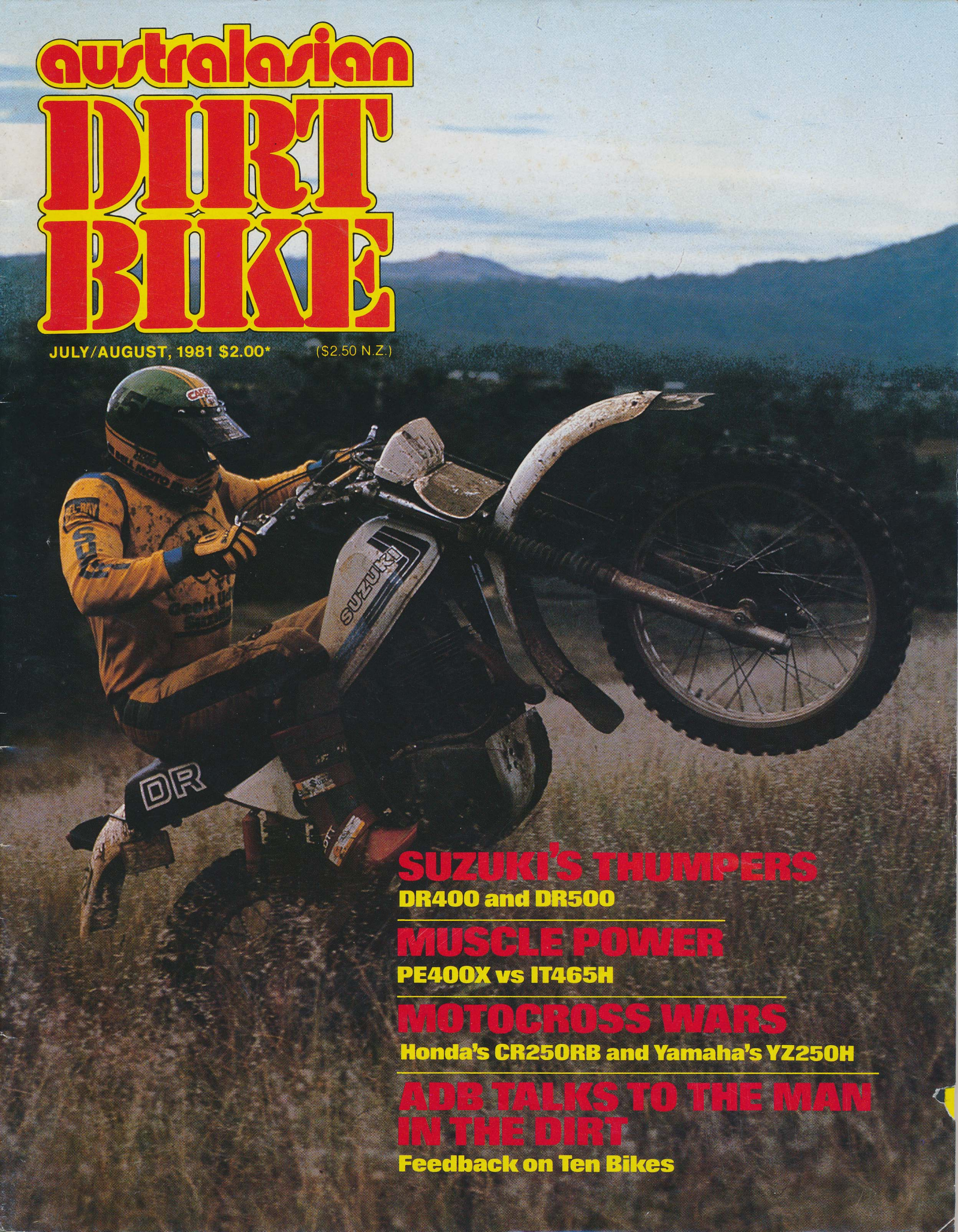
australasian DIRT BIKE

JULY/AUGUST, 1981 $2.00* ($2.50 N.Z.)



SUZUKI'S THUMPERS
DR400 and DR500

MUSCLE POWER
PE400X vs IT465H

MOTOCROSS WARS
Honda's CR250RB and Yamaha's YZ250H

ADB TALKS TO THE MAN IN THE DIRT
Feedback on Ten Bikes

australasian DIRT BIKE

JULY/AUGUST 1981
VOL. 5 NO. 6

CONTENTS

TESTS

RANDOM SAMPLING: TEST FEEDBACK

TECHNICAL

CULTURAL CARTOON FEATURE — PART 2

HUMOUR

REGULAR FEATURES

PEOPLE SLAVING TO GET THIS THING OUT ON TIME

EDITOR: Geoff Eldridge
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Ray Ryan, Chris Blethyn, Dave Ewins, Geoff Udy, Murray Watt, Terry Dodd, Ian Palmer M.I.A.M.E.
PHOTOGRAPHY: Peter Fischmann, Terry Dodd, Geoff Eldridge, Alan Tomlinson
ARTWORK: Iain Wilson and Geoff Eldridge
Advertising: Alan Tomlinson (NSW, 699 7861), Walter Keating (Melbourne, 699 2851)

COVER: Geoff Udy idles the DR Suzuki along on the back wheel in an attempt to persuade the world into turning four-stroke. Photography by the everpresent lens of Peter Fischmann, who operates largely on Flexitime.

Published by:
YAFFA PUBLISHING GROUP
(Page Publications Pty Ltd Division), Yaffa Building, 432 Elizabeth St., SURRY HILLS, N.S.W. 2010. Phone: (02) 699 7861.
Address Mail to Box 606, GPO, Sydney, 2001. Telex 21887.

MELBOURNE OFFICE: Yaffa Publishing Group Pty Ltd, 63 Dundas Place, Albert Park, 3206. Phone (03) 699 1152. **BRISBANE:** D. Wood, Anday Agency, 11-15 Buchanan St., West End, 4101. Phone: 44 3485. **ADELAIDE:** Ray Cant & Associates, 99 Currie St., Adelaide, 5000. Phone: (08) 51 5007. **PERTH:** Cliff Thomas, Adrep Advertising Representatives, 62 Wickham St., East Perth, 6000. Phone: 325 6395. **NEW ZEALAND:** Yaffa Newspaper Service of New Zealand, 31-35 Dickson St., Wellington C1. Phone: 84 5505. **UNITED KINGDOM:** Robert Logan & Associates, 16 Waldemar Avenue, London, W13 9PY, United Kingdom. Phone: (01) 579 4836.

BUSINESS PUBLICATIONS: Advertising News; Australian Refrigeration, Air Conditioning & Heating; Australian Women's Wear/Clothing Industry News; Club Management in Australia; Food Manufacturing News; Furniture & Furnishings; Hospital Journal of Australia; Men's Wear; Modern Cleaning & Maintenance; Packaging News; Textile Journal; Travel Agency Magazine.
SPECIAL INTEREST MAGAZINES: Australasian Dirt Bike; Australian Angler's Fishing World; Australian Flying; Australian Hot Rod; Australian Powerboat; Guns Australia; Sporting Shooter.
REFERENCE WORKS: Australian Advertiser's Brand Names Index; Advertising Buying Guide; Advertising Guide to Clients & Agencies; Club Annual Buying Guide; Food Manufacturing Buying Guide; Hospital Annual Buying Guide; Men's Wear Annual Buying Guide; National List of Advertisers; National List of Advertising Agencies; Refrigeration Annual Buying Guide; Textile Annual Buying Guide.
MARKETING SERVICES: Character Licensing; Direct Mail Services; Exhibitions & Shows.

***This is the recommended retail price for this magazine. It has been noted that in Eskimo currency, the price is considerably higher at three sea lion teeth and a hunting knife. And that's not even Air Whale.**


HONDA
8

SHOOTOUT:
HONDA CR250RB VS YAMAHA YZ250H

A tale of 250s — you had to be there

In the 250cc class there are two extremes. Yamaha's YZ250H, which represents the to-date peak of perfection of an air-cooled engine in a time-tested chassis and a refined inventory of accessories, and Honda's latest effort. The CR250RB is radically new and different for Honda as well as any other manufacturer. We thought we'd see how the two compared.

What to ride — 250 or 465? That is the question. At least, the question wracking the minds of low-budget privateers. There was once a day when a 250 rider could have a reasonable shot at a 400 rider without too much disgrace. But that was before metric and the 465. It is no secret that even 400s have trouble keeping the rear mudguard of the awesome 465 in sight for more than a lap.

So what chance has a 250 rider got in an Unlimited race? Should the riding ability of the two riders be equal, the 250 rider may as well have stayed at home.

But that is not the answer to the question.

Looking at the situation from ground level, it stands to reason that the majority of riders should choose the 250 over the big bore. It is pure and simple. The new breed of 465 is a serious piece of machinery with the seasoned professional in mind. Sure, any rider can ride one — but how well?

It is also true that once in the lead it is much more difficult for a 250 rider to pass a 465 in flight than is the reverse. But at C Grade level there comes a point where that 250 will improve his technique and style so that he can return and clean the 465 rider's dial. Consider also that it is much harder to improve your riding when on a machine you can hardly handle, and that the 250 rider pays fewer bills for mutilated tyres and stretched chains, and surely the writing is on the wall.

At least, that is the way Honda corporates have seen it for the past decade. As a result, they consider also that sales of any volume are in the 125 and 250 classes. In the first year of their release the CR Elsinores were the best in their class. As years went by that image faded badly. A revived assault on the motocross market was launched by the Honda factory in 1978 with the CR125 and 250Rs. The 250R, in particular, set the world on fire, shot Honda back into the front row and gave birth to the factory replica concept we enjoy today.

Since that date the 250 has remained the strong arm of the Honda assault. The CR125s fell one step short somewhere along the line (mainly in price). So more as a course of conditioning, it is not unusual to see most people scan the line-up for the CR250 when Honda releases its new models. It has been a rule of thumb that the CR250 will spearhead the Team Red attack.

So it seemed evident that Honda planned to maintain this tradition when the 1981 range of motocross hardware was introduced. Honda went card-for-card with the rest of the table in the 125 and 500 class with the introduction of watercooling, monoshock suspension and so on, but threw an additional ace on the table in none other than the 250 class with the introduction of the first production watercooled 250. It seemed only fitting, therefore, to give the new CR250RB a shot at the YZ250H — the successor to the YZ250G which in '80 held the title as best 250.

White lightning?

In 1980 the YZ250G ruled. The YZ had the motor and the suspension to do the job better than another other Japanese 250. Unfortunately the YZG had its flaws. Brittle front hubs and a few shattered gears, combined with a difficult airbox, gave quite a few riders bitter memories of the YZ250G. But despite the risk, the YZ250G was the machine to ride if you wanted to win races. The Yamaha was that much better.

Yamaha's course for '81 was obvious. Take a successful design, wipe it of its blemishes and make a few refinements. The theory alone should ensure favourable results. It would certainly make the YZ250H a hard act to beat. Looking at it shows us that the Yamaha engineers did just that.

To clean up the shop Yamaha strengthened the front hub as well as making the rear hub larger and stronger. The six-speed gearbox was modified to accommodate a better five-speed cluster consisting of stronger gears. The solution to the airbox problem was to introduce a larger airbox which enables you to get your hand around the air filter to ensure a good seal during installation. To help eliminate the risk of a bad seal the factory has widened the foam flange at the mouth of the filter and added a steel rim to the air cage to prevent distortion during tightening of the two butterfly nuts which secure the air filter in position.

From there on the R&D boys were left in control to refine the H with data received from factory team members with the aim of bringing the YZ in line with the latest works machinery. The first change made was to the suspension. Last year's suspension was good, but Yamaha riders wanted it better. Larger diameter 43mm front forks were mounted to the front with the steering rake reduced by one degree to help make the steering quicker. The large diameter forks were designed to stabilize the front end and to reduce fork flex, making the YZ's steering more precise through fast berms and over rough sections.

YZ250H vs CR250RB

The back end got some attention with the addition of a new swing arm, lengthened by one inch, and an improved mono-shock unit. Externally, the remote reservoir has been made larger while all other changes have been made to the internals. Compression damping of the shock has been reduced slightly with the piston modified to allow the choice of 30 rebound damping settings rather than 22 offered on the G. Yet despite these changes, Yamaha failed to produce a decent dual rate or progressive rate spring. Last year nearly every top Yamaha rider in the country had to send his shock up to Gaythorne Yamaha in Queensland to have a decent spring added and the internals modified. This modification gave the YZ superb suspension and handling. But we expected the factory to make this modification to the H — particularly since a Gaythorne shock and a White Brothers (USA) shock were sent to the factory for examination. As it turns out, this one point may decide which factory will hold the upper hand in the 250 and 500 class.

As well as the gearbox changes, Yamaha modified the clutch housing to accept an additional fibre and metal plate. The actuating cam has also been redesigned to make the clutch much lighter to disengage and feather.

The power too has been changed to offer a much wider delivery and a higher overall output. To do this, the factory changed the porting slightly, added a fatter exhaust chamber, and introduced the new Yamaha Energy Induction System (YEIS). This unit consists of a plastic chamber attached to the inlet manifold by a wide rubber tube which withdraws and holds unburnt fuel vapours blown back into the carburettor by the engine when the throttle is closed, and stores the vapours until the reed petals open once again. The YEIS system simply eliminated the time lag which occurs as the air flow changes within the carburettor during opening and closing of the throttle.

The improvement is mostly noticeable at the bottom of the power curve and hardly affects peak power at all. Last year the YZ250G had a savage power delivery by comparison. The H picks up much sooner down low and offers a much smoother and wider powerband while still gaining a few extra ponies. As a result, holeshots are even easier on the H since the added low-end power makes the YZ more tractable out of the gate.

To finish off the package, Yamaha brought the YZH into line with the 80s with the welcome introduction of a straight pull throttle and a set of dog-leg levers shortened slightly to prevent damage during a fall. The throttle is a good design which relies on a gear system to rotate the top pull wheel. The throttle cable is attached to this wheel instead of the actual throttle grip as is the case with most throttles, and therefore stands less chance of fraying or breaking due to the short arc the cable has to travel through. The unit is waterproof and easily checked, thanks to a transparent top. Folding shift levers, rubber carburettor covers and butterfly nut rear brake adjusters all add up to making the overall finish of the YZ first class.

Enter the Red Rocket

Honda's new CR250RB water baby has a 'trick' look about it that just doesn't quit. Initial sales on a totally unproven machine confirm the fact that Honda is scooping sales purely on the factory bike image projected by the CR250. It's not unusual to see new owners of CR250s lock themselves away in the garage for a few hours at night imagining they have just signed a big dollar contract with the Honda factory team and have just picked up their first bike. It may as well be true because the new 250RB is a closer replica of the works bike than any other Honda has been.

We are in the midst of a new trend and loving it.

Looking under the exotic plastic and bright paint, we find a purely business oriented machine with new concepts designed to add more function than flair. This policy is projected in every new component on the CR. When you consider that the CR250RB is a totally new motorcycle from the ground up, then you can begin to appreciate how much is involved.

The watercooled 250 powerplant and new Pro-Link suspension play the leading roles in the CR250 fanfare. The remaining multitude of exciting features play a supporting role which under the circumstances of an annual update, as we have come to know it, would rank a top billing.

While everybody stood around discussing and contemplating the advantages, benefits and economics of watercooling on the motocross circuit, Honda had their water pump factory in full drive. Honda R&D reported that both 125 and 250 watercooled mills reaped all kinds of benefits from the extra plumbing and was a sure bet. The fact that the mysterious hoses and protrusions would also act as an invaluable sales gimmick had nothing to do with it.

Or did it?

Anyway, naked cyclinders and orifices are in and fins are out. Honda is first to the orgy and everything is wonderful.

But does it work? Better than we expected!

YZ250H vs CR250RB

Honda has always made good engines. Honda CR motors have always been pretty much bullet-proof, strong in their delivery and tidy in their design. Jetting from the factory has always been spot on. However, since 1978 the gearboxes have been notchy and have required more thought when shifting. The CR250RB is worse. The shift lever has a longer throw and resulted in missed shifts on more than one occasion during our test.

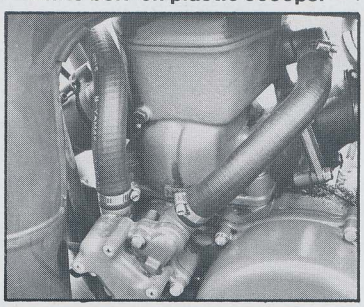
The power of the newest CR is wider and stronger than ever before. Excellent port design along with clean jetting and a superb expansion chamber give the CR250 one of the strongest 250 engines available. The new long stroke configuration gives it plenty of torque and tractability which helps make the CR a fast bike out of the gate. For years the Honda factory bikes have had both long stroke and square stroke motors, but this year is the first time the long stroke motor has been put into production. Also, the chrome lining in the barrel has been replaced with a steel sleeve so that re-boring is possible should the barrel DNF.

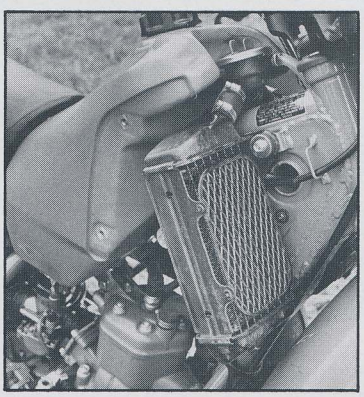
The watercooling of the 250 is the same as the 125, with two radiators mounted in front of the tank feeding a left side mounted impellor pump. The pump consists of a single impellor driven by spur gears off the crank. Unlike the 125 though, the waterpump on the 250 is shielded by the expansion chamber, which will protect the pump in a fall.

Water drives from the left radiator to the pump, from which it is circulated to the rear of the cylinder, up through the head and then to the right side radiator. A cross-over tube joins the two radiators to the single filling mouth mounted between the steering head and tank. The only disappointing feature of this system is that the water is not routed through the crank. Suzuki and the majority of the European factories circulate the coolant through the entire length of the cylinder (the jacket on the Honda only runs down about half way) and then down around the crankshaft bearing to keep the overall temperature of the engine down. Honda press blurb suggests that the watercooling reduces power loss of the CR RB by 20% compared to that of an equivalent air-cooled engine. For racing under Australian conditions the reliability aspect and tuning benefits are more applicable features than any power loss. Nonetheless, it is up to you to decide whether or not watercooling is a good thing.

BELOW TOP: Honda's water pump is driven directly off the crank by spur gears. Water is used to cool only the top end of the engine.

BELOW, CENTRE: The twin radiators are mounted one each side of the contoured tank and are hidden under white bolt-on plastic scoops.



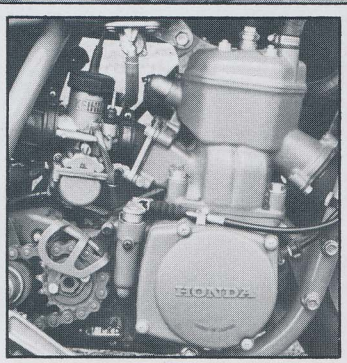


Perhaps one of the most interesting aspects of the CR's suspension is not only the new Pro-Link design, but also the fact that the Honda factory opted to mount Kayaba 41mm forks on the CR rather than the Showa units that were previously the custom. Kayaba has made the forks for Yamaha, Suzuki, and Kawasaki for years now and currently supplies those factories with 43mm units for 1981. Why Honda chose narrower 41mm units over 43mm forks is beyond us. Irrespective, the forks on the Honda are first rate and are the best we have yet found on a CR.

The unique Pro-Link system gets its name from the progressive linkage concept, which, simply put, indicates a suspension system which uses a number of linkages to provide a varying leverage ratio on the shock absorber during compression. This system mechanically duplicates the action of a progressive spring, but with far more accuracy. The Showa shock has a remote reservoir and four damping adjustments which are easily reached at the base of the shock. The shock is mounted to the backbone of the frame behind the tank and seat junction and a rightangled lever which sits on its own pivot on the swing arm. A short anchor attaches the lever to the frame and pivots the lever through a two to five degree arc. Consequently, with such little movement, the factory left the lever to rotate on a rubber bush rather than using heim joints. Rider over-tightening of this central pivot bolt on the swing arm therefore freezes all possible lever movement and can cause the shock to snap at the shaft. This has happened all too often, and owners are warned strongly not to overtighten it.

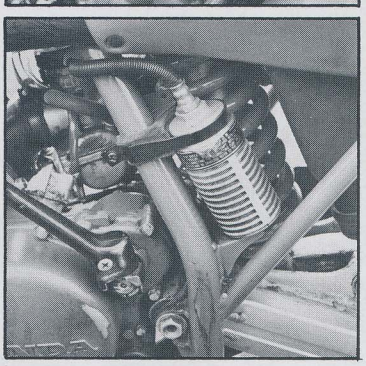
Overall, the progressive rate system is the best suspension available today and is currently used by Suzuki and (in the 1981 models) Kawasaki as well. Yamaha's production system is a constant rate design, but a new link version is now under development. Honda's shock works adequately, but has a harsher feel to it than that of the KX and RM. Top riders in the US and Europe believe this to be the result of a poor spring and a so-so shock.

Apparently, a much better performance can be felt with a decent spring while an Ohlins or White Power shock seems to be the rage on the professional level. Our main gripe with the Pro-Link suspension was in the adjustment of the spring pre-load. The owner's manual suggests removing the seat, side panels and airbox to adjust the spring. Surely a factory that can develop a suspension system of this kind can incorporate an easier method of adjust-



ABOVE: The first of the water-cooled production 250s. This engine features good plumbing, reed-valve, 36mm Keihin carb and a beautiful power delivery. Our gearbox has a long shifting throw and it is possible to miss shifts.

ABOVE: The CR has a twin leading shoe front brake, providing strong single finger control.



ABOVE: Honda's Pro-Link reservoir helps cool the shock. There are four damping adjustments on the shock. Beware of overtightening of the rubber bush between the lever arm and the anchor arm to the frame: it can snap the shaft in two.

ment into their design?

Other than working on the shock, maintenance on the Honda is simple and straightforward. Quality and choice of materials are good, and no other problems arose. Choice of accessories is also commendable, with DID chain and rims, alloy folding shift lever, semi-straight pull throttle assembly and black dog leg control levers clinching the downpayment.

Getting down to business

Before we actually go into what we found when comparing the two bikes on the one day, we will set the record straight with a few points. Firstly, the CR250RB we used suffered a gear selection failure in the afternoon as a result of a loose retaining screw which holds the selecting arm onto the shaft. And secondly, the damping in our YZ's mono-shock left the scene over the course of a few days. On one of those days the comparison took place. The result was that the YZ monoshock did not perform 100% and had to be sent to Gaythorne Yamaha in Queensland for an autopsy.

Perhaps the most conclusive statement we can make about the data received in the comparison by our testers is that both machines are very fast and functional, but it was agreed that the Honda offered better value off the showroom floor. There were three factors which were listed as the reasons:— Firstly, the CR comes out of the crate with spot-on jetting. The Yamaha comes so rich that it was almost a joke and to a lot of riders with only average carburetion knowledge this is disastrous. Some conscientious dealers make jetting changes to the YZ before delivery, but our decision was based on test conditions.

Secondly, the powerband on the Honda was considered to be slightly wider than the YZ's. Most felt the Honda had a little more at the top of the rev range. It was a close decision. We raced the YZ at a local Open after changing the jetting and pulled holeshots all day.

And thirdly, the quality of the rear suspension is better on the CR than the YZ. This affected both the tracking and the turning of the YZ and was largely due to a bogus

Continued on page 22

YZ250H vs CR250RB

Continued from page 19

spring. The spring on the YZ is a nasty unit which sags and offers poor feel as far as progressiveness goes. The sag leads to the steering and overall cornering of the YZ not being what it should or could be. Getting Rob Assink of Gaythorne Yamaha to modify the YZ shock will improve the cornering of the H and make the suspension better than the Honda's.

Gaythorne will modify the piston, change the oil and mount a dual rate spring. But that costs money.

We maintain that the CR250RB is better value out of the crate. Many riders will point out that with an extra $200 spent on the YZ the Yamaha would be a better bike. We might just add that $100 of that figure is necessary for a new set of tyres. The point is, the average rider can spend less money and be happy on the CR. Modifications can improve nearly any bike. We tested standard machines.

But we were impressed with the standard of both bikes. Both machines have been built to win races and will do so in the hands of a competent rider. Braking on both bikes is top-line. The brakes on the YZ are stronger than those found on last year's bike and were considered a little savage by a rider hopping off the CR. Yamaha uses a single cam in both front and rear drums, while Honda mounts a double leading shoe system at the front of the CR. In comparison the CR brakes feel spongey. Once a rider has adjusted both bikes can be pulled up to a halt much faster than has been possible in the past.

Both the YZ and the CR handle well over jumps and in the air. Both bikes sail flat off jumps with the power held on and are very forgiving if they land crooked. All of our testers commented how confident they felt on both bikes, no matter at which angle or what speed they hit the jumps.

Surprising, though, is that over rough ground the Honda felt lighter than the YZ. This is largely due to good weight distribution with the CR and an overall lower centre of gravity. The CR is technically a porker at over 110kg (240 lbs), but feels lighter than the scales would have you believe on the track. The YZ does not feel heavy as such, but heavy in comparison when negotiating large whoops and tight turns. No difference would be noticeable unless both bikes were ridden within a couple of minutes of one another, but then that's what you want to know before you plonk down your money.

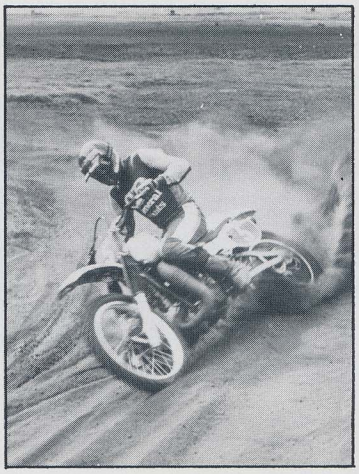
Cornering is generally faster on the CR. The steering angle on the YZ is actually one degree steeper than the CR, but was a little harder to flick through tight turns due to stiffer forks and a sagging back spring. The higher centre of gravity also makes itself known. Both the YZ and the CR can carve a good tight line through any turn and charge through the fastest berm with stability. We would have liked to try some softer fork springs in the YZ and used a Gaythorne shock at the back to see whether or not the modified YZ would perform much better than the CR. Unfortunately, the modified YZ we rode was not available on comparison day. Fast riders and also heavier riders found the forks on the CR to be a little soft. Adding a few mls of oil to the CR and running about 61lbs of air seemed to be the answer.

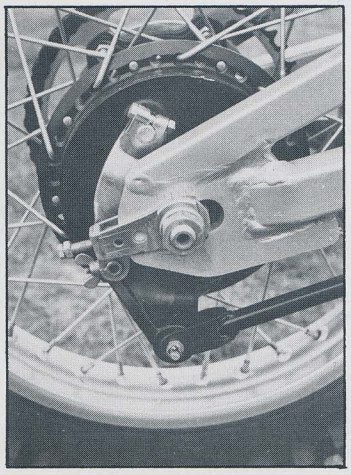
The CR250 comes standard with IRC tyres, which are a fair piece of Oriental rubber. However, the Yamaha comes standard with the same horrific Bridgestones which we found on the 125. These tyres are not even worth the air space they fill. In fact, on a hard packed track, these tyres are a health risk! Be prepared to buy new tyres with your YZ, before you even run the bike in.

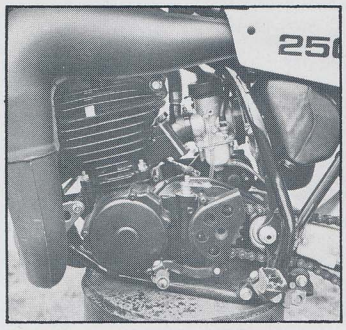
Once the jetting on the YZ has been made leaner, the 250H will pull cleanly out of corners and give a strong power delivery throughout the mid-range, but peak out a little early in the top end. The YZ250G had a peakier power, but had less torque than the H. The CR, on the other hand, pulls cleanly off the bottom and will pull a tad longer than the Yamaha with the stock jetting. Down the straight the two bikes ran a close race. In drag races the Yamaha gained the advantage through short shifting and by virtue of being easier to flat shift. Once set up, the two bikes are hard to separate.

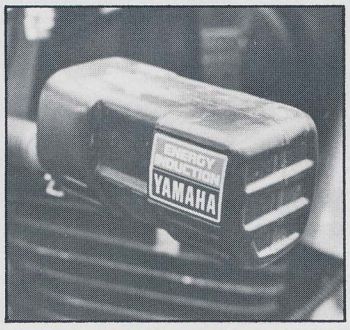
We have already mentioned the result of the suspension comparison. One point we chose not to mention was that on the day of comparison our testers felt that the suspension on the YZ tended to transmit too much pounding to the rider, causing the YZ rider to tire more quickly than the CR rider. We

BELOW: Yamaha has a knack of building super strong brakes. The YZ250H is no exception, although when you first jump on you tend to lock them up all the time. Yamaha riders are always critical of the brakes on other bikes.

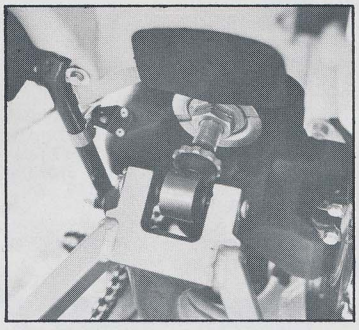






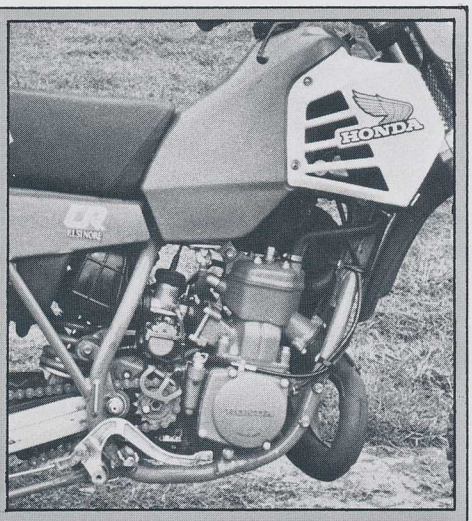


ABOVE: With the 250s, both YZ and IT, Yamaha designed the YEIS system to improve throttle response down low in the rev range. Why they didn't do the same thing by porting and pipe design is beyond us.



ABOVE: the monoshock is so sophisticated you can adjust the damping to 32 positions without using any tools. Preload is almost as easy. The unit is made from aluminium and the centre of gravity has been lowered in the frame.

ABOVE: Forks have 43mm diameter tubes and 1° less rake to improve steering. The front hub has been strengthened.



	YAMAHA YZ250H **Test Bike:** McCulloch Yamaha, Station Road, Seven Hills, NSW Phone: (02) 624 6999	HONDA CR250RB **Test Bike:** Greg Cady
SPECIFICATIONS		
Engine	Single cylinder, air-cooled two-stroke with reed induction	Water-cooled, single cylinder two-stroke with reed induction
Displacement	246cm³	247cm³
Bore x stroke	70 x 64mm	66 x 72mm
Compression	9.9:1	7.5:1
Carburettor	Mikuni VM38SS	36mm Keihin
Claimed power	41ps at 8,000 rpm	42ps at 8,000 rpm
Ignition	CDI	CDI
Starting	Primary kick	Primary kick
TRANSMISSION		
Transmission	5 speed constant mesh	5 speed constant mesh
Primary drive	Gear	Gear
Secondary drive	520 chain	520 chain
Gear ratios:		
1st	1.928	1.800
2nd	1.631	1.471
3rd	1.270	1.150
4th	1.027	0.955
5th	0.860	0.833
Transmission pattern	1-N-2-3-4-5 LHS	1-N-2-3-4-5
DIMENSIONS		
Overall weight (dry)	99kg	
(wet)	104kg	112kg
Overall length	2,175mm	2180mm
Overall height	1,220mm	1,150mm
Seat height	950mm	927mm
Wheelbase	1,480mm	1485mm
Ground clearance	320mm	305mm
Fuel capacity	9.0 litres	7.6 litres
FRAME AND SUSPENSION		
Frame	Chromoly single cradle frame	Single to double cradle chromoly tube
Fork rake angle	28.5°	29.5°
Trail	122mm	123mm
Suspension:		
Front	Telescopic fork with oil damping, spring/air assisted	Telescopic fork, oil damping, air/spring assisted
travel	304mm	305mm
Rear	Mono-shock oil/nitrogen damping with remote reservoir, spring assisted, fully rebuildable	Single shock oil damping with remote reservoir, spring assisted
travel	306mm	292mm
Front tyre size	3.00 x 21	3.00 x 21
Rear tyre size	5.10 x 18	5.10 x 18

Craig Scott

felt it unfair to mention this when it was discovered that the damping of the shock was on the way out when that point was made. A separate and shorter comparison was made between the CR and another YZ250H on a different track to evaluate the two rear suspensions when it was discovered that the YZ shock initially used was faulty.

We knew that the basis of our decision would require us to cut fine lines to determine a winner of the comparison. We were only disappointed to not to have a Kawasaki or Suzuki available to include in the test. At our time of printing, Suzuki had not yet released their bikes and Kawasaki could not release their bikes due to a silencing problem.

A few will argue about the basis by which we decided a winner. But we had to test the bikes under standard conditions for the test to be absolutely fair. In out of the crate form, the Honda stands on top. Modifying the YZ and CR could lead to all kinds of results. The only point we will mention is that the YZ is easier to modify or improve than the Honda. This is due to the fact that the standard Yamaha shock can be modified for roughly $100 to obtain excellent results. Trying to buy an Ohlins or White Power shock will set you back some $400 IF and WHEN you can get hold of one.

One thing we have found from having various riders ride numerous bikes is that some machines suit individual riders better than others. Obviously, the best way for you to know which bike you should buy is to go out and try to ride them yourself. If you are not in a position to be able to do that, then you will have to go on what magazines like ADB say. And we say the CR250RB is better value for money than the YZ250H.