

Which Bike?

FEBRUARY
75p

55

EVERY MONTH ALL NEW AND USED BIKE PRICES

LAST CHANCE FOR 250s?

BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT
CHOP: A MONSTER GUIDE TO
EVERY 250cc BIKE



FOUR-HUNDREDS
FOR EXCITEMENT AND ECONOMY

URBAN DIRTSTERS

125 TRAIL BIKES FROM YAMAHA AND KAWASAKI

RED HOT RACER FANTIC'S STUNNING 125

PIZZA POWER! FROM BENELLI'S 654

Big brother is planning to chop the 250cc learner limit to 125cc. So if you're in the market for a new bike, get it now with the help of *Which Bike?*'s monster 250cc guide. Reviews by John Nutting.

This year will probably be the last in which novice riders will be able to use 250cc machines before they pass the driving test. Next year, if the Government's proposed new legislation is enacted, new riders will be limited to bikes with a maximum power of 12bhp and a capacity of 125cc — meaning that, instead of the impressive array of machines now available, they'll be forced to ride much smaller lightweights with a limited performance.

It's arguable that this is a mistake — that it's unlikely casualties will drop as a result. Either way, 1981 will give you the last opportunity to ride a 250 with a provisional licence. The question is: Which 250?

To help you decide, *Which Bike?* has compiled a guide to every 250cc machine on the UK market — 27 in all — from the modest CZ250 costing £397 to the fastest of the lot, Yamaha's water cooled RD250LC at £1,030. There's a short description based on our road tests plus a comparison chart of the specifications to enable you to make your choice. Further information is available from the manufacturers and earlier issues of *Which Bike?* are available through the Back Issues service. So check the road test index on pages 2 and 3.



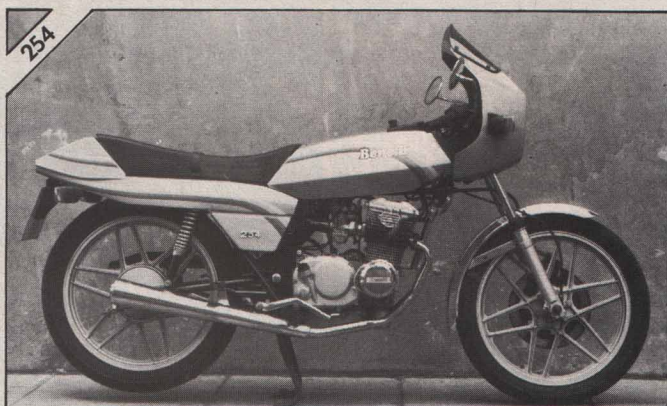
**LAST
CHANCE FOR
TWO-FIFTIES?**

BENELLI

254

The only four-cylinder 250 ever produced, the Italian Benelli 254 is incredibly compact and light for its capacity. Flair for design is shown in the clever use of plastic bodywork, covering the spine frame and seat supports. Weighing just 257lb dry and having a 50in wheel-

base means the Benelli is not much bigger than many 125cc machines, yet its overhead-camshaft four-carburettor motor pulls well from 2,000rpm to the 12,000rpm red line. So, although an average performer, the Benelli feels and runs like a little racer. Price has dropped to £1,199, but it's still an exotic toy that's typified by the silly 1.8 gallon fuel tank and 54mpg fuel consumption.



CAGIVA

SST250N

Since the takeover of the Harley lightweight factory at Verese, Cagiva has been gradually improving the two-stroke singles. Although simple in specification, the SST250N is a well-finished and fine-handling bike. Low weight of 286lb dry enables

the 243cc motor to provide a good acceleration but heavy fuel consumption (around 40-45mpg) lets the bike down. Styling is semi-chopper, with a high handlebar and small tank, so the modest top speed of 82mph isn't too much of a hardship. Compared to bikes of similar specification, the Cagiva is expensive at £949, but that's the price of good looks.

CZ

250SC

What do you expect of a 250 that costs less than Honda's little MB50 sixteen-er? CZ's 250 two-stroke costs just £397, making it the cheapest of its class and, naturally, the bike is basic in the extreme. But it's light (227lb dry), as simple as a Villiers-powered machine of the Fifties and, with only 13bhp on tap, hardly likely

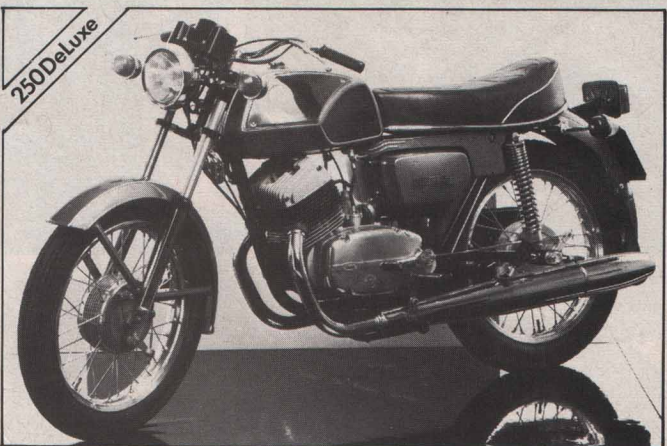
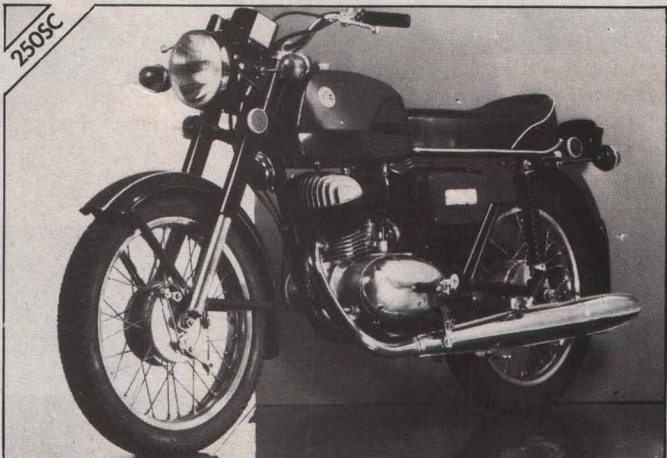
to thrash itself to pieces. Essentially, the CZ single makes the ideal transport for the practically-minded ride-to-worker who won't be bothered by a low 70mph top speed or typically-Czechoslovakian detailing.

250DeLuxe

If you're determined to spend as little as possible on your new 250, yet find the CZ single too basic, then the CZ 250 twins are a possibility. Still pretty crude by modern

standards, the twins provide modest performance (73mph flat out) but with smoother running and better fuel consumption (about 75mpg). The petroil-lubricated two-stroke engine (like the single)

can be a chore but it'll go forever with the right care and is nothing like as buzzy as its Japanese counterparts. There's also a flash custom model with a fairing for about £530.



HONDA

XL250S

Trail bikes aren't usually the sort of bikes to be festooned with technical wizardry, but Honda's XL250S four-stroke single has balance shafts, four valves and automatic decompression levers, all of which improve the manners of this punchy red dirt bike. Like most trail bikes, its off-road performance is only good enough for mild green laning, but on the tarmac the bike can zip to almost 80mph and return 53mpg. £899

price tag is the same as the CB250N Super Dream, which is faster and cheaper to run. But if you want to pretend you're Andre Malherbe, this is your bike.

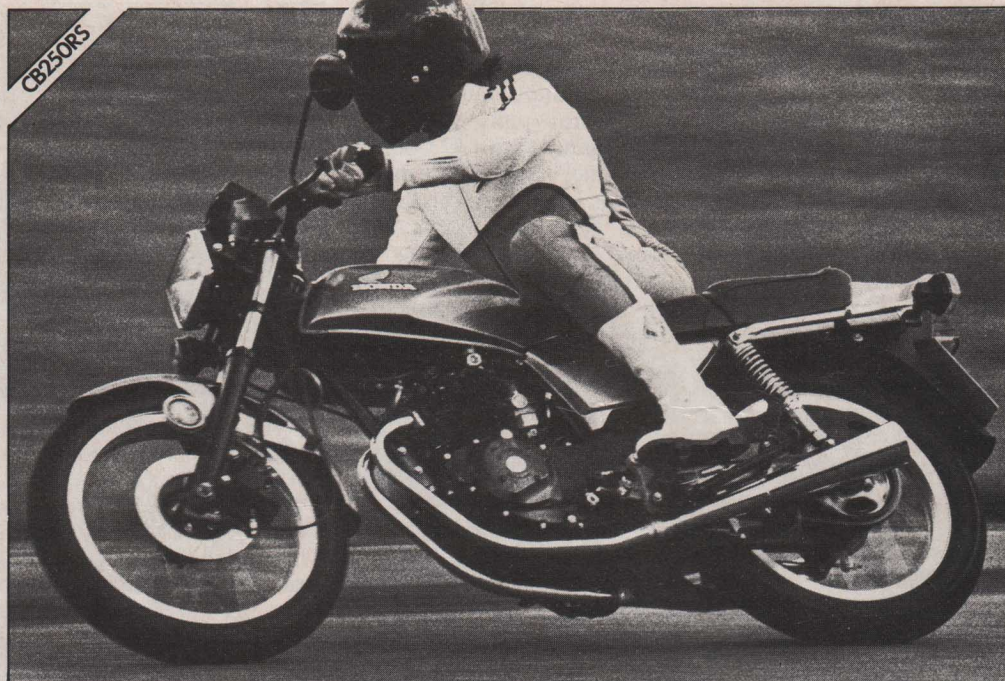
CB250RS

Few new machines have had such a welcome reception as Honda's CB250RS. For the bike can be practically all things to all riders. Being a four-stroke five-speed single (using the same basic — but tuned-up — engine as the XL250S trail bike) it can return as much as 80mpg, but it's also an 85mph sports bike, able to outspurt

Suzuki's GSX250E over the quarter mile. The sculpted fuel tank and flat handlebar offer a sporting riding position and, despite the one-into-two exhaust, there's masses of cornering clearance. There's no electric start (as on the 250N) but, even so, the bike's performance alone makes it a good buy at £795.

CB250N

Seventeen thousand riders can't be wrong. That's how many bought Britain's top-selling machine – the Honda CB250N – in the last year. The reasons why include good looks, easy performance, fine handling, utter reliability and the backing of the massive Honda organisation. It's a big, heavy (367lb) 250 twin with a complex, balanced, six-valve, six-speed engine but of more importance to the Honda Super Dream rider is its electric starting and the ability to

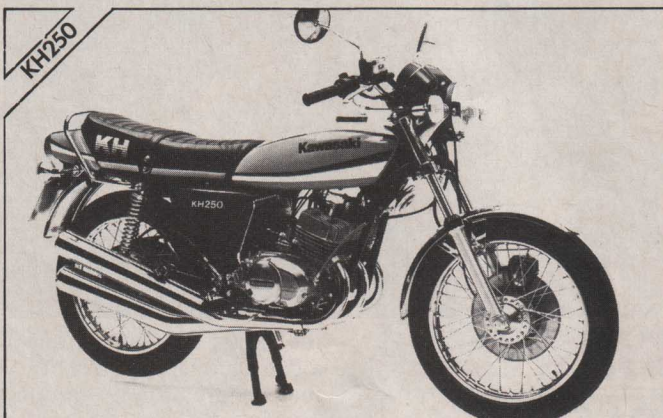
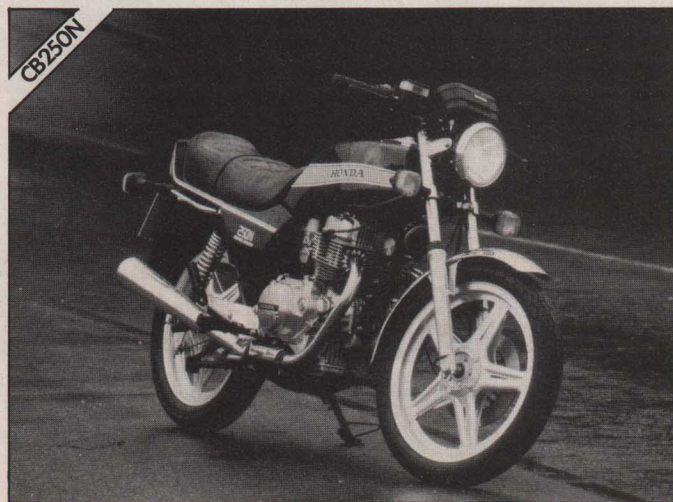


carry a passenger and accessories with the ease of bigger bikes. Better still, you can buy them discounted to under £800.

and generally anti-social nature. By sporting two-stroke standards it offers merely average performance, with a top speed of 90mph and consumption of 40mpg. But when you're the only one of your kind, who cares?

KL250

Thanks to some useful mods, Kawasaki's four-stroke single-cylinder trail bike becomes one of the better off-road handlers for this year. It's got a long-travel leading-axle



KAWASAKI KH250

Kawasaki's 250cc two-stroke triple, the only bike of its type on the market, is a carry-over from an age when

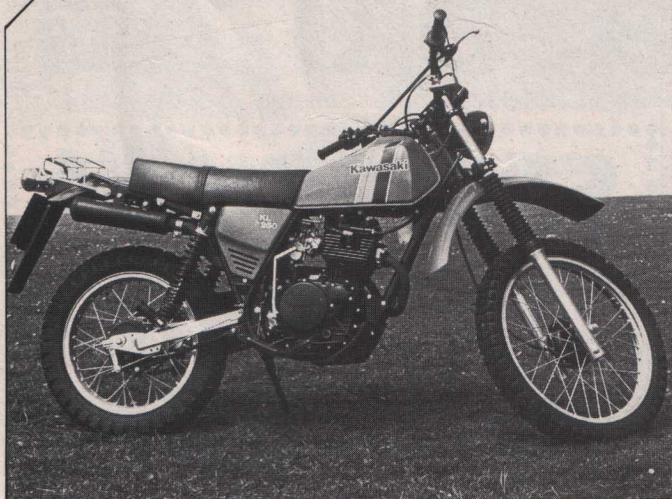
performance, even at the expense of economy, was the top priority. But there are still many fans of the sporty KH250 – despite its specification remaining unchanged for four years – who like its screaming, smoky

WHICH 250? BUYERS GUIDE

Model	BENELLI 254	CAGIVA SST250N
Price inc VAT:	£1,199	£949
Warranty:	12 mnth/unlimited	6 mnth/6,000 miles
Engine:	Ohc four	Two-stroke single
Capacity:	231cc (44x38mm)	243cc (72x59.6mm)
Max power:	27.8bhp @ 10,000rpm	28bhp @ 7,600rpm
Gearbox:	Five-speed	Five-speed
Fuel capacity:	1.8 gallons	2.3 gallons
Battery:	12v/12ah	12v/13ah
Headlamp:	45/40 watt	45/45 watt
Suspension (f):	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork
Suspension (r):	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload
Brake (f):	10.5in disc	10.25in disc
Brake (r):	6.25in drum	6in drum
Tyres:	2.75x18, 3.00x18	3.25x19, 4.00x18
Wheelbase:	50in	56.25in
Dry weight:	257lb	286lb
Top speed:	88mph	82mph
St ¼-mile:	17.2 secs	17.5secs
Fuel consmptn:	54mpg	41mpg
Importer:	Benelli Concessionaires Ltd, 361/365 Chiswick High Rd, London W4	Mick Walker (Motorcycles) Ltd, Norwich Rd, Wisbech, Cambs.

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KL250



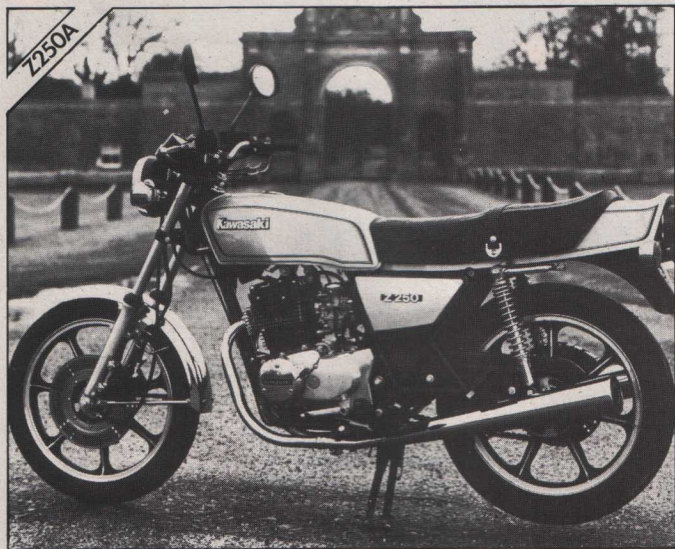
front fork and multirate springs at the rear, combined with a punchy 21bhp motor that can rush the bike to nearly 80mph on the road. It's not all good news, though, because there's more vibration than usual, but that won't matter to those who prefer the KL250 on the rough. So long as you don't rev it hard, the KL250 is a great town bike for £869.

good as well as being functional. A high performer with a low profile, and 64mpg economy, for £899.

Z250B

Everything that makes the Kawasaki Z250A so good is included in the Z250B but for £70 less (at £829). The price cut is achieved through the use of steel-rimmed wire-spoke wheels drum brakes,

Z250A



Z250A

There are those who believe that the Z250 Kawasaki twin is the best 250 on sale. It's no faster than Honda's 250 Super Dream but, because it's fairly light for a twin (335lb), the Kawasaki is quick off the mark and has more precise handling. The Z250 is smooth, too, as the simple six-speed 180-degree twin has rubber mounts making it vibration-free right up to the 10,000rpm peak power revs. Seven-spoke cast alloy wheels and disc brakes front and rear (using Kawasaki's excellent sintered brake pads) look

a less lavish paint job, two-into-one exhaust system and no centre stand. The abbreviated specification saves weight (15lb) and money but there's hardly any change in performance. The overhead-camshaft 248cc twin spins smoothly to its 10,000rpm 27bhp power peak and gives a top speed of 87mph while, when less aggressively ridden, it can return 70mph with ease.

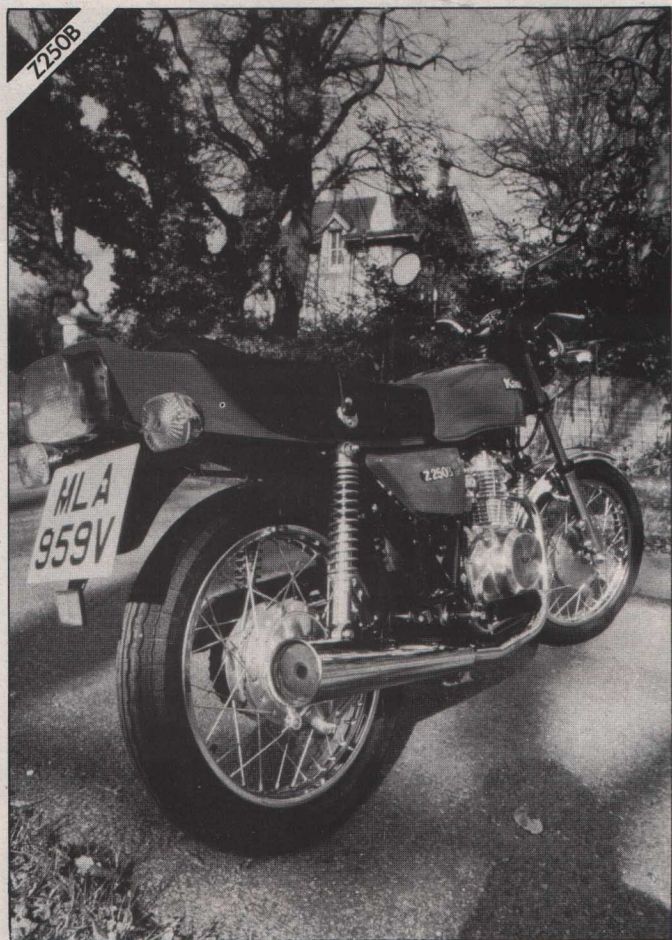
Z250C

Kawasaki's basic four-stroke single cylinder machine is neither here nor there. For it isn't a high performance bike like the Honda CB250RS,

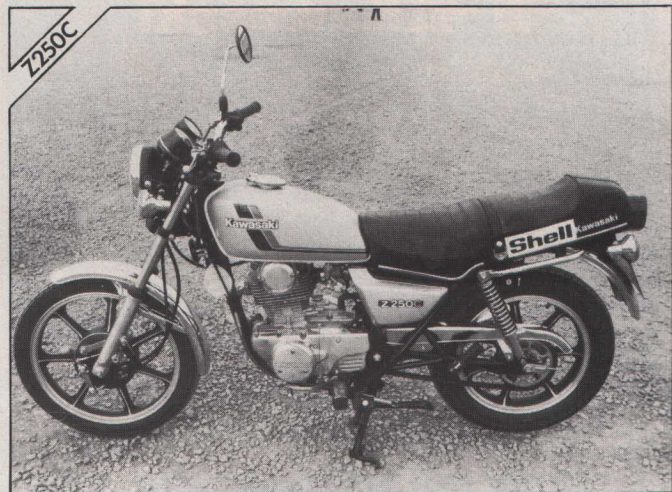
but it doesn't have the custom looks of the Z250-LTD single. If you want an unpretentious bike for running to-and-from work, the Z250C makes a good mount, though, offering an 80mph top speed and fuel consumption of around 75mpg. Features include cast wheels

motor of the trail, but with electric starting. Concessions to style are the pull-back handlebar, small 1.8gallon tank and stepped seat, plus smart cast wheels. The low seat height of 27½in makes the bike ideal for those shorter riders but it isn't much good for carrying pass-

Z250B



Z250C



with drum brakes, a long dual seat and an electric starter. Plus a rock bottom price of £759.

engers and the top speed of 77mph is low. Nice for solo town riding, though.

Z250LTD

Like Yamaha, Kawasaki have really got it together with their chopper-style bikes. The Z250LTD is their smallest and, like the Z250C, uses the ohc four-stroke single-cylinder

MORINI 250 2C

If you're into fine-handling, exotic Italian bikes then Morini's 250 vee-twin is for you. Like the bigger Morinis,



the 250 2C uses a six-speed ohv twin mounted in a superb red-finished frame with taut suspension front and rear that gives great roadholding. Despite the maximum power of 25bhp at 9,000rpm and a light weight of 282lb, the 2C — with an 85mph top speed — isn't a stunning



performer. Neither is rider precise handling and fully-comfort or the electrical enclosed final drive chain. system up to scratch, which Top speed of this East might make the Morini a bit German all-rounder is a pricey, at £1,275. Very modest 82mph but, with exclusive, though. 286lb to push and five speeds,



MZ TS250/1

MZs: either you love them or hate them. Fans of the marque like the rugged, torquey and smooth single-cylinder, two-stroke engine,

general performance is good. Opponents laugh at the strange styling, poor tyres, petroil lubrication and out-dated brakes, but you can't say the TS250/1 is bad value. The £550 price-tag includes excellent finish and a better-than-usual toolkit.

WHICH 250? BUYERS GUIDE

Model:	CZ 250SC	CZ250 DELUXE	HONDA XL250S	HONDA CB250RS	HONDA CB250N
Price inc VAT:	£397	£439	£899	£759	£899
Warranty:	6 mnth/6,000 miles	6 mnth/6,000 miles	12 mnth/unlimited	12 mnth/unlimited	12 mnth/unlimited
Engine:	Two-stroke single	Two-stroke twin	Ohc four-valve balanced single	Ohc four-valve balanced single	Ohc 360-deg six-valve twin
Capacity:	246cc (66x72mm)	246cc (52x58mm)	248cc (74x57.8mm)	248cc (74x57.8mm)	249cc (62x41.4mm)
Max power:	13bhp @ 5,000rpm	17bhp @ 5,250rpm	20bhp @ 7,500rpm	26bhp @ 8,500rpm	27bhp @ 10,000rpm
Gearbox:	Four-speed	Four-speed	Five-speed	Five-speed	Six-speed
Fuel capacity:	2.5 gallons	2.8 gallons	2.1 gallons	3.1 gallons	3.1 gallons
Battery:	6v/8ah	6v/12ah	6v/4ah	12v/9ah	12v/12ah
Headlamp:	35/35watt	35/35watt	35/35watt	45/40watt	45/40watt
Suspension (f):	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork	Leading axle Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork
Suspension (r):	Swing arm, three-pos preload	Swing arm, three-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload
Brake (f):	6.3in drum	Drum	Drum	9.4in disc	10.9in disc
Brake (r):	6.3in drum	Drum	Drum	5.5in drum	6in drum
Tyres:	3.00x18, 3.25x18	3.00x18, 3.25x18	3.00x23, 4.60x18	3.00x18, 4.10x18	3.60x19, 4.10x18
Wheelbase:	52in	52.2in	54.7in	53.2in	55.5in
Dry weight:	227lb	337lb	261lb	276lb	367lb
Top speed:	70mph	73mph	78mph	85mph	89mph
St ¼-mile:	21secs	19.8secs	17.8secs	16.5secs	17.8secs
Fuel cnsmpn:	70mpg	75mpg	53mpg	69mpg	60mpg
Importer:	Jawa/CZ Motorcycles, Bergen Way, North Lynn Industrial Estate, Kings Lynn, Norfolk	Jawa/CZ Motorcycles, Bergen Way, North Lynn Industrial Estate, Kings Lynn, Norfolk	Honda UK Ltd, Power Rd, Chiswick, London W4	Honda UK Ltd, Power Rd, Chiswick, London W4	Honda UK Ltd, Power Rd, Chiswick, London W4

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NEVAL

IZH250

A bit of a mystery to many riders, the Neval IZH250 has only sold in small numbers, but importer Neval Mason is building a good reputation around his South Humberside base. The basic bike is a Russian-made two-stroke single developing 24bhp and using a four-

speed gearbox. But Neval adds a number of refinements that bring the bike close to the standards we're used to in the UK. Performance is modest, with a top speed of 75mph, but braking and electrics appear good. Price of £749 seems high for the type of bike, but it's not everywhere you can get personal attention from the importer.

SUZUKI

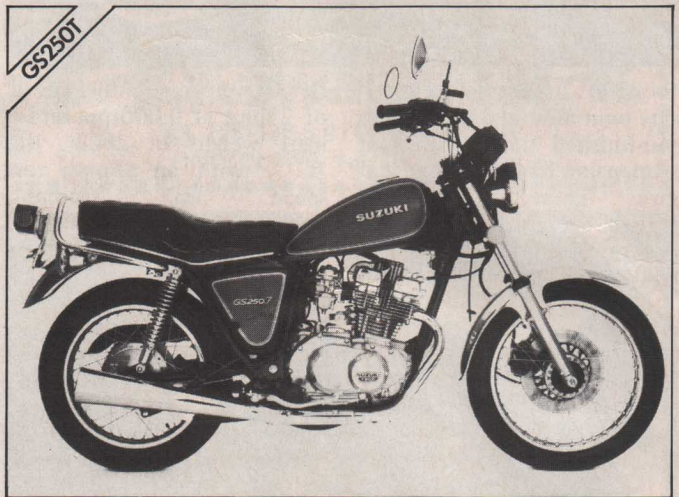
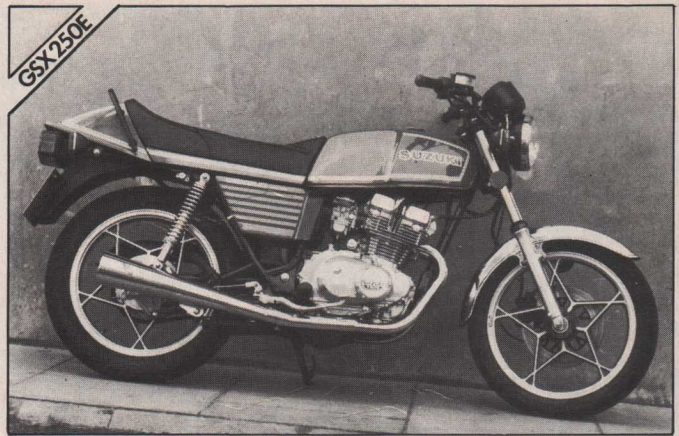
TS250ER

Suzuki have set the stage with their trail bikes and the TS250ER is one of the smartest-looking dual-purpose machines on the road. Suzuki exploit their strength in motocross and enduro racing to give the TS250ER a good image, but the two-stroke single-cylinder power unit and chassis is much less highly-tuned than the racers. Flexible power delivery and ease of handling are the

bike's main strengths so, if you're looking for high performance, the top speed of 74mph and fairly heavy consumption will be disappointing. But, at £750, the looks of the bike alone make it very attractive.

GSX250E

This is Suzuki's answer to Honda's CB250N Super Dream. The GSX250E is big for a 250 but it makes up for size with a sophisticated six-speed parallel twin-cylinder engine boasting double overhead camshafts



and four valves per cylinder, giving a maximum power of 27bhp at 10,000rpm. Top speed is the best of the four-stroke twins at 90mph but that isn't the whole story, because the smooth, counter-balanced engine pulls well from low revs. And it can give between 66 and 68mpg. Brakes are good, too, with Suzuki's latest disc design upfront, mounted on smart, cast alloy wheels. Electric starting is included in the price of £899, with 12 months' warranty extra.

GS250T

Probably the best-value motorcycle from Japan, the GS250T is the custom version of the GSX250E and has a smaller tank, sculpted seat and high handlebar. But, although cheaper wire spoke wheels are used, the power unit is still the same eight-valve dohc counterbalanced twin used in the GSX. So, at £770 - a full £129 less than the GSX - the 250T costs about the same as other manufacturers' single-cylinder

WHICH 250? BUYERS GUIDE

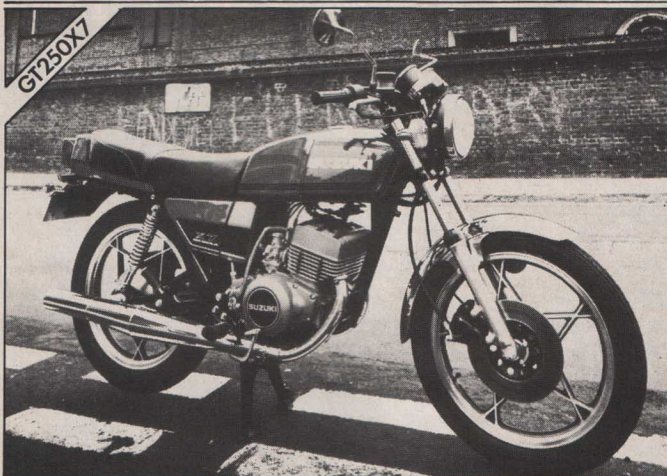
Model:	KAWASAKI KH250	KAWASAKI KL250	KAWASAKI Z250A	KAWASAKI Z250B	KAWASAKI Z250C
Price inc VAT:	£869	£869	£899	£799	£769
Warranty:	12 mnth/unlimited	12 mnth/unlimited	12 mnth/unlimited	12 mnth/unlimited	12 mnth/unlimited
Engine:	Two-stroke triple	Ohc single	Ohc 180-deg twin	Ohc 180-deg twin	Ohc single
Capacity:	249cc (45x52.3mm)	246cc (70x64mm)	248cc (55x52.4mm)	248cc (55x52.4mm)	246cc (70x64mm)
Max power:	28bhp @ 7,500rpm	21bhp @ 8,500rpm	27bhp @ 10,000rpm	27bhp @ 10,000rpm	19bhp @ 8,000rpm
Gearbox:	Five-speed	Five-speed	Six-speed	Six-speed	Five-speed
Fuel capacity:	3.1 gallons	2.1 gallons	3 gallons	3 gallons	2 gallons
Battery:	12v/5.5ah	6v/6ah	12v/10ah	12v/10ah	12v/10ah
Headlamp:	35/35watt	35/35watt	35/35watt	35/35watt	35/35watt
Suspension (f):	Telescopic fork	Leading axle telescopic air fork	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork
Suspension (r):	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload
Brake (f):	11.25in disc	Drum	10.75in disc	7.1in 21s drum	7in 21s drum
Brake (r):	7in drum	Drum	9.75in disc	6.3in drum	5in drum
Tyres:	3.25S18, 3.50S18	3.00x21, 4.60x17	3.00S18, 3.50S18	3.00S18, 3.50S18	2.75x18, 4.60x16
Wheelbase:	54.75in	55.7in	52.8in	52.8in	51.5in
Dry weight:	348lb	260lb	335lb	320lb	284lb
Top speed:	90mph	78mph	87mph	87mph	81mph (c)
St 1/4-mile:	16.9secs	n/a	16.9secs	16.8secs	16.9 secs (c)
Fuel cnsuptn:	40mpg	55.3mpg	64mpg	62mpg	n/a
Importer:	Kawasaki Motors UK Ltd, 748/749 Deal Ave, Trading Estate, Slough SL1 4SH				

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WHICH 250? BUYERS GUIDE

Model:	KAWASAKI Z250LTD	MORINI 250 2C	MZ TS250/1	NEVAL IZH250	SUZUKI TS250ER
Price inc VAT:	£799	£1,275	£550	£749	£750
Warranty:	12 mnth/unlimited	6 mnth/4,000miles	6 mnth/6,000miles	12 mnth/unlimited	6 mnth/10,000miles
Engine:	Ohc single	Ohv vee-twin	Two-stroke single	Two-stroke single	Reed-valve two-stroke single
Capacity:	246cc (70x64mm)	239cc (59x43.8mm)	243cc (69x65mm)	249cc (65x75mm)	246cc (70x64mm)
Max power:	19bhp @ 8,000rpm	25bhp @ 9,000rpm	19bhp @ 4,600-5,600rpm	24bhp @ 5,500rpm	17.5bhp @ 5,500rpm
Gearbox:	Five-speed	Six-speed	Five-speed	Four-speed	Five-speed
Fuel capacity:	1.8 gallons	2.9 gallons	3.8 gallons	2.2/3.7 gallons	2.2 gallons
Battery:	12v/10ah	6v/9ah	6v/12ah	12v	6v/4ah
Headlamp:	35/35watt	35/35watt	45/40watt	55/55watt Hella	25/25 watt
Suspension (f):	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork	Leading axle telescopic fork
Suspension (r):	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm	Swing arm, five-pos preload
Brakes (f):	7.1in 21s drum	Grimeca 10.25in disc	6.3in drum	8in 21s drum	5.9in drum
Brake (r):	5.9in drum	6.3in drum	6.3in drum	7in drum	5.9in drum
Tyres:	2.75x18, 4.60x16	2.75x18, 3.00x18	2.75x18, 3.50x16	3.25x19, 3.50x18	3.00x21, 4.00x18
Wheelbase:	52.5in	52in	53.3in	57in	55in
Dry weight:	284lb	282lb	286lb	293lb	267lb
Top speed:	77mph	85mph	82mph	75 mph (c)	74mph
St ¼-mile:	18.9secs	17secs	18secs	n/a	17.0 secs
Fuel cnsmpn:	77mpg	51-61mpg	76mpg	55 to 80mpg (c)	51mpg
Importer:	Kawasaki Motors UK Ltd, 748/749 Deal Ave, Trading Estate, Slough SL1 4SH	Harglo Ltd, 462 Station Rd, Dorridge, Solihull, West Midlands	Wilf Green Ltd, MZ House, Jet Corner, 330 Queens Rd, Sheffield 2, Yorks	Neval Motorcycles, Hangar Works, Elsham Airfield, Elsham, nr Brigg, South Humberside	Heron-Suzuki GB Ltd, 87 Beddington Lane, Croydon, Surrey

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bikes. There's no skimping on the specification: the 250T has electric starting, a disc front brake and full instrumentation.

GT250X7

Until the advent of the water-cooled Yamaha 250, Suzuki's 250X7 was the top performer in the class and, even now, there's not much to choose between the two bikes. Suzuki achieved a top speed of 95mph and sharp acceleration by offering a bike with a super-light (282lb dry) chassis and a very flexible reed-valve two-stroke twin-cylinder six-speed motor developing 29bhp. The X7 is small for its performance and handling is nimble and precise. Brakes are disc front and drum rear, in cast alloy wheels. But, being a high-performance two-stroke, fuel consumption of 42mpg isn't too good.

YAMAHA

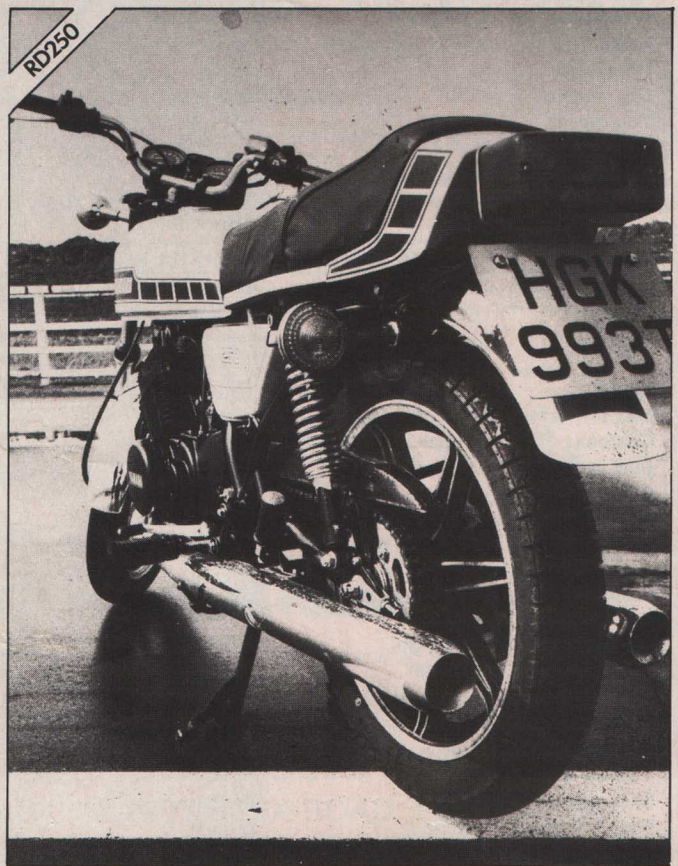
RD250

Yamaha's sporty RD250 two-stroke twin has been around for seven years now, but its appeal is no less than when it first appeared, only being overshadowed by the water-cooled version. A six-speed reed-valve twin developing 30bhp, the RD is the basic equipment for any self-respecting youngster after a racing-inspired bike. Much bigger than the X7 in feel – and heavier – the latest versions aren't so sharp as the earlier ones, but can still hit 90mph with ease and offer good handling. Braking is through discs front and rear on cast wheels and, although consumption is heavy, the large 3.6gallon tank gives a good range. Average value at £860.

RD250LC

The RD250LC needs no introduction. Launched last year, it's the most potent quarter-litre machine ever offered and has inevitably become the most desirable machine among sports riders. The water-cooled six-speed motor develops 35.5bhp, enough to push the top speed over the ton, though this is achieved at the expense

of power at low revs and greedy 40mpg consumption. Despite being very light – at 306lb dry – the LC still looks a big bike with its 3.7gallon tank. It's handling is well up to the performance, with a cantilever rear fork and a disc front brake. The highest price ever offered for a Japanese 250 – £1,030 – or the lack of electric starting hasn't diminished the bike's appeal one bit.



XS250

Yamaha's XS250 is the anti-thesis of the RD250LC. A four-stroke parallel twin with electric starting and a six-speed gearbox, the XS has a sporty but tractable feel and, although claimed to develop as much power as the Honda Super Dream and Kawasaki's Z250 twin, seems slower and more sluggish on the open road. But it's a largish, impressive-looking bike, with cast wheels and disc front brake, that can take a passenger comfortably, unlike the single-cylinder Yamaha four-stroke. Top speed is 86mph and overall fuel consumption varies between 60 and 65mpg, giving a good range on the 3¾gallon tank.

XS250S

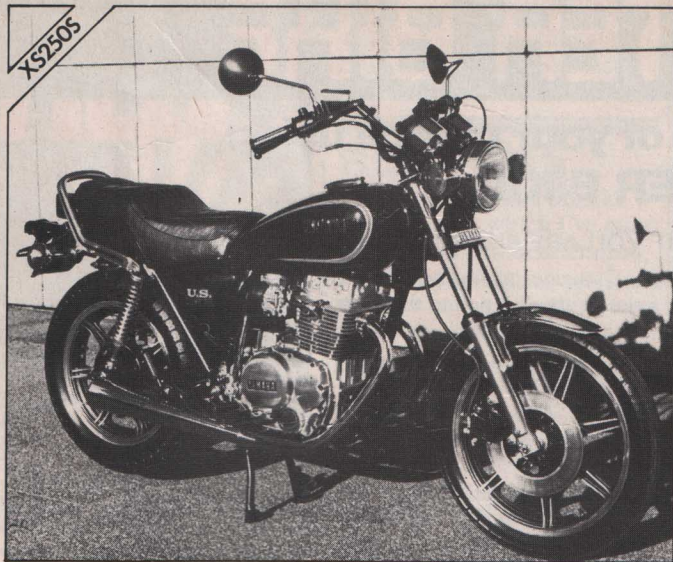
Yamaha's custom bikes have



WHICH 250? BUYERS GUIDE

Model:	SUZUKI GSX250E	SUZUKI GS250T	SUZUKI GT250X7	YAMAHA RD250	YAMAHA RD250LC
Price inc VAT:	£899	£770	£820	£860	£1,030
Warranty:	6 mnth/10,000miles	6 mnth/10,000miles	6 mnth/10,000miles	12 mnth/unlimited	12 mnth/unlimited
Engine:	Dohc eight-valve balanced twin	Dohc eight-valve balanced twin	Reed-valve two-stroke twin	Reed-valve two-stroke twin	Water-cooled two-stroke twin
Capacity:	249cc (60x44.2mm)	249cc (60x44.2mm)	247cc (54x54mm)	247cc (54x54mm)	247cc (54x54mm)
Max power:	27bhp @ 10,000rpm	27bhp @ 10,000rpm	29bhp @ 8,000rpm	30bhp @ 7,500rpm	35.5bhp @ 8,500rpm
Gearbox:	Six-speed	Six-speed	Six-speed	Six-speed	Six-speed
Fuel capacity:	3.2 gallons	2.4 gallons	3.3 gallons	3.6 gallons	3.7 gallons
Battery:	12v/12ah	12v/12ah	12v/5ah	12v/5.5ah	12v/5.5ah
Headlamp:	35/35watt	45/45watt	35/35watt	35/25watt	60/55watt qh
Suspension (f):	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork
Suspension (r):	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Cantilever, five-pos preload
Brake (f):	10.75in disc	10.75in disc	10in disc	10.75in disc	10.4in disc
Brake (r):	6.3in drum	6.3in drum	6.5in drum	10.75in disc	7.1in drum
Tyres:	3.00S18, 3.50S18	3.00x18, 3.50x17	3.00S18, 3.50S18	3.00S18, 3.50S18	3.00S18, 3.50S18
Wheelbase:	53.5in	54.3in	52.25in	53.5in	54in
Dry weight:	353lb	348lb	282lb	334lb	306lb
Top speed:	90mph	88mph	95mph	90mph	102mph
St ¼-mile:	16.7secs	16.7secs	15.6secs	16.3secs	15.0secs
Fuel cnsmpn:	66-68mpg	67mpg	42mpg	42mpg	40.5mpg
Importer:	Heron-Suzuki GB Ltd, 87 Beddington Lane, Croydon, Surrey			Mitsui Machinery Sales Ltd, Oakcroft Rd, Chessington, Surrey	

Model:	YAMAHA XS250	YAMAHA XS250S	YAMAHA XT250	YAMAHA SR250S	YAMAHA DT250MX
Price inc VAT:	£875	£950	£899	£760	£875
Warranty:	12 mnth/unlimited	12 mnth/unlimited	12 mnth/unlimited	12 mnth/unlimited	12 mnth/unlimited
Engine:	Ohc 180-deg twin	Ohc 180-deg twin	Ohc balanced single	Ohc balanced single	Reed-valve two-stroke single
Capacity:	248cc (55x52.4mm)	248cc (55x52.4mm)	249cc (75x56.5mm)	249cc (75x56.5mm)	246cc (70x64mm)
Max power:	27bhp @ 9,500rpm	27bhp @ 9,500rpm	21bhp @ 8,000rpm	21bhp @ 8,000rpm	23bhp @ 6,000rpm
Gearbox:	Six-speed	Six-speed	Five-speed	Five-speed	Five-speed
Fuel capacity:	3.75 gallons	3.1 gallons	1.7 gallons	2.4 gallons	1.75 gallons
Battery:	12v/12ah	12v/12ah	6v/6ah	12v/12ah	6v/6ah
Headlamp:	40/30 watt	45/45watt	3%635watt	50/35watt	35/35watt
Suspension (f):	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork	Leading axle telescopic fork	Telescopic fork	Telescopic fork
Suspension (r):	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload	Swing arm, five-pos preload
Brake (f):	10.5in disc	10.5in disc	Drum	6.3in drum	6.3in drum
Brake (r):	7in drum	7in drum	Drum	5.1in drum	5.9in drum
Tyres:	3.00S18, 3.75S18	3.00x18, 120/90x16	3.00x21, 4.60x17	3.00x19, 120/90x16	3.00x21, 4.00x18
Wheelbase:	55in	55.3in	55.5in	52.8in	55.7in
Dry weight:	370lb	372lb	248lb	273lb	262lb
Top speed:	86mpg	85mph	76mph	82mph	n/a
St ¼-mile:	17.7secs	17.7secs	n/a	17.9secs	n/a
Fuel cnsmpn:	60-65mpg	65mpg	65mpg	80mpg	n/a
Importer:	Mitsui Machinery Sales Ltd, Oakcroft Rd, Chessington, Surrey				

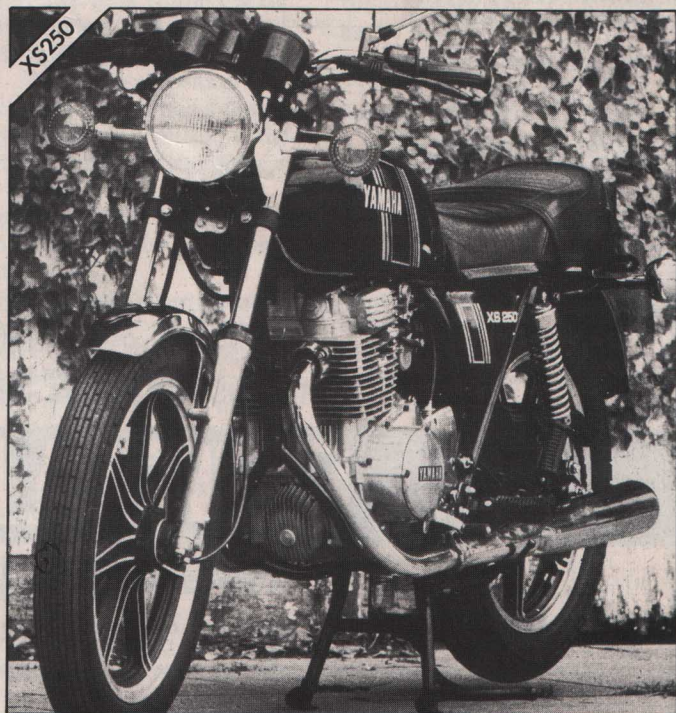


been a great success in America, and everything the company learnt over there has been incorporated into the custom version of the XS250 – the XS250S Special. The styling has transformed the electric-start, four-stroke twin, giving it a more solid, chunky appearance that belies the bike's real capacity and less-than-striking performance. High bars, a stepped seat, cast-alloy rear grab rail, shorty exhaust pipes and lots of chrome give the Yamaha an edge over most other customs. The engine is stone reliable, too, in addition to giving around 65mpg econ-

omy and a top speed around 85mph.

SR250S

If you've got an SR250S, you're lucky. Yamaha's single-cylinder four-stroke custom roadster sold out almost as the bikes hit the showrooms. Reason is that it's a neat little bike that's ideal for beginners, its custom looks combined with a bargain £760 price-tag, light 273lb weight and 80mpg fuel consumption. There's also electric starting and cushy suspension, making the bike perfect for town use. Like the XT250, the engine



has a balance shaft that makes it much smoother than similar singles from other factories. Brakes are drums, laced into wire wheels, the rear being a fat 16incher.

76mph top speed and 76mpg economy, but its dirt pretensions are modest.

DT250MX

Yamaha's 250cc two-stroke trail has been somewhat overshadowed by the most popular trail bike in Britain, the DT175MX. Although the DT250MX has all the same features – such as a punchy reed-valve engine and cantilever rear suspension – it's bigger, heavier (at 262lb dry) and doesn't handle quite so well off-road. But on tarmac it's easy to handle, with slick acceleration and a top speed approaching 80mph. Like all trail bikes, the DT250MX has a wide handlebar and knobby tyres, plus heavier-than-usual fuel consumption; as it costs £875 – almost as much as the luxury four-stroke twins – you're buying it for its looks alone.

XT250

In its off-road guise, Yamaha's new four-stroke 250cc single didn't quite hit the target. The motor is great for a trail bike but the XT250, while nice on tarmac, tended to be skittish when pushed hard on the rough. The motor is virtually identical to the SR250's – an overhead-camshaft five-speed unit with a balance shaft behind the crank – but without the SR's electric starter. Chassis is fashionable, with a leading axle front fork and a cantilever rear end, the bike being set off by gold anodised wheel rims. As a road bike, the £899 XT is a sporty-looking machine with a



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