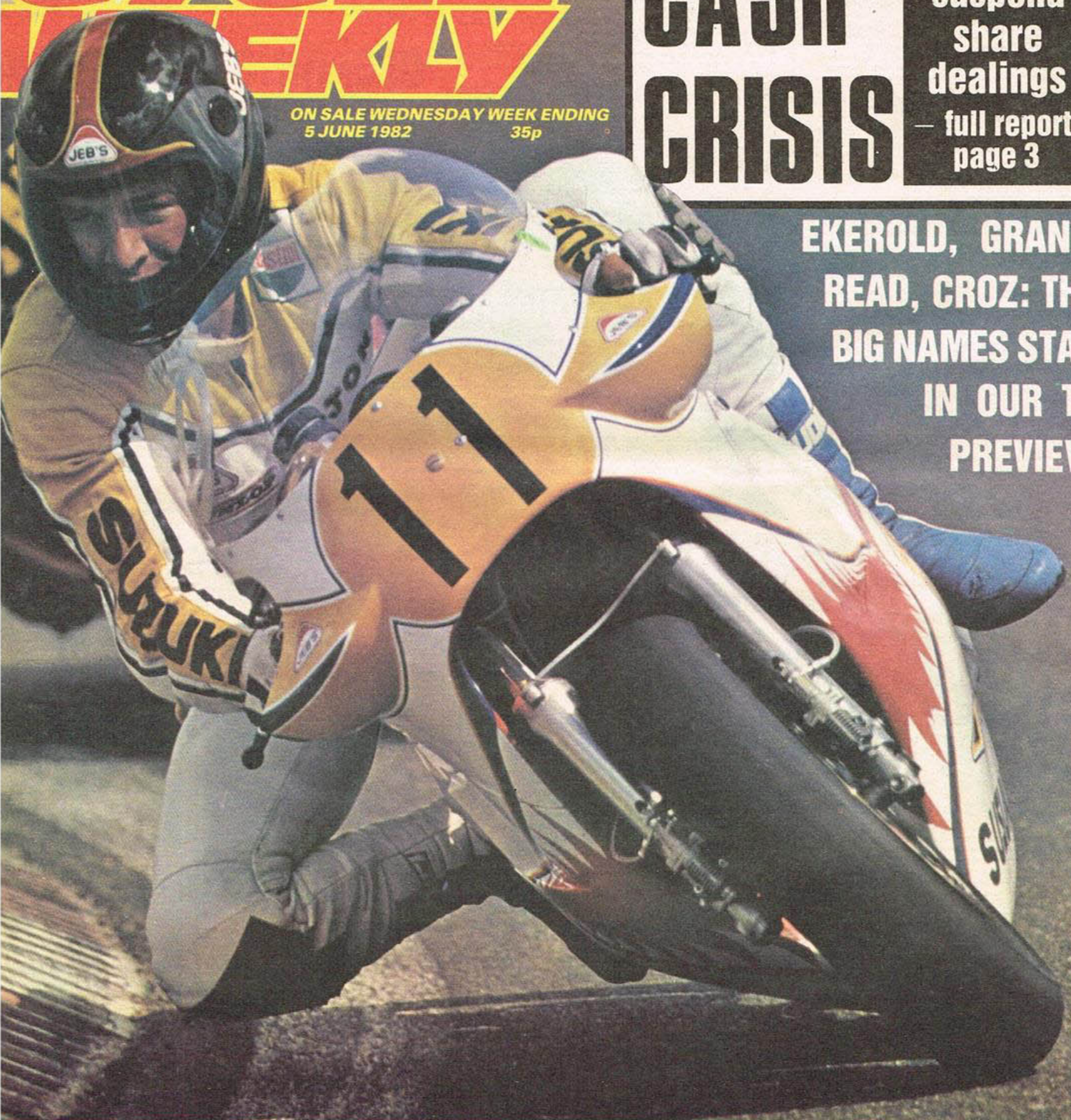
MOTOR CYCLE WEEKLY

ON SALE WEDNESDAY WEEK ENDING
5 JUNE 1982 35p

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— full report
page 3

EKEROLD, GRANT,
READ, CROZ: THE
BIG NAMES STAR
IN OUR TT
PREVIEW



Jon Ekerold in action on the RG500 Suzuki he will be racing in the Isle of Man.

Picture by Don Morley.

YAMAHA



20-PAGE
PULL-OUT
SPECIAL STARTS HERE

ADRENALIN BOOSTER!

TURBO-CHARGING in the past has earned, and still maintains, a rather tarnished reputation.

Utilising unsuitable, large turbos, some goody merchants – not all – have produced all boost, little brain and big bangs.

Those horrible experiences seem to be well and truly buried in the past, as three of the Japanese big four have turbo-charged models in their ranges, or imminently so, or on the roads here already.

If you have yet to ride any 1982

models, then you can anticipate an experience akin to Buck Rogers returning in the 25th century. Twiki and all.

Especially so if it should fortuitously be one of the new era models represented by arguably the most futuristically-styled of them all, the Yamaha XJ650 Turbo.

With streamlining shielding an instrument panel holding the normal rev-counter and speedo but additionally, liquid crystal gadgetry monitoring sidestand retraction, oil level, battery level, fuel level (in a quarter-segment display) and more, plus the almost mandatory boost gauge thrown in, our modest explorer almost rivals the Searcher's flight deck.

● continued over



Out in the sticks, the Turbo is the equal of the best handling machines available; on the open road the equal of all but the fiercest roadburners blasting for the horizon.



Whether you own an XT500 or SR500 Yamaha or purchase one of the other popular singles on the market

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YAMAHA

Data Sheet 20/82

ROAD TEST



MAKE: **YAMAHA**
 MODEL: **XJ650T**
 PRICE: **£3,000**
 approx.

ENGINE WARRANTY: 12 months, unlimited mileage

ENGINE: Double-overhead-camshaft, in-line transverse four-cylinder; 5. Mitsubishi TC03-06A

DISPLACEMENT: 653.4cc (0x52.4mm)

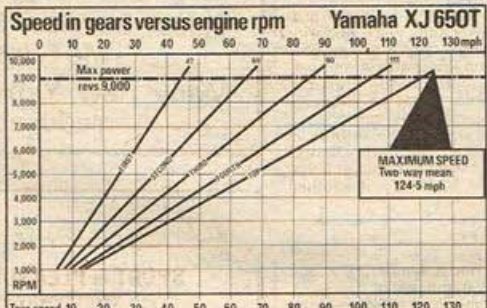
COMPRESSION RATIO: 8.2

VALVETRAIN: Four 1mm-choke Mikuni BS30 carburetors with cable-actuated cold-start jets.

IGNITION: Wet pump; 6-pint. Oil cooler.

DRIVE: Gear primary drive. Wet, multi-plate clutch and five-speed gearbox. Spur, middle and bevel gears through shaft final drive.

GEAR RATIOS: 15.27, 8.05, 6.52 and 5.67 to 1



ELECTRICS

Electronic ignition with governor. 12V, 12AH battery and alternator. Regular 6x4in headlight 160/55W main bulb. Self-cleaning indicators, starter motor, headlight flasher; graphic liquid crystal instrument monitor display, gauge and boost gauge. Positional lights for indicators, neutral, main beam and parking flasher.

WHEEL PARTS

FRAME: All-welded, full loop duplex downtubes. Steering angle, 62 degrees; 4.72in.

SUSPENSION: Kayaba forks. Telescopic, air-assisted front fork with oil piping. Pivoted rear fork, shocks with five spring preload and four damping adjustments.

WHEELS: Staggered spoke light-alloy.

TIRES: Bridgestone Magnum - L303 3.25x19in, front; G514 120/90x18in, both V-rated.

BRAKES: Hydraulically-actuated duplex 10.5in discs in front; 8.5in diameter SLS drum in rear.

DIMENSIONS

WEIGHT: 539lb inc. approx. fuel tank

FUEL CAPACITY: Four gallon inc. reserve.

SEAT HEIGHT: 57.75in.

STANDING HEIGHT: 30.25in.

WHEEL WIDTH (at mirror): 28.5in.

GROUND CLEARANCE: 5.5in.

WHEEL CIRCUMFERENCE: 18ft 6in.

TEST FEATURES

Good acceleration. Riding position, comfort and control operation. High-speed cruising and maximum sitting-up speed. Engine smoothness and power very. Instrumentation.

VELOCITY ACCURACY

Indicated mph	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Actual mph	28.4	37.9	47.3	57.2	67.1	76.3	85.9	95.2

COMPARISONS

Model	Capacity cc	Price £	Speed mph	Fuel mpg	St. 1/4-mile secs/mph
Yamaha XJ650	653	n/a	124.50	42.0	12.82/103.70
Yamaha XJ650	653	1,845	118.74	39.4	13.35/99.77
Honda CX500 Turbo	497	3,350	-	42.0	-
Honda CBX550F-C	572	1,720	120.89	42.3	12.72/101.27
Suzuki Z750GP	738	2,079	127.12	51.5	12.29/107.87
Suzuki XN85 Turbo	673	-	-	-	-
Suzuki GS650GT	674	1,705	116.37	48.7	13.53/97.09
Honda XJ750 Seca	748	2,025	121.85	60.2	12.81/104.94

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continued from P19

Yamaha have selected the six-fifty for turbo treatment from amongst their successful-selling XJ series of fours and while maintaining as many stock components as possible, boosted power and hence performance to equal, better in many cases, models of 750cc and 850cc displacement.

Extra zest has been achieved after approaching the task sensibly and with modest boosting without disfiguring the slim, trim figure of the XJ650.

The operation has been completed very compactly indeed after fitting what Yamaha claim to be the smallest turbo-charger in the world.

Unlike Honda for their CX500 Turbo and Suzuki with their XN85, who have both chosen IHI units, Yamaha have plumped for a Mitsubishi, designated TC03-06A, and tucked it neatly away below the swinging arm pivot.

Turbos are noted for working at extremely high revs, and this one, according to Mitsubishi, can safely spin to 210,000rpm!

To help allay cost and complexity they have avoided Honda's extremely complex fuel injection system and retain four carburetors, Mikunis in place of Hitachis, and the turbo blows through these carbs fitted with slightly reduced 30mm chokes.

Boosting

Boost is kept almost to a minimum, more in keeping with Suzuki who have their IHI boosting their six-fifty four at 10.5psi, and half that metered out to the V-twin Honda.

Even so, Yamaha's modest 8psi boosts the standard XJ650's 73bhp at 9,000rpm, claimed maximum power, up by a hefty 23 per cent to 90bhp delivered at the same revs.

Maximum torque of 43.4lb-ft gets a corresponding big wellie to 54.2lb-ft at 7,500rpm.

The moment we were waiting for to answer the obvious question we asked of the first stock turbo we were going to put through its paces at the MIRA test track, arrived on a bright but windy day at the track.

The results: a scintillating 131mph hiding behind the sports screen, aided by a 20-25mph three-quarter tail wind. Returning, 118mph against it for an average 124.5mph.

Not a barn storming, tarmac boiling top speed, but dramatic enough to put it amongst the leading seven-fifties of today.

Naturally we were pleased and yet at the same time a little disappointed. At the moment we have no stock figures with which to compare it, although we anticipate taking along our long term test



Comprehensive and compact cockpit (but no clock!) with the central ignition switch/lock amid the moulded plastic handlebar shield. Air-assisted forks are interlinked to attain balanced and more convenient setting.

by Stewart Boroughs

CX500 Honda very shortly.

However, it confidently exceeded the 120mph reached by two papers in their tests of the CX, and the best I've seen published by two mph one way.

For us, the Yamaha has set the standard by which the others will be judged.

Yet the result raises once

again the same, highly pertinent question that gnaws at the heart of the matter: To turbo-charge or not to turbo-charge bearing in mind slightly larger models are capable of the same speed, slightly more in a few cases.

The XJ650's results merely cloud the issue but clearly seem to confirm a trend

amongst their breed.

Their allies will state that by recycling the normally wasted hot exhaust gases back through a turbo-charger, that is self-perpetuating in boosting a fresh petrol/air mixture into the combustion chambers, you're getting something for nothing.

Yet, in fact, that's very much an understatement and what you gain on the swings you seem to lose on the roundabouts.

While overall very impressed with the model - it's an excellent machine - its drawbacks are added complexity (more to go wrong), weight has been significantly increased and you're paying for the privilege.

Price of the Turbo is still undecided (it is believed Mitsui will reach their final decision within the next week) but it is anticipated to be in the region of £3,000.

Exceed

If accurate, while less than Honda's turbo it will exceed the XJ750's retail price by more than 50 per cent and cost almost £1,200 more than a standard XJ650!

Topping the scales at 539lbs on the road with a gallon aboard, the turbo-charger and ancillary equipment, plus the fairing, add 5 1/2 stone in weight to make it the heaviest six-fifty by far. Which accounts for the good, if unexpected, acceleration figures of 12.82 secs/103.70mph. Almost identical with the Seca, but a full half second quicker than the standard XJ650.

Pause though to reflect on the performance of one of the new era of five-fifties coming on stream, Honda's CBX550 with 12.72 secs/101.27mph. Menacing without a turbo.

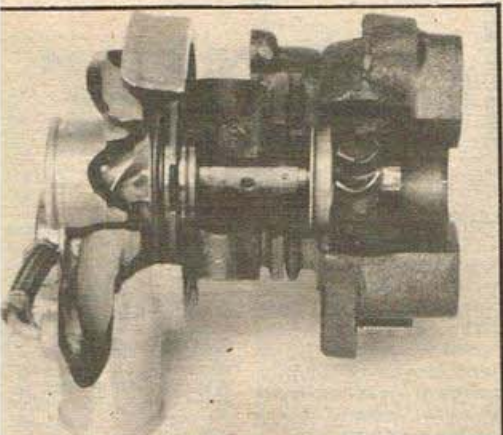
Put in further perspective, the Turbo literally fits in the heavyweight class. Only one model in Yamaha's range is heavier, the massive XS1100, it outweighs many one litre models and such firebrand sportsters as Honda's CB1100R, Kawasaki's Z1100GP and Suzuki's GSX1100S which would all need extra fuel in their tanks to balance the scales with the Turbo.

To be fair I only noticed its weight manoeuvring into tight

LEFT: Arguably the most striking, futuristic model around.

ABOVE LEFT: Twin tail lights, final drive shaft and ornate 'flower' caps on the black-chromed silencers are all but the fastest of roadburners will glimpse of the Turbo on the road





ABOVE: Cutaway of the Mitsubishi TC03-06A turbo, smallest in the world and safe up to 210,000 rpm! Maximum output is a low 8psi.

BELOW RIGHT: An extremely compact exercise, only close inspection gives any inkling that the power of this four is boosted to a healthy 90bhp and not just dressed in a fancy new fairing.



parking spaces, not on the move.

Enough of purely statistical comment. What's she like to ride? Even more absorbing and enjoyable than the already-established and excellent XJ650.

Few changes have been made from the stock bike and such features as Yamaha's Induction Control System are retained. Among the more notable modifications are a redesigned cylinder head which helps dissipate the extra heat generated via bigger cooling fins.

There's also a sensor incorporated in the cylinder barrel which tells the electronic ignition to retard the spark if pre-ignition is imminent (four-star fuel is recommended).

Measures taken to increase lubrication are cross-drilling of the main bearings and con-rods that have special holes to splash oil under the pistons. Compression ratio is reduced from 9.5 to 1 to 8.2 and piston crowns are sturdier being 30 per cent thicker.

Valve sizes are identical (clearances adjusted by different thickness shims carried in inverted buckets) but opened by 'softer' camshafts with 1.3mm less lift.

Gear ratios are the same (5.67 to 1 overall in top) with beefed up clutch and transmission to cope with the power increase.

The Turbo's riding position is excellent and you feel as one in the bike with all controls beautifully placed, light to operate with instruments clearly visible.

No discomfort whatsoever after 300 miles in the saddle in a day and every belief a thousand wouldn't have made any difference. The pillionist is similarly cosseted and with a choice of seat handles or frame rails on which to hold.

For safety, the tail light contains two bulbs with the normal standard 11-piece Yamaha tool-kit under the seat tail.

The lower lift cams assist power delivery, eliminating undue clutch slip and step in power, noticeable at 3,000rpm on the standard XJ. Up to the 9,500rpm blood line, the dohc four-cylinder is turbine smooth whistling with the contentment of a long haul cruising jet.

Accompaniment is provided by a distinctive, deep and well subdued rasp from a four-into-one-into-two exhaust, the healthy blast from the twin horns sharply contrasting with the model's general civility and excellence.

Swapping cogs through the five-speed gearbox is first class, the clutch light, slip and drag-free under normal use. However, the plates swelled markedly, and understandably so, taking off from standstill, almost at full bore, during the acceleration runs.

Small points are difficulty switching the fuel tap to reserve whilst on the move and the trailing edge of the screen obstructs a small part of the mirrors which, adjustable on a ball joint, maintained their setting even at maximum speed.

My experience of 'special' turbo-kitted jobs is few and far between, even more so on recent Japanese jobs. A week on the Turbo and weekend with the CX500.

Yamaha's bag of tricks is a whole generation more civilised than the specials - cleaner carburation, exhaust hung conventionally with no high level pipes - a characteristic of the specials that threatened to incinerate either leg given a second or two's contact.

The Yam pipes are special, exhaust gases leaving across the turbo fans and through the silencer on the left only. That on the right carries excess pressure generated in the system and released through the wastegate. The Yam is unique in having, additional to that, a 'failsafe' one in the inlet as well.



Silencers are double skinned, the inner of stainless steel to withstand higher temperatures that can reach 800 degrees centigrade. Outer has a black chrome finish that matches the complete predominant colour of the rest of the bike.

Black, that is, apart from the silver livery of the glass fibre-reinforced plastic streamlining that carries red and blue flashes. Wheels are Yamaha's latest staggered-spoke variety in cast light-alloy.

Its features depict a menacing, gladiatorial weapon that would, I suggest, benefit from a brighter livery to match the more attractive looking Honda CX500.

Looks apart, from the practical point of view the wind tunnel tested and proved streamlining certainly earns its keep. In weather protection and providing increased sitting-up speed at the expense of less fuel. Unlike the Honda,

the Yamaha fairing does have space for two lockable compartments to hold gloves, spares, etc.

Maximum sitting-up was an impressive 121 mph (best 128 mph) and that leaves several seven-fifties reeling. Significantly it is within 3/2 mph of the prone speeds reached.

Our overall fuel return of 42.0 mpg represents an improvement of more than 6.5 per cent over the standard XJ on test 18 months ago and should be bettered by a private owner.

As always in a full road test, the figure includes fuel used while obtaining all our performance data... and some 400 of the 600 miles we covered during the week-long test was fast going!

Power delivery of the Yamaha contrasts starkly to the CX500 turbo. The Honda gives you a healthy kick in the pants as the revcounter swings to 4,000 rpm.

The Yam's is far more progressive and with superior handling - partly attributable to being lower and slimmer - more manageable. Particularly safer piling on the coals coming out of fast corners.

Response to the throttle is minimal as the turbo-charger commences its boost at 4,000 rpm. At 5,000 rpm it soothes and massages the dohc four into stirring life. At 6,000 rpm, it pumps pure adrenalin into the system. Yet with maximum boost limited to 8 psi, it's still manageable.

The surge in power is most apparent in fourth and top and appreciated attacking gradients and headwinds. Just a tweak of the throttle is sufficient to 'flatten' the TT Mountain climb.

Yamaha have made strides trying to eliminate turbo lag by feeding additional air via a reed-valve controlled passage from the air cleaner to the surge tank as the turbo rapidly gathers speed. The surge tank also contains the safety 'wastegate' on the inlet side. A poppet valve releases excessive build-up in pressure.

Lag is difficult to detect riding normally but if you search for it the pause is some one to two seconds.

At maximum speed the wastegate came into operation otherwise the speeds obtained would have been exceeded 131 mph may be fast enough for some, and Yamaha will frown on the thought, but I would like to see an adjustable wastegate.

Say, maximum boost of ten to 12 psi, which could be altered for maximum speed or economy as you prefer?

Overall an excellent machine in its own right, a pleasure to ride, but which I see as an alternative that compares to today's 750s.

Except on the all important question of price... and therein lies the dilemma!

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talks to 250
world
champion
Neil Hudson

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Neil Hudson is noted
for his shyness - a
complete contrast in
character to his
career-long rival
Graham Noyce, a flam-
boyant personality by
any standards. Neil
made no secret about
his ambitions when
we spoke recently.

So I was pleasantly sur-
prised how forthright
the 25-year-old West
Country rider can be
when I spoke to him
about his future.

"As soon as I win the 500cc
world championship I will
switch to the 125 class," he
said with conviction.

"I will never defend a world
title. If I win the 500 class
this year and the 125 next
year that will be the end. I
would retire."

Even if he doesn't win, Neil
intends to quit GPs when
he is 30. He believes it is not
possible to be competitive
past that age. "I only have
to look around the paddock
at the older riders to see
that I am right."

"You've still got 40 years left
to live and I don't want my
wife Dawn, daughter Jess-
ica and myself to be left
with nothing as a base for
this part of our lives."

"We're moving from Pensford
to the Portsmouth area,
near to Dawn's parents, at
the end of the season and I
want to start up a business
there within the next
couple of years. I've no defi-
nite plans, but I expect it
will be a road bike
dealership."

As the Hudson family sat
down to dinner at the end
of another tense GP battle,
it was clear to see that the
presence of Dawn and five-
month-old Jessica was no
hindrance to Neil's mental

preparation for
the racing. In-
deed the relaxed
'at home' atmos-
phere in their
caravan probably
makes Neil the
coolest man on
the track.

By late evening
the paddock was
virtually empty,
yet the swning
on the side of the
Hudson caravan
was still in place
and they were
looking forward
to a leisurely
drive to the next
round.

The caravan is
their home-from-
home for the
season. Not for
them the hectic
journey by road
or air every week
back home and
Jessica certainly
seems to thrive
as much as her
parents on the
family unit.

The fact that
his daughter will
be of school age
when he is 30 is
undoubtedly a
contributory fac-
tor in Neil's de-
termination to
quit GPs then.

"I'll still carry
on riding," said
Neil, "because I
enjoy it, but it
will be for fun. As
well as helping
me to keep fit, I
ride trials in the
winter because I
enjoy the sport. I



Neil about to touch down his big Yamaha during the Finnish GP earlier this season, and above inset, Neil chats to fellow Englishman and the man that always seemed to be in front of him, Graham Noyce.



Bill Aldridge (14) chases Hudson over the dusty Finnish terrain.

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the nearlyman!

hope to ride bikes as long as I am capable and enjoy it."

For Neil, one of the original schoolboy scramblers, that is likely to be a long time. His first machine was a Bantam for which he and his parents paid £1.50 after finding it in a barn when Neil was 12.

A race winner all his riding career, it is strange that until his victory in last year's 250 world championship Neil had never won any title except at club level.

For so many years he had seemed to be the eternal number two, always living in the shadow of Noyce at home or Hakan Carlqvist in the world rounds.

"In schoolboy racing Graham seemed to have the edge on me when championship meetings came around, then I missed most of our first adult season through injury," said Neil.

"I was just starting to catch up in 1978 when Graham went to Honda. The factory support from the Japanese makes a tremendous difference.

"I don't want to discuss past contracts - they're best forgotten - but when you tell Yamaha that something is wrong they do something about it - straight away!"

"In addition, last year was the first time I was really fit. I went to Finland at the start of the year and Heikki Mikkola made me train until I was in condition."

Seeing Neil on the track last year confirmed this. His sand riding improved dramatically.

At St Anthonis he pushed Rond and van der Ven all the way and in the British championship opener at Hawkstone he became the first British rider to beat Noyce there in a major race.

It is also difficult to envisage the Hudson of past seasons powering back through the



Family man Hudson with wife Dawn and baby daughter Jessica.

pack in such devastating style as he did to clinch the world crown at Apeldoorn last August.

The condition training, plus the professionalism he showed in missing a week-end's racing to acclimatise to the humid American atmosphere, enabled him to become the first European to win the US 250 GP. Neil had always failed miserably in this round.

When Neil decided in the autumn that he would step up to the 500 class this year the knockers were soon writing off his chances. "He's got no chance with the big boys. The 500s are a class above the rest."

The 250 world champion has answered them in style. A couple of fourth places in

the French opener, his first ride in the class since Farleigh in 1977, was enough to silence the critics.

Never before in modern motor cross has a rider come from such poor starts twice in one day. Despite making a mess of the first race a week later in Holland, fastest time in training and speed in the racing second only to Vromans confirmed that Neil doesn't need to step up a class - he is already there!

So what does Neil think of the 'premier class'?

"I was a little bit surprised. I thought they would be a lot quicker. The Press makes out that the 500cc riders are better and boost them up, but in fact they are racing less at the end than the

250cc men.

"Changing from the 250 to the 500 machine and back again was a problem for me at this level of competition last year, but I am confident that I have a real chance of the world title this year now that I am racing the 500 all the time.

"I aim to finish as many races as possible and to finish them in the points. I feel confident on all types of track.

"There are so many of these guys who are only good on their own.

"The only problem I have at the moment is my starting. I know I have to do something about that. I've never been a really good starter, but I was always in the first five last year and these guys are no better from the line."

Certainly Neil will have to improve his gating if he is to fulfil his title ambitions but, if he has another fault, it is a lack of aggression in the first few laps.

Just watch mechanic Bill Buchka in the early stages of a GP and you will see his frustration as Neil waits for a gap rather than force one open. That was the reason

Georges Jobe won so many races last year, even though he didn't win the crown. He hit the front as soon as possible.

The partnership of the English family man and his brash American mechanic might seem strange at first, but it is one which works admirably.

They work together in deciding how to set-up the bike, but Bill says: "My job is to prepare the bike so that Neil can race it as hard as possible to the finish. Neil's job is out there on the track."

Certainly they have an enviable relationship and I remember Bill's reply early last season when I asked him how he found life working with Neil. "It's really fine. Neil is a gentleman!"

There is still a long way to the end of the season for Neil and his family team, but they have a real chance of winning the world title.

That must have seemed a long way off back in the summer of 1980 when Neil fractured his right ankle in a first corner incident at the German GP.

"I suffered concussion, so I can't say what happened. Dr Derweduwen fitted a plate and told me that it could stay there for ever if I wanted.

"I just couldn't concentrate on my riding when I came back that summer, though. I could feel the plate and it affected me psychologically. I must admit I'm a bit squeamish about things like that."

"Neil's not kidding. He almost fainted when they were taking the stitches out!" Dawn chipped in.

Neil knows what he wants from racing and life in general. After being the 'nearlyman' for so long, the world 250 championship marked the start of a period in which he seems likely to achieve those aims.

He has the skill, confidence and support to do so. I wish him luck.

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Hudson turns on the power coming out of a corner, and shows the style that's taken him to third position in this year's world championship.



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YAMAHA 

The Pros and Ams of production racing



YAMAHA introduced the race-bred RD350LC in 1980 to riders in the market for a potent street-bike or a dynamic production class racer.

In production events at all levels, the bike met immediate success. This success did not go unnoticed at Mitsui, the British Yamaha importer, and it rapidly came up with a different idea for road racing – the Yamaha LC350 Pro-Am series.

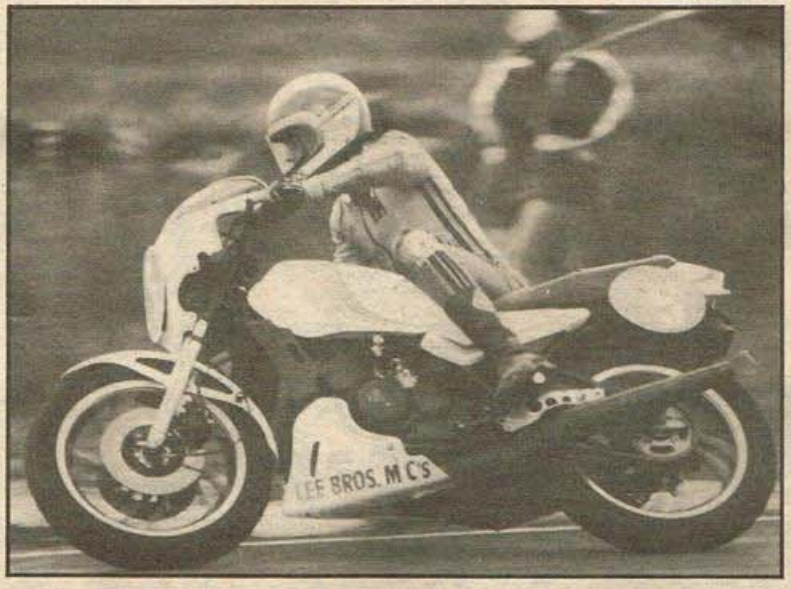
by **BRENDAN QUIRK**

Basic thinking was to produce close, exciting racing by using identical machines. In this way, the results would reflect rider ability rather than differences in machinery.

The first series, in 1981, was such a resounding success that Mitsui has once again organised the series for '82.

The format remains unchanged. The established international riders – the Pros – meet 10 newcomers to the international racing scene – the Ams – at eight meetings in Great Britain during the season.

Mitsui believes that by giv-



ing the young Ams a chance to ride in the series it is helping strengthen the challenge of British racers at the highest level of the sport.

This belief has already been borne out by fact.

Several of last year's LC series riders are contesting the European Championship

this season and one – Alex Bedford – is taking part in the 125cc grand prix this year.

But there is another side to the series. Many of the riders, both Pros and Ams, are young lads struggling to make ends meet in the increasingly expensive game of racing.

Many riders have little or no

sponsorship and find themselves having to use a tyre not ideally suited to a particular circuit on their privately-owned racing bikes because they cannot afford the £80 needed for a new tyre.

Mitsui, as well as providing these riders with good competitive races, is also helping

ABOVE: From Yamaha LC350 Pro-Am series to grand prix racing... Alex Bedford (5) has done it already.

LEFT: Kim Barker made the most of the opportunity presented by Mitsui, finishing second in 1981 series.

to finance the riders' racing programme.

First prize for each of the races is a lucrative £300 with £200 for second, £150, £100, £75, £50, £40, £30, £20, £10 down to tenth man.

But the major bonus for the riders is that all the money they win, plus their £35 expense money for each meeting, is profit.

Mitsui prepares the bikes, pays for tyres and looks after any maintenance so it costs the Pros and the Ams nothing to take part.

The racing potential of the LC350 has been recognised in most European countries where a similar series has been adopted and for the last Pro-Am race, the best of the Continental Pro-Am riders will meet the best of the British riders at Brands Hatch on October 23/24.

If the standard of racing in Britain is anything to go by, it will be one of the best races on the day.

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YAMAHA



Controls for the right and left hands. Despite the busy appearance of the left-hand control module, above, everything falls naturally to the thumb without confusion

Road testers raved about the sports-touring Yamaha XJ750 Seca when it was introduced last year. Martin Hodder reports on our long-term test Model

All aboard a sporting all-rounder



YAMAHA has come up with yet another winner in the XJ750 Seca, which is best described as a kind of sporting all-rounder, with emphasis on the sporting.

It's not the fastest 750, although with a top speed of about 125mph it is no slouch. And although not quite the fastest-accelerating 750, there are few that can live with it up to 100mph.

The Seca scores when you start looking at it through the eyes of the rider who wants a fast, reliable, comfortable and safe machine, capable of doing everything. From this point of view it is possibly without equal.

It's only when you start living with a bike that you start to appreciate its qualities. MCW road tests tell us most of what we want to know but using a bike on a permanent basis puts you with all the lads who are using a particular bike, or are thinking of doing so.

Having collected the Seca with only 1.2 miles showing, I was a typical new owner.

Although there are only 600 miles more behind it, I have already experienced most of its virtues. And I have yet to find its first fault!

Standards of comfort for both rider and passenger have improved greatly over the years.

Yamaha has done more than its share and the effort shows through in the Seca.

Because the bike has a low seat level and because the engine looks deceptively small, this 750 feels more like a 500 or even a 250 - while at a standstill.

The handlebars are a compromise between the flat, out-and-out sports type and the fashionable high-and-wide

American style. They provide an excellent riding position, with more than adequate leverage on the bars for full manoeuvrability at low speeds.

Naturally, as on any machine without a fairing, sustained high-speed riding requires some physical effort to counter the wind force.

Despite carefully following Yamaha's cautious running-in instructions, I have been able to do a few motorway trips at reasonably high cruising speeds.

The most recent saw me traversing the entire length of the M23 at a steady 80mph, which gave me a fair idea of the effectiveness of the handlebar design.

While I didn't feel stressed, I was aware that I'd done the trip, but wouldn't want to alter the handlebar shape or style in the slightest. I'm 6ft tall and feel the Seca's riding position was tailor-made for me.

Yamaha has a good reputation for attention to detail; it has done a particularly good job with the various handbar controls on the Seca.

Everything comes straight to the appropriate thumb and, despite the fact that the left bar has controls for no less than five functions as well as the clutch, there is no confusion.

I particularly like the indicator switch which self-cancels on a time or distance basis, whichever is greater, and which can be cancelled manually if desired.

Yamaha has used this manual cancelling method for some time, and it works perfectly.

Underneath the indicator switch is the combined switch for operating the horn and flashing the headlamp. Press the part of the switch nearest the thumb and the horn works; slide the thumb slightly further to the raised part and you have the headlamp flasher. If you want, both can be operated simultaneously.

Much has been written of the Seca's excellent instrumentation and its useful central warning system, positioned between the speedometer and tachometer.

The warning system serves as a systems check before setting off and also warns of lamp failures, lack of engine oil, etc, while on the move.

If a problem develops, the big red lamp at the top of the warning unit flashes and the appropriate panel displays the type of problem.

At the base of the warning panel is the fuel gauge - a most welcome fitment to any motor cycle - while the warning flasher lets you know when the fuel level's getting low.

It's a kind of belt and braces policy which should put fuel level worries completely out of your mind. The warning lamp begins to flash when there's about a gallon left in the tank.

I particularly like the Seca's handling which can best be described as superb.

The bike has that safe, taut feeling about it which is more usually experienced on a racing machine, and which demonstrates that Yamaha has used its vast racing experience to provide better products for the road rider.

On both tight, slow corners and fast, sweeping bends, the Seca possesses superb "feel," the combination of its inbuilt fine handling and excellent ground clearance inspiring wonderful confidence.

The tyres may seem a little on the slim side when you look at the bike, but they appear to be perfectly suited.

Japanese designers take some criticism for lack of attention to improvements to handling, but the Seca's design team deserve a healthy pat on the back for producing such a beautifully handling and safe machine.

Aiding the general excellence of the bike, although in normal road use not making a great deal of difference to the handling, is the race-bred mechanical anti-drive unit fitted to the front forks.

The idea being to reduce the

tendency for forks to bottom out under heavy braking. The Seca's system does that, making for greater comfort and safety all round.

When "Motor Cycle Weekly" tested the Seca last September, there was some criticism of the gearbox.

My long-term test bike has a superb gearbox; it was excellent even when the bike was new, and has become progressively better (to my surprise) during the running-in period.

All changes, both up and down through the five gears, are delightfully smooth and positive and I have yet to experience my first missed or "grauched" gear.

The Seca's four-cylinder inline engine measures only 17½ inches across with the generator is fitted behind the engine.

With the Seca, there's no mass of metal sticking out greatly aiding the compact feel of the bike.

The engine is a beauty. Maximum power is 76bhp at 9,000rpm, and although I have yet to exceed 6,000rpm, I have every reason to believe it will rev on as smoothly to the limit as has been my experience during running-in.

Initially, I was surprised by the tractability of the engine, expecting its four cylinders to be less useful at low rpm than has proved the case.

Especially in the lower gears, it accelerates well from as little as 2,000rpm, although the needle needs to be up to 3,000 before there's any surge of power.

This tractability, coupled with the compactness and excellent handling makes it a great bike for heavy traffic use, such as in central London - unlike many 750s, which can be a bit of a handful (and much too wide) in these conditions.

Delightful as the Seca is in traffic, though, it comes into

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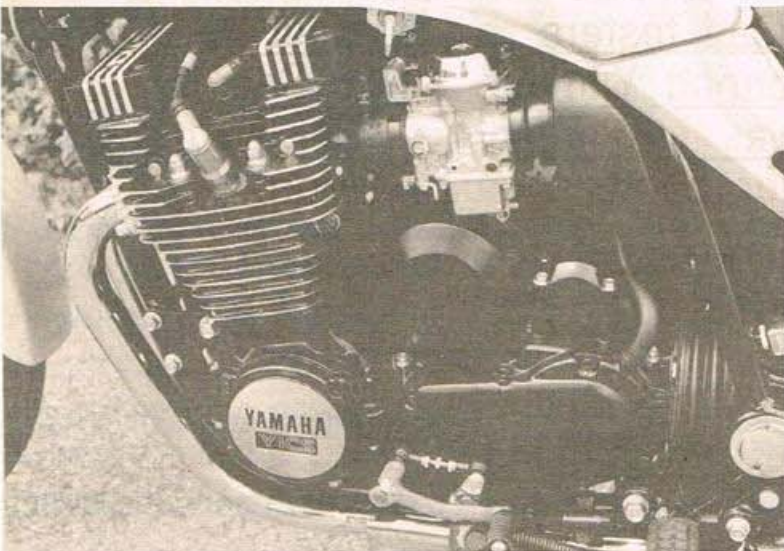
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This view of the left side shows how well the 750cc engine has been fitted into the frame



Handling on the Seca is superb - the handlebars and riding position in harmony with my six-foot frame.

its own on the open road. Initially, there was some foot-tling vibration about 65mph in top gear, which was annoying as this was a good running-in speed.

But this has since dissipated and I wouldn't be surprised to see it vanish altogether.

The engine has a reassuring feel of strength and I have no doubts that it will continue to function efficiently for a long time yet.

The exhaust note is best described as pleasant, subdued, deep-throated with a pronounced whistling effect on over-run.

In its first 600 miles the engine has used no oil, while petrol consumption has averaged 55mpg.

Since much of the running-in mileage has been done on fast main roads and motorways, with plenty of use

of the bike's acceleration, the mpg is much as I'd expected.

The smoothness of the engine and the excellent gearbox are complimented by a good clutch action and shaft drive.

The overall effect is one of cushioned power which, because of the excellent handling, is a joy to use.

The brakes are a little deceptive. Because the anti-dive system works so well, and braking action is progressive, I thought in the early stages that the brakes weren't as good as they might be.

I was being deceived, the brakes are more than a match for the performance and the exuberance with which the machine is certain to be used.

I have yet to do any fast night-riding on this Yamaha, but initial experience suggests that the lights are in keeping

with the general excellence of the bike.

In the interests of self-preservation, I prefer to rely on dipped headlamp than the rectangular running light fitted underneath the main unit.

In its first 600 miles, my long-term test Seca has had only one very minor failing - the bolt supposed to hold the left side of the headlamp to its mounting bracket unscrewed itself and disappeared after 200 miles. But, I think it had not been tightened during the PDI.

All told, I am most impressed with this excellent, well-finished machine. It provides me with the kind of motor cycling I like and I genuinely look forward to covering many thousands of miles on it.

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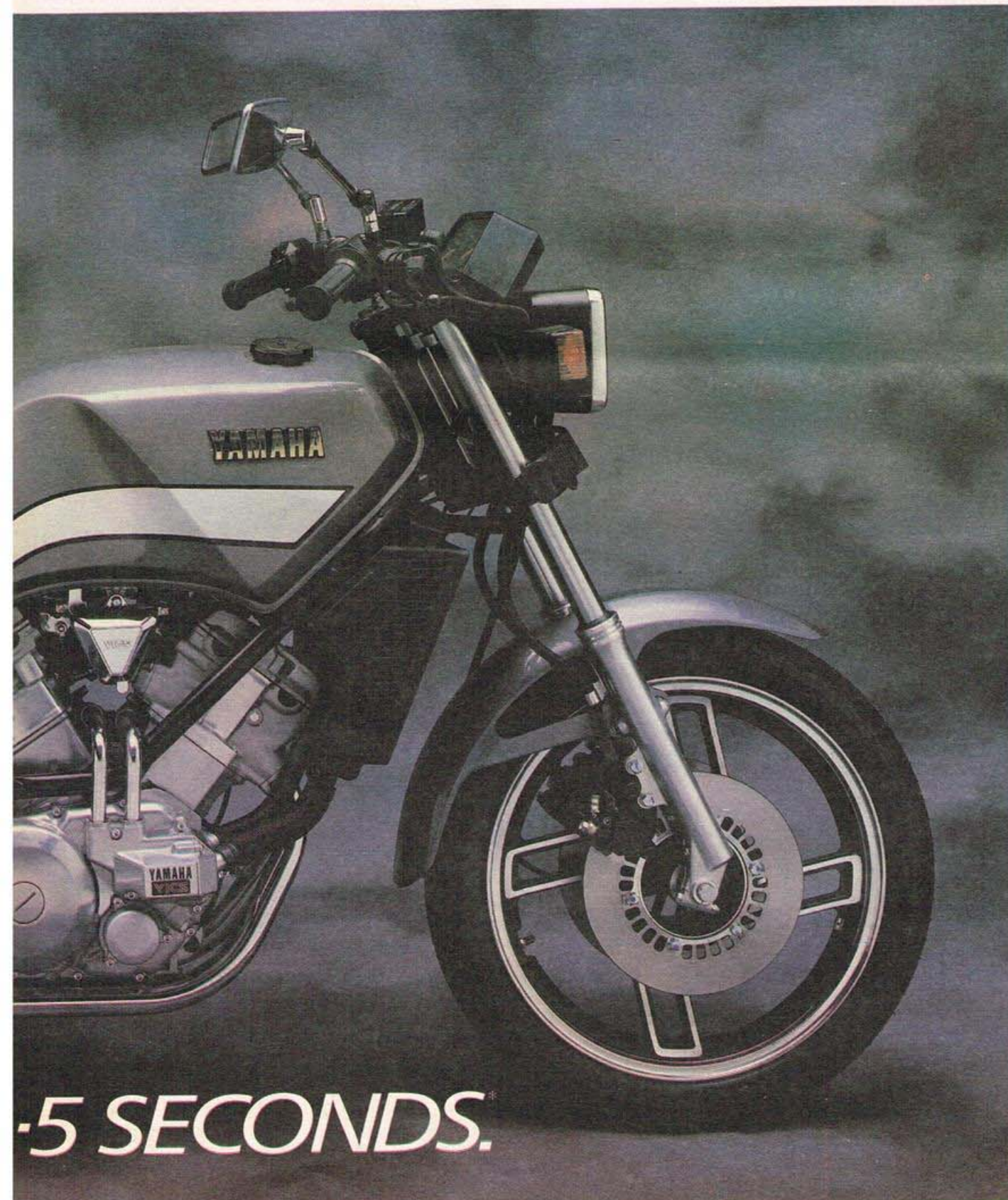
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YAMAHA



Specification: IT175 enduro

ENGINE: Single-cylinder, air-cooled two-stroke.
DISPLACEMENT: 171cc, 66 x 50mm bore and stroke.
COMPRESSION RATIO: 6.4 to 1.
MAXIMUM POWER: 25bhp at 8500rpm.
MAXIMUM TORQUE: 2.3kgs at 7000rpm.
LUBRICATION: Premix.
CARBURETTOR: Mikuni VM34.
IGNITION: CDI.
STARTER SYSTEM: kickstart.
FUEL TANK CAPACITY: 2.4 galls.
TRANSMISSION: Six-speed.
DIMENSIONS: Overall length, 41ins; overall width, 32ins; seat height, 36ins; wheelbase, 56ins; ground clearance, 13.3ins; dry weight, 220lbs.
BRAKES: Drum brakes front and back, with magnesium hubs. Front tyre 3.00 x 21; rear, 4.00 x 18. Rear and front suspension travel, 10.6ins.
MANUFACTURER: Yamaha Motor Company, Japan.
IMPORTERS: Mitsui Machinery Sales Ltd., Oakcroft Road, Chessington, Surrey. Telephone 01-397 5111.

LIGHT

FEELING tired and listless? Bored with the same old strip of tarmac? Had a skinfluff of being carved up by semi-blind motorists? Then get off the road and on the dirt!

But apart from trail riding, most people's idea of competing on the rough usually means either trials, grass track or moto cross. They can be mighty expensive ways of getting the cobwebs out of your befuddled head, but wait! There is an answer.

It's called the Yamaha IT175, and has to be one of the most civilised and yet successful lightweight two-strokes in the enduro world. Ask an enduro man about the IT range, which starts with the 175, then through the 250 and up to the terrifyingly-fast 465, and he'll tell you, no matter what bike he rides himself, that the Yam is a cracker.

But a bike doesn't have to be an unrideable beast to win events. Perry Leask, now lying second in the national 125cc moto cross series, 6th in the 250 and 13th overall in the open British championship,



Perry gets the IT175 airborne and in an awkward position. He landed safely though with no damage to the machine

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'N' EASY!

by Geoff Aspel

took the IT175 for a squirt around his dad's - that's Brian Leask - 16-acre farm in Sussex.

"It has a nice easy type of power and it's fine to use on the roads. Lights are good for this type of bike and although nice and quiet I did keep running out of gears. It's the same with other enduro bikes on the road though."

The real test came on the farm, though. The field we used had been full of horses until a few weeks ago, and was rutted with deep hoofmarks which had now hardened into bone-dry potholes.

The bike was hitting the ruts and jumps and bumps at one hell of a lick, but showed no signs of being unable to cope. "The front end feels a bit soft," said Perry "and would be better fitted with a heavier fork oil."

The rear end - which is the new bell-crank type as used on the production and works 250 moto crossers, - was very good but Perry altered the damping to suit his style, and now it's set-up like his own moto cross bike.

"I didn't like the tyres very much though, especially the front", commented Perry. "I've found that Japanese tyres, at least those on the production bikes, aren't to my liking. The front slips a bit. If this bike was mine, I'd fit a set



A winner in standard trim, the IT175 can also be used for pooding to and from work. Well-equipped it's one of the most civilised bikes for both on and off road use.

of Dunlop 139s.

"Brakes were very good with the front specially so. They had a nice, light feel to them and never let me down."

"I also liked the riding position and comfortable seat. It doesn't come up as far on the tank so I found I could slide further up the front of the bike, which I prefer.

"I didn't like the shape of the fuel tank though, it's too wide and I'd fit a different type - maybe like the older version, because that doesn't spread your legs out quite so far.

"I found that although I'm a bit on the short side, I could still put both feet firmly on the ground. During testing I found

that the front end of the bike was pattering over little sharp bumps, but the back end was good although it could do with a bit more tension.

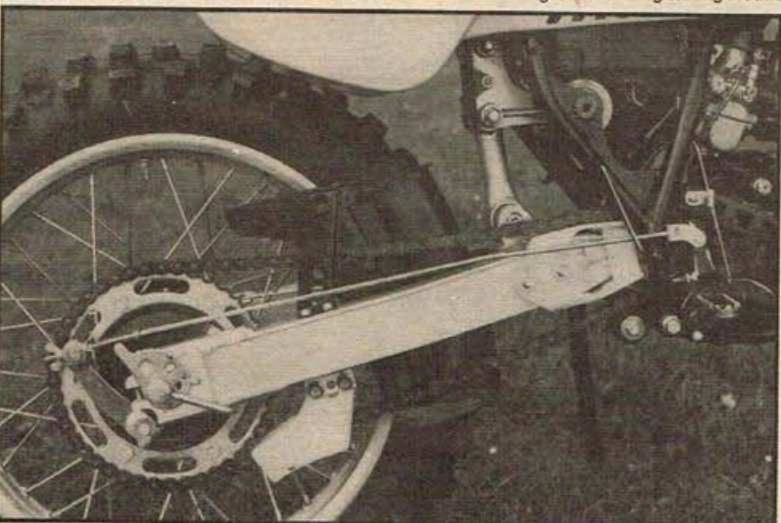
"I particularly like the gearbox. The gears are nice and close for off-road, but a bit too close for road riding. The gear lever position is also good for both types of riding."

The IT175 is fitted with Yamaha's Energy Induction System (YEIS) for maximum use of available power, and of

course, over such a short distance, no fuel economy figures were obtained.

"I thought it was better than the 250 enduro", enthused Perry "because it has lots of smooth, usable power right through the range. The 250 has more of a lumpy sort of power."

So, kick out those cobwebs and get into the dirt! And if you can't handle the rough going, then the IT175 is just at home on the open road.



The latest IT175 boasts the works-type bell-crank monoshock unit, claimed to be capable of handling any type of terrain.



Perry Leask found the handling safe and predictable.

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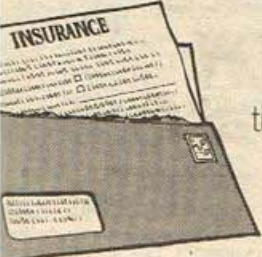
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YAMAHA



Stage two moves (fast) into position



XS400 styling is an excellent piece of motor cycling sculpture.

JAPAN's continued desire to entice newly-qualified motor cyclists from learner machines has resulted in bikes like Yamaha's latest XS400.

But beware, apart from its name, the new 399cc parallel-twin has nothing in common with its similarly-titled predecessor introduced in September, 1977.

The dowdy but honest and efficient XS of yore has been replaced by a machine with a totally new engine, frame, suspension, styling, instruments, lighting, wheels and brakes. Despite sharing the same designation, the two cannot be confused.

Yamaha has also discovered a method of squeezing more power from a given capacity.

The new XS is quicker over the quarter-mile and on top speed while fuel consumption is even more frugal.

This and the sharp racy styling will lay claim to many a biker shrugging off the limitations of learner machinery for the first time.

It's not exactly cheap at £1,299, although it is similarly-priced to competitors in the 400 market, but a homely balance of power and economy make it a realistic machine for someone who cannot afford a one-litre multi.

Not that I use such terms to conceal disappointment. The new machine's mean top speed of 104.44mph easily better the 102.8mph of the last XS and is the going rate for new 400s twins and fours alike.

So too is the XS absolute top speed of 110.35mph. Acceleration showed a more dramatic improvement with the

by Graham Sanderson
pictures David Nash

Yamaha's best pass of 13.79seconds/94.24mph, significantly faster than the previous 15.2sec/87.5mph, while the new machine's mean acceleration is a full second quicker than the old model.

But this is nothing more than you'd expect with 4½ years separating the two models, especially when you consider the specification of the latest machine.

The new XS probably has more in common with machines like the XJ550 four than it does with the old twin.

Like the 550, the alternator on the XS sits on top of the crankcase behind the cylinders reducing engine width to less than 14 inches, not much more than some singles.

It has two overhead camshafts, not one as before, and the 180-degree crank incorporates chain-driven counter balancer in an attempt to smooth out inevitable vibration from a one-up-one-down twin.

Twin 34mm Mikuni constant vacuum carburetors are retained as is a six-speed gear cluster and clutch diameter has been increased to further promote narrowness without sacrificing surface area.

And similar to the XJ machines, the new XS also has the Yamaha Induction Control System.

Continued Page 34

Data Sheet 21/82

MAKE: **YAMAHA**
 MODEL: **XS400**
 PRICE: **£1,299** inc all taxes

WARRANTY: 12 months, unlimited mileage.

ENGINE

Test machine provided by Mitsui Machinery Sales (UK) Ltd, Oakcroft Rd, Chessington, Surrey.

Single-overhead-camshaft, 180-degree air-cooled parallel-twin. Three plain bearings. Plain big-end bearings. Plain big-end bearings.

Capacity: 399.4cc (69 x 60mm)

Compression Ratio: 9.7

Duration: Two 34mm valves

Lubrication: Wet sump; capacity 5.1 pints.

Mission: Gear primary drive. Wet, multi-plate clutch and six-speed gearbox. Final drive by chain.

Gear Ratios: 19.93, 11.25, 9.03, 7.54 and 6.01.



ELECTRICS

Capacitor discharge ignition. 12AH battery. Electric starter. Self-cancelling indicators. 60/55w quartz halogen headlight.

CHASSIS PARTS

Frame: Tubular spine-type engine as stressed member.

Suspension: Telescopic front fork. Pivoted rear fork with single monoshock carrier suspension system five-position spring pre-adjustment.

Wheels: Staggered eight-spoke cast alloy.

Tires: Bridgestone Maggus 3.00 x 18in, front x 18in rear.

Brakes: Hydraulically-actuated 10.5in. single discs 17in. diameter s/s drum.

DIMENSIONS

Height: 38.1in. one-gal. fuel tank.

Capacity: 4.4 gallons reserve.

Seat height: 54in.

Wheelbase: 31.3in.

Ground clearance: 5.1in.

Track width: 35in.

STYLING FEATURES

Active knife-edge styling. Ergonomic. Small and manoeuvrable.

COMFORT FEATURES

Comfortable passenger seat.

SPEEDO ACCURACY

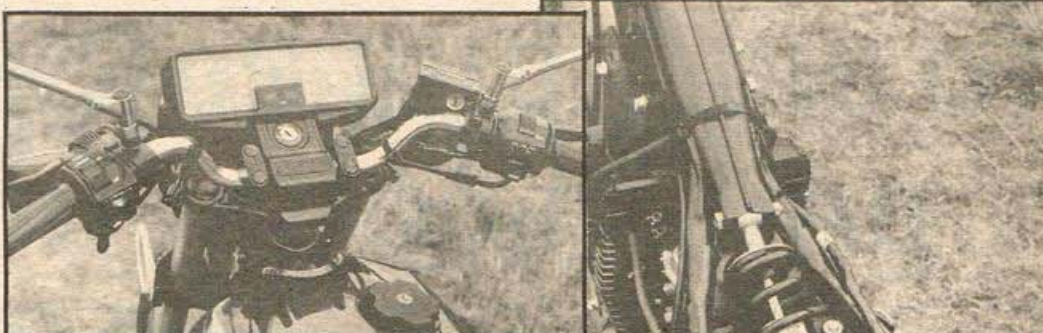
Indicated mph	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
Actual mph	28.1	37.1	46.2	56.2	66.0	76.1	86.2

COMPARISONS

Model	Capacity (cc)	Price (£)	Speed (mph)	Fuel (mpg)	St. 1/4-mile (secs/mph)
Yamaha XS400	399	1,299	104.44	57.7	14.11/90.20
V R45	473	1,995	95.92	56.3	15.10/83.97
Da CB400N	395	1,210	105.20	48.2	15.00/88.60
Asaki Z400J	399	1,299	103.94	45.8	14.89/88.15
Guzzi V5J11	490	1,599	101.57	52.3	15.07/86.00
Asaki GSX400	399	1,120	101.72	65.6	14.65/87.55

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YAMAHA



A mph speedometer will be fitted for the British market. Note thumb-operated choke. Self-cancelling indicators are too sensitive to the touch during manual operations.

Performance is up with 45bhp on tap

● From Page 33

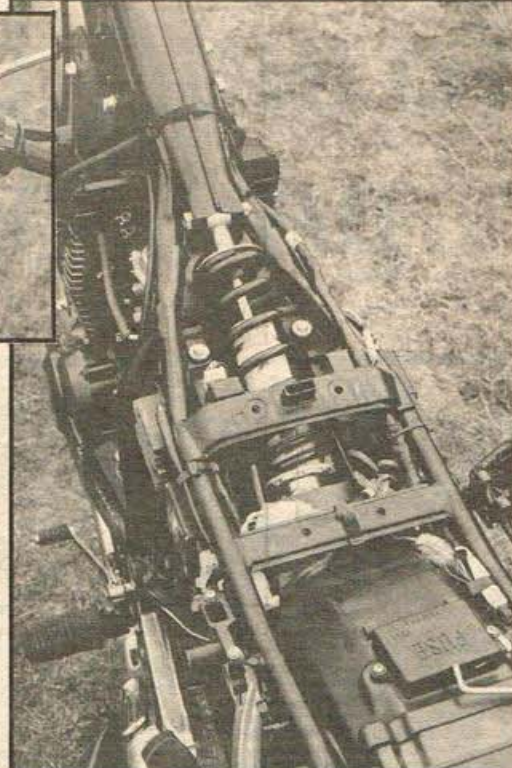
This system allows incoming fuel to rest in a chamber below the inlet ports when the inlet valve closes instead of stacking up behind the valve. When the inlet re-opens the fuel is sucked in to rejoin the main charge washing the mixture around the compression chamber in a circular pattern and leading to cleaner, more efficient combustion.

Yamaha claim an overall 10 per cent reduction in fuel consumption as a result and it seems to work. Our average of 55.7mpg was better than the 54mpg of the old XS but many of our miles were covered on 80mph-plus dashes along motorways.

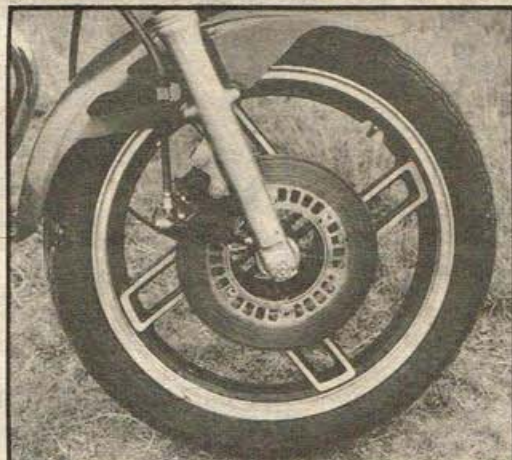
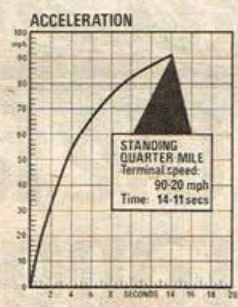
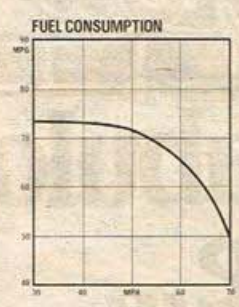
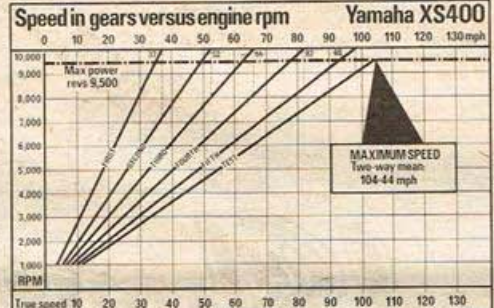
Only during red-line performance testing did it dip below 50mpg, to 46.3, in fact. Electronic ignition completes the engine package and Yamaha claim 45.5bhp at 9,500rpm for the XS compared to the 38bhp at 8,800 on the old machine so the latest machine's better performance was expected.

What is surprising is the striking similarity in which both old and new twins delivered their power. The old XS was always a free-revving machine which liked using high revs and imparted audible notice that it was doing just that. And it's like that with the new machine.

There's always lots of



Monoshock rear suspension has become the hallmark of many a modern motor cycle. The XS400's is adjustable to five spring pre-load settings.



Single front disc brake is adequate and offset spoke-pattern provides another variation on the cast wheel theme.

mechanical commotion of an almost musical nature and despite the motors willingness to freely yield high rpm, it creates the false impression that it's straining to do so.

But it revs so freely I was surprised to learn that, like the old XS, it possesses only two valves per cylinder.

You need about 4,000rpm on the tachometer before it gets into its stride and it accelerates about as hard as its going to when you hit 6,000rpm with a wide open throttle. Red-line is at 10,000rpm.

Individually the six gears provide lower overall ratios than before and a genuine 70mph is returned at a high 6,400rpm in top.

But, like the old XS, the new machine is capable of holding 85mph cruising but accelerating from 50-60mph in top gear fails to deliver and you'll need to call on fifth or even fourth gear to wind up the motor.

Once it reaches more than 70mph the XS comfortably holds speed without the need to chase down the gears in search of a more suitable ratio.

Handling, the most discussed factor in modern motor cycling, was good once we'd sorted severe problems which temporarily made the XS one of the poorest handling machines I'd ridden for years.

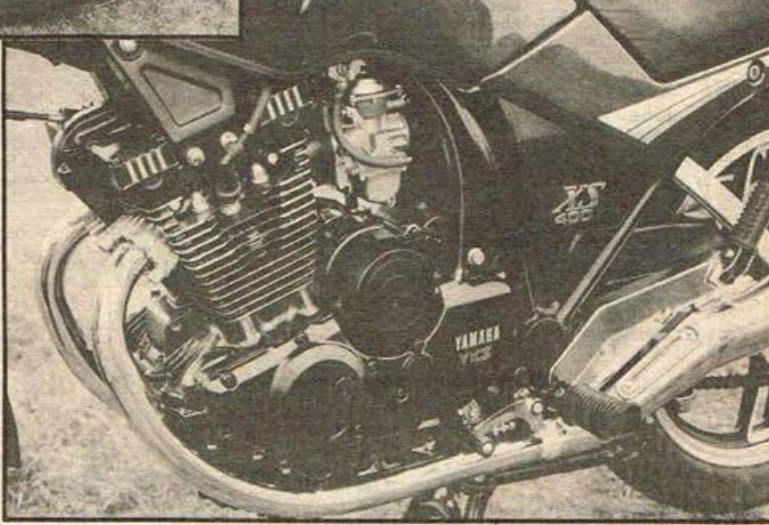
And the lesson for all, here, brought home the dramatic effects worn tyres can have on handling.

Our test machine returned from the recent launch on a millionaires private race track at Mas du Clas in France with the tyres were badly scrubbed at their edges from a combination of hard-riding and a severe surface.

This unusual wear created the unlikely circumstance of understeer on one corner followed by oversteer on the next curve with a tendency to right-hand bias in steering adding further complications.

The transformation when new tyres were fitted was immeasurable. The steering became beautifully neutral and the machine began to perform like its racy styling would indicate.

With alternator mounted behind cylinders, the XS400 mill is compact and narrow. Note head-steady showing that motor is a stressed member of the frame.



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Once we'd renewed oddly-worn tyres, XS handling achieved a high par. But it can be a little petulant when a large passenger is added.

Handling qualities were calm and steadfast, a sensible balance

bags of information about the surface below.

And there's none of the rear-end pogoing so familiar with the old XS.

But physically small and light, handling can suffer from the addition of a hefty passenger even if the unit is set on the hardest pre-load.

The front end becomes light while at the rear you get a hint of unwanted lateral movement in the rear suspension.

A passenger will also have to contend with a horribly uncomfortable pillion perch as it seems there's no such thing as seat technology. Less than 50 miles will have a passenger screaming for mercy.

Riding position, through, is capable of sustaining the pilot at the cruising speeds which the XS is capable of. The handlebars are flat, enabling the rider to absorb wind pressure while the seat itself,

up to 12 inches wide, provides reasonable comfort.

But the frame top tubes are widely spaced and the styling of both petrol tank and seat forces the riders knees well out into the airflow. Flattening knees against the tank rapidly causes aching thighs.

But overall, the styling has cloaked what is still a fairly humble parallel-twin with a special grace.

It is neat, compact and func-

tional with the thankfully large petrol tank providing a healthy range of more than 200 miles.

And once you get the motor warmed up, something which takes several miles on full choke, there's no doubt Yamaha has succeeded with its objectives.

It's the kind of machine which proves you don't need a one-litre multi for practical long distance motor cycling.

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June

Saturday 5 June
Sunday 6 June
Saturday 12 June
Sunday 13 June
Saturday 19 June
Sunday 20 June
Saturday 26 June
Sunday 27 June
Tuesday 29 June

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Sunday 8 August
Tuesday 10/11 August
Saturday 14 August
Sunday 15 August
Saturday 21 August
Sunday 22 August
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Sunday 5 September
Saturday 11 September
Sunday 12 September
Saturday 18 September
Sunday 19 September
Saturday 25 September
Sunday 26 September

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October

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Sunday 3 October
Saturday 9 October
Sunday 10 October

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Friday 16 July
Saturday 17 July

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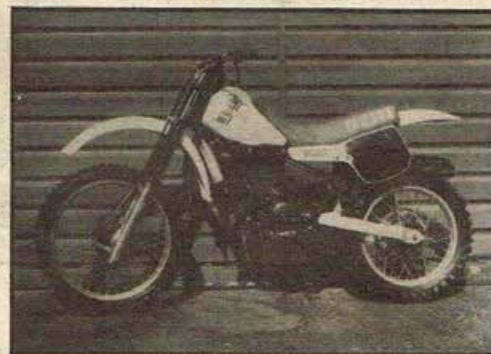


Getting it on - Guy guns the YZ100J out of a corner.

**Guy Woollett gets to grips with
the little Yam with a big heart**

YZ100J SPECIFICATION

ENGINE: Single-cylinder air-cooled two-stroke
CAPACITY: 98cc (50 x 50mm).
COMPRESSION ratio: 8:1.
CARBURATION: VM30SS Mikuni.
MAXIMUM POWER: 22bhp at 11,500rpm.
MAXIMUM TORQUE: 10.1lb-ft at 9,500rpm.
PRICE: £960 inc VAT.
TRANSMISSION: Gear primary drive. Wet multi-plate clutch and six-speed gearbox. Chain final drive.
ELECTRICS: CDI ignition.
FRAME: Duplex steel tubular cradle.
SUSPENSION: Air-assisted telescopic front fork with 9.8in. travel. Yamaha Monocross rising-rate rear suspension with gas/spring/oil control. 10in. travel.
WHEELS: Spoked, aluminum rims.
TYRES: Tubed. 3.00in x 21in. front. 4.10in x 18in. rear.
BRAKES: Drum front and rear.
DRY WEIGHT: 191lb.
FUEL CAPACITY: 1.8 gallons.
WHEELBASE: 55.9in.
SEAT HEIGHT: 35in.
GROUND CLEARANCE: 12.4in. (minimum).



YAMAHA'S latest 100cc moto crosser, the YZ100J, is so good it's a crying shame only schoolboys are allowed to race it!

For under existing ACU/AMCA rules and regulations, the smallest capacity machines used in senior competition are 125cc.

Which is silly when you think about it, for today's 100cc bikes are far faster than the 250s of 20 years ago and would be ideal for young riders seeking to break into the big-time - cheaper than the new wave of grand prix-style 125cc machines yet fast enough to provide good sport.

In fact, the class is popular in the States and the latest YZ100 is a full-sized man's machine and appeared impressive when delivered to the Editor Mick Woollett for testing.

"It looks big, but once you get on it and the suspension goes down it's fine," Guy Woollett, the editor's moto cross-mad 13-year-old younger son, said.

In fact, the new rising rate Monocross rear suspension, which incorporates a double linkage, came in for favourable comment.

"It definitely handles better than the 80cc models I've ridden. The rear suspension has so much travel it irons out

the bumps - you can hardly feel it when you land. It's great," Guy said.

Front suspension was not quite up to the same standard.

"The air forks are good when you are braking, but the wheel pattered and made the front too light on the straights

- I'll have to try them with more pressure in them to see if they are better that way," he said.

In fact, the comprehensive manual has a section telling how to "tune" both the front and rear suspensions to correct various faults.

General riding position is

good and the way the seat blends on to the tank was praised as a good safety feature - though Guy felt the bracing handlebar stay also should have been padded.

If it had been, it may have saved him a nasty whack on his left knee as he sailed over the handlebars after colliding

with a rival on the track! The YZ100J proved easy to start despite the short travel of the kickstart which is restricted by the rootrest.

The engine needed only a little choke and soon warmed up, luckily as the choke lever was hard to get at with a gloved hand.

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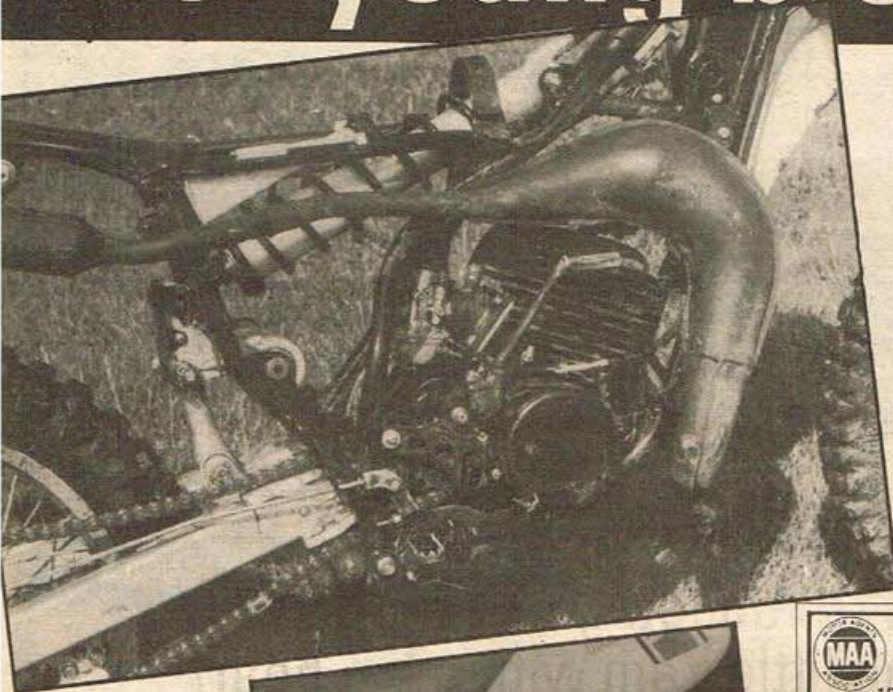
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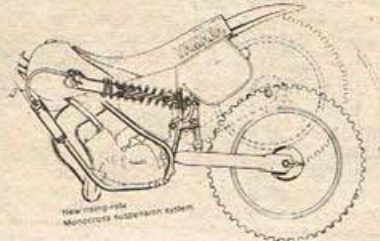
NOW!



A man-sized crosser for young blokes!



Tank, panels and air-cleaner removed to show the new rising-rate rear suspension set up. Note the link pivot above the rear fork pivot. Drawing, below, shows the set up with gas reservoir mounted on the front down tube.



As with all small capacity, high-performance two-strokes, you had to rev the YZ100J hard to get the best out of it.

But once under way it compared favourably with a YZ250G belonging to a friend.

"From a standing start I could keep up until he changed into fourth gear - it was only then he could pull away. Mind you the track was tacky - probably on a one-day circuit it would be different," Guy said.

Attention to detail is good. The footrests are spring-loaded and so is the end piece of the gear pedal and brake.

The rear brake rod is protected by a neat guard where it passes the frame and the lengthy rear chain is kept in place by a nylon guide ahead of the rear sprocket - and a nylon block protects the rear swinging fork near the pivot.

The frame is neat and fits closely around the new 98cc engine which incorporates the Yamaha YE1S and Torque Induction systems.

The large rear suspension



Yamaha's long involvement in moto cross is reflected in the attention to detail and the neat way everything is tucked away.

unit is well protected with gas reservoir mounted on the front down tube.

Both damping and rebound can be adjusted to suit the rider's weight and riding style.

Gearbox is a six-speeder. The change is good; fast and positive and the clutch took up the drive smoothly with no slip or judder.

The longish wheelbase and the Monocross rear suspension kept the front wheel down and it was hard to wheelie the YZ100J - even in first and second gears.

All in all, an impressive, purpose-built moto crosser that has obviously benefitted from Yamaha's years of experience in building competition cross-country bikes.

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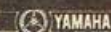
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Hey dad, they got it right again!

SMALL is good. Small can be better. So says my five-year-old son Tom, who, after a brief encounter with Yamaha's best-yet offering in the mini-bike range, is convinced that his favourite bike the Yamaha PW50, is even better now that there's a sidecar as an optional extra.

When asked if he thought that the 3/4-inch steel-framed moto cross-style sidecar with details like the drilled aluminium floor, sidecar wheel suspension and alloy wheel arches, not to mention a smashing three-spoke easy clean knobby-tired sidecar wheel, was any better than the solo version, he came out with a long, thoughtful "yes". With a nonchalance only mastered by kids, he and his mates took to the sidecar version of Yamaha's "Pewee" like ducks to water. The original solo version of the 50cc air-cooled two-stroke



This shows just how light the 'chair is. Care must be taken though, when youngsters make a right-hand turn, because the sidecar wheel lifts easily. There are no rough edges for the kids to hurt themselves on, and the quality of construction is superb.



with shaft drive - proved to be one of Yamaha's best sellers with adults finding every opportunity to ride the bikes. Proof of the pudding is that the dozen or so PW50s that Yamaha have been carting around the country on their year-long promotional activities have stood the test of time, with some, after a tiny bit of refurbishing, set to see out another year of ill-treatment in the hands of unsympathetic nippers.

But if one is company, then two is a sidecar team, and now junior can take dad for a ride on the bike. The sidecar outfit is really that strong. My thirteen-stone neighbour, a trials rider himself, delighted in pottering around on the minuscule outfit on some pretty rough ground, with the bike showing no signs of strain.

The bike is a tough little nut. In its original form, it has a restrictor plate inserted in the exhaust pipe. This is to keep the power down whilst junior gets used to the handling of the bike, and can be removed by simply slipping out the

plate once the exhaust pipe is loosened from the cylinder head - a job that takes about three minutes. But it's not all plain sailing, because there aren't many adults who can handle a sidecar outfit, let alone kids. The right-hand mounted sidecar is very light and will easily lift on right-hand turns, so children should be forewarned. It's really a good idea to keep the restrictor in position until the rider is completely familiar with the outfit's handling.

Specification: PW50

ENGINE: Single cylinder two-stroke; 49cc (40 x 39.7mm), developing 2.7bhp at 5,500rpm. Compression ratio 6.0 to 1. Automatic lubrication. Electronic ignition.

DIMENSIONS: Overall length, 48in; overall width, 22in; overall height, 28in; seat height, 19in; wheelbase, 33in; ground clearance, 4.1in; dry weight, 81lb (solo); tyres, 2.50 x 10. Drum brakes front and back.

PRICE: £425 with sidecar, £285 solo.

IMPORTERS: Mitsui Machinery Sales Limited, Oakcroft Road, Chessington, Surrey. Telephone 01-397 5111.

by Geoff Aspel

With its low seat height, separate oil and petrol tanks, and shaft drive, which is a miniature of the pukka thing,

the most anxious parent should be satisfied with safety. There's also the novel starting switch mounted on the right-hand handlebar. To start the bike, flick the switch to 'start'. This will of course, enable the bike to be kick-started, but opening the throttle merely revs the bike up. To move off, the switch has to be moved to the 'run' position, and finally, there's the 'off' position. A flip-up choke lever is mounted on the steering head. Brakes are mounted bicycle-style, on both handlebars; there is a deep padded seat which comes right up to the fuel tank like the moto crossers, and the sturdy three-spoke wheels are strong and easy to keep clean. In our household, the solo Yamaha was raved about, but with the sidecar attached, it's a downright sensation!

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