

trail & track

AUSTRALIA'S OFF-ROAD MOTORCYCLING MAGAZINE

June '77 - 80 c

MINI SHOOTOUT

Part 1

Camping on
the cheap

Lectron
Carbys

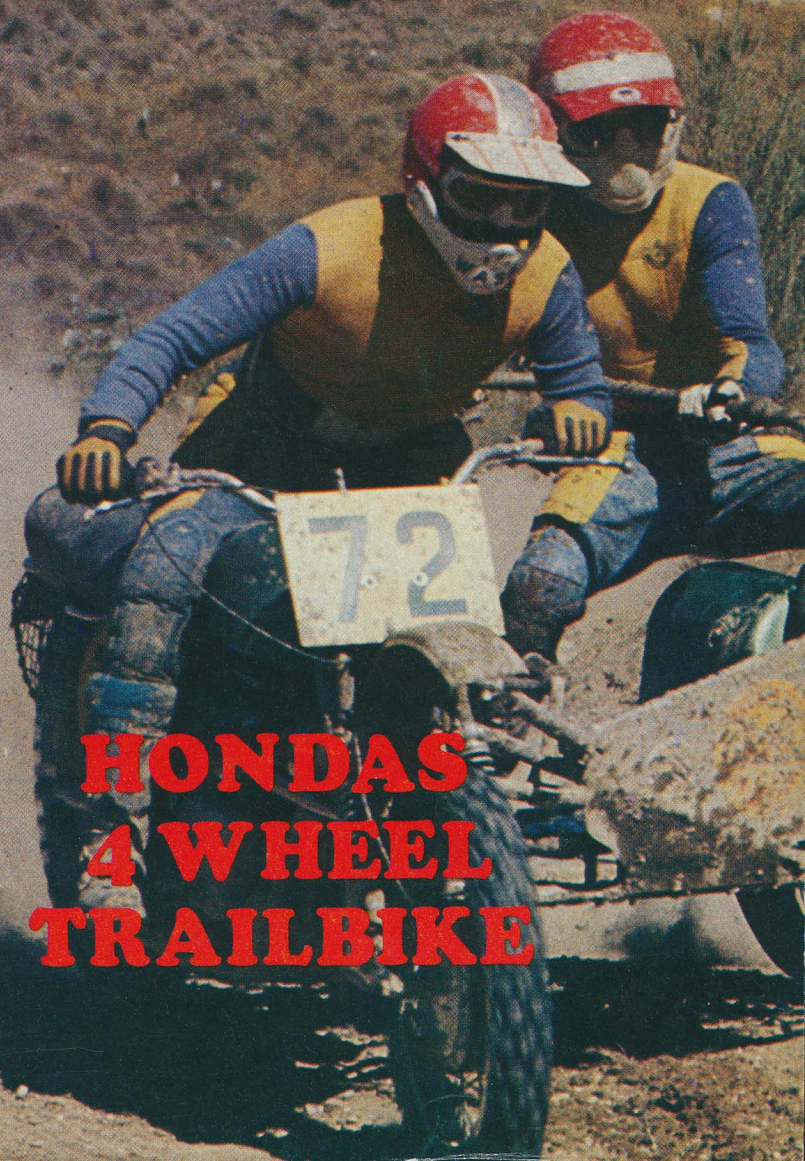
Peter Paice

Honda
500 Trail

SCOOPS

YAMMYS
IT250
ENDURO

HONDAS
4 WHEEL
TRAILBIKE



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Cover shot: Ron Parker and Daryl
Howes (Norton 850 Wasp) power up
the hill at Monza, Victoria. Watch for
our special sidecar feature next issue.

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Honda's 4wheel
ODYSSEY



Wait! Don't write in. We know we're a dirt BIKE magazine. We know you think we shouldn't be testing this.....er, thing. But hear our case before cancelling your subscription. (You do have a subscription, don't you?)

Fact 1: The Honda Odyssey (also known as ODDyssey) has a CR250 motor in it. Yeah, same as you Blue.

Fact 2: It runs tyre pressures of 3psi rear and 5psi front. Just like your super cheap Yong Ying tyres that you brought on special.

Fact 3: If you had the chance to test one of these things would you say "Oh no, never, we strictly a dirt bike magazine"? Well neither did we. In fact the Odyssey drew our biggest crowd of part-time testers (some even sobered up for the occasion) since the TT500D.

So what is an Odyssey. In a few words, its a 4 wheeled trail bike. Don't believe us? We'll prove it.

First off you get in the Odyssey. (This isn't hard, you just sit down.) Next you strap yourself in. The system of seat belts is very formidable. A full harness set up with one quick release buckle that sits in your navel. "What's all this crap for", the Editor was heard to say. (He got first ride through order of rank). He soon found out what all that crap was for.

Once in you're got to start the Odyssey, which you should have done before you got in. Why? Because strapped in you can't reach the pull starter, or the choke lever, or the petrol tap, or any damn thing.

So unbuckle, get out, pull start it, give the trigger (yes trigger) a squirt to rev it up, run three steps as the cantrifugal clutch jumps it forward, put the hand brake on (smart thinking), then get back in and do up your harness.

Right, ready to go.

Now you're sitting in the pregnant go-kart, hanging on to a small aeroplane type steering wheel, or whatever they call them in aeroplanes. On the right side of the "wheel" is the throttle trigger. On the left side is the brake trigger. And that's it. No other controls. Nothing under your feet.

Release the hand brake. Give the throttle trigger a gentle squeeze. The engine revs go up. A bit more, a



bit more. Then at what the manual says is 3,500 rpm, the Odyssey takes off. It sort of bursts forward.

Understand now that the rear axle is fixed. Rigid. No differential like in a car. So cornering at just above a walking pace is hard. It just wants to keep going forward. Turn the front

wheels (which aren't driven) and they sort of just wash out. So the trick is a quick bit of throttle, and the back slides around to point the whole plot in the new direction.

The Odyssey takes off now and its a bump, bump, jolt, bump, crunch, crunch, jolt affair as it literally





bounces over everything.

Now we found out why the controls are like they are. Because the steering wheel that you're hanging onto, and your bum, which is held down by straps, are the only two parts of the anatomy still touching the Odyssey. The rest is at various angles.

No way known could your feet be kept still long enough to work any throttle or brake. In fact all the feet were good for were pushing hard into the nose to stop some of the body bounce.

After a short five minute blast our arms were aching like...um, well you know. So tightly did we wrap our paws around the wheel that it was sometimes an effort just to uncurl one finger to work the throttle.

After some "gee whiz, this is great", warm up spin outs, we set off on some enduro type tracks. We had the Kwaka 175 that was tested last month. an XL and our ever loving XT500. The smarties on the bikes were going to blast off, see? They were going to leave the Odyssey way behind.

They were going to sneak up some narrow trail, trickle up a greasy slope, and disappear. Then come back and say "yuk yuk, whatsa-matter, couldn't that THING make it".

But it didn't work out like that. As long as there weren't two trees so close together that the Odyssey couldn't get through, then it could stay with the bikes. It would take a trials rider, and a trials bike to go where the Odyssey couldn't. It climbed ledges that had the bikes monowheeling and footing. It went through mud up to its plastic mudguards. It rocketed up greasy slopes where the bikes with Trials Univesals fitted had trouble. In fact it did just about everything, as long as either one of the rear wheels were touching the ground, it kept driving.

It had so much ground clearance, it was hard to believe. We transported it on a normal 3 bike trailer. Come time to unload it, and it was just a matter of pushing it off the back. The rear wheels hit the ground before the underneath hit the trailer. And with this particular trailer that can't even be done with a trials bike.

MAKE.....	Honda
MODEL.....	Odyssey
engine.....	single, air cooled, 2 stroke
capacity.....	248cc
bore x stroke.....	70 x 64.4mm
compression ratio.....	6.6:1
transmission.....	centrifugal clutch
length.....	2,095mm (82.5ins)
width.....	1,230mm (48.4ins)
height.....	1,525mm (60.0ins)
weight.....	180kg (397lb)
brakes front.....	none
brakes rear.....	disc