

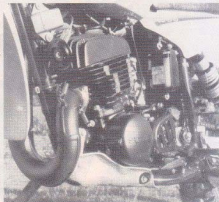


PE400 SUZUKI "T"

SUZUKI PE 400T "MASTER BLASTER"



The moto-crosser with a battery, the PE400 "T". Note the tubework around the critical area.



It will take a brave man to use this powerplant to its full.



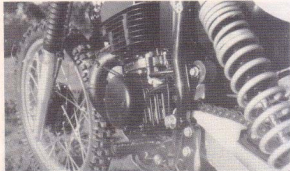
Glistening in early morning sunlight it lacks nothing for the serious-minded.

Most trial riders are familiar with the P.E. 250 and 175. Possibly you have been overtaken by one on the hilly trails, or just knew a guy who rides one. Perhaps you helped a rider up who fell from one eh! hardly. But you are aware of them. Well what of the 400. Just how does this most expensive of the range slot in. Come closer, we'll tell you right off or you can wait a few months and read about it in other mags. It was only a few days ago we got to ride the very P.E. 400 that won the recent Mt. Despair Enduro at Taggerty.

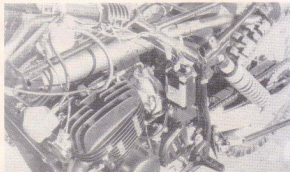
Said Murray Tainton. "Go out to Brian White's farm, the bike is out there, he will give you a ride on it, with a bit of luck he'll go with you. Brian like most farmers, loves to plow the earth whether it is with multiple discs or a 5.10 Metzeler it's all a load of laughs to him. Tall, slim Brian well spoken, vital, seemed just the type to be motivated by a Suzuki 400. "Sure I'll go out with you" he smiled eagerly. It was only a week ago Brian had ridden this Suzuki to outright victory in the Mt Despair Enduro. Some riders may feel a bit apprehensive as they eyeball this big machine. To vis the high seat, 96 cm, and the 400 printed on the side panel may conjure up visions of a recent M.X, you went to and were thrilled watching Mark Hill or some other R.M. rider spear off in a cloud of dust and wheelspin with the front wheel pawing the air. Relax, it's not quite like that.

The 400 looks very similar to the 250 but the big barrel and head leer back at you to let you know there have been some changes made. If your leg is long enough, you can throw it over and angle the bike to give it a kick. It lights up just as easy as the 250. Never did it kick back or show reluctance to start. If you can't make it, foot on the ground, it's no hassle to stand on the peg and kick it while on the side stand. Several I.S.D.T. riders of shorter stature use this method.

The Suzuki burbles over quickly enough even though the restrictor plate is out and muffler and modified. P.Es come stock with a 10 plug if you make the modifications it will run cooler and may tend to oil up so best to use a 9 or even 8 for efficient running. A tweak of the grip runs revs up a shade slower than some. Easing out the clutch showed less chance of stalling, with the bigger engine it seemed to pull away so strongly, but watch it! There are bags of torque lying in wait so don't give it too much

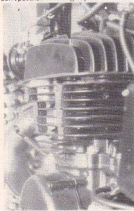


A big stokers got to be noisy, note the liberal use of fin rubbers.



A better idea of the thought that has gone into frame design

Even the rubbers have arrows on so's you don't put them in wrong way.



too soon. Right off you'll appreciate the power from minimal revs, there are no dead spots. Most two strokes don't pull hard until they reach about 4000 revs when power commences to build up, this 400 is strong right from little more than zero, when the clutch is home is the time power starts to come in.

Leaving Brians farm on to the gravel road at about a mere 3000 revs in third, a touch on the grip was enough to break traction and put the Suzuki in a gentle power slide making the turn into the road and facing off in the right direction for thrillsville. Power was exhilarating you couldn't help but appreciate and enjoy it. Sure the bike is tall, some say like riding a camel, this is the "in" thing you soon get used to. To allay your fears as you make a turn plant a foot on the ground and it will come reassuringly to find the terrain is not that far



The pics above and below show the well constructed chain guide system



Better than average exhaust system mount.



Alloy everywhere for lightness.

away. The reason for all this of course is the long suspension which soaks up the bumps to make it all worth while. Having the wheels more on the ground improves steering which was true and positive.

Brian rode us deeper into the woods, it had now become apparent suspension was a shade firm for a 10 stone rider particularly at rear. If you are 12 stone or more could be just right. Before it's time to rush in and spend your money on trick European shocks give it a few weeks to settle down they soon collapse a few cms. and soften up in the process. This is a machine to turn you on, enchanting to ride with so much power at hand a rider does not need to downshift when moving steadily on the trail. Unlike most bikes where you are swapping cogs all the time, third gear was just right to keep an average speed up hills, down gullies over washaways just about wherever you wish to ride in moderate manner. Instead of poking about with gears you could spend more time enjoying the ride. A little like riding an automatic. With 400 cc working for you and only 5 speeds a rider tended to pull higher gears, this meant less revs and a more relaxed style. Of course if you used the second half of the throttle and turned your head sideways, at first you may wonder why the scenery has become blurred. Then if you see a tail lamp and recognise it as your own you'll get the message to ease off a bit and pay more attention to riding a straight course. The 400 will wag its tail like any other P.E. if you feed it all the fat before your ability says so.

Our trail led through trees tightening up in places over logs, around stumps. The Suzuki changed direction readily, easily. This tight going was no hassle with 320 mm of ground clearance but it was imperative to foot on the high side of the hill, with this always in mind it never proved our undoing. This machine pulled so strongly the rider began to assume it would go up anything and enjoyed making it pull in second and third at minimal revs. But there comes a time when you find it really does need a little speed even in first to keep going. It is now you realise this gear may be a tooth high particularly for a novice when it comes to the tight sections and those bizarre rocky pinnacles. Even Brian confided he had replaced the countershaft sprocket with one a tooth smaller. Jollin along the highway enthused the rider by the fact that a

big motor pulling a high gear means less revs. Noise and vibration though not troublesome on the 250 are even less so with the 400 and there is this great feeling of ample power.

These come stock with Dunlop Sports but like most top riders Brian had fitted Metzeler, these seemed to hang on tenaciously giving confidence to the rider and top class rider, lesser ones would find it a distinct advantage as it pulls away so strongly and transports you from corner to corner picking up to such a great rate of knots that your inferior



Rear hub carries no extra weight



Plug spanner too easy — can get stolen?



Whirlpool throttle—standard for PEs and MXs now?

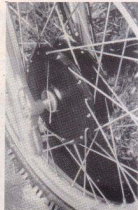


Good front end

riding would be disguised by the speed you cover the overall distance. Not too difficult to handle, this really is a bit of a low flyer. It could help you emulate Dick Burleson, greatest Enduro rider in U.S.A. who says, "I'm always anxious to get out there and experience the thrill that comes from riding as hard as possible a section of tight trails. I never tire of trying to do just a little better than anyone else."

This motor has only one head gasket fitted, it is a copper compound type as opposed to the two solid copper ones on the 250.

Brian had not removed the gasket "goes well enough with it in" he smiled. I didn't go much on the brake action rear cable has too much of a bend as it transfers from right to left. It was not prone to lock-up but will need periodical lubrication. All the other cables are heavy gauge, have ease of operation and are channeled out of harms way. Whirlpool throttle of course. Rear wheel as on all P.E.s is really quick detachable. Sprocket, brakes and adjusters remain in place when wheel is removed. This takes 16 seconds. Aluminium alloy swing arm



Full width hub, a common Suzuki feature nowadays



Aircleaner requires effort to install properly. Centre bolt goes into plastic thread — to wear out after a time!





An RM by nature-blinker warning light is on centre of h'bars

is strong and helps keep down unsprung weight.

All P.E.s are petrol-oil, premix 20:1. It is best to do this in a can. If you are refilling at a garage always be sure to turn the petrol tap off and lay the machine away from tap while adding oil. Shake bike vigorously before standing it upright and turning on petrol. If you get an excess of oil into the carburetor some gets down the crankcase and it's bad news. Petrol consumption did not appear in excess of the 250 which is quite average. This 400 tended to run a shade rich in mid range. Murray says a smaller needle jet will fix this. He is looking forward to starting a development centre where riders can bring their

P.E.s to have the trick mods fitted and latest improvements made as the Enduro team become aware of them and prove their worth.

If you are contemplating a new P.E. you have a decision to make 250 or 400. It is interesting to compare the power, 400 puts out 31 kws at 7000. The 250 is 26 kws at 8000. Stroke is the same in both motors at 70 mm only the bore is different 85 mm against 67 mm. The 400 is 4 kg heavier and \$150 dearer, other things are equal. I'll tell you what, difference in the power is pronounced. Which ever way you go good riding.

Norm Lindsay



SPECIFICATIONS

Engine	2 stroke single reed valve 397 cc
Max h.p.	31 kw 41.5 h.p. at 7000
Max torque	43 n.m. 31.9 ft. lb. at 6000
Bore and stroke	.85 x 70 mm
Comp ratio	7.3:1
Ign	Suzuki P.E.I.
Carby	Mikuni V.M. 36
Air filter	Poly foam
Transmission	5 speeds
Wheelbase	1445 mm
Clearance	320 mm
Weight dry	113 kg
Seat height	960 mm
Front wheel	3.00 x 21
Rear wheel	5.10 x 18
Fuel tank	10.6 litres
Price	£1799



The off-road "Master Blaster" from Suzuki as they only know how.