

T+MX News IMPRESSIONS

HONDA'S 200 IS A TASTY NUMBER

ALTHOUGH it will be early next year before Honda UK start importing the new TL 200 trials bike that development rider Kiyoteru Hattori rode in the SSDT, we were lucky enough to have a quick ride on Eric Lejeune's bike he use at Kickstart, here's a quick impression of the new production machine.

However, those of you who can't wait until next year will be pleased to know that the bikes are already available in the country right now at D and K Motorcycles, South Humberside. Proprietor David Smith has sold the entire first batch and is expecting another in the next week. The price is £1,380 including VAT, delivery and Car Tax.

T+MX staffman John Dickinson tested Kiyoteru's own 250 Honda at the Hurst Cup earlier this year and was very impressed. The 200 shares the same cycle parts except for a smaller barrel and piston. As the seat height is low, and the bike nice and light, the 200 Honda will appeal to many riders. It is very smooth on power, although some bigger lads will find it lacking urge as it's under the 200cc barrier, it will obviously steal some sales in the

schoolboy B class as well as the A class.

Showa forks and rear dampers give a very predictable feel to the handling, although Papa Lejeune, who is currently marketing the bike in Belgium, says on later models, a slight change in damper positioning may take place.

The compact OHC two valve motor was underpowered for Mike Greenough but many

lighter trials riders, will find it will do everything that is asked of it.

The smooth six speed box was very positive during the quick test ride, though a higher top cog is being developed at this moment. Said Lejeune, "We feel a higher top gear will make it even better on the road".

The strong box section swinging arm and front downtube add robustness to the compact little bike and it doesn't look as if it will shatter the first time you throw it off a 6ft rock ledge.

One interesting point is that very shortly there will be an easy-fit bolt on conversion kit, which ups the capacity to 250cc making it identical to the 250

Hattori rode to 10th place in the Hurst Cup trial.

Looking like a scaled down version of Eddy Le-

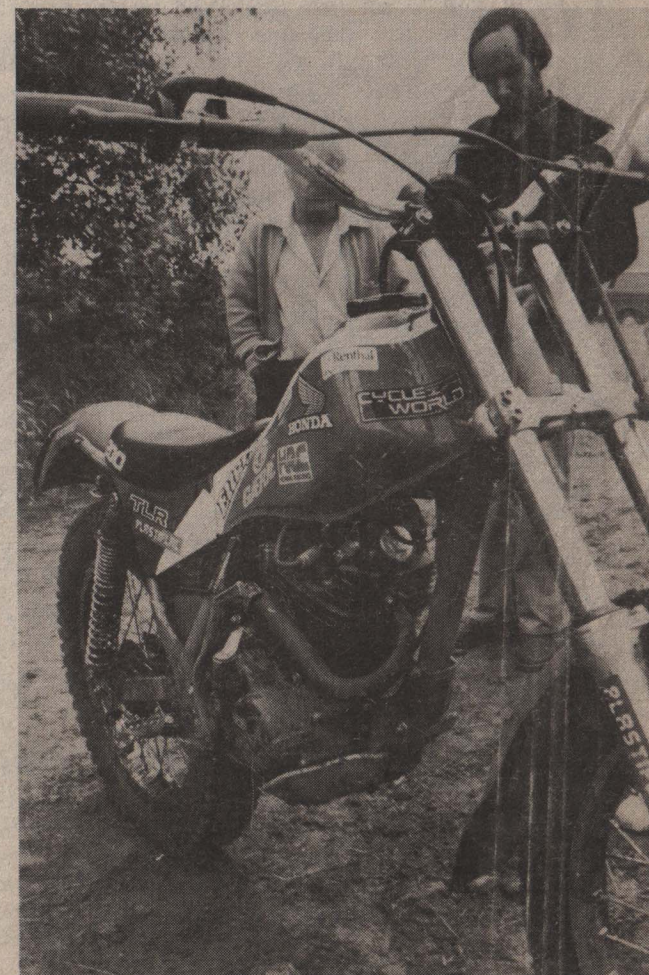
jeune's own 360, the little Honda can't fail to take off, and will be welcome addition to the scene.



Showa forks give excellent damping on the front end.



Handling of the 200 was excellent



The 200 looks a very robust machine indeed. The motor is protected by a substantial alloy sump shield.