

trail & track

AUSTRALIA'S OFF-ROAD MOTORCYCLING MAGAZINE

June '77 - 80 c

MINI SHOOTOUT

Part 1

Camping on
the cheap

Lectron
Carbys

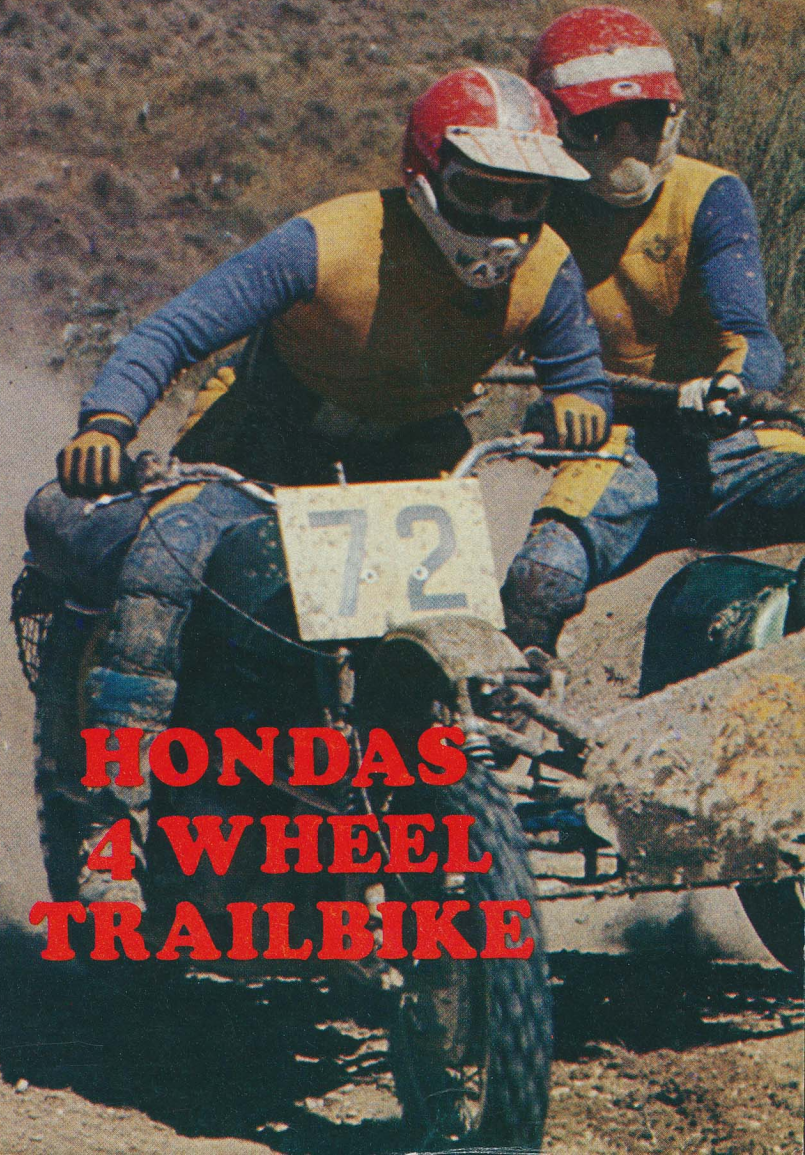
Peter Paice

Honda
500 Trail

SCOOPS

YAMMYS
IT250
ENDURO

HONDAS
4 WHEEL
TRAILBIKE



trail & track

June 1977 No. 45

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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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MINI SHOOTOUT: XR75 HONDA

This issue we start what we've been asked to do many times, a comparison test between the YZ80, the RM80 and the XR75. We're going to do this comparo a little different to the normal method of testing 3 or 4 bikes side by side and writing up the results. The reason for this is taht it's not right to say the YZ is quicker than the XR in stock condition, because with a little bit of work, the XR can be made much faster. [80cc kit, cams, etc.]

So not only must we access the bikes, we think we should also access "potential performance". That is, what each bike is capable of becoming and for how much money.

All this, as we started to find out, got deeper and deeper as we got into it. The amount of accessory pipes, carbys cams, swing arms etc, for the XR's, YZ's and to a lesser extent, the RM's is becoming endless. So evaluation of not only "which is the lbest 80cc class racer" but of "which bike, with the right accessories could become the best 80cc racer" is very tricky.

We think we found a way that will best overcome the problem. Our minibike shootout will be run of the next few issues, and we'll be doing it in stages.

First we'll look at each bike, stock Standard condition, and evaluate it. This evaluation will include a list of items and functions on the machine which will be scored out of 10.

This scoring is designed so that it



can be directly related to the other models. For example one machine might get 8 for paintwork, while another 7 and another 5. The bike which got 5 you can tell would have a fairly rough paint job.

These points won't be totalled up. We don't believe the way to find the best bike is to simply add up the points. One machine might have a faster engine, and a better set of gearbox ratios, but could be at the bottom of the points total because of things that don't really matter, such as appearance, or the handgrips etc. So the points system will be included for direct comparison of certain aspects of each bike, but not for the overall view.

After each machine has been evaluated, and hopefully put into some sort of 1, 2, 3, order as far as things such as power, handling, braking, etc., then we'll look at ways of improving each bike.

Here we'll try to quage how the biggest performance increases can be got for the least amount of dollars, what mods need to be made to each bike to keep it competitive, etc.

We've spent the last couple of months getting to know each machine, and this issue we kick off with our first evaluation — The XR75 Honda.

Honda's red framed 5 speed 4 stroke gives away a little to the YZ80 and the RM80 in the power department right from the start. Despite the obvious advantage of going to 80cc, Honda stuck with their smaller sized engine, and being a 4 stroke up against the 80cc 2 strokes the power plant has its work ahead of it.

Where we thought the Honda's main engine advantage was though, was lower down, where the pulling power of the 4 stroke, coupled now with the 5 speed box, makes the bike easier to ride. As a fun machine it doesn't have to be kept on the boil as much, and if the rider does find himself in the wrong gear occasionally, it doesn't matter.

The Honda would pull strongly from just above an idle, and rev out cleanly. It's lightness and low first gear mean a too sudden release of the clutch and the front wheel is pouring the air.

In the time we had the machine the engine worked perfectly, and didn't leak any oil. All engine bolts stayed tight, which was good, and the bike would start hot or cold with no more than 2 kicks. Choke wasn't needed, even on the coldest mornings, and second gear was ideal for push starts.

The exhaust system, curled down

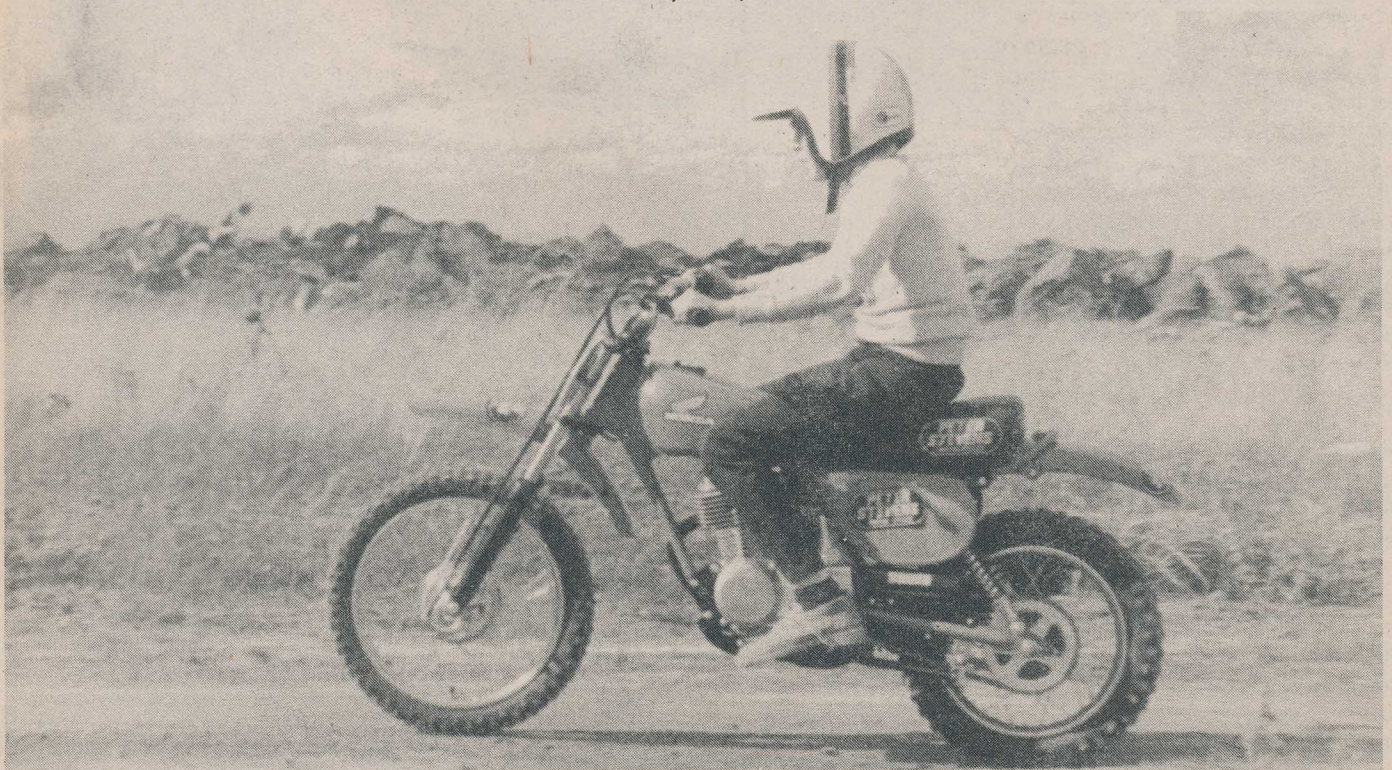
and under the fairly wide motor, and stuck out on the left. Here it was asking to be flattened when the bike was dropped.

The frame is basic. A single down tube stops just above the bash plate. There are no loops, or "cradles" under the engine. The main backbone of the frame is pressed steel, not tubular. The rear section of the frame is a mixture of pressed steel and tubular members. The tubular swing arm is braced in front of the rear wheel and the rear shocks are layed forward.

Overall a reasonably solid frame, and one that could handle the engines capabilities. No flexing was apparent under even the severest riding conditions.

The front suspension we thought, was very good. Rider weight on the XR75 is going to vary a great deal so it is impossible to evaluate what exact spring rate should be used. The set up, as it is however provided a good compromise for someone around the 6 stone mark. Plenty of damping too, provided a very stable front end.

The rear units, now layed down a little, were good, although nothing over exciting. Again, rider weight around the 6 stone mark will do it justice.



XR75

MAKE	Honda
MODEL	XR75
PRICE	\$528
category	mini-racer
engine	single, 4 stroke
capacity	74.9cc
bore	48mm
stroke	41.4mm
compression	9.5:1
horsepower	10.1
lubrication	wet sump
ignition	magneto, coil
starting	primary kick
clutch	wet, multiplate
ratios (internal)	
primary	4.437
1	2.690
2	1.820
3	1.4
4	1.130
5	.96
final	3.285
overall:	
1	39.2:1
2	26.5:1
3	20.4:1
4	16.4:1
5	13.9:1

DIMENSIONS

wheelbase	1143mm
width	750mm
ground clearance	188mm
weight	67kg (148lb)
tank capacity	3 litres
front suspension	telescopic fork
damping	oil
travel	126mm
rear suspension	swinging arm
damping	oil
wheel travel	120mm
front wheel	steel rim
tyre size	250x16
rear wheel	steel rim
tyre size	300x14

BITS AND PIECES

kill button	switch type
footpegs	serrated metal

frame	pressed steel and tube
exhaust	downswept
number plates	plastic
air cleaner	oiled foam

PERSONAL TOUCHES

paintwork	7
welding	6
grips	7
handlebars	8
seat	6
footpegs	7
levers	6
switches	5
choke	7
sitting position	8

ENGINE

low power	8
medium power	7
flat out power	5
torque range	8
ratio spread	8
noise	9
ease of power use	9

SUSPENSION

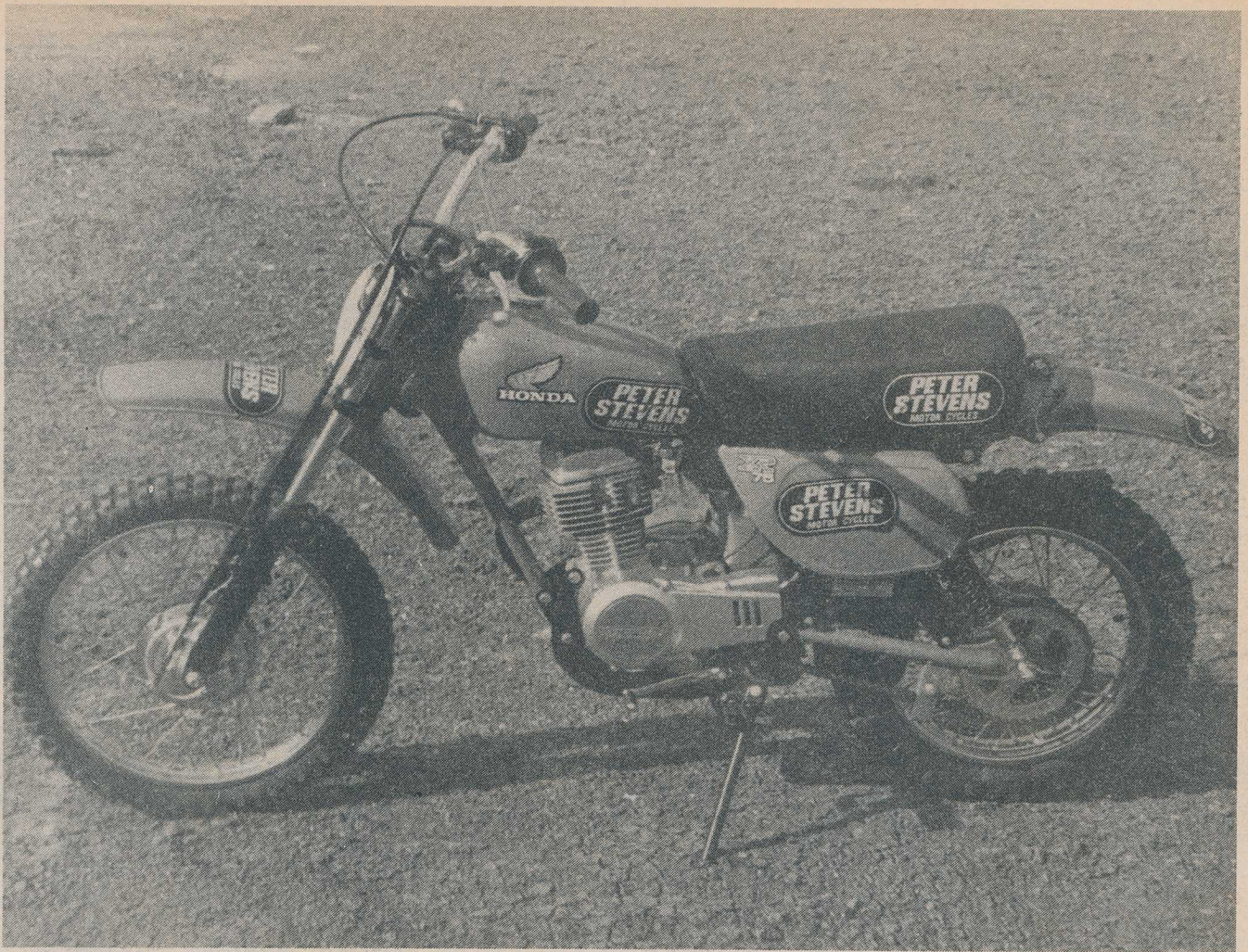
front springing	7
front damping	6
front travel	6
rear springing	6
rear damping	5
rear travel	6

HANDLING

tracking	7
sliding	8
tight cornering	7
wide cornering	8
whoop de doos	4
corrugations	4
sand	7

BRAKES

front power	6
front sensitivity	6
rear power	5
rear sensitivity	4



Combined the suspension system is adequate for the new rider, but is a few years behind the more advanced system of the RM and YZ. Where the other two system of the RM and YZ. Where the other two bikes could handle mild whoop de doos, the XR was bouncing and crashing, and generally leaving the rider knocked about. A better set of rear units could be the answer for the XR owner who wants to get a little more serious.

Where the suspension held the Honda back a little compared to the other two machines, the low pulling motor was its biggest aid to handling. In corners for instance, you could charge in at any rate, turn, and power out. You didn't need to be an expert, in the right gear and in the powerband. The pulling engine of the XR was forgiving. And so for the newer

rider, someone in his first or second year of riding, the Honda in many cases would be a faster bike simply because less time would be lost fishing for power.

At the same time the honda is more fun to ride as a playbike because you can relax. It can be ridden slow, like a good trail bike, without constant clutch slipping. With the YZ especially, and to a lesser extent the RM* the rider had to be constantly racing the bike to feel he was doing it justice.

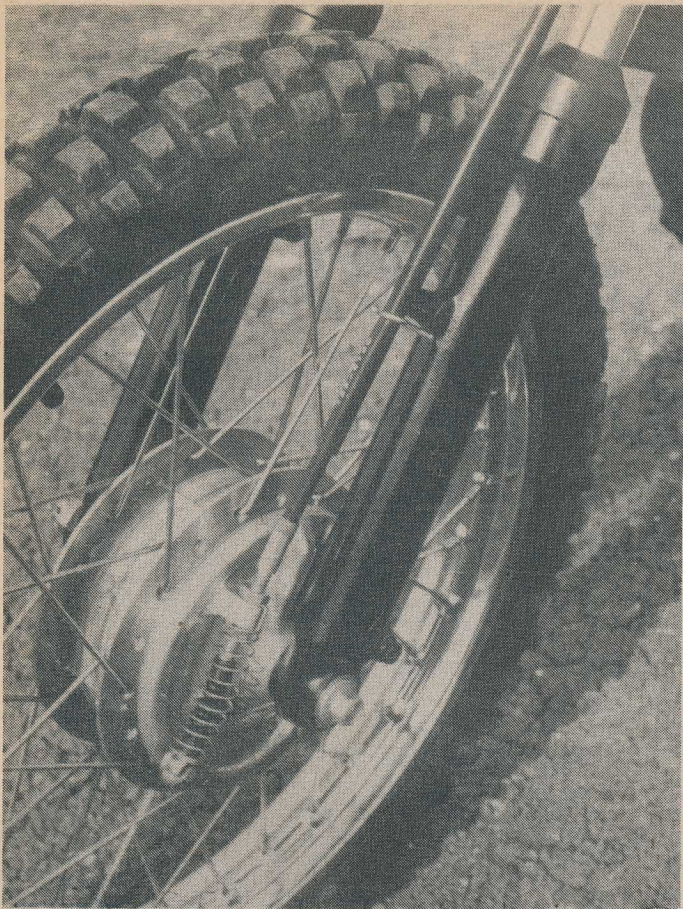
Another point in favour of the Honda was that it steered well. As long as the suspension wasn't made to work too hard, the Honda went well in loose dirt and sliding. Both the RM and the YZ had "quicker" steering, and were able to turn tightly fast, but the XR gave the rider more confidence. The less experienced rider especially will feel

safer on the XR as again it makes the riders job easier.

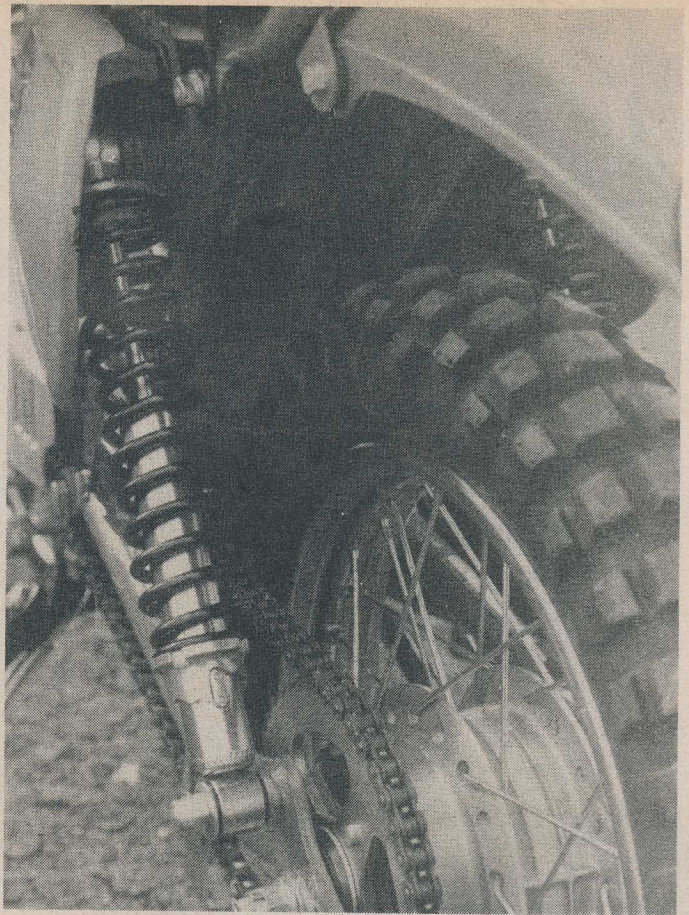
Overall, rated with the other two minibikes, the Honda comes out on top as a beginners play bike. Its easier to ride, is more forgiving, and for just messing around on a minibike track, more fun. Its not as fast as the other two under racing conditions in either the engine or suspension department.

BEFORE YOU RIDE

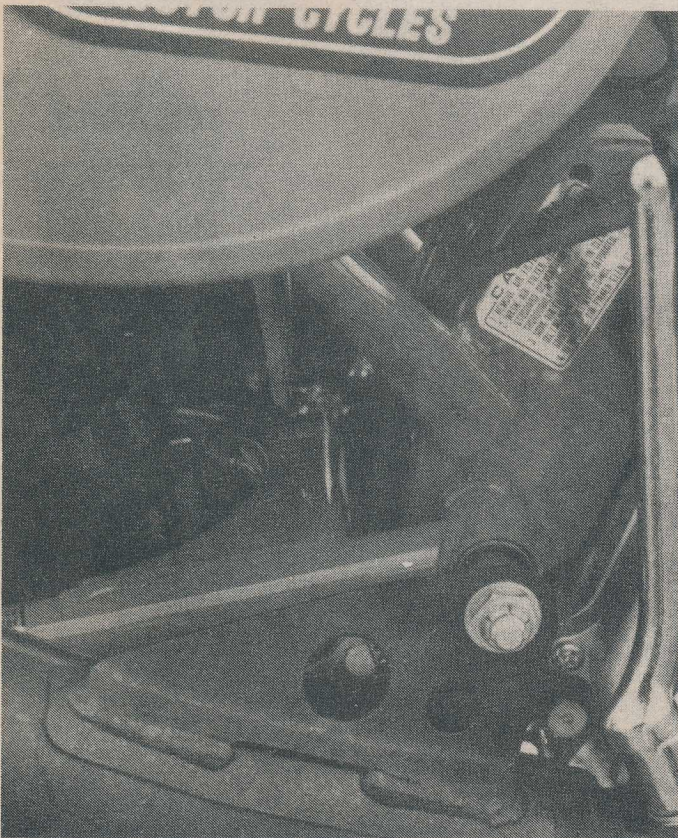
***make sure your bike is
quiet and that you're
wearing suitable clothing.***



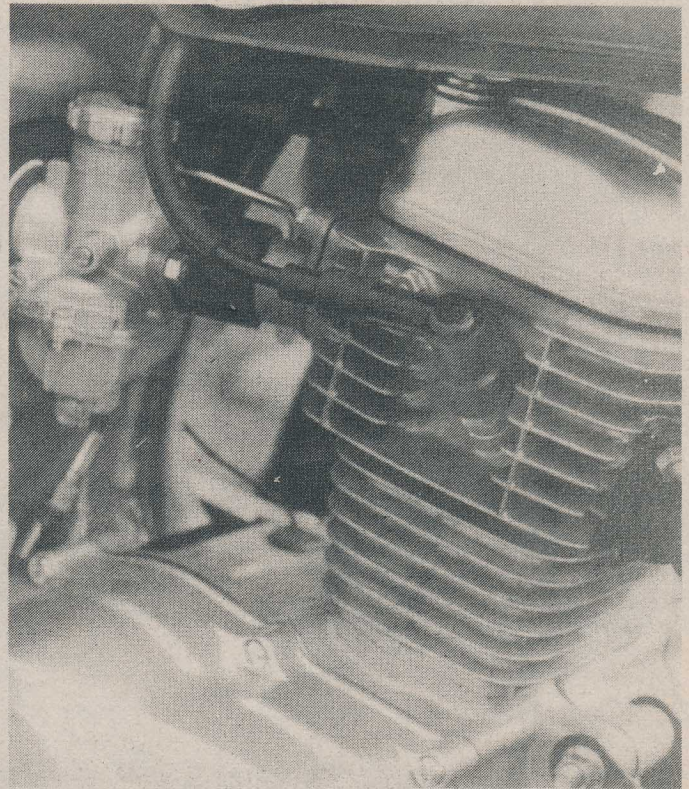
8w look include black lower fork legs.



Standard oil shocks now layed forward.



The half pressed steel half tube frame.



Hondas dependable 4 stroke. The easiest motor to handle, and the most fun.