

# Performance BIKES



## 125 FRENZY



UK'S QUICKEST

## KAWASAKI ZX-10



JAPAN'S FASTEST?

## YAMAHA TDR NEW STYLE HEADBANGER!



# FROM DUBROV

The bug had been planted in the editor's desk for three months before the vital information was relayed to the tape machine hidden in the school broom cupboard opposite PB's Peterborough offices.

Yoshi Miyazaki could hardly contain his delight. Spending three months as a school cleaner was hardly the way an industrial espionage agent should earn his wages, he thought. But now he'd got what he had come to the UK for and there'd be a healthy bonus in store for him when he returned to Japan. Speed was vital from now on. Yoshi booked himself a club class seat on the next 747 bound for Narita airport, Tokyo. There he took a taxi for the three hour journey to the factory headquarters.

His arrival at the factory had been expected. Yoshi faxed his boss just hours after that vital conversation had been recorded on his tape deck in that dusty, dark cupboard all the way back in Peterborough. Within minutes of him climbing from the taxi, he was seated at the head of a large conference table around which sat the cream of Yamaha's motorcycle R and D department. The team was desperate for new ideas, they were convinced that Yoshi was going to come up with the goods.

"Gentleman," croaked Yoshi, his voice hoarse after 25 hours of non-stop travelling, "I think this tape here will tell you all you need to know. It was recorded in an editorial meeting at the offices of Performance Bikes magazine in the UK last week. The editor and his team were discussing the creation of their next 'project bike'. You will already be familiar with their interesting attempts at modifying KH250s, CB400s, Z250s and TS250s. I believe their latest idea could be made to work on the production line. But we must work fast."

Yoshi switched on the machine set upon the desk in front of him. Three unfamiliar voices were engaged in an enthusiastic conversation. It began:

"We should be able to get an RD350 motor for a couple of hundred quid and with a bit of work we should get it to fit the CR250 chassis sitting in my garage. Then all we need add is small wheels, fat road tyres, twin headlights, a socking great disc brake, two up and over spannies and we'll have

## PB's spy catcher Matskov Oxlski jets to Yugoslavia to steal a ride on Yamaha's crazy new TDR.



Yugo roads are lubricated with goat's blood and spilt diesel but TDR tyres and suspension are made for scratching.



With a horde of police Zastavas biting at his heels, Oxlski attacks the Yugo mountain trails in wimpish style.

the ultimate street scrambler. It'll be fast, handle, out pose any FZR or GSX-R and it'll pull great wheelies . . ."

Yoshi turned the machine off.

"That, gentleman, is all you really need to know," he said knowing that his work was now over, the R and D team's only just beginning.

At first he was met by stunned silence. It seemed that the Yamaha bosses could hardly believe the millions of yen they'd spent on the Peterborough operation had yielded just a few sentences of useful information.

Shinichi Oshima, chief of two-strokes was first to answer.

"This British idea seems to be based on the French Supermotard series where the machines are half road race, half motocross. Already in France there are many enthusiasts who make their own road replicas of these machines. They look great."

"I believe there was also an RD350 powered machine entered in last year's Paris Dakar rally," volunteered engine designer Shigeo Takemura.

The conference continued into the small hours but when the twelve tired bodies set out for home their minds were racing with ideas. The Peterborough concept had already evolved into a basic machine specification; a street minded trail chassis holding a full spec TZR250 engine.

It was a whole new idea to the men and something told them they could be in at the start of something big. The factory bosses were already aware that the race replica concept was getting stale. A new breed of street scrambler could fire a whole new craze and begin the market expansion they were looking for.

No news of Yamaha's plans got out of the factory for over six months. The PB editorial team, in their usual laid back fashion, had got no further than discussing their RD powered CR, but in early December an anonymous telex arrived on the editor's desk.

URGENT MESSAGE  
STOP YAMAHA SECRET  
TESTS OF NEW ON/OFF  
ROAD MACHINE IN  
YUGOSLAVIA STOP TEST  
HQ BELIEVED  
DUBROVNIK STOP  
SUGGEST YOU ARRANGE  
RIDE STOP.

The information should't have excited the editor

# NIK WITH LOVE

unduly. The Japanese were always testing pre-production bikes in Europe and these tip-offs weren't unheard of. Admittedly the venue was a little unusual and somehow the editor's interest was aroused.

He put it down to the journalist's sixth sense and knew that a great scoop was on the cards here. Besides it was warm and sunny down there.

"Clare", he said huskily to his ultra efficient secretary,

"Book me a seat to Dubrovnik on the next plane."

Twenty-seven hours later the very rattly, DC-9 was yawing its way haphazardly into Dubrovnik airport, a strip of dusty concrete set just yards away from the coolly glowing Adriatic sea.

The first job was to find exactly where, Yamaha had based their secret test operation.

The airport would be no good for that kind of information. Questions could arouse suspicion and there were more than a few surly looking guards hanging around, idly fondling their Kalashnikov automatics.





immediately.

The editor knew he'd have to strike fast. If one of the Yamaha personnel recognised him he'd have wasted his trip and missed the scoop of the decade.

His plan was simple. Rise at dawn, lie in wait outside the hotel gates and jump on the test rider when he appeared.

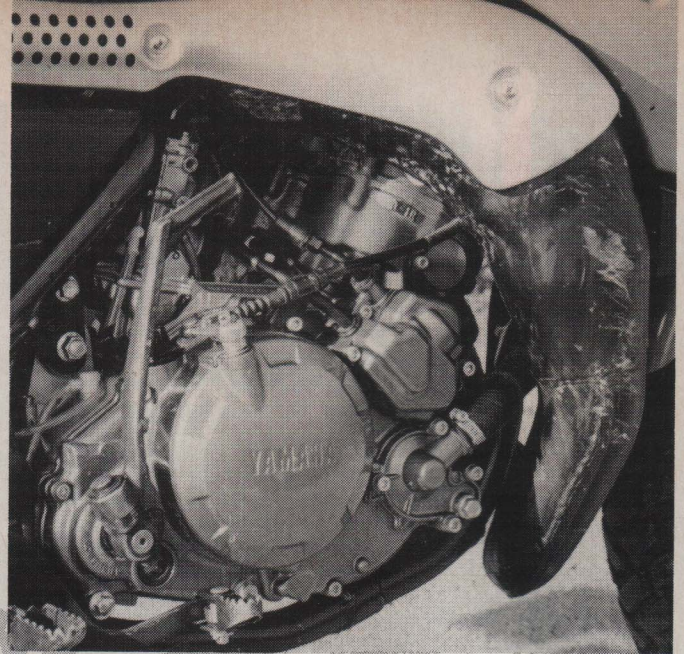
He'd been hiding in the scrubby hedge for two hours when the sharp crackle of a two-stroke exhaust rent the dawn air. The noise sounded immediately familiar — it had to be a TZR250. His heart sank, if this was all he'd come for, he'd wasted his time.

He listened as the bike was warmed up for a minute and then heard it approach down the hotel drive.

Suddenly the bike was in sight. Hardly looking at the machine, the editor leapt from his hiding spot and delivered a swift kick to the right kidney of the rider. His victim jerked to the left gasping in pain and the bike crashed to the ground. In an instant the editor lifted it up, noting it felt just 24lb heavier than a TZR, hit the kickstarter and before the test rider could recover, stabbed the bike into gear.

By now the adrenalin had taken total control and he took a greedy grab at the throttle as he let the clutch home. The front wheel must have been four foot off the ground before he'd got it under control and then shifted into second.

"Mmmmm, does good wheelies. I'll be having a lot of fun today," he thought. Now he'd got the bike, the editor knew he had just two hours



**Yamaha didn't even bother to detune the TZR motor. Instead they just lowered the first gear ratio and the overall gearing. Does it pull wheelies or what?**

riding ahead of him before he'd have to abandon the machine, catch the lunchtime flight out of Dubrovnik and head for home where he'd be greeted as a hero. No other journalist had ever done this before, they just waited for the official launches where they were cosseted and pampered to by the manufacturers. This was real journalism.

Racing up the madly twisting Yugoslavian mountain road with the Adriatic 500 feet below, he realised the bike was like nothing else he'd ever ridden.

When he'd first leapt aboard the riding position had told him this was some kind of trail bike, but that didn't match up to the way the bike worked.

For a start it was way faster than any trail iron he'd ever ridden (including the quickest 650s) and it handled more like a sports bike than a stodgy trailster. Somehow he was very confused, but the more he rode it, the more he liked it. Yamaha had worked some strange magic to produce a machine of such potency.

Unlike normal trail bikes he soon found that the suspension travel wasn't too much for road use, so the bike steered sharply and was really stable as he flung it into the tight turns that climbed up the Montenegro foothills.

Despite the high and wide bars he was fast becoming very convinced that this was no trail bike, the brakes hauled him up for the hairpins like a sports machine and the acceleration was something else. The engine, he decided without doubt, was a TZR250 unit with slightly lower gearing.

After 15 minutes of frantic work through the swervery, the editor finally reckoned he was safe to check out the true identity of this machine.

He pulled off onto a farm track and killed the engine behind a hedge, out of sight of the road. He flicked down the side stand and was able to get his first real look at the bike.

The design was inspired! He was right about the engine, the TZR casings were recognizable at first glance. But what delightful lunacy to stick a TZR motor in a trail bike chassis! If Yamaha were really going to put this creation on the roads it surely deserved to sell like hot cakes. It had been years since he'd had such unbridled fun from a motorcycle. Unlike repli-racers you didn't have to go 140mph to get your rocks off with this thing.

The chassis looked like a trail unit but it was obviously



**Crazy is the only word to describe a TZR motor in a trail style chassis. Yamaha hope the TDR will appeal to those riders who are getting bored by repli-racers. It deserves to be a hit.**

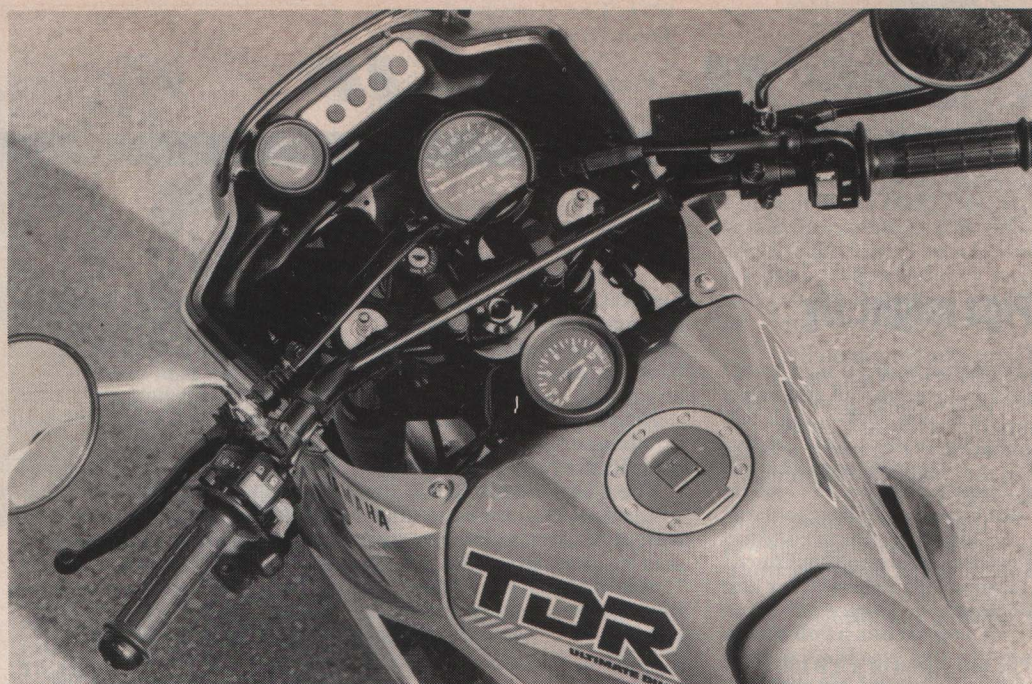
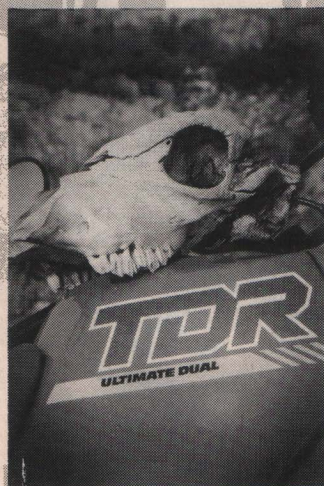
more than that. The wheels were small with dual purpose Metzlers (but they were the right size to take proper street sports tyres), there was a socking great front disc, exactly like the one fitted to the TZR, the front mudguard was short and low like a sports bike and the bodywork with integral headlight finally made it all fit. This bike was just what he'd wanted to do with that RD350 motor and CR chassis.

He was amazed that any factory had had the guts to want to put a bike like this into production. But it wasn't a total risk. The bike had the looks, the performance and the ability to out-scratch FZR's on back roads that would appeal to a new breed of headbangers. Now all he wanted was to ride it some more.

Checking that the smallest fuel tank was nearly full he climbed back on board and kicked the motor into life again. Pulling back onto the road he popped another huge wheelie for fun and aimed the bike at the hills again. Revving hard through the gears he found most of the bike's power between 7000 and 9500rpm just like the TZR. That meant that Yamaha must have left the TZR port and YPVS timing alone. He imagined that this must be what a GP motocrosser feels like in a straight line — totally crazy and very, very fast.

Rounding a tight right hander, with his right boot skimming the tarmac motocross style, he was confronted by a blue Zastava parked sideways across the road. Four uniformed guards had their fingers on four shiny Kalashnikov automatics. They looked like they didn't want to let him pass.

He was in second gear just then. But instead of slowing, he grabbed a big handful of throttle and aimed to the left of the car using the bike's terrific manoeuvrability to the full. Before the police could fire he was past and thrust his head onto the tank to present them



The handlebars lie — this is no stodgy trail bike. Note artistically scattered instruments.

the smallest possible target. But the shots didn't come. Instead the police were leaping into the Zastava and heading after him. Soon he was off the coast road and heading inland. Here the roads were straighter. Flat on the tank behind the little fairing he saw almost 110mph on the speedo with the bike perfectly stable.

Though he knew that Zastava would never keep up, he knew there would be others chasing, closing in from all directions. Arriving on the outskirts of a village he spotted two more police cars heading for him and behind them was what looked like an army truck.

There was only one way out now: lose them on the rough. He flicked the bike left onto a narrow lane, impressed again by the rapid turn of direction. A glance into the mirror confirmed that the police had seen his move and were following and they weren't far behind.

He noticed with a smile that the road ahead became a rough track — that would sort the Zastavas out. He hit the gravel at around 40mph. It wasn't difficult to maintain that kind of speed despite the fact that he was a useless off-road rider. Even so he was enjoying himself. The bike's suspension was enough to soak up most of the bumps and the bike steered well on the rough but he kept well away from the fierce front brake.

Then the going got more difficult as he climbed uphill with the gravel turning to small rocks. Cranking into a right hand hairpin he dialled in too much throttle and the bike crashed down onto its side. It was his fault but it could have been a fatal mistake. The Zastavas were closing as he got

the bike back upright and set-off again, the sweat pouring down his face.

He could sense that the police were trying harder now that they were closer. Now he was really working hard, working to save his life, using every bit of capability the bike had and praying that this was no ordinary motorcycle. Luckily God and the Yamaha were on his side.

Though the exhausts were no quieter than a TZR's he couldn't miss the terrified screams from behind. He shot a rearward look over his shoulder to see one of the Zastavas cartwheeling down the mountain side.

The remaining car didn't give up but chased him more and more feebly for another five miles before he found himself back on tarmac road, out of sight.

Up ahead he could see a figure waving to him in the road. As he got closer the face gradually became recognisable. It couldn't be . . . surely it couldn't be him.

But it was. He came to a halt directly in front of Yamaha PR man Andy Smith. Smith's face was glowing red.

"What the bloody hell are you up to Oxley?" said Smith, his voice straining with rage. "We invite you out here for a few days testing with the rest of the UK press, you almost kill *Superbike's* assistant editor and then career off on your own up some mountain pass. It wasn't supposed to be your turn to ride the bike till tomorrow. It was *MCN's* turn this afternoon. And you're due at the Yamaha tech presentation in half an hour. We're all rather upset and so are the four Yugo cops who got killed trying to tell you all this on that mountain pass an hour

ago."

Gosh, didn't the editor feel silly. But he's made it up to them by buying a TDR. "Must stand for 'Terrifically Dim-witted Rider'," he thought as he followed Smith back to the press base at the Belvedere Hotel.

MO



## S P E C

**Engine:** Water-cooled two stroke twin with YPVS. Capacity 249cc. Power 50.3bhp at 10,000rpm. Torque 26.7lb-ft at 8500rpm. Basically it's a TZR motor with lower first gear (for off-road) and lower overall gearing.  
**Chassis:** Tubular steel cradle frame. 27 degrees castor. 38mm diameter telescopic forks. Rising rate Monocross system rear with single shock, remote reservoir. Single disc with four piston caliper front, single disc with twin piston caliper rear. Metzeler tyres 100/90 x 118 front, 120/80 x 17 rear. Dry weight 302lb (137kg) Expected price approx £2600, expected availability March.

The characters portrayed in this story are entirely fictional (well, most of them anyway).