

**ALL-COLOR
ISSUE!**



**FIRST TESTS: 1990 CR125 & XR200
PLUS—HONDA'S OUTRAGEOUS 1991 FUTURE BIKE!**

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MINICROSSER SHOOTOUT:

KAWASAKI vs. HONDA

vs. YAMAHA vs.

SUZUKI vs.

KTM!

**HOW TO EARN MONEY
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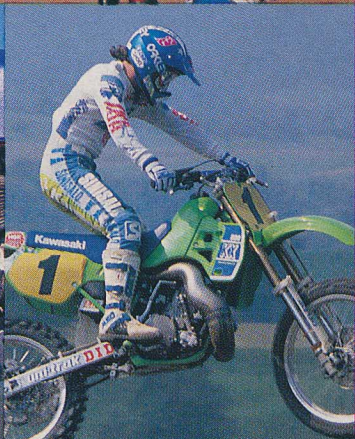
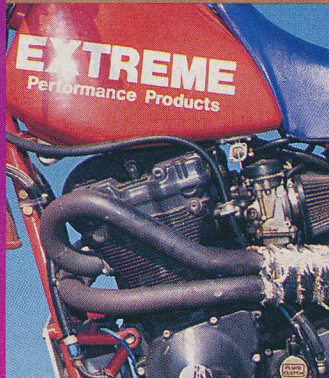
**MOTOCROSS & OFF-ROAD RACING
TACTICS FROM RICK JOHNSON,
KEVIN HINES, RANDY
HAWKINS, DAN SMITH
& MORE!**



**ANOTHER DIRT BIKE FIRST:
FROM BLACK & WHITE TO
ALL-COLOR!**



ISSN 0894-1546



ON THE COVER:—Shane Trittler wheelies the 1990 XR200 across a Yuletide stream for the lens of Ed Arnet, and the 1991 Honda Cub 90 awaits its first Christmas. Tasteful cover design by De-West; separations by Valley Film.

WARNING: Much of the action depicted in this magazine is potentially dangerous. Virtually all of the riders seen in our photos are experienced experts or professionals. Do not attempt to duplicate any stunts that are beyond your own capabilities. Always wear the appropriate safety gear. *Dirt Bike* does all of its testing and photography legally on public land, or private land with permission from the owner(s), and we abide by the local laws concerning vehicle registration and muffler/spark arrester requirements. We are not responsible for quality of aftermarket accessories we use.

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MOTOCROSS COMPARISON TEST

With Christmas rolling around, what better time is there for the 80cc motocross shootout?

There have been many improvements on some models, some are unchanged, and KTM has re-entered the mini wars, so which 80 should be on your Christmas wish list? Which one will dad be most happy with? With these questions in mind, we're putting a new twist into this shootout. On one level, we'll clue in the young roosters on what it's like to rip around a track or gravel pit on each of these puppies, and, on another level, we'll let the parents know about what life with each bike is like. So, you future Rick Johnsons (or whoever your fave is), after you've scoured this shootout and chosen your dream bike, leave the mag on the coffee table for dad to find!

HONDA CR80R

Like last year, Home Boy, the CR80R has the motor of doom. It has a kick-butt mid-range hit and nose-bleed top-end runout. If you find the CR lacking power, your name must be Schwarzenegger. This motor is magic, but the suspension is black magic. The forks are too soft, so it'll kick and stinkbug in turns. Do some suspension tuning and you can be hero in the 85 Modifieds!

Parental translation: The CR80R is un-

changed for 1990, as is the price tag of \$1998. Smaller, inexperienced riders may be intimidated by the pro-like power and the suspension limitations can be felt by the smaller kids. Reliability is unequalled, so the CR is an excellent choice for more experienced riders, once the suspension is corrected.

KAWASAKI KX80-L3

Last year was, like, bog city, so a smaller carb gives the '90 a gut-wrenching midrange hit and a new ignition (digital) keeps the top-end in the eye-watering range. This is an excellent motor, even for spodes. Boinger action has also been boosted, so the Kwacker is definitely in the hunt for winning trophies and babes.

Translation: Kawasaki answered complaints of the '89 being too hard to keep on the pipe and of suspension harshness (stiction) for smaller riders. They also provided a wider range of shock adjustment, so you won't

have to revalve, all for a \$100 price increase. For \$1899, the KX80 is an easy-to-ride, easy-to-work-on, reliable, fast minicycle.

KTM 80MX

Dude, the Katoom has an idol motor, but the suspension is not hero for the mini experts. It's way rad for carving the gravel pits or doing the dez, but it'll eat roost at Ponca City. Too micro for aggro pilots, too.

Translation: KTM brought back the 80MX as an economy model, with a low price tag of \$1489. For this astonishing price you get a bike that's excellent for off-road riding and racing, especially for smaller, less experienced riders. Componentry is excellent, but faster motocrossers will want better suspension.

SUZUKI RM80L

It was way rad last year and won the shootout, but Suzuki went ballistic anyway for '90. Brakes (rear disc), tires, suspension and

1990 MINI S



This comparison will tell you rad riders which mini carves best and which one will carve the least out of dad's wallet.

CR vs. KX s. KTM vs. RM vs. YZ

SHOOTOUT

motor are more aggro and you'll feel hero on this bike. Definitely famous.

Translation: Suzuki wanted to win the shootout again in '90, so they went all-out to improve suspension, motor and brake performance, longevity, rigidity and handling. The maintenance-intensive Full Floater eccentric cam system has been replaced by a new linkage system and the piston is plasma-coated for longer life. It's much easier to ride and work on for '90.

We had a chance to ride the Suzuki Country Racing RM and it had much better mid and top than the stocker or the CR. This shows that the potent RM motor has a lot of hop-up potential.

YAMAHA YZ80A

Less hard-core riders will idol this mid-range motor, but this puppy has nothing on top. Smaller dudes will feel hero on the YZ, then the suspension bottoms big-time when

they get bigger and quicker. Off-road fun is maximum 'cause breakdowns are minimum.

Translation: The YZ80 is basically unchanged for '90 except for cosmetics, while cost has escalated \$200. Although the '89 came in last, the '88-'90 YZ80 is a good bike for the smaller, beginner-to-novice rider. It's a dependable, rugged workhorse and many dealers are discounting the YZ to make it more attractive. If you can find an '89 or even an '88, buy it to save further.

POWER PLAY

Honda's motor is definitely most hero over the RM, KX, KTM and YZ.

Translation: Good midrange and excellent top-end give the CR holedshot power, while the power-valved RM lost some low-end and gained mid to top. Both could be intimidating to the younger pilot. The KX80 is easier to keep on the pipe for '90 and it gained top-end, but isn't as quick as the CR or RM.

KTM's motor is mostly top-end with not much midrange, while the YZ is a midrange motor that falls flat on top.

SHIFTING & CLUTCHING

Honda takes bang shifts and clutch brutality better than the RM and KX and way better than the YZ and KTM.

Translation: The CR takes full-power shifts and clutch abuse without a whimper, while Suzuki takes a close second with excellent shifting and clutch action. Kawasaki comes in a close third; it shifts well but the clutch is comparatively grabby. The YZ doesn't like full-power shifts or repeated clutch fanning. Clutch pull and action are all right on the KTM, but shifting is notchy and neutrals are too numerous.

SUSPENSION HONORS

Suzuki's forks are ragin' over the KX, CR, YZ and KTM, which is agin'. Kawasaki has the coolest shock over the CR, RM, YZ and KTM.

Translation: Suzuki has the best fork action and the linkaged Full-Floater is excellent, but rebound damping went away. Kawasaki's package is also well balanced, but the forks aren't as plush as the RM units and shock rebound also faded. The Honda forks are softer than the shock, giving an unbalanced feel. Revalving is in order, which is il-

1990 MINI SHOOTOUT



Dyno-mites: The '90 crop of 80s delivers big performance for younger pilots. Which one is best? Read on!

VITAL STATISTICS

CATEGORY	CR80R	KX80-L3	KTM80	RM80	YZ80A
Piston	\$22.72	\$30.90	\$78.36*	\$21.12	\$59.00*
Piston ring(s)	8.60	14.04	10.97	10.30	7.80
Clutch plate (fiber)	7.34 (5)	8.20 (7)	11.93 (6)	4.41 (5)	7.00 (6)
Clutch plate (metal)	3.29 (4)	3.78 (6)	3.47 (7)	2.44 (4)	7.60 (5)
Countershaft sprocket	5.52	6.18	24.99	8.08	13.00
Rear sprocket	37.38	23.40	57.43	56.29	38.35
Front brake pads	19.11	30.70	18.83	28.45	37.50
Rear pads/shoes	14.60	30.70	17.65	39.31	12.40
Claimed weight (lbs.)	138.2	134.5	131.1	140.8	135.0
Actual running weight with no fuel or sidestand	143.2	143.7	136.0	145.7	136.7
Sound output (dB, MIC 20")	99	98	100	91	98
Time to remove/install air filter (min:sec)	1:15 / 2:40	1:37 / 2:46	1:17 / 2:53	1:05 / 1:27	1:17 / 2:11
1 / 10th mile acceleration	9.50	9.80	10.15	9.60	9.86
Top speed (mph)	60.30	55.13	55.21	58.25	54.79
Comparative lap avg. +	2:04.97	2:05.68	2:11.65	2:00.05	2:10.15

*KTM's price is a forged piston complete with rings, pin and circlips, while Yamaha's price is for a piston kit with rings.
+Lap times were taken with an 80 Junior rider on a technical, hilly track with varying soil types.

legal in the stock classes. All but the smallest pilots will find the YZ undersprung at both ends. Our KTM blew a fork seal and lost rebound damping in the shock. Overall, Suzuki's package edged out the KX and smoked the CR, YZ and KTM.

HANDLING HEROICS

The RM is the most aggro carver over the KX, CR, YZ and Katoom. In a straight line, the RM is ragin' over Kawasaki, Honda, Yamaha and KTM.

Translation: Suzuki has the best overall handling package, Kawasaki carves well but headshakes on rough straights, Honda has



great carving abilities but the suspension makes the bike skittish, the YZ is also hindered by suspension and KTM is too soft for predictable berm and whoop bashing.

BIG-TIME BRAKING

Suzuki's and Kawasaki's disc brakes party hardy over the drum solos of Honda, Yamaha and KTM.

Translation: Best braking power and feel honors go to the RM, and the KX units take a close second in power and action. Honda's front disc is excellent, but the rear drum is outclassed and outdated. Yamaha's front disc is on a par with the RM, KX and CR, but the rear drum is marginal at best. KTM's rear drum outshines the YZ, but the front disc requires too much finger pressure.

FIT & FEEL

Most pilots feel hero on the RM, with the CR and KX close, but anyone over five feet tall will feel real horror show on the cramped YZ and Katoom.

Translation: Suzuki has an excellent layout for a wide variety of riders and all controls are easily manipulated. No one sniveled about anything on the RM. Smaller riders complained of a big feel on the CR, due to the tall bars and low pegs, but the controls are excellent. Kawasaki has a flat layout but

taller riders felt cramped; the controls are easy to manipulate. All but the smallest riders felt the YZ and KTM were way too cramped and the KTM rear brake pedal was hard to hit.

RELIABILITY & SERVICING

Say what? Come on dad, kick down the toolbox!

Translation: Most mini fathers don't want Junior mousing up the bike. All but the KTM have a pry slot to ease popping off the head. Suzuki made some major changes to ease rear suspension and head bearing maintenance. The airbox is the easiest to service, but the power valve does complicate top-end teardowns a bit and spark plug access is the most cramped. It also lacks a radiator support brace. Kawasaki has good plug access, but air filter removal is complicated by the digital ignition box, which resides above the airbox. The KX also has nice touches everywhere, like the grab tab on the airbox boot and the radiator brace. Detailing also makes the CR a pleasure to work on, although plug and air filter access are a bit cramped. Yamaha has the roomiest plug access and the stout test radiator guard but top-end servicing is complicated. KTM has screw-on tank badges, while the others have peel-o-matic tank

stickers, but jetting the Dellorto is a pain, compared to the flatslide RM and roundslide KX, CR and YZ units. The suspension also went away all too quickly, as did the RM's and KX's shock rebound. For reliability and ease of maintenance, we have to rate the CR tops over the KX, RM, YZ and KTM.

OVERALL RATINGS

From spode to pro, the RM is ragin' over the hard-core KX. Honda has a pro motor and beginner suspension. Yamaha is strictly small-fry and the KTM is a CR80 wannabe.

Translation: Despite having questionable shock longevity, the RM takes top honors with a quick, smooth motor and excellent handling. It's more reliable this year but has less low-end than '89. A close second goes to the KX80, which is easier to ride than last year but lacks the awesome top-end of the CR and RM. It would have tied the RM if it had a little more power and less headshake. Third goes to the ultra-reliable and fast CR, which could have won with better suspension manners. Fourth goes to the YZ, which is an attractive choice for the smaller beginning rider. The KTM also has the price and layout to be attractive to the newcomer, but maintenance costs drop it to last in the shootout. □

	CR80R	KX80-L3	KTM 80MXC	RM80L	YZ80A
Engine type	Reed-valved, liquid-cooled 2-stroke	Reed-valved, liquid-cooled 2-stroke	Reed-valved, liquid-cooled 2-stroke	Case reed- & AETC power-valved, liquid-cooled 2-stroke	Reed-valved, liquid-cooled 2-stroke
Displacement	82.9cc	82cc	82.9cc	82cc	82.5cc
Bore and stroke	47mm x 47.8mm	48mm x 45.8mm	48mm x 45.8mm	47.5mm x 46.8mm	48mm x 45.6mm
Carburetion	28mm Keihin round slide	26mm Keihin round slide	26mm Dellorto round slide	28mm Mikuni flat slide	26mm Mikuni round slide
Fuel tank capacity	1.3 gals (5.0L)	1.2 gals (4.5L)	1.3 gal (5.0L)	1.2 gals (4.5L)	1.3 gals (5.0L)
Gearing	15/49	13/49	14/52	14/48	14/46
Lighting coil	No	No	No	No	No
Spark arrester	Aftermarket	Aftermarket	Optional	Aftermarket	Aftermarket
Green sticker legal in stock trim	No	No	No	No	No
Wheelbase	49.4 in. (1255mm)	49.2 in. (1250mm)	48.0 in. (1220mm)	48.8 in. (1240mm)	48.6 in. (1235mm)
Ground clearance	12.2 in. (310mm)	13.2 in. (335mm)	13.4 in. (340mm)	12.8 in. (325mm)	11.4 in. (290mm)
Seat height	31.9 in. (810mm)	33.1 in. (840mm)	31.5 in. (800mm)	33.1 in. (840mm)	31.5 in. (800mm)
Tire size and type:					
Front	70/100x17 Bridgestone M23	70/100x17 Dunlop A-917	2.75x17 Pirelli MT32	70/100x17 Dunlop K490	70/100x17 IRC M6A
Rear	90/100x14 Bridgestone M22	90/100x14 Dunlop K595	4.10x14 Pirelli MT32	90/100x14 Dunlop K695	90/100x14 IRC M5A
Suspension:					
Front	35mm Showa TSCD, 10.8 in. (275mm) travel	35mm KYB TVC, 10.8 in. (275mm) travel	33mm Marzocchi, 9.4 in. (240mm) travel	35mm Showa, 10.8 in. (275mm) travel	33mm Kayaba, 10.0 in. (255mm) travel
Rear	Pro-Link, Showa remote res., adj. comp./reb., 11.0 in. (280mm) travel	Uni-Trak, KYB piggyback res., adj. comp./reb., 10.8 in. (275mm) travel	Pro-Lever, White Power piggyback, adj. comp./reb., 11 in. (280mm) travel	Full-Floater, Showa piggyback res., adj. comp./reb., 10.9 in. (277mm) travel	Monocross, Yam. remote res., adj. reb., 10.2 in. (260mm) travel
Country of origin	Japan	Japan	Austria	Japan	Japan
Suggested retail price	\$1998	\$1899	\$1489	\$1999	\$1599
Distrib./Mfr.	American Honda Motor 100 W. Alondra Blvd. Gardena, CA 90247	Kawasaki Motor Corp. 9950 Jeronimo Rd. Irvine, CA 92718	KTM America 1906 Broadway Ave. Lorain, OH 44052	American Suzuki Motors 3251 E. Imperial Hwy. Brea, CA 92621	Yamaha Motor Corp. 6555 Katella Ave. Cypress, CA 90630

