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MARCH/APRIL 1980

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BLACK MAGIC
IN THE WOODS**

**YAMAHA IT425G:
UPDATING OLD BLUE**

**ADB'S FIRST EVER
NOVEL INSIDE!**

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VOL. 4 NO. 4

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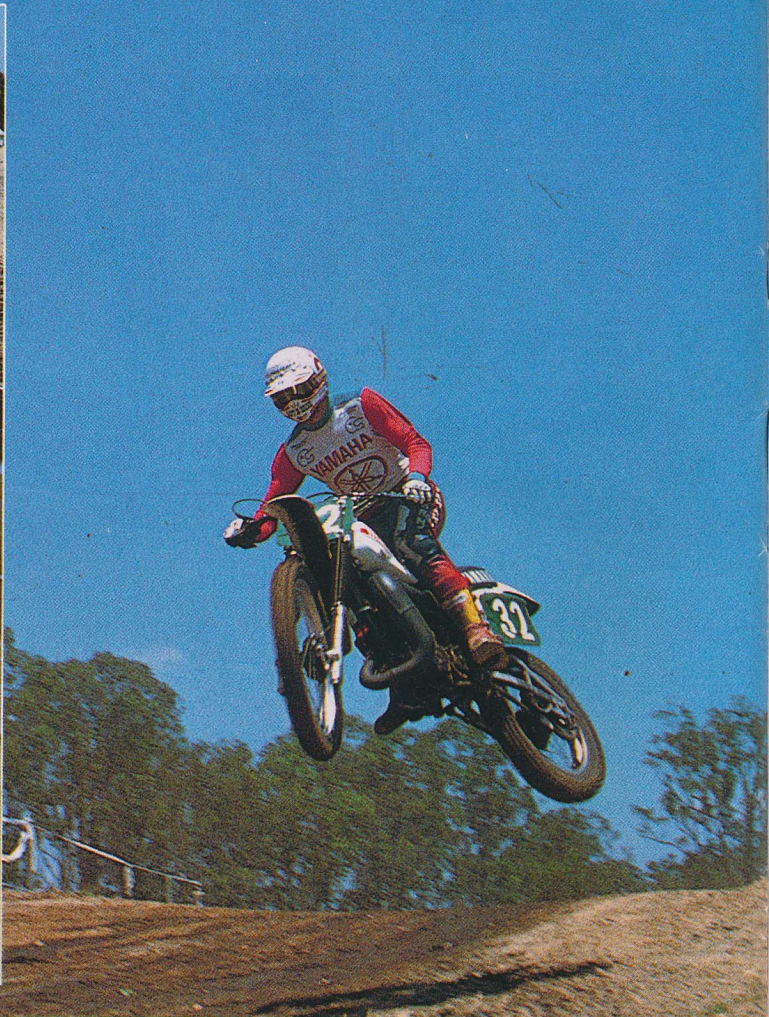
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COVER: Is that a gleam in his beady little eye, or is it a reflection of that Gold Medal he is wearing? Phil Lovett and one of his two ISDT medals: who wouldn't be proud?

**Recommended and maximum price only*





YAMAHA YZ250G

Ten feet away, the G model YZ looks almost identical to the F. A lot of people are going to think it is nothing more than an F with new mudguards. Emphatically, it isn't so. This is one whole new ballgame.

Test bike supplied by Gaythorne Yamaha in conjunction with Annand and Thompson Yamaha, Brisbane. Special thanks to Andrew Bailey.

It is almost par for the course these days to begin tests on new Yamahas with the words "although it looks the same, this model is all new." For the past three years or so, Yamaha has been producing YZs which look essentially to be the same, but on each successive one they add a few important changes which alter the nature of the machine. A little extra horsepower here, a slight weight saving there, a different rake up front. Things like that.

All of them, from the D model (which was a vast improvement and a truly new design after the X model), through the E to the F. But they were, to most intents and purposes, all changes added to the same basic motorcycle.

The G is different. In fact, on the whole thing there are only a handful of part which are the same. Front hub, levers, chain adjusters and that's pretty much it. The rest is new.

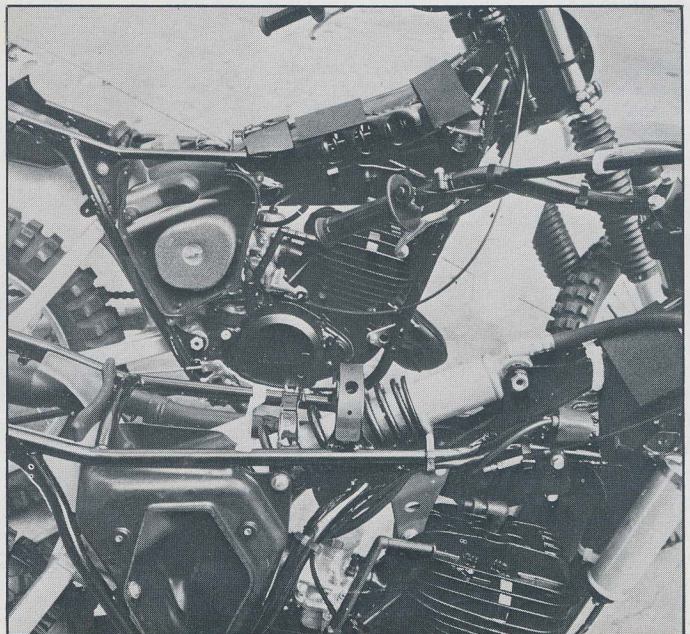
So it's new. Is it a lot better, is it marginally better, or is it similar to the F?

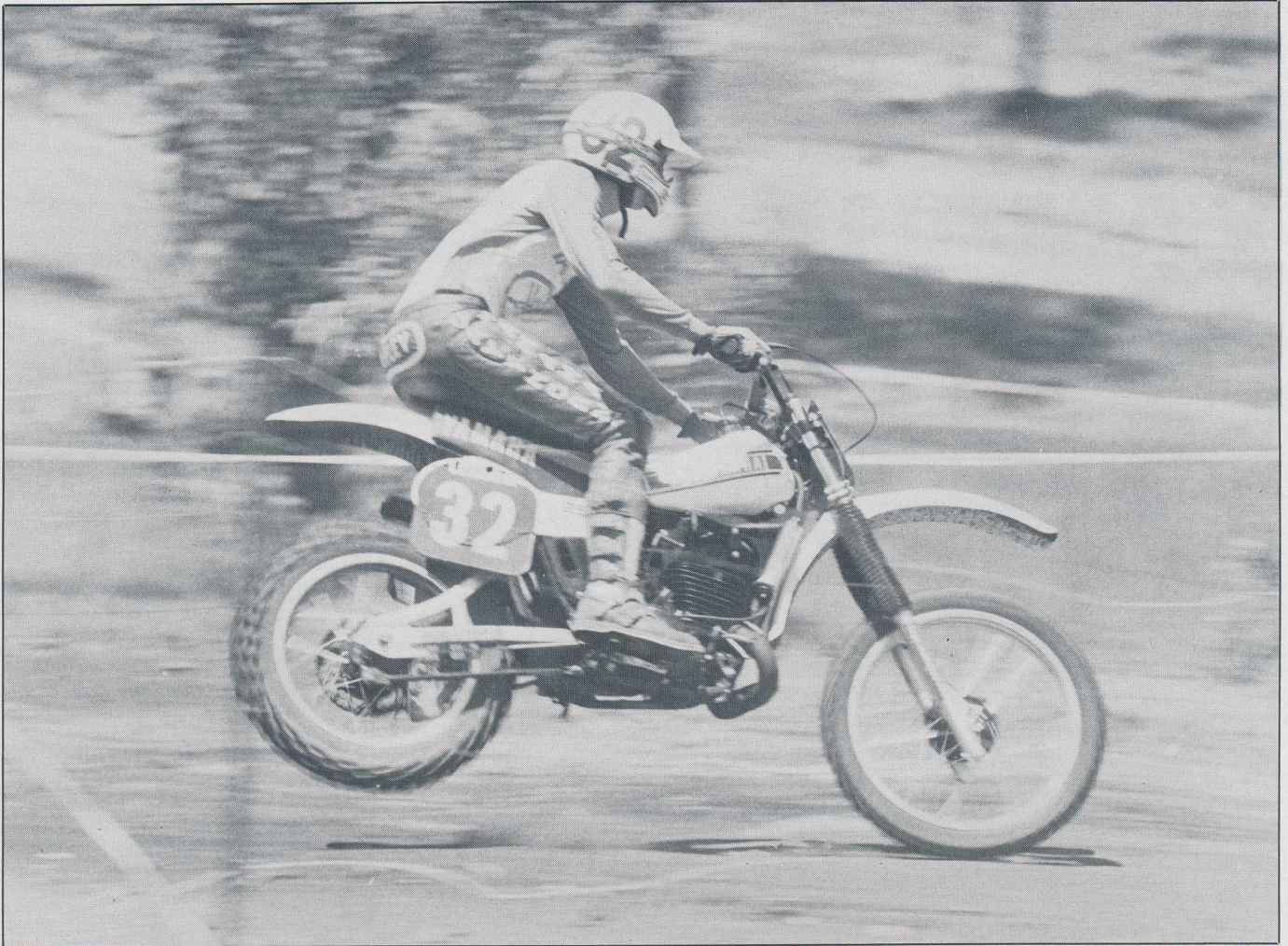
It's better. A whole lot better. Fact is, every Yamaha rider we spoke to who had been riding Ds, Es, Fs, then rode the G, came away in raptures. There was even one phonecall from the Shearer motocross team in Bega, NSW, in which we were told they'd bought a new YZ250G and were amazed at how much better it was. Andrew Bailey, Yamaha's leading rider in Queensland, felt much the same. The Fs aren't in the race anymore.



ABOVE: The G is a whole new bike, from the frame up. The main thing it offers is a handling package which is bulk better than any other Yamaha has ever been, and a wider spread of power to use with it.

RIGHT: Without all the plastic-ware, you can pick the frame and monoshock differences between the F model (the top bike) and the G model. Note the reservoir and additional tubing in front of the airbox of the G.

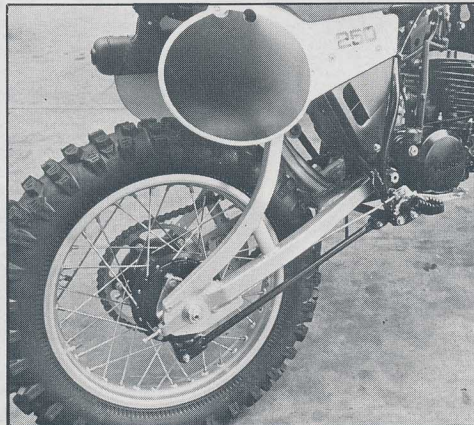
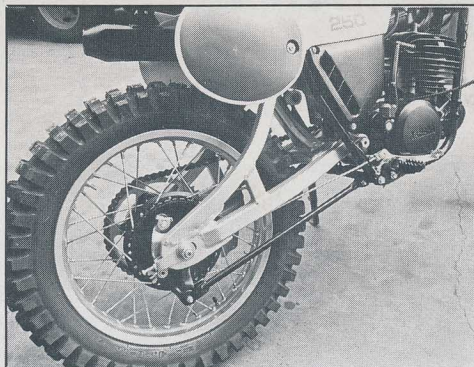




ABOVE: Queensland's leading Yamaha rider, Andrew Bailey, in action at Tivoli Motocross Circuit.

RIGHT: Swingarm on the F is shorter than the G, and has 25mm less wheel travel.

BELOW, LEFT AND RIGHT: The G model monoshock gives more travel, easy external adjustment and a remote reservoir for the oil, bolted in a canister up front under the tank. The centre of gravity is lower with the G.



FRAME AND SUSPENSION

This is the area where most of the changes have most of the effect. Traditionally, Yamahas have all suffered from monosockitis, which is a disease which affects the handling of the YZ in a motocross corner. It is brought on by the nature of the rear suspension and by its location in the frame.

Monoshocks are relatively heavy pieces of hardware designed to cope with the demands of the rear wheel as it is pounded over the circuit. They sit high up in the frame and connect to the rear wheel via a complicated triangulated alloy swinging arm. This design gives a YZ a higher centre of gravity than the more conventional cantilevered shocks as used on, say, an RM. The higher the centre of gravity, the harder it is to flick the bike around in corners.

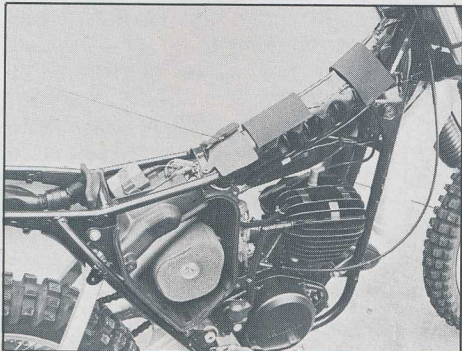
In the F model, the monoshock sat inside the top frame member, which of necessity had to be a large chrome-moly (the Japanese type) tube. This year, the whole concept has been changed.

YAMAHA YZ250 G

One look at the photos of the YZ250G and the YZ250F without tanks, seats and sidecovers will show you why. The new frame is 100% new. Gone is the old large backbone, replaced by more normal-sized tubing which runs down to the area above the airbox, then splits just like more conventionally suspended machines. As you can see on the F model, the frame supplied no tubing members in front of the airbox, and relied instead on the rigidity of the rearward sloping members: it is pretty obvious which design offers the most strength in the frame. The G model has no flex at all, where the rear wheel on the F could, and did, transmit a lot of flex to the frame.

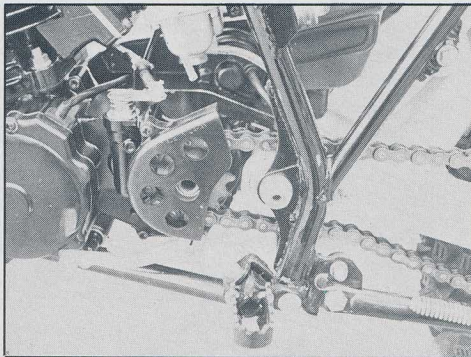
As you can also see, the positioning of the monoshock has also been radically changed. It is outside the framing, and several inches lower than last year. As well, there is a remote oil reservoir mounted to the front frame downtube, which means that the overall size of the monoshock body is smaller and therefore there is even less weight up high. It's all pretty trick.

As a rider, it is difficult to even equate the F with the G while racing.

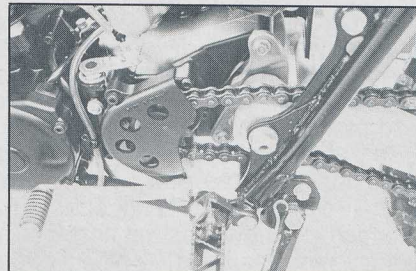
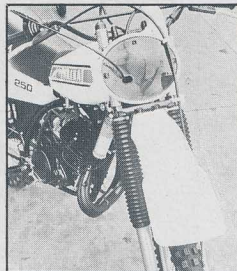


ABOVE: The F monoshock is within the top frame member, which places the centre of gravity quite high. The monoshock, as you can see, goes all the way up to the steering head.

BELOW: On the other hand, the G model monoshock is outside the framing, and starts lower down. This improves the weight distribution. Check the differences in the frame tubing in front of the airbox.



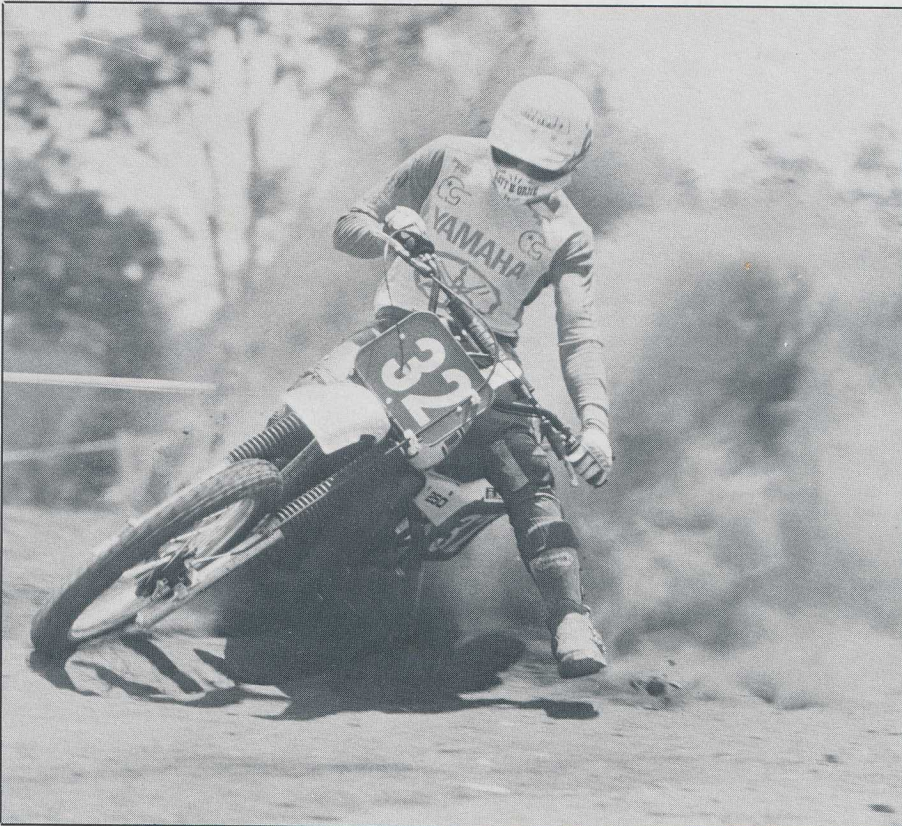
LEFT AND BELOW: In these two shots, you can see the difference in position of the countershaft on the G (left) and the F (right). The G no longer needs a chain tensioner, since the sprocket is so close to the swingarm pivot. Check the differences in the framing, footpegs, gearlevers and rear engine mounts.



ABOVE LEFT CENTRE: New guard, non-approved front numberplate, fork travel and steering geometry. The F is on the left, the G on the right.



LEFT: Bars on the G are mounted with a rubber grommet to absorb vibration. Check the new all-plastic cable guides. Neat.



YZ250 G

There is no top heaviness at all. The YZ250G feels so much like the RM250N (ot T, for that matter) that it isn't funny.

There are a few other important frame changes, too. The steering angle is steeper than the F by one full degree: this translates into even better steering than the F, which was 29.5°. At the rear, the swingarm is longer to keep stability.

In corners, the G is so easy to manoeuvre that it at last is able to challenge the accepted leaders, where up till now it always wallowed and ploughed around behind them.

In the area of suspension, Yamaha gave buyers more and better. A full inch more travel at both ends. The monoshock now has easy-to-get-at adjustment settings which affect spring preload and damping. With the damping settings, all you do is click the rear collar around through some 16 different settings by hand: it is all out in the open and no tools are necessary. Very 20th Century.

Up front, the forks provide an even better ride than they did before. Run a lightweight oil, choose an air pressure to suit your weight and riding, and you



are in plush city. The spring rate is as close to spot-on as you can get, so all you need to do is fiddle around with air and oil.

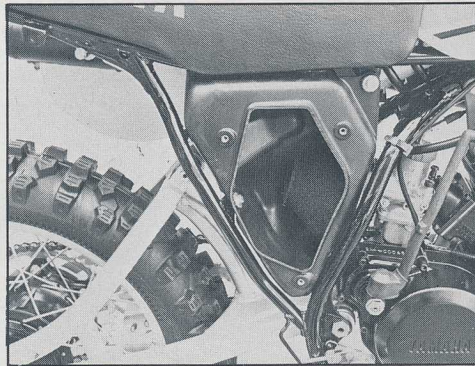
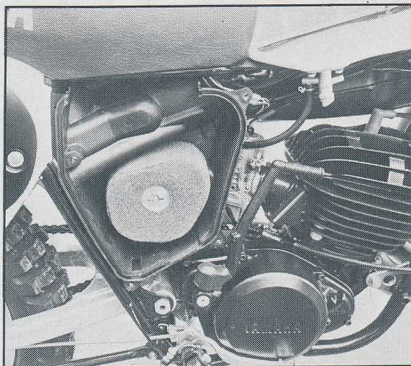
Getting the most out of the YZ's suspension requires a little practice,

though, even with this model. If you hit a bad bump with the power off, the front absorbs it nicely but the back jumps into the air and transmits a jolt to your body. Hitting the same bump with the power on you don't even notice it is there. Learn to wail full throttle into corners, jump savagely onto the tank in corners to keep the front where you wanted it (all modern long travel suspended machines need this style) but there was a time when Andrew Bailed headed into a corner way too fast. He said after he had easily negotiated it that he did something he doesn't normally do — he leaned back in the seat and just gassed it, hoping for the best. It worked so well he was going to try to develop it as a technique. You can please yourself.

We found a slight contradiction, here. Riding the bike needed the rider to climb onto the tank in corners to keep the front where you wanted it (all modern long travel suspended machines need this style) but there was a time when Andrew Bailed headed into a corner way too fast. He said after he had easily negotiated it that he did something he doesn't normally do — he leaned back in the seat and just gassed it, hoping for the best. It worked so well he was going to try to develop it as a technique. You can please yourself.

Jumping the YZ was also noticeably better. It was far easier to manhandle or reposition in midair, where the F was a handful. This, again, is due to the new frame and the slight reduction in weight.

It was once said that YZs were fine to race hard, because that was when they delivered the most. This model is the same, but it is also very forgiving. Which is what it's all about when you near the end of a 30 minute moto and all you want to do is stop.



ABOVE: The F model airbox was good, but the G features a more waterproof cover and a secure, even if difficult to accept, bolt mounting for the filter itself. Wingnuts outside the front of the airbox hold the filter in place. You still have to put duct tape over the sidecover vents in wet riding conditions. Filter foam is better in the G. Sidecover is now one-piece.



Continued on page 74

HELL'S BELL.



The new Bell Moto III. A new helmet that's been through hell and back. Tested and developed by Champions such as Bob Hannah, Roger DeCoster, Larry Roessler and other superstars.

The new Moto III sets new helmet standards with its combination of safety and comfort features: smaller, lighter fibreglass shell for better balance. Contoured to protect nose, mouth and chin (it eliminates the need for

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YZ 250 G

Continued from page 20

POWER AND ENGINE

Again, everything is different. Gone are the bulky looking crankcases which bolt into the rear of the frame via a couple of clumsy looking alloy brackets which can't be doing anything for frame flex. The new engine bolts straight in without any funny business. Overall gearing remains the same, but the clutch has been rethought to give better action on the start line: the lever arm on top of the cases is shorter and the cable retainer is at a different angle, and these two factors combine to give the clutch a more positive feel.

The powerband, too, has received attention. The pipe and barrel are both designed to provide a wider powerband, as against the peakier feel of the F. It was noticeable in coming out of corners through deep sand — the engine would easily pull through them without needing to change down. Overall power is greater, too. Second gear starts on most tracks are the rule rather than the exception, as with the Suzuki RM250.

But where the Suzuki doesn't want to rev out and still provide good horsepower, the YZ will, as has been a trademark of Yamahas since day one. Overrevving doesn't make it die off. Starting was easy, never needing more than two prods at the lever.

Gear selection was slick, with no stickiness evident. The whole engine was a pleasure to get along with.

DETAILING

Last year, people looked at the YZ250F and said "What can they do to improve that?" The G model shows that they could do a hell of a lot because that's what happened.

The countershaft has been located a lot closer to the swingarm pivot bolt, making a chain tensioner unnecessary. So, Yamaha left it off and provided instead a series of the neatest looking plastic chain guides ever seen by moto men. The seat foam is softer. The airbox features a whole new access and mounting system, which the guys from Gaythorne say is better once you get used to the idea that it works. The footpegs don't have the ribbing in the centre which used to collect mud. The barrel/carb/airbox connection is a straight line which improves air flow. The pipe/silencer junction is changed for a neater fit.

The tank is different and is slightly better to slide up onto. The



SPECIFICATIONS

YAMAHA YZ250G

Test Bike: Gaythorne Yamaha,
Brisbane
Phone: (07) 355 0991

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine.....Single-cylinder, air-cooled
reed-valve two-stroke
Bore x stroke.....70 x 64mm
Capacity.....246cc
Compression ratio.....8.1:1
Lubrication.....Premix
Carburettor.....Mikuni, 38mm
Air filtration.....Oiled foam element
Electrical.....CDI

TRANSMISSION

Clutch.....Wet, multiple disc
Primary drive.....Helical gear
Secondary drive.....DID chain, 520,
48/13 sprockets
Gear ratios (overall):
1st.....2.142 (30/14)
2nd.....1.182 (29/16)
3rd.....1.411 (24/17)
4th.....1.142 (24/21)
5th.....0.956 (22/23)
6th.....0.875 (21/24)
Transmission pattern.....1-N-2-3-4-5-6
Starting.....Primary kick, RHS

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase.....1,455mm (57.3 in)
Handlebar width.....935mm (36.8 in)
Seat height.....935mm (36.8 in)
Ground clearance.....310mm (12.2 in)
Weight.....97kg (214 lbs)
Fuel capacity.....7.6 litres

FRAME AND SUSPENSION

Frame.....Tubular steel and semi
double crade

Suspension:

Front.....Telescopic, hydraulic forks,
300m (11.81 in) travel
Rear.....Monocross unit is triangulated
framing system, remote oil reservoir,
300mm (11.81 in) travel.

Wheels and brakes:

Front.....21 x 3.00 tyre with DID alloy
rim, conical-type hub leading/trailing
brake.
Rear.....5.10 x 18 tyre with DID alloy
rim, conical-type hub with fully floating
brake, leading/trailing shoes.

Footpegs.....Serrated, spring-loaded
folding, self-cleaning.

Mudguards.....White impregnated break
resistant plastic.

Numberplates.....Illegal in Australia,
Goddamn.

Silencing.....Pretty good, actually

handlebars are rubber mounted with good, strong rubber grommets, and the clamps are offset to allow a lot of positioning of the fork tubes. There is a little rubber cover over the throttle housing which gathers as much mud as it shielded. The guards are a different design, but are essentially about as good as the old guards. The rims have an extra thickness of meat around the beading for better resistance to buckling. Tyres are different, but they still aren't Metzlers. The cable guides have eliminated the old metal ring which encompassed the nylon guide, so that now the whole thing is nylon and can't come apart. The rear hub is smaller, and the rear brake works flawlessly: gone is the Yamaha rear wheel chatter of old.

The whole thing is yet another masterpiece of Japanese technology, this time even better than before. Will we never cease to be amazed?

CONCLUSION

It's going to be really hard for buyers in the US, now. Over there the RM and the YZ are both yellow. How do you choose?

At least in Australia, the colours are different, so you have a choice and a reason for buying either an RM or a YZ.

In the past, the RM definitely has the edge on the Yamaha (N model RM against the F model YZ) in handling. This year, it is a different story. The two are so similar it is frightening, when you consider the incredible suspension design differences. But in our books, that is a compliment to the YZ: gone, really, are all the bad aspects of the monoshock system, despite what a lot of Yamaha racers think. The people at Gaythorne Yamaha Brisbane said that they frequently service the units, changing oil and checking seals and gas pressures, and the riders claim to be able to pick the difference. So you can't just buy it and forget it.

All the same, it is easy to dial in this time, and most riders should welcome that fact. In the handling department, the reduction in top heaviness, the almost absolute rigidity of the frame design and the improved steering make this the best YZ yet, easily on a par with the RM, we feel. Power is good, suspension is good, handling is good.

Yes, it's going to be bloody hard trying to choose a new 250 motocross machine this year.

RIDING SPOT

TIVOLI RACEWAY



While the ACU of NSW persists in charging all NSW riders 50c per weekend of racing in what they call the Land Purchase Fund, and while they systematically store it away in a mattress or a jam tin or a building society, the ACU of Queensland have actually gotten off their bums and gone out and bought land, on which they built a racing complex. Although a lot of Banana Bending Motocrossers complain that Tivoli's motocross circuit is too dusty, at least it offers northern riders in a capital city somewhere to go to either practice or to race.

And that's something the ACU of NSW hasn't managed to do yet, Land Purchase Fund and all. It's probably time we all sent them a letter asking exactly what is to be done with all that NSW money. Meanwhile, Tivoli is pressing on, giving a riding spot for motocrossers, dirt track riders, speedway freaks and committee people for official meetings.

A large building has been built on the site to double as a meeting place for committees and an office for the Queensland ACU, Secretary Mr. Noel Stitt, MBE, is always there, working away and letting riders onto the track during the week for practice (\$2.00 per rider per day). The

land was originally bought in 1969 by the ACU, shortly after which they built the scrambles track which, after consistent modification and alteration, is what is now known as the Tivoli Motocross Circuit. Adjacent is a speedway, and lower down on the property is a dirt track. Clubs can hire the tracks on Sundays for 15% of the gross gate takings in the case of an open meeting, or \$2.00 per rider in the case of a club meeting. Noel Stitt claims this is "not enough" but at the time of writing, that was what it was. The building was finished in 1975.

The speedway is fully fenced and properly prepared, as is the dirt track, but most riders comment that the motocross track needs more attention paid to dust prevention and digging up the surface layer: as it is, the circuit is only oiled, and then inconsistently. What is needed is a ripper which digs down about four or five inches and upturns that layer; then oil can be added and will effectively eliminate dust, as is the case at Dargle, near Sydney.

Still, the complex is at least real, and is taking full advantage of land inflation while at the same time offering Brisbane riders a place to go. Which is a damn sight more than is happening down south.

