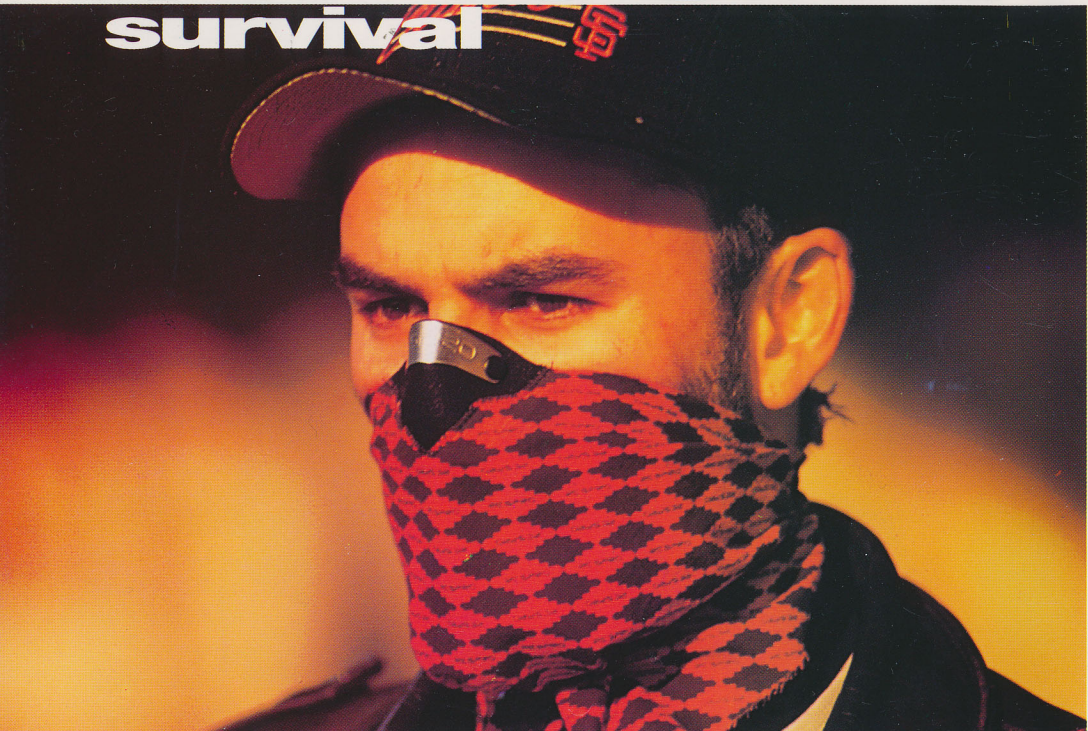


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DT200WR
We test Yammy's best DT

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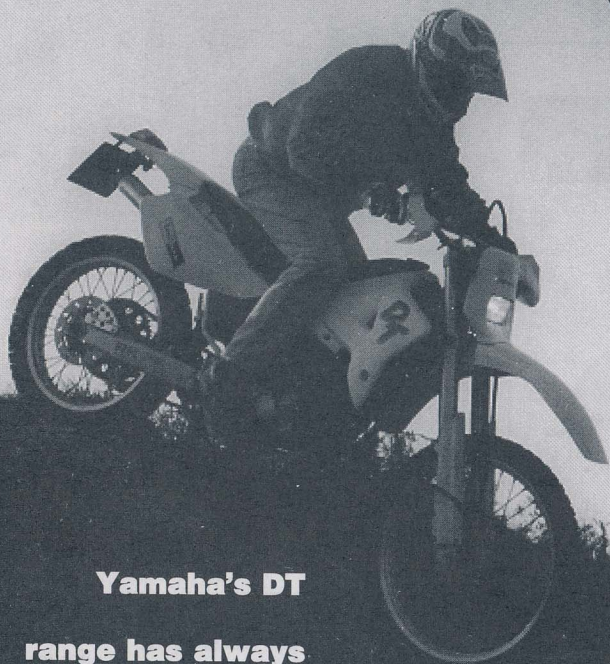
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TRAIL TEST

YAMAHA DT200WR



Yamaha's DT range has always been highly regarded as a capable range of trail bikes. Dave 'Crasher' Cornish took a spin on probably the most desirable DT of all - the Japanese spec DT200WR

Back in the summer of 1991 I was lucky enough to get a brief ride on the first Yamaha WR200 imported into the UK. Mitsui Yamaha had brought the enduro spec 200 in to Britain to evaluate the bike's sales potential. In spite of being allowed only a short time on the new 200 I could tell that it was indeed something special. The WR's super smooth and supple suspension was leagues ahead of that of my own well sorted KDX200, and the Yam also possessed a powerplant that was at once both fast like the KDX, yet smooth and torquy.

Despite its excellent credentials, its forgiving nature, and the fact that the WR was probably one of the best clubman enduro bikes around, last year it was axed from the Yamaha range due to poor sales - (something which can't have been helped by Yamaha's reluctance to advertise their enduro bikes) - though the WR250, an altogether different machine, lives on. So when I was recently offered the 'grey import' trail version to test for a couple

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DT200WR looks virtually identical to the WR200 enduro bike, but is slightly better for trail riding



of weeks I couldn't wait to get my paws on it. The trailie version of the WR200 is sold in other markets as a DT200WR and as the DT moniker implies, this bike comes equipped with all the expected road going goodies absent on the full-on enduro machine.

As with other trail bikes (like the Honda CRM and Suzuki TS), an autolube system replaces the need for messy pre mixing, the subframe is beefed up to carry a passenger and the bike comes fitted with speedo, mini indicators, quiet exhaust and an uprated lighting system. Apart from these extras the DT looks almost identical to its racer brother. Chunky Kayaba 'USD' forks hold up the front end, and the slim (aquamarine blue) MX-style seat dominates the bike's profile, this comfortable perch stretches from the profiled rear mudguard all the way up to the locking fuel cap and allows

the rider uninterrupted movement from front to back.

From its neat integrated enduro headlamp to the huge Deltabox alloy swing arm, the DT200WR looks every bit the pukka off roader, but with the convenience of something far more civilised both on *and* off the road. A conventional chrome moly duplex frame houses the powerful 199cc motor that dominates the DT. The two stroke, YPVS, power valve-equipped single breathes through a 34mm flatslide case reed mounted Mikuni carb and puts out a claimed 35hp at 9000rpm. As you would expect liquid cooling is utilised which incorporates a thermostat for a rapid warm up and twin rads with an expansion tank for keeping it all nice and cool.

Firing up the WR entails rummaging around for the carb mounted choke, switching on the ignition (situated neatly

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in the top fork yoke) and stabbing at the tiny right handed kick start lever (I've ridden bikes with more substantially proportioned gearlevers than the 200's tiny kickstarter). The trick is to kick the motor over using just the tip of your toes, not much of a problem when you get used to it but just watch your shin on the heavily serrated footrest. One or two stabs at the lever is all that is normally required and once started the muted burble from the exhaust takes on a hard-edged rasp if you give it some revs. Our test bike came fitted with an after-market RSV tail pipe which may or may not improve the performance but it certainly gave the bike a distinctive 'sporty' tone to the exhaust.

Once fired up the motor warms up quickly and the fun can begin. getting onto the DT's relatively low 895mm seat is easier than it looks since the suspension sags enough to enable the average rider to comfortably touch the ground both sides. The view to the front is familiar Yamaha fare with a small kph speedo sat alongside a small binnacle containing the usual array of idiot lights. Its basic alright, as is the switchgear, but all you really need. Click it into gear, ease out the light clutch the bike responds



instantly, leaping forward and accelerating at a truly amazing rate through all six ratios in its well spaced box. Keep the throttle wound on and your left foot will have a job to shift up quick enough; this motor is seriously *fast*.

Thanks to its adrenaline-pumping powerplant, the DT200WR can turn any normally sane rider into a serious petrol head, the urge to keep the engine on the pipe simply proves to much for even the most level headed of riders. It's not that



Despite unadjustable front suspension, the DT feels comfortable on the rough. But it's that addictive powerplant that truly impresses

the DT lacks mid range torque in fact the 200 stroker makes more torque (and at lower revs) than Yamaha's own TT250R four stroke. But the transition from power-valve half open to fully open has the motor producing an unbelievable addictive surge that few can resist. Ripping around the back lanes of Norfolk, the bike is in it's element. The well damped and compliant suspension soaking up pot holes and badly surfaced tarmac as if they don't exist. In fact on these sort of tight and twisty roads you'd be hard placed to find a better bike than the DT/WR. Fitted with a pair of 17 inch rims and some seriously sticky tyres, I reckon nothing short of a big Husky would touch it.

Given a top speed of around 90-95mph (that's nearly ten mph up on the editorial CRM on standard gearing), I was glad that the twin-pot Nissin caliper biting onto a 219mm front disc did its job well slowing the bike safely to a halt. As well as being supremely powerful the brakes offer plenty of feel both front and rear, and are well matched.

Whilst the long, slim, MX-inspired saddle looks like it might only be comfortable for a short race I spent over an hour just on

TRAILSPOORT

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DT200WR

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main trunk roads (including fast dual car-
riageways), and even at high speeds the
DT felt reasonably comfortable. However,
as with most lightweight trailies, main
roads are not the best way of getting
around, stick to B-roads and the DT is
much more fun.

Off road the DT didn't disappoint
either. Rutted tracks and dusty off cam-
ber climbs were shrugged off by the light-
weight DT which weighs just 107kg. The
smoothly damped and compliant sus-
penders coped well with most obstacles
found on a hot summer's day trailing, and
bimbling along at slower speeds is well
within the bikes capabilities.

Keeping the front end light is obvi-
ously no problem and even deep sand
holds no fears for the intrepid DT pilot
since that excellent full length seat
enables the rider to move around the bike
easily - just the ticket for tougher madgery
sections. Press on a bit and the slick shift-
ing transmission can be cogged both up
and down the box without the need for

T E C H S P E C

Yamaha DT200WR

Price (as tested): £2500

Engine: Liquid cooled 2-stroke
single with YPVS

Displacement: 199cc

Power: 35hp @ 9000rpm

Transmission: 6-speed

Frame: Cro-moly duplex frame
with alloy Deltabox swing-arm
Forks: Kayaba USD 41mm (non-
adjustable)

Shock: Kayaba piggyback

Seat height: 895mm

Fuel capacity: 10L

Weight: 107kg

Max speed: Approx 90-95 mph

the clutch, though the gearing is rather
more suited to road and trail use than
more serious enduro type terrain, and a
smaller countershaft sprocket would
doubtless offer the rider more appropri-
ate ratios from which to choose.

Fuel consumption is, putting it mild-
ly, not the DT's strong point. Less than
40mpg is the norm and I'm sure it would-
n't take much more off road abuse to
drop this figure to nearer 30mpg. Not all
that impressive but I suppose fairly pre-
dictable given the DT's output from such
a small engine. The fuel tank holds just 10
litres of unleaded so you'd better keep a
wary eye out for petrol stations if you
indulge in plenty of right wrist.

The DT200WR's competition heritage
is always apparent, chassis, suspension
and motor all compliment each other bril-
liantly to make the bike a serious but
practical trailie for everyday use. Sensible
features such as folding tip levers, grease
nipples on the shock linkages and even a
tiny pair of alloy passenger footrest make
the DT as practical a trailie as you're ever
likely to get in this arena. In fact, despite
its civilised features, the DT has lost very

little in its transition from enduro racer to
street legal trail bike. Sure the competi-
tion bike is a tad lighter, better suspend-
ed and pushes out a few more ponies but
for most off road conditions the DT can
cope almost as well and it goes without
saying that on the road the trailie wins
hands down, and is actually a lot faster.

Inevitably the DT200WR's biggest
competition will come from similar grey
imports such as the Suzuki TS200R,
Kawasaki KDX200SR and Honda CRM250R
and whilst any of these make good dual
purpose machines, the Yammy is just that
bit special thanks to its frenetic character
and sheer rarity. In fact the main problem
with the DT is that it's incredibly rare -
even in Japan where bikes like the CRM
outsell it five to one. If you see one for
sale, snap it up and be prepared to pay
somewhere between £2100-£2600 for a
whole heap of fun.

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