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AUSTRALIAN

TRAIL & TRACK

MAY, 1979, $1.

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Inside:
STEPHEN GALL Column
B.P. Hattah Rally

Test: SUZUKI PE175 "N"
YAMAHA DT400 "F"

Suzuki's little fireball: PE 175 Enduro 'N'

(3)

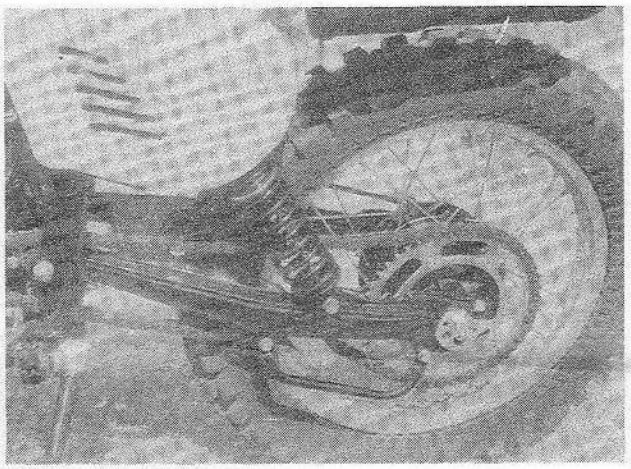
Be it car or motorcycle the savvy people say "Don't buy the first model, you wait for the mark two and benefit from the improvements as they get the bugs out of it." There could not have been much wrong with the first P.E. 175 for there is not much change in the new model. This 175 N can be distinguished easily from it's predecessor by the snail cam chain adjuster, built in tommy bars on the wheel axles which also serve as a puller and a stone and stick guard at the rear sprocket. What you can't see is what they have done to the motor.

Suzuki have given you a larger carburetor, 34mm as against the previous 32mm and a little porting job on the barrel. Power has increased from 24 to 26 h.p. but revs remain the same at 9500. Torque has risen from 13.7ft. lb. at 7500 to 15.9 ft. lb. at 8000. This extra power only comes in at the intermediate range so has made the motor a little more peaky.

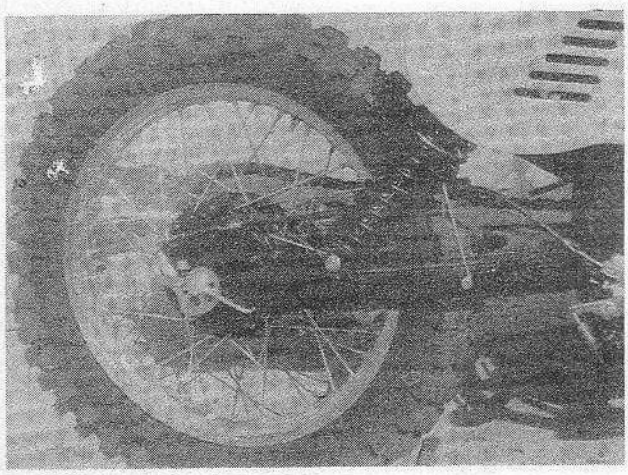
I picked up the Suzuki from Melbourne Motorcycles. It had just been registered the previous day. The compliance plate shone proudly on the head lug. "Have it back before Easter" said Peter Jones, "for Graeme Laing is riding it in the B.P. Desert Rally."

On the first visit the P.E. looks high if you are not used to the modern enduros, seat is 890mm so not as high as some. As you sit down and the suspension drops it measured 810mm (32ins.) not much different from some road bikes, in fact I at 170cm tall could sit with feet flat on the deck no hassles.

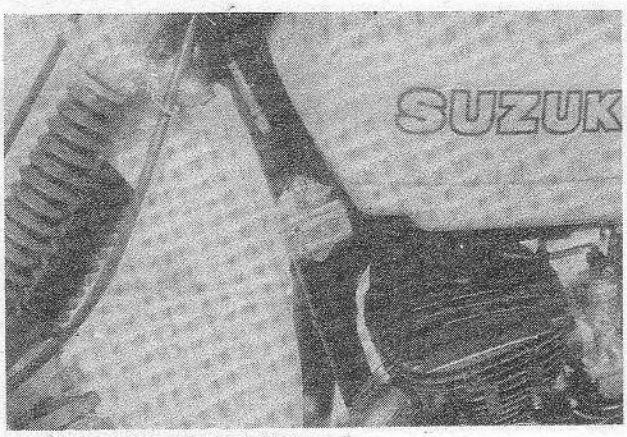
"It's a bit noisy" smiled Peter and as I kicked it over I knew he wasn't kidding. Apart from the cackle it was a good bike to ride home from work, remembering you've got knobbies on. Docile in traffic, ran well at low revs. Though it has 6 speeds top gave the impression it would pull a higher gear. Power was only like an average 125 until the revs rose in the higher range, more about this later, I'm supposed to be running it in. You must admit brakes are the best way to stop and the ones on this P.E. could only bring you pleasure.



TOP — Solid chain guard.



MIDDLE — Good rear-end engineering.



LOWER — Under the tank, just a coil.

It's light weight did not take much anchoring but they were not prone to lock, just progressively powerful. Later on the trail I found them to be just as good, descending steep rocky hills that often instil a feeling into me, like stark terror. This did not alter much but I found it easier to keep a straight course finessing with the lever in my hand while having smooth confident control over my descent.

After immersing in water I found t recovery to be reasonably fast.

This is a remarkably sim motorcycle. Under the plastic s covers there is nothing of inter

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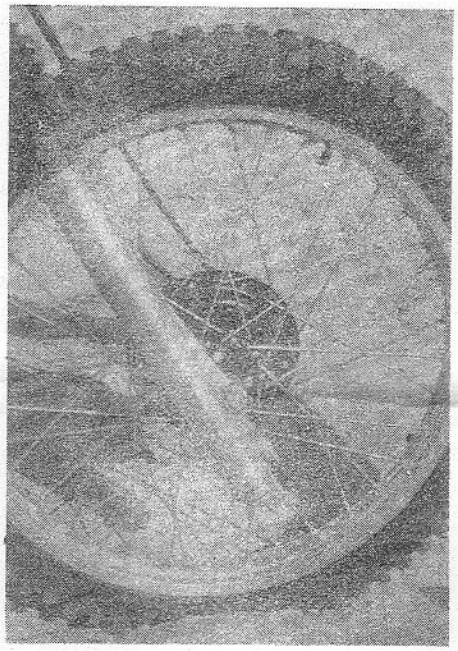
under the tank just a coil. This plastic tank is well supported on a forward mounting plate and will not sag when full or work loose. 2 bolts hold the seat in position under which is an excellent air filter. In the large plastic box is a foam element held by a clip, all this can be removed in a few seconds. Looking inside one can view the big throttle slide in the 34mm carby, it's a straight run in. This should be waterproof to seat height, after that, woof! You'll fairly get a lung full but unbending it and squeezing out the element should only take a few minutes. In the bottom of the air box is a drain hole in which is fitted a rubber valve rather like a whistle, this lets the water out, but not in.

There is no tool box as we know it. Instead there is an all purpose spanner which sits in a bracket on the upper fork leg, held in place by a rubber band. First thing to do is bend the clip holding the band closed so it remains captive and you won't loose it. This spanner fits plugs and wheels and some nuts but not all. You can drill it out to fit the security bolts on the rims, but you'll really need a few selected tools in your kit. Take care when using the spanner on small nuts as it's long and leverage obtained will strip the nuts and break studs.

Light system is quite fantastic. The neat little headlamp is tucked well into the fork legs, the toughened lens protected by a strong grill. There is no battery to worry about, it's direct lighting. Night riding was a pleasant surprise, even at idling revs a bright white light shows in a beam up the road, the small rubber mounted tail lamp looks almost unbreakable and glows bright red at these same revs. Around the suburbs one could ride at legal max. well within the vision of this surprising headlamp. The kill button looks a bit mickey mouse with its untidy wires wrapped around the bars but it works O.K.

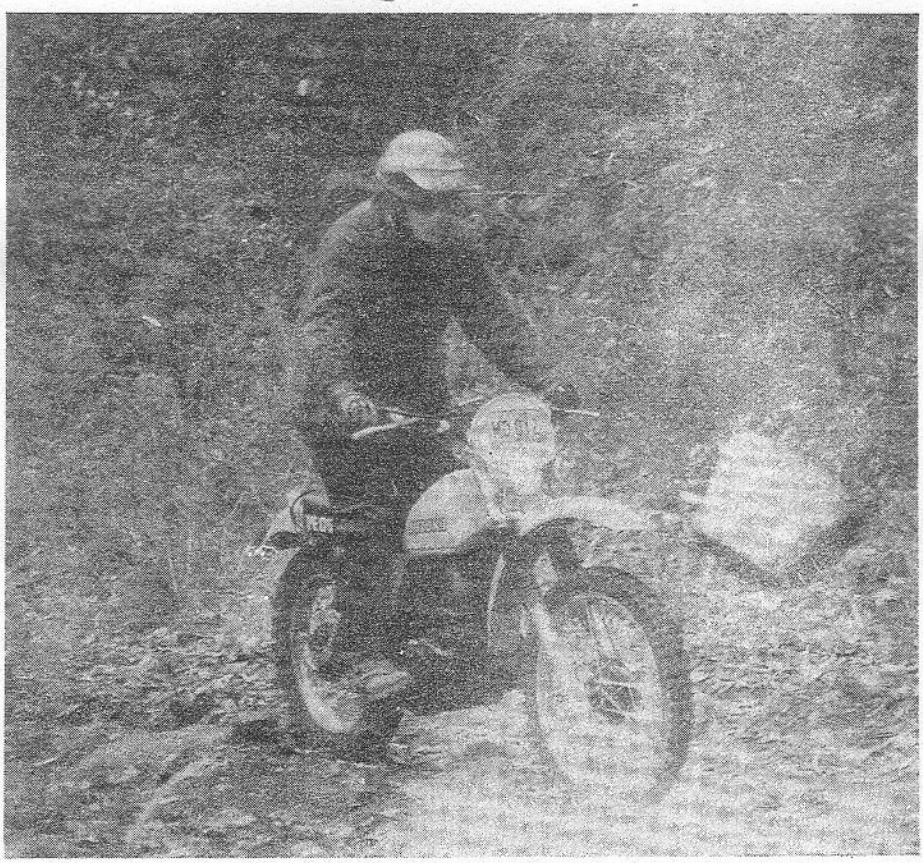
Light and dipper switch are unusually close in to the forks, this I though good for a trail bike as you don't use them much, they are less vulnerable there. Front brake, throttle and clutch are all heavy duty with extra covers where they may rub, the latter having an adjuster right where you need it, before your eyes. Cable ends are well lubricated under neat neoprene covers. Levers themselves are of the quick breaking Suzuki alloy, but wait! If you slacken the clamp bolts and run them just a shade off tight you won't have any trouble. In 10 years of trail riding I've only broken one lever and that was when we were running them locked up tightly.

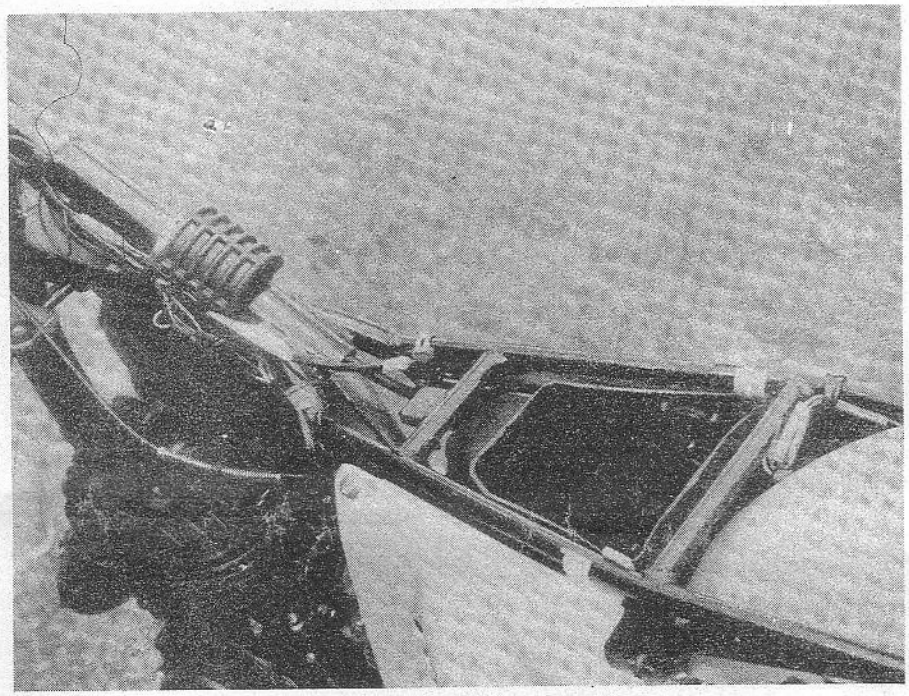
After enjoying enough road miles to loosen things up a bit we took the Suzuki into the bush. Being a 175 it just had to be easy to kick start, the lever folding away so neatly it could never foul your leg. It liked a few minutes to warm up after which you could make your choice — putter along smoothly, sweetly changing up at 3000 revs it ran so nicely, or let it spin to say 5 or 6 in each gear when the 26 horses start to make their presence felt with all their fury.



Move over, Maico, — Suzuki has long front fork too!

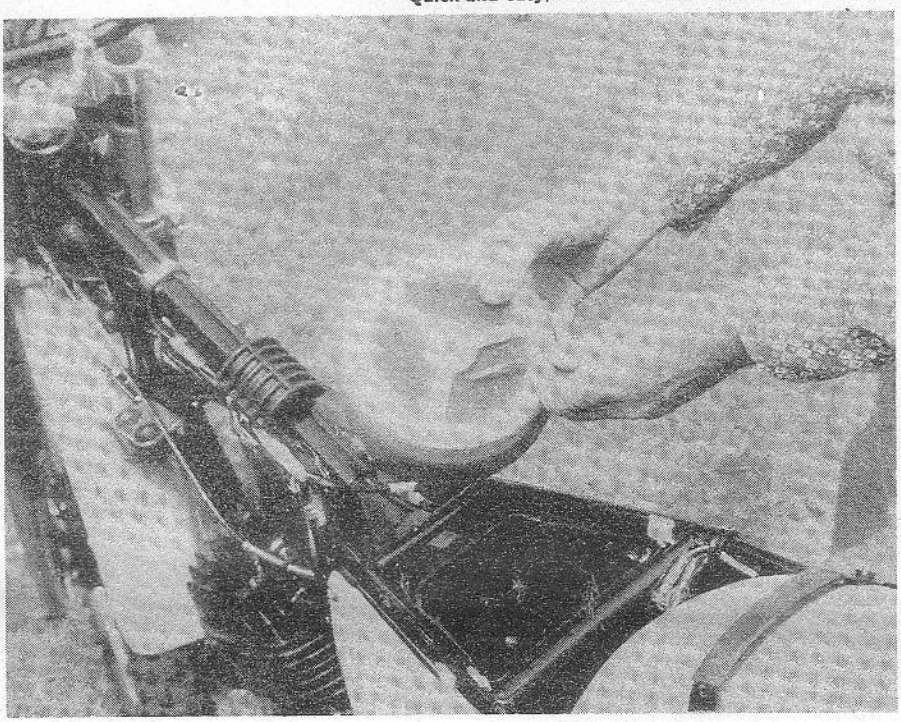
Erick liked the PE175, and was surprised by the power available.





Giant still-air box, showing high and dry inlet.

Quick and easy, air-filter maintenance is made simple.



It will mono if you like or on the gravel induce wheelspin to wag it's tail, or if it is a bit more slick or greasy could even swap ends on an unsuspecting rider. Either way it instills a feeling of excitement, exhuberance to make you chuckle if you enjoy the mirth in this sort of thing. I thought it ironical that all the previous machines had rev counters and did not need them. They drop it off this bike that perhaps could make some use of a tacho at times, to give an unsuspecting rider a warning near the approach of these revs when this vicious power is about to come in.

If you strike it in a low gear on a steep slippery hill you'd better have some ability about you. Too much throttle will set the tail wagging. I had to ease off a bit to keep in some sort of control and avoid going into the scenery. You can't help but like the exhilarating feeling this P.E. will serve up to you.

Tyres are the heavy duty sidewall type, you know you can run them at 8 or 10 lbs and they still feel hard. On fast rocky sections the front did feel just that, a bit hard, the long travel forks never showed sign of bottoming and gave a good ride. Rear was even better, just floating over rocks and gullies while standing on the pegs and if you did sit down the seat proved remarkably good. On steep hills and slow corners it took a little while to become used to the characteristics of this Suzuki, several times I was caught out of the powerband until one learns to decide well ahead which gear to select.

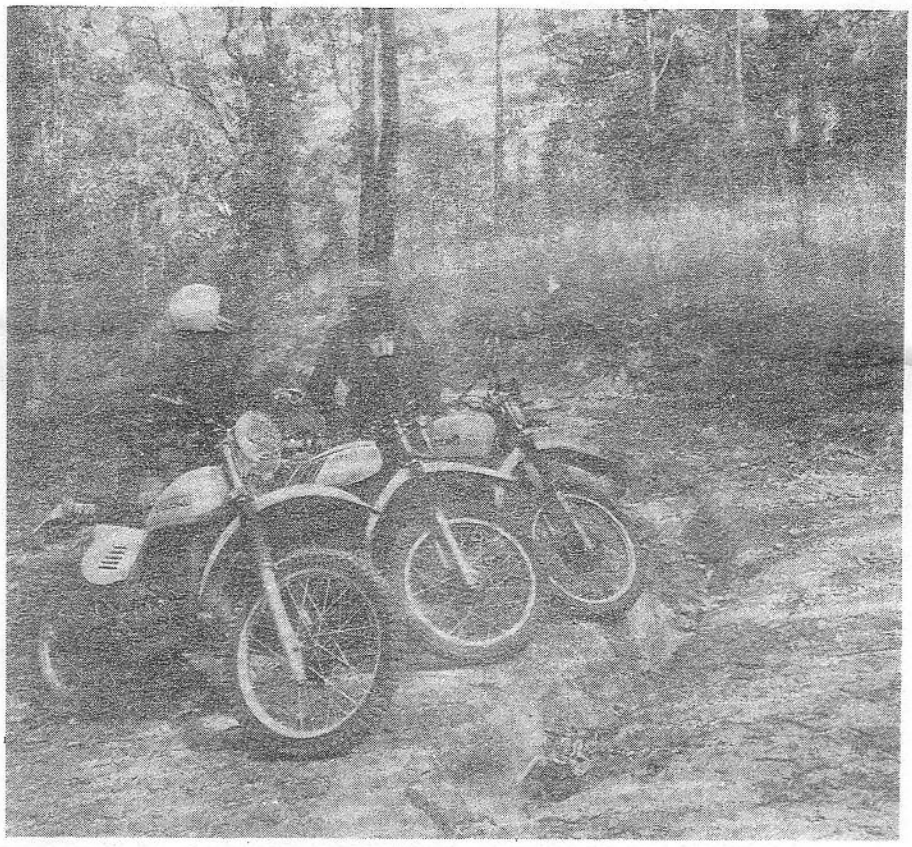
If you're in the mood it will fairly fly up the hills, pedalling the gear shift you can go as fast as you are capable of riding it. Conversely if you are a more steady rider, first and second gear are low enough to pull even at minimal revs. Gears are all spaced reasonably close together. I had thought this essentially a riders machine until we had an incident that made me realise it's full potential.

Taking a wrong trail, (so what's new?) We descended into deep forest down some rocks steps where the track fizzed out. This meant turning back and riding up rock ledges at near zero speeds, a feat the Suzuki performed so well I realized then it would pull strongly inf first gear and was a good restarter on hills. Seat height still has to be considered and care must be taken not to be caught on the side of a hill and having to foot. Ribbed and vented, a steel bash plate protects the underside, securing bolts are countersunk to ensure a smooth base.

There is a grease nipple on the swing arm to lubricate the needle roller bearing, also a good chain tensioner but I would like to see some sort of a chain guard where it passes the wheel Mud and water get fed into the underside at the countershaft sprocket. You'll soon need a new chain, better get an O ring. If you do, oil it as the outside of the rollers and the sprockets need lubrication. 11.5 litre tank is translucent plastic, in the right light you can check your fuel level, When brim full the bike could be shaken and no seepage could be seen, the large plastic screw cap proved very efficient. We rode 65k of trails at a fair average speed, it took 4 litres to re-fill the tank, 16k per litre, though this works out at a range of 185k you can't bank on all this as you may ride harder than I, strike tougher terrain or take a wrong turn. Riding in an enduro when things were more friendly I once laid my bike on it's side while I helped another rider who was having trouble on a hill. Some time later I ran out of petrol as a lot had leaked out while it was laid down.

With all it's high revving power the P.E. was docile enough, in first gear with clutch home it could be throttled down until the speedo registered zero and accelerated away. Maximum speed was 125k. It ran up to that so smartly I think there could be more there or you could gear it up a bit. Vibration was not troublesome at the trail, completely unnoticed. You should not have to look hard to see this is not a trail bike called enduro but more like an I.S.D.T. replica. It's a great little machine, will keep with most bikes on the trail yet has the advantge of light weight and low price. Don't underestimate it for there are so many first class features about it.

If you can't stand a few revs, forget it, but if you are after a trail bike that's not too heavy, simple to maintain yet will provide you with exhilarating power, is exciting to ride, fine to handle, if you are any sort of a rider you couldn't help but enjoy this Suzuki.



Pick the odd bike out? Comparing notes, after the rain stopped!

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine	175 two stroke reed valve
Max H.P.	19.5kw. 26hp. at 9,5000
Max torque	2.2kg.m. 15.9 ft. lb. at 8000
Bore	62mm. Stroke 57mm
Comp.	7.6 to 1
Carburetor	Mikuni 34SS
Ignition	Pointless Electronic Ignition
Air cleaner	Foam element
Clutch	Wet multi-plate
Transmission	6 speeds constant mesh
Lubrication	Fuel mix 20 to 1
Suspension	Front Tele 230 mm of travel Rear gastoil shocks 176mm
Seat height	890mm
Fuel tank	11.5 litres
Wheelbase	1420mm 56in.
Ground clearance	280mm 11in.
Dry weight	98kg. (216lb.)
Price	$1299