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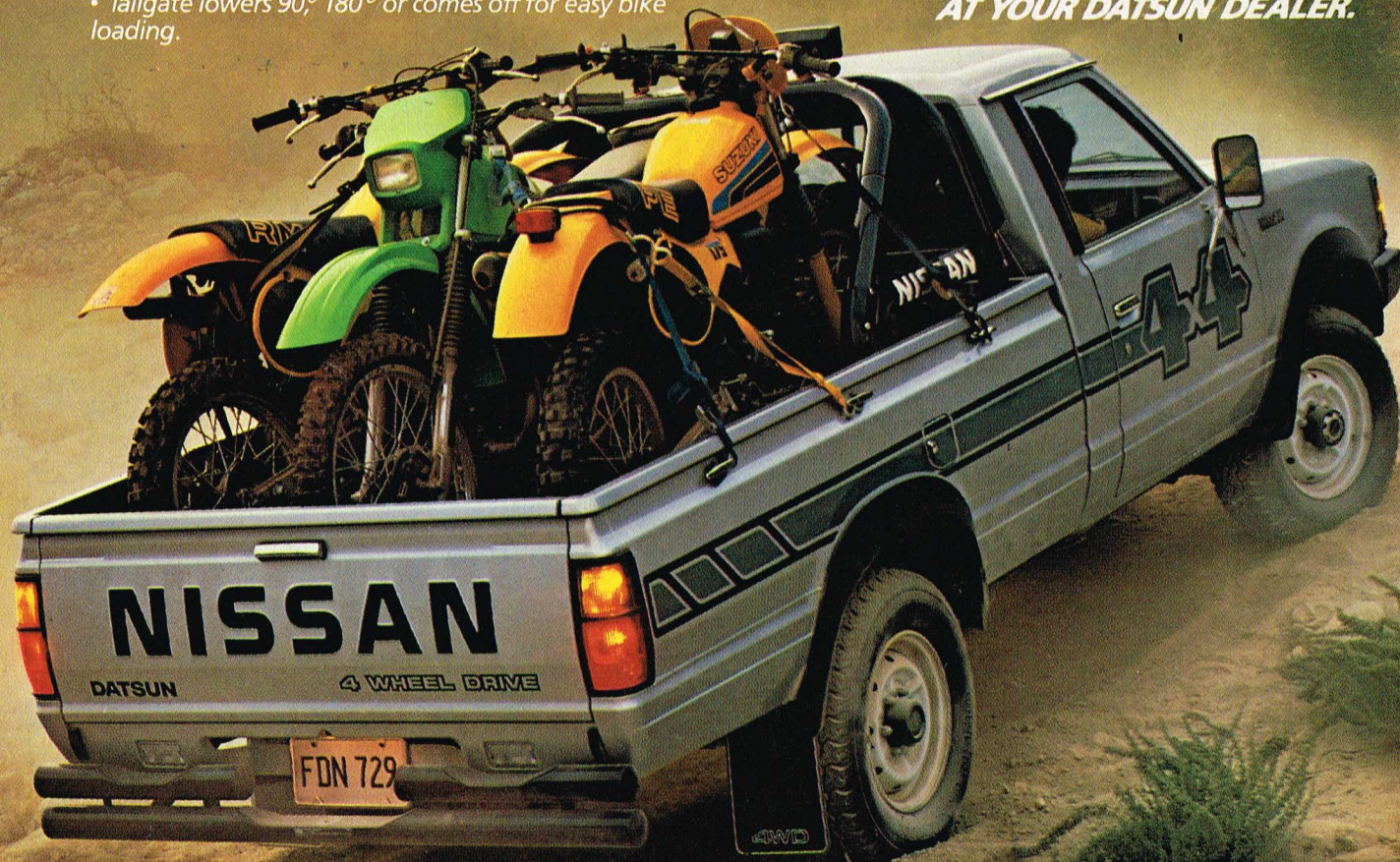
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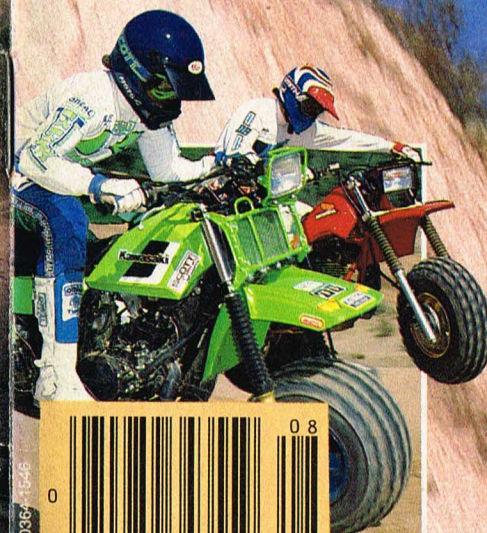
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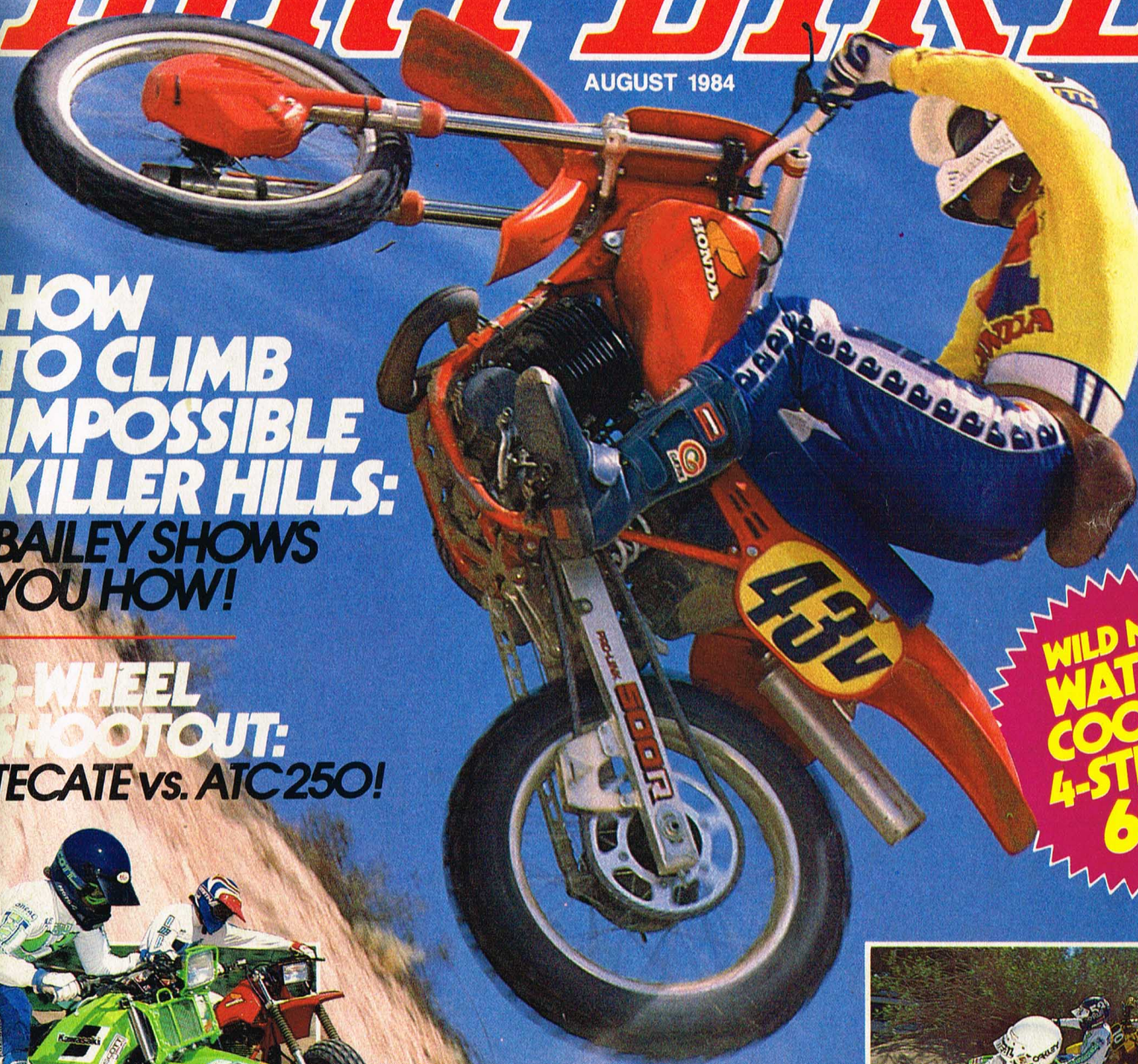
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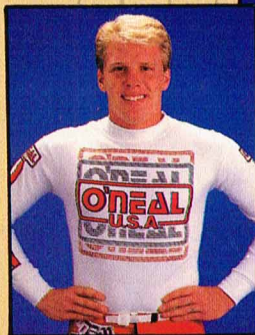
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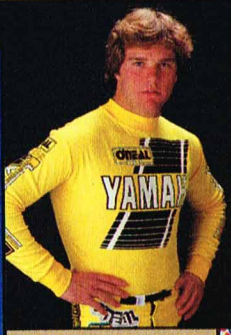
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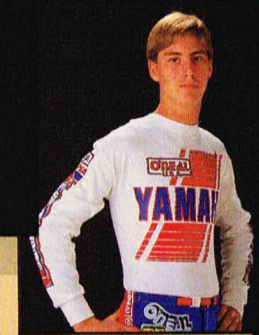
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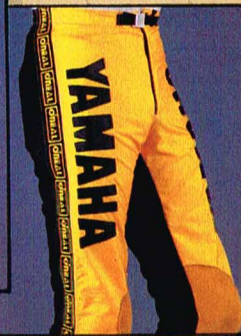
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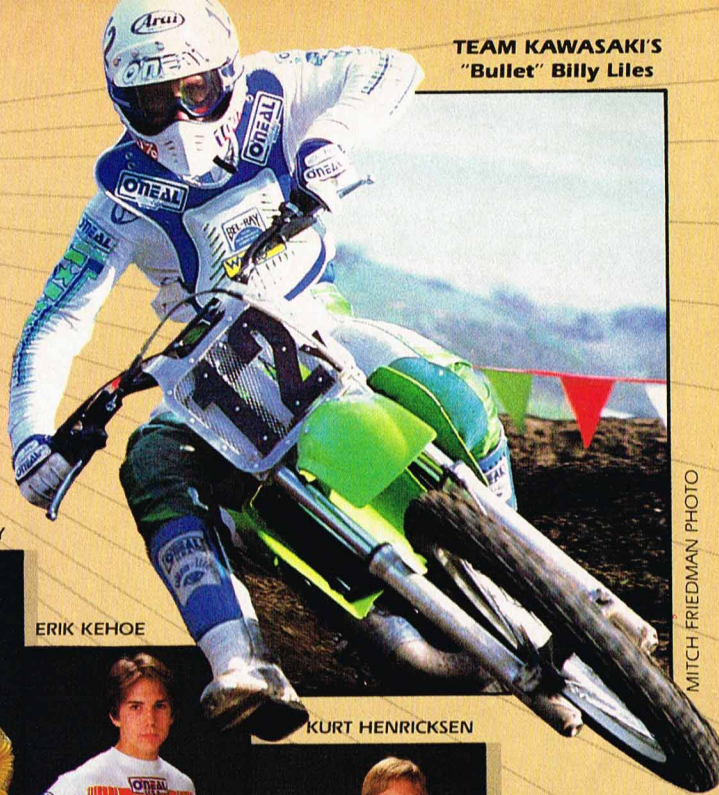
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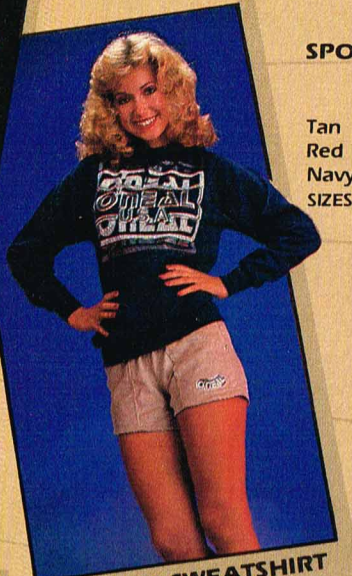
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- SCORE Class 7 Championship
- Mint 400, Frontier 500
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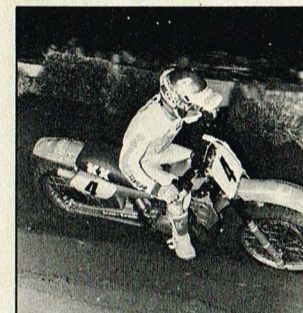
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ROSE BOWL



ATC vs. KXT



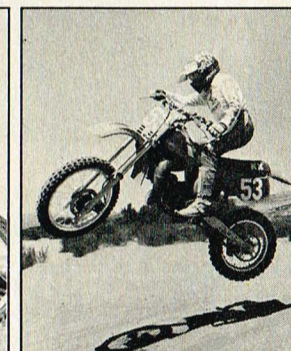
KLR600



XT250



CAGIVA 125



80 SHOOTOUT



XL350



XR200

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Reginald Pewty eats the big one

ON THE COVER:—Jon Miller shows us how to climb a Gorman hill, and how to part the waters on a TT600. The mini gang is hard at work evaluating the Little Four, and the stunt team of Russell and Beckman jump for our ATV shootout. Photos by Rick Sieman and Paul Clipper; color 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.



"ROLL OFF'S WORK IN ALL CONDITIONS OR I WOULDN'T USE 'EM!" Bob Hannah.

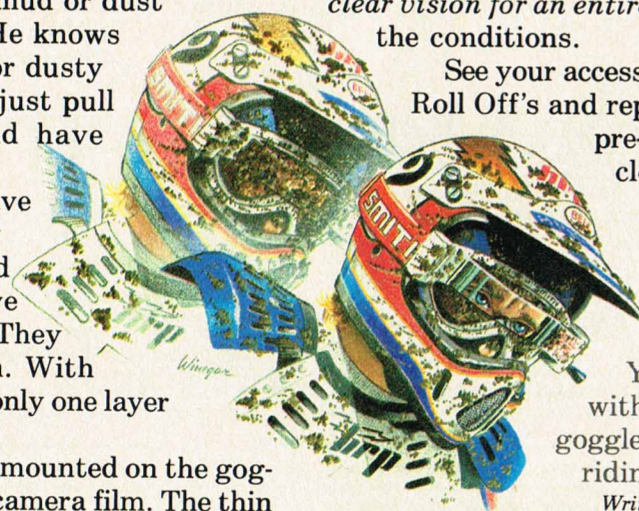
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TEST RIDERS

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From the Saddle



The care & feeding of the Pennsylvania Turnpike

By Rick Sieman

The phone call came at 15 minutes after 1:00 in the morning. Calls at that time mean only one thing: bad news. No one calls you up at that time to tell you that you're a winner in the Irish Sweepstakes or anything like that. However, they do call you up at that time to inform you that your favorite uncle was hit by a train and could you please come down with a Glad Bag and help pick up the pieces.

RING... RING... RING.

"Hello. Who is this and why are you calling me at this ungodly hour?"

"Listen, this is Andy. How much money do you have around the house?"

"Why?"

"Oh, just a little bit of a problem. I had a flat tire."

"You call me up at this time of the night to help you with a flat tire? Didn't you leave the track at the same time I did today?"

"Well, that's not exactly the whole story. You see, I'm sort of in jail because of a flat tire on the trailer and—"

"Hold it right there! Even the Pennsylvania State Police will not put you in jail for having a flat. Give me the whole story."

Long pause. Shuffling sounds. Throat clearing.

"Okay. You know that trailer we borrowed today? The big four-rail deal?"

"Yes. But please make this short or I'll let you rot in that cell. I need my beauty sleep."

"Well, we left the track about 15 minutes after you did. We got on the turnpike and headed west, keeping an eye out for the you-know-what."

I knew what. The state police in Pennsylvania are cold-hearted, merciless people who will bust you for two miles per hour over the limit and then give you a lecture that'll make you feel guilty for a week, just to rub it in.

"Anyway, about three miles before we were ready to exit at that tollbooth over by the ugly green hotel, the left tire on the trailer went south and we pulled off the road. We didn't have a spare with us and nothing to fix it, so we unhooked the trailer and figured we'd head for Eddie's house and get his spare. He keeps it tied to the rafters in his garage."

"Good place for a spare." My sarcasm was ignored.

"So then we took off and stopped at the tollbooth. The lady took our card and said it was the wrong one. The card was for a three-axle vehicle, and we were in a car, which has only two axles. We tried to tell her that we had left a trailer with a flat tire,

(continued on page 70)

Last Over

The IRTPR challenge

By Paul Clipper

We are all in a rut. That's right—you, me, the guy down the street, the girl behind the counter at the bike shop—all of us. We struggle out of bed on Sunday morning, drive out to the track or riding area, fiddle with our bikes for a while, race the race or burn up the usual trails, climb the same hills and try to beat the same guys. Then when the day's over, we head home, put the bike away and forget about it until next weekend. We need a change, something that will drive us out of bed on Sunday morning like a cattle prod in a hot tub, and I think I know just exactly what is needed.

A new form of competition is in order. Something that will relate to our first love of dirt biking, but not be so closely related that we take it for granted. It should be a form of racing that would be uniquely American in character, that would offer a high level of personal satisfaction, encourage team spirit, and once again allow us to hold our heads up high when the subject of international racing comes up.

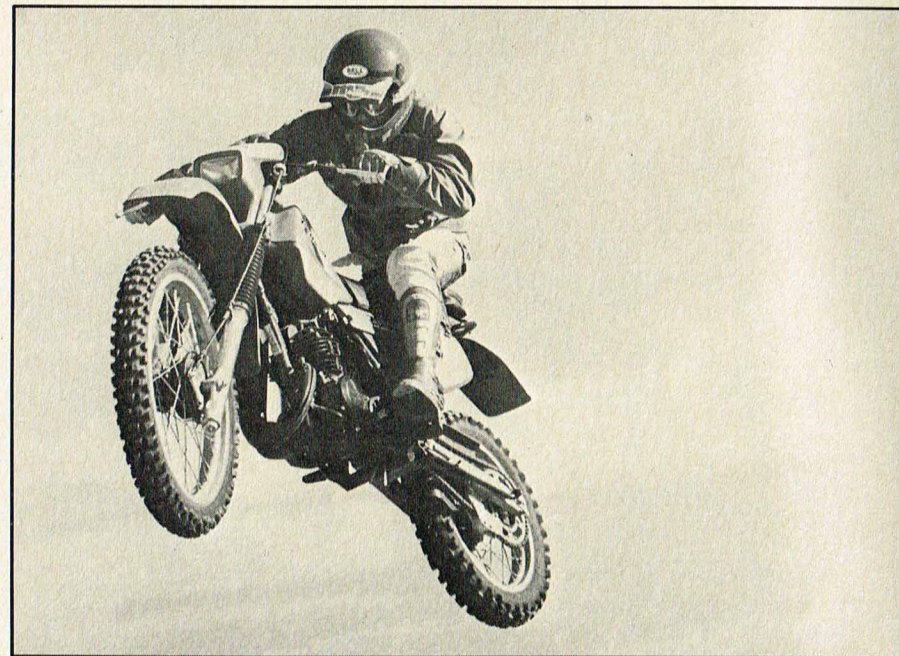
Naturally, I have a plan.

Listen: Say you're headed out to an enduro on a Sunday morning, or off to the motocross for an early race. You and your buddy are the only two going, so you load up the old pickup with all the bikes and gear at five o'clock and floor it out there, with the only stop being at a source of fast food for something to keep an early-morning stomach from going haywire. You've done it before, right? Around here we call such a quick trip a "power run," and therein lies the nub of my idea—"The International Rat Truck Power Run," or "IRTPR" for short, or maybe just "Rat Run."

Think about that name for a minute; it'll grow on you. Naturally, for any sort of racing to be fair, there needs to be some ground rules and an ultimate objective. First off, you couldn't enter a Rat Run with just any kind of truck. This sort of an event in a brand-new Toyota Xtra Cab four-wheeler with power brakes, automatic transmission, air conditioning, digital stereo, cruise control, power steering, automatic cigar lighter and 8300-way hydraulic seats would be a cake.

No, for fairness you could only enter in a 1971 or earlier Chevy Luv, Ford Courier, Toyota Hi-Lux, Datsun 1600 or an acceptably ratty El Camino or Ranchero. Bigger trucks would be disallowed, as would any modifications to the interior of the vehicles that would result in more room for the passenger or driver.

There would be a tech inspection to check the following points: A stereo system could be installed, but the total value of the system must be limited to \$129.50. Radio antennas



must be broken. No automatic transmissions would be allowed, and all instrument lights must be burned out, or so dim as to be unreadable. No radial tires. Stock rims and belted tires with a width no greater than four inches would be required. Suspension must be stock, right down to the original shock absorbers, windshield wiper blades must be worn out, and all interior glass must be absolutely filthy. The only item allowed to be changed in the cab is the seats, and the owner would be free to replace them with something ultra trick like Recaro racing seats. This may not be a smooth move, however, as you'll see in a moment.

The objective would be to leave the house at five o'clock in the morning with a fully loaded truck, and try to clock the fastest elapsed time to a predetermined point, be it a race track, riding area, or vacant lot. There would be two required stops on the trip. The first would be at a gas station, where you would have to fill up the tank and two gas cans, and the second would be at any one of the many burger joints that offer breakfast food, and both the passenger and driver would be required to buy two of the greasiest egg sandwiches on the menu, as well as two large cups of coffee. Now, this is each person, understand?

Said food must be consumed. There would be an honor system wherein no dumping of coffee out the window would be allowed; likewise, ejection of Breakfast Jacks would be a no-no.

Think of it! I can see teams of Rat Runners spilling gasoline all over themselves at the local 76 station, tearing down the street, being beaten unmercifully by inadequate suspension systems.

The tense part would come after the food stop as the competitors tried in vain to keep

from wearing everything in those little white bags. Imagine clutching a steaming-hot cup of coffee in one hand while another cup pours all over your expensive seat, wrestling with the wheel and gearshift on a bumpy road with the tail end of an Egg McMuffin stuffed in your mouth and dripping egg yolk all down the front of your T-shirt. The passenger would be occupied trying to keep everything upright while tuning in weak stations on the broken radio and wiping the fogged windshield with a dirty sock.

The route would consist of every known "shortcut" to the riding area (using a minimum of main highways and freeways), and the winner of every Rat Run would be the team that arrived first, wearing the least amount of ugly stains, and still had any enthusiasm left for riding.

To give Rat Running a uniquely regional flavor, the rules could be modified to suit each different state; for example, in New Jersey teams could use main highways but would be honor bound to use every exit ramp between the start and finish. Texans would be required to hang a rifle rack in the rear window, further reducing interior space and increasing the challenge, and Californians could spend part of the run trying to relate to the hot coffee burning their leg.

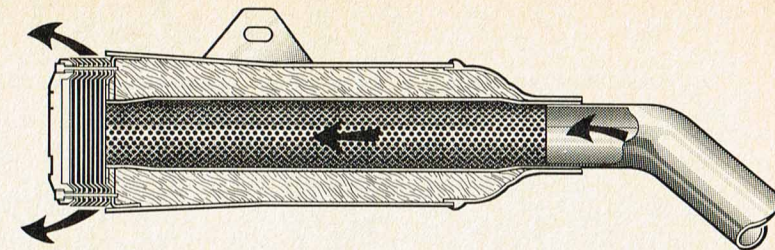
Think of the international celebrity we would gain! We could organize rental car teams during the annual ISDE and Trophée des Nations trips and show those foreigners just which side of the scone is buttered and which side is merely brown!

So get organized, and let's get this thing going. I've got a Rat wagon rotting away out at the curb and I'm ready. Just remember to keep those McMuffins inside and down, the coffee in your left hand, and your foot to the floor! □

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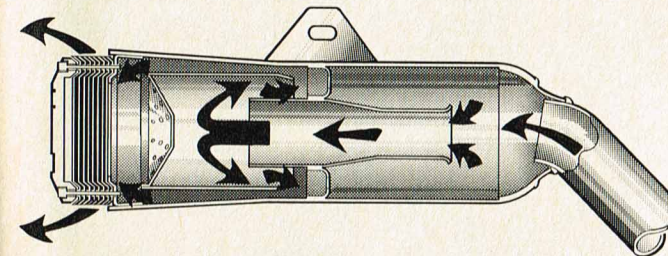


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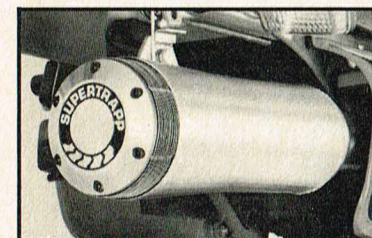


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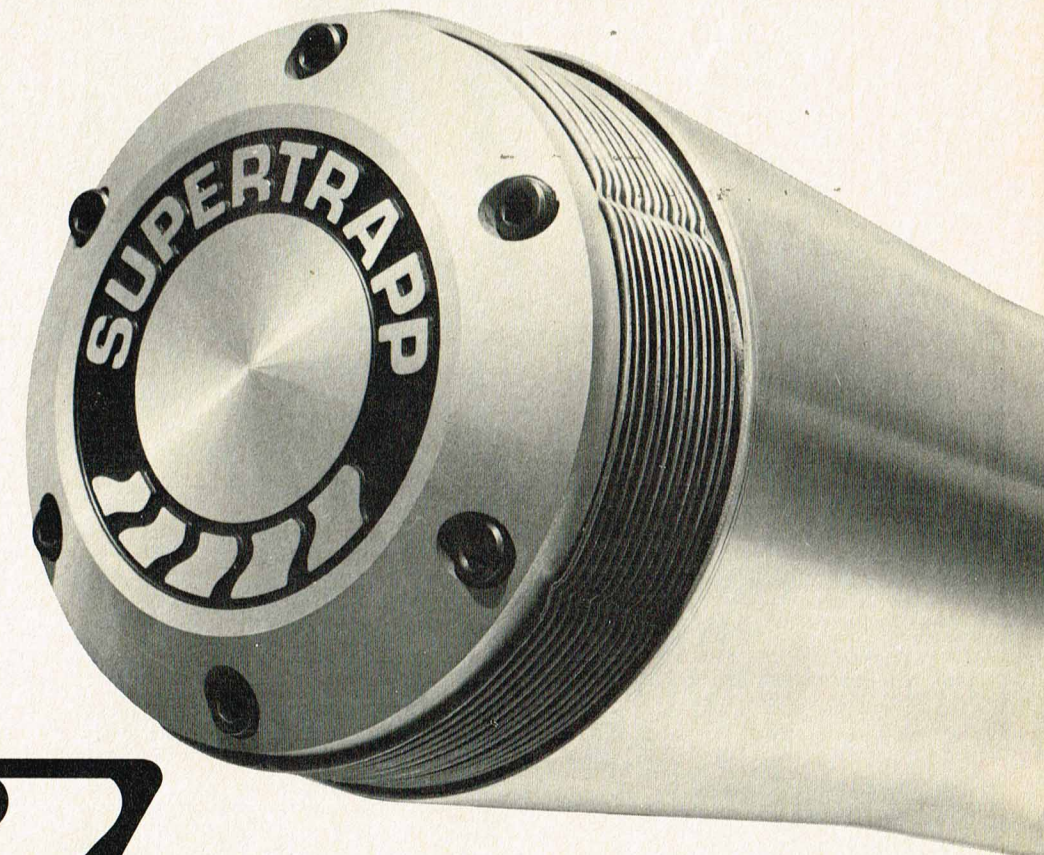
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Bits & Pieces

BY
TOM
WEBB



ANOTHER WINNER

We've actually given away quite a number of motorcycles in the past two years, but you'd never know it by the amount of ink the winners receive. Hey, we tell the people to send us a photo when they get their bike, and sometimes they do... sometimes they don't.

Take the case of Robert Labiske of Tillamook, Oregon. He won the Seattle Supercross Sweepstakes in the drawing held February 27, 1984, and only now do we hear from him. Guess he had to finish off the roll, right? He won his choice of Hondas, and he picked a 250, but as it turns out, there were no 250s around, so he opted for a 500. This is Bob's first Open bike, and he says he's going to "test the laws of gravity" with it. We wish him luck and continued good health, and we urge the rest of you to keep those entry forms coming—we really do give the bikes away!

□ □ □

NOYCE GETS THE AX FROM KTM

The KTM factory has dropped Graham Noyce after being unable to get what they consider any sort of decent results out of the former World Champ. Noyce has been campaigning an all-new liquid-cooled 495, and has had teething problems from the outset of the '84 GP season.

KTM says they'll continue development of the waterized 495, and hopefully we'll see one in their lineup shortly.

□ □ □

MORE KTM GOSSIP

One member of the *Dirt Bike* staff will ride this year's Blackwater 100 on a brand-new 1985 KTM. It will be a big-bore, cross-country machine, but not a full-sized 495. It's aimed at the new mid-sized, big-bore market, like the Husky WR400. Sounds great, and you'll see a full test next month.

□ □ □

KEVIN HINES WINS THE FOOL'S GOLD NATIONAL ENDURO—By Jim Bowman

Despite a timekeeping error that cost him three points, Team Husky's Kevin Hines smoked through the Northern California woods at the Fool's Gold National enduro to lead a Team Husqvarna sweep of the top five positions. Because of his error, Hines' score placed him in a tie with 1983 National Enduro Champion Mike Melton, reducing Hines' win to a margin of seconds. Northern California's Dave Bertram capitalized on Hines' error to lead the event up to the 70-mile marker, but Hines and Melton were picking up precious seconds, and Bertram slipped one minute behind the leaders in a couple of sections, to finish one point back at 37. The 1982 National Enduro Champion, Terry Cunningham, finished fourth overall with 38 points, while Husky teammate Fritz Kadlec carded a 41 for fifth.



Kevin Hines



Mike Melton

The first non-Husky finisher at the California Enduro Riders Association event was Australian Geoff Ballard, who finished sixth overall and first overall A. Ballard, who is used to the ISDE method of scoring used in the Australian enduros, is still learning timekeeping, and burned two checks to drop from a respectable tie with Cunningham at fourth overall to a solid sixth.

Kawasaki support rider Jeff Fredette lost four points more than Ballard to finish seventh at 45, and local riders Jeff Henning (eighth) and Jeff Irwin (ninth) tied at 49 points. Ballard's senior teammate at Can-Am, John Martin, rounded out the top ten after changing two flat tires on the trail and finishing on a third.

RESULTS: FOOL'S GOLD NATIONAL ENDURO

1. Kevin Hines	Hus
2. Mike Melton	Hus
3. Dave Bertram	Hus
4. Terry Cunningham	Hus
5. Fritz Kadlec	Hus
6. Geoff Ballard	C-A
7. Jeff Fredette	Kaw
8. Jeff Henning	KTM
9. Jeff Irwin	Hus
10. John Martin	C-A

□ □ □



Tom Stratman

STORM WARNING AT PONTIAC SUPERCROSS

The two-day Miller High Life-sponsored event in Pontiac, Michigan, saw a return of the old Bob Hannah on the first night of racing. After coming out of the gate in 12th place, Hannah rode like a man inspired and fought his way to fifth by the midpoint of the Final. Jeff Ward was leading, with his archenemy Johnny O right behind, and to those not watching the Hurricane, it looked as if Kawasaki would have its second Supercross win in ten more laps.

But Hannah was charging, and it seemed like a repeat of all the past performances that have made him the winningest rider in Supercross history. He dispatched riders one by one with the precision of a mad surgeon, and with only four laps to go he was breathing down O'Mara's neck. Sadly, in an all-too-familiar pattern, Ward's luck turned sour, and he got out of shape and nailed a hay bale, letting Hannah and O'Mara by. Without ever slowing to look back, Hannah blew by O'Mara and took the checkers, to the delight of the crowd. Would he have been able to win if Ward hadn't crashed? There's still plenty of discussion on the subject, but we're betting Bob is glad he didn't have to answer that question for us.

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On Sunday the track was run in reverse of the night before, and there was no doubt that the fans were looking forward to a repeat win by Hannah. But the track was faster and less technical on Sunday, and that is just not Hannah's favorite type of track. Instead it was Johnny O in the lead of the first lap, and that is just where he stayed for the rest of the night. Mark Barnett spent some time running in second, but it was Ward—who else?—who took control of the runner-up spot before the race was half over.

Ron Lechien moved into third while Barnett dropped down to fifth, and Hannah found himself rooted in fourth.

□ □ □



JOHNSON'S A FLASH AT ORLANDO

Orlando turned out to be a three-way food fight between Ron Lechien, Ricky Johnson, and David Bailey. Johnson found clear sailing right out of the gate, followed by Bailey and Lechien. Bailey looked as if he was setting up for the swoop on Johnson, when Lechien roosted by as if his Honda teammate were riding backwards. Bailey did a double take and took up the pursuit, but Lechien and Johnson left him for dead.

The ensuing battle saw the leading Yamaha and Honda riders swapping the lead nearly a half-dozen times, trying to wear each other out. In the end Johnson had the staying power, and Lechien took the wise course of letting him go and hoping for a mistake. Johnson never bobbed, and took the win with Lechien and Bailey a fair distance behind.

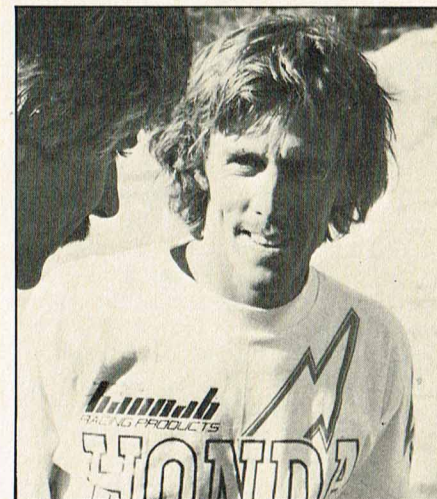
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SERIOUS SUPERTRAPP ALUMINUM SYSTEMS

SuperTrapp has come up with a new racing series exhaust system that is designed to develop max power for both stock and modified four-stroke machines. You can save up to 11 pounds over the stock mufflers and still be Forestry legal. Too, the system is tunable with the discs, and the one-piece designs make for a precision fit into the stock pipes. All Honda XRs, the Yamaha TT500/600 and the new Kawasaki KLR600 are available.

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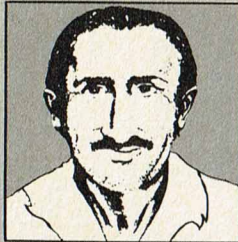
MORE ON THE HURRICANE...

Bob Hannah's Supercross win at Pontiac was his 68th career Supercross/National motocross victory.

Everyone was set for Hannah's late-season charge at the upcoming Orlando race, but at the AMA National the week before at Atlanta, Georgia, Hannah's luck once again ran out. In a first-moto collision with Yamaha rider Keith Bowen, the Hurricane came out the loser with a broken arm and is now having to sit out a major portion of the season. If you *tried*, you couldn't have worse luck than Hannah this year.

(continued on page 72)

Mister Know-it-All



By Rondo Talbot

NO STROKES AT ALL?

• The other day I noticed a slightly built young rider trying in vain to start an XR500 Honda four-stroke. After 20 or so kicks, he propped a crate up to the bike for better leverage and gave it 40 more serious prods. Beads of sweat were evident. Curse words defiled the clear air. He was breathing heavier by the moment.

Feeling sorry for my fellow dirt biker, I ambled over and offered some assistance. He gratefully handed me the bike with a terse "Lotsa luck."

I moved the kickstarter slowly through its arc a few times, found top dead center, made sure the choke was off and that the throttle was not cracked in the slightest. I squeezed

the compression release in and gave a gentle nudge to the kickstarter as I let go of the compression release. Before the kickstarter had gone halfway through its arc, the engine started and settled down to a quiet burbling idle.

I smiled benevolently and handed the bike back to the stunned lad. Jaw hanging, he blipped the throttle, and the bike promptly hiccuped and died. He then furiously attacked the kickstarter once again but, alas, to no avail. The XR remained stone cold and silent.

Once again I patiently went through the ritual and lit the big bike off easily. I then took time out of my busy day to explain to him just what I had done to coax life into the beast.

He gave exuberant thanks and then proceeded to utterly fail to start the bike in the next 65 kicks. Before I could offer my assistance, he loaded the XR up into the back of his Dat-sun pickup and snugged it down.

As he pulled out of the parking lot area, he waved a thank you and said, "That's it. I'm selling this porker and

getting me a CR250 instead. This thing is impossible!"

Not impossible... just different and requiring a certain touch. There are those who have a feel for starting a big four-stroke, and there are those who will never have that feel. I know one fellow who can start a 510 Husky four-stroke with his hand ten times in a row. He's won quite a tidy sum of money doing so.

I know of another fellow, a skinny, scrawny-looking roadracing type, who couldn't start a decent four-stroke dirt bike if all his relatives' lives depended on it.

Yes, you either have the touch and the feel, or you don't. So, either learn to stroke it through properly, or you'll get no strokes from your four-stroke. And some two-strokes, too, for that matter.

Seekers of wisdom can get help by writing to Rondo Talbot, the Fifth Stroke of the Universe, c/o DIRT BIKE Magazine, 10600 Sepulveda Blvd., Mission Hills, CA 91345. No freaks or weirdos need write. Thank you. •

HEAT CONTROL

Dear Mr. Know-A-Little-Something,

When water-cooled bikes appeared on the scene a few years ago, I seem to recall a number of articles that dealt with ways of regulating temperature by means of a thermostat. I believe there were aftermarket kits sold to accomplish this.

I presently own an '84 CR250 Honda, and, when I asked the local parts manager about possibly putting a thermostat on, he looked at me like he didn't think I had both oars in the water. I am especially interested in this matter because I live in the Northeast and would like to race some winter races. Can you please tell me if the thinking has changed on this subject, and if not, where I can obtain the necessary paraphernalia to transform my CR250 into Heisler's Howlin' Honda?

Fred Heisler, Jr.
Greene, NY

A few companies used to make thermostats for Suzukis, but we haven't seen them on the market lately. You can help your bike warm up in cold weather by simply taping over portions of your radiator as needed. Don't forget to take the tape off when it warms up—if it ever does.

4-STROKE HITCH

Dear Mr. Know-It-All,

I recently purchased a 1983 KTM 504MX. The bike has approximately 500

miles on it. It has developed a problem in the carburetor. The problem is that when you go into a berm and nail the throttle, it dies. The only way to keep this from happening is to come on the throttle real slow.

I'm not expecting two-stroke performance off the tight turns, but I do need to find a cure for this problem, because when you nail the throttle and expect to blast out of a turn and all you do is fall over, it takes all the fun out of riding.

The carburetor is the Bing 54. It has a 210 slide, 55 idle jet. The needle is in the bottom groove. All attempts at jockeying needle positions and idle jets have made no change. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Allen Pinkston
Clovis, NM

The single biggest improvement we got from our KTM504 was a Mikuni carb that was supplied by the famed White Brothers. Since that carb was installed, the bike was a one-kick starter and, when warmed up, never even hints at a low-speed hitch.

MINI CLANKS

Dear All-Knowing, All-Seeing, Mr. Know-It-All,

My kid came walking into my garage the other day with his little '76 MX80. He said he couldn't get any power, it wouldn't wind out at all, and there was an odd clanking noise coming from the

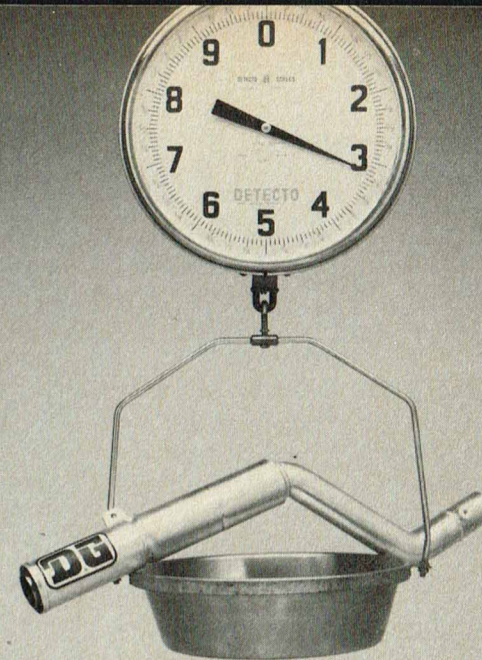
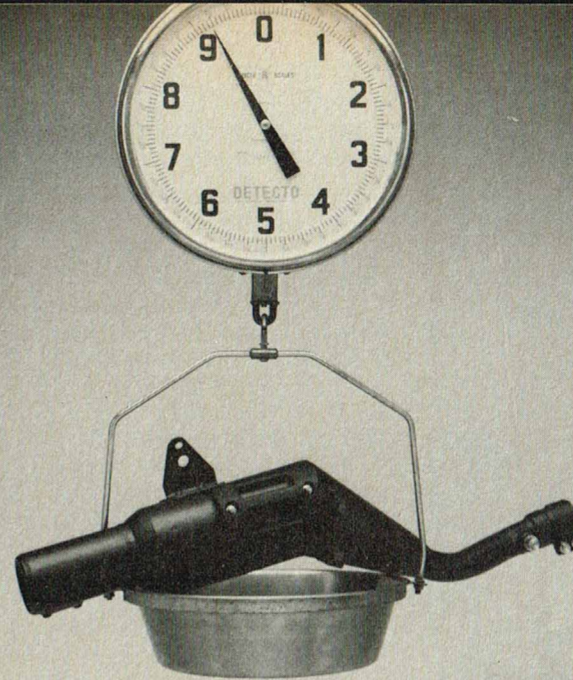
general area of either the pipe or the bottom end of the engine.

The bike (since we've had it) has never been torn down. So that means that after a couple of months of trouble-free riding, the bike suddenly goes. After hearing this, I proceeded to take off the cylinder and piston. There were no valuable parts missing and nothing was chipped or gouged. So what's going on down there? Oh, yeah. I wondered if it would make any difference if I told you that the bike never had a sixth gear and we never could get to first gear.

No one else can help me. Noooooo. Impossible, hombre. There's no way. It's just not gonna happen. Uh-uh. No way, Jose. Absolutely, positively, no one can help. I sincerely hope you can help me, Mr. K-I-A. I have gone to numerous Yamaha dealers and their mechanics all looked at me as if I were more than mildly deranged. So give a 35-year-old guy a break and get his kid off his back.

T.R. Grimm
Paradise Valley, AZ

Sadly, I must suggest that you tear the poor little engine down and inspect all the parts that make clanking sounds when worn out. This means inspecting the crank, all of the gears and the clutch and drive train components. Various broken metal chips could cause the noises you described. Good luck...you'll need it. □



HOW TO LOSE SIX POUNDS IN TEN MINUTES

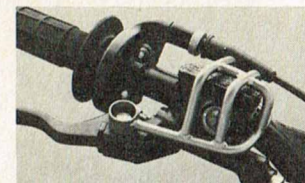
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Riders Write



"GIMME A PERNOD, PARDNER!"
Dear *Dirt Bike*,

I've been reading your magazine for three years and really enjoy it, but one thing puzzles me. I've seen plenty of photos of Brad Lackey, America's first World Motocross Champion. My question is, what does Pernod mean, and, if it isn't English, what language is it?

Craig Collier
Dundee, MI

Boy, we could have all kinds of fun with a question like this, but it's getting late, the night watchman has been hovering over our shoulders for the last half hour, and we're just a little too tired to take advantage of an honest soul from Dundee, Michigan. "Pernod" is a licorice-flavored liquor; the French company is very active in motor racing and has been one of Brad's main sponsors for years.

BOBBY'S RAD HAT

Dear *Dirt Bike*,

When I saw the Supercross, Bob Hannah was wearing the most rad helmet I have ever seen. Please tell me what kind it is and where I can get one.

Tracy Arensberg
Kent, WA

The helmet is a Bell Moto 4, and by now they should be available from nearly every dealer in the country. The paint job is a trick, one-off style that is not available to the general public.

SIMPLE ADVICE

Dear *Dirt Bike*,

I need some advice. I am five feet sev-

en inches and weigh 140 pounds. I want to buy a new Yamaha, but I'm having trouble deciding which one to buy. I want either a YZ125 or an IT200. Most of my riding is through trails, creeks, fields, some mud, and gravel roads. Which do you recommend?

Will Eicher
Warrenton, VA

The answer is painfully simple—the IT200. If you said you were going to race motocross, we would go the other way, but the YZ125 is not a trail bike by any means.

MOLDY MEAT

Dear *DB*,

Your photo of Davidson Harley in the "Bits and Pieces" column of the March '84 issue was, in fact, not Davidson Harley, but the famous singer himself, Burl Ives! You people should know better. Besides, who wants a statue made out of Lebanon bologna, anyhow? I know for a fact that Spam molds better.

Eric Garnel
Plano, TX

Obviously, there's more to that photo than meets the eye.

READY TO GO

Dear *Dirt Bike*,

After reading your Gary Bailey story on saving energy, I went out to the race track and saved so much strength that I felt fresh as a daisy after two motos. Good thing, too. I rode out with my buddy Jim, and we had to push his van halfway home before it started. Do you guys have any tips on how to save energy behind a Chevy van?

Gary Yarnell
Bellingham, WA

You should always take along a pit crew. Then if you have trouble after the race, you groan and wheeze and lie down in the back of the truck. It works every time.

BLACK AND BLUE ABOUT THE IT200

Dear *Dirt Bike*,

I can't see how you guys can say that the KDX200 is better than the IT200. I have an IT200, and I think it's the best bike I've ever ridden. It has plenty of power for anything I ever want to do, and I can beat out guys on KDXs any day of the week. I've never ridden a KDX, but they don't look so hot when I pass them.

Ben Stilford
Canton, OH

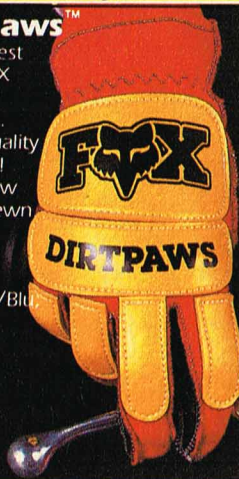
When we tested the IT, we rode it side by side with a KDX200, and it was the ultimate opinion of our testers that the KDX was marginally better. Don't get us wrong—both bikes are excellent machines, but if they are compared objectively while in the saddle, the Kawasaki comes out on top. □



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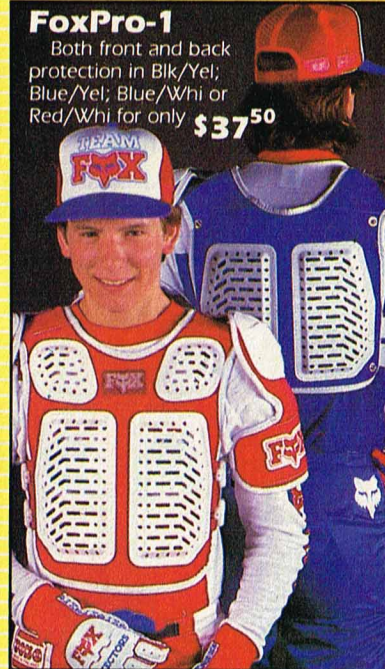
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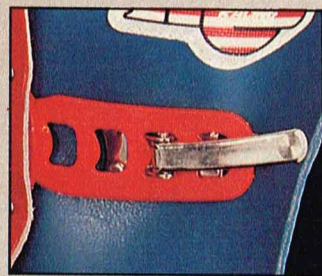
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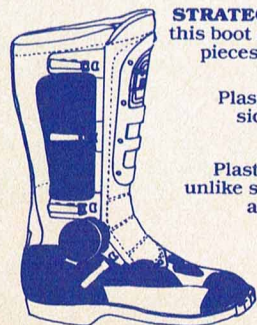
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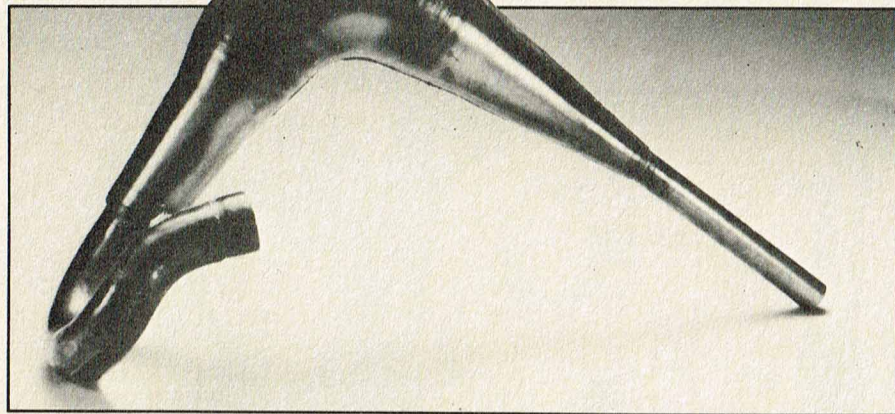
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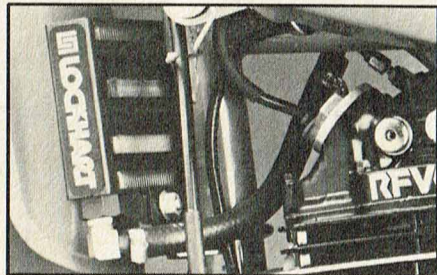
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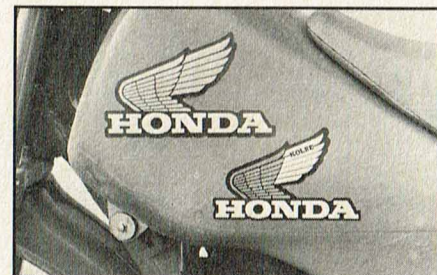
Answer pipes are designed to improve ground clearance, power delivery and throttle control. They're made from 18-gauge steel, so they resist denting better than the stockers. They are available for 1984 MXers, 125cc to

500cc, also for the ATC250 and the KXT250 for the three-wheeling crowd. Check with Answer Products, 27967 D, Beale Court, Valencia, CA 91355; (805)257-4411.



LOCKHART OIL COOLERS

Big four-stroke owners know that their bike will sometimes run hot enough to melt a dipstick. Lockhart says that with its oil cooler, excessive oil temperature is a thing of the past. They have them for the XR500R, the XL600 and the Yamaha 500/550. The kits sell for \$99.95 to \$114.95. Lockhart, 15717 Texaco St., Paramount, CA 90723; (213)630-4621.



KOLBE WORKS HONDA TANK STICKERS

Honda riders have probably picked up on this already: The factory bikes have new red, white and blue tank stickers. Well, Kolbe Cycle sells a factory replica sticker that is, of course, the color of the American flag. A pair of red, white and blue works stickers sell for \$2.49 and are available from Kolbe Cycle Sales, 7514 Reseda Blvd., Reseda, CA 91335; (818)345-7616.

MOUNTAIN TRAINING

Many of the top motocrossers are training with mountain bikes. It's a fun and healthy way to build up stamina. Shown here is the Kettler Safari mountain bike. A combination of chromoly strength and Kettler's proven high-tech alumi-

num construction makes for a light yet rugged bike. For more info contact Uli Schuenemann at Aluminum Cycle Distributors, 904 Silver Spur Rd., Suite 201, Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274; (805)255-7417.



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POCKET-SIZED OUCH POUCH

This little first-aid kit appears to be just the right size for the trail rider's fanny pack. The Ouch Pouch comes from M.C. Johnson Company and features an alcohol wipe, antiseptic wipe, antiseptic ointment, and bandage strips in a 4 1/4- by 3-inch zip-lock plastic pouch. The price for the Ouch Pouch is 50 cents and more literature and dealer information can be had by contacting M.C. Johnson Co., Melissa C. Johnson, 758 Main St., Leominster, MA 01453; (617) 534-8483.

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WORKHORSE!

Heavy-duty hauler

By the Staff of DIRT BIKE

Though virtually unchanged for the last two years, the Yamaha TT600 has something going for it: Basically, it responds to simple modifications better than any other big four-stroke.

Slap a pipe and a carb on a Honda and you don't get much out of it. Do the same thing to a TT600 and you get an increase in performance that surprises and delights you.

This makes you wonder about two things: Firstly, you tend to be grateful about the low-cost improvements, and secondly, you wonder why-oh-why did they ever strangle the stock setup so much in the first place?

RIDING IT STOCK

Heavy. That's the first impression you get. The power is decent, with enough down low and mid-range to deliver a certain amount of satisfaction, but there's no real gut-wrenching snap to write home to Mom about.

You just *want* more out of the massive 600cc four-stroke engine. You surely *expect* more. Still, one cannot snivel about the sheer acceleration of the TT600, as it will normally pull an XR500 in a basic drag race.

The bike is heavy... too heavy, according to the gastronomically correct *DB* scales, which indicate 280 pounds, with no gas in the 2.9-gallon tank. This places it right in the ballpark with the other big four-strokes in its class.

The Can-Am Sonic weighs 275.5 pounds; the Honda XR500 is the same; and the KTM 504 is heftier at 286.5 pounds. All of them, in our opinion, are 25 to 30 pounds too heavy. The four-speed Husky four-stroke, on the other hand, is slightly under 255 pounds, with no gas in its tank.

When you ride the 280-pound Yamaha, you'll be horsing around with nearly 300 pounds of bike and fuel/oil. You feel it on the rough stuff and when you land from jumps, but when doing what the TT600 does best, you completely forget about the weight.

What the TT600 *does* do best is slide like a fool on flat, twisty fire roads. The steering is decent and the rear end can be cranked out with the power on and left there as the rider does his best imitation of a flat-tracker.



Strong suits of the TT600 are decent turning manners and friendly four-stroke power.



When the TT is pushed hard, the stock suspension is overstressed. Still, for fun play riding it's fine.

Over medium-rough whoops and bumps, the suspension is not bad. It soaks up the medium-sized and small bumps just fine. It'll even take serious bumps all right if you don't pound them with too much speed. But when the TT600 is forced to slam through the serious grinders, the shortcomings of the forks and shock show their glitches.

The forks will clank metal to metal, even with the maximum safe oil level. Heavier springs (optional Yamaha parts) are the answer. You lose some of the suppleness with heavier springs, but if you insist on pushing the TT600 hard, they're a must.

At the rear, a heavier spring is also needed. Luckily, a huge selection of YZ springs

(and even shocks) will fit right on the TT600. You can dial that rear end in with patience and the right spring.

Our suggestion would be to leave the stock suspension on the bike for most trail-riding conditions or woods work. For desert enduros or desert riding/racing, you should go for the heavier suspenders.

MANNERISMS

We found the TT600 a reasonable bike to start—for a big four-stroke. More often than not, it would bang over within three kicks, hot or cold. Every once in a while it would get stubborn and require a dozen boots, but this was not the norm.

At lower trailriding speeds, the TT600 is

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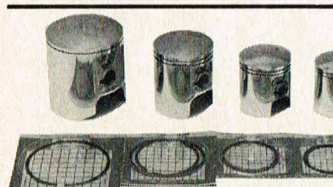
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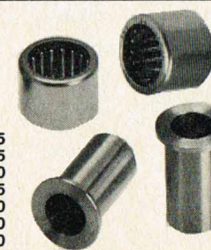
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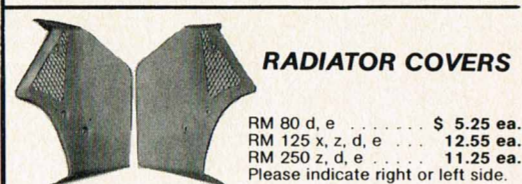
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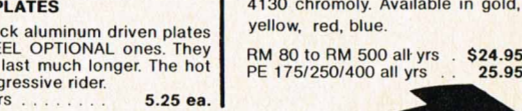
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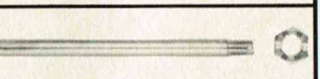


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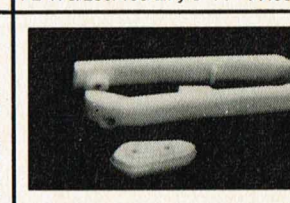
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PE 250/400 all yrs 8.35

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FASTA PASTIA

Deep-dish delight

By the editor/tes de la DIRTE BIKE

Cagiva is working hard at becoming a prominent name in the off-road world. This isn't an easy area to break into, let alone stay in the competitive mainstream. Life evolves quickly; technology is at a constant high. Our first thoughts with the Cagiva WMX125 water-pumper were positive; the bike looks stylish. The Italians know how to dress up a scoot, and the bright-red 125 gets an "A" rating here.

A compact, tidy liquid-cooled engine rests in an advanced chassis with a break-away rear tail section. An Ohlins rear damper is mated to a beefy aluminum swingarm. Sharp red plastic, tucked-in radiators and a gray seat detail the package. Yes, Cagiva has done its homework here.

SADDLE UP

Once you throw a leg over the Cagiva, it's apparent that the bike is definitely European. It feels like a shrunk-down Maico. Bars, pegs and saddle all have that Euro touch. The Big Four 125s are lower and just different. If you're a Honda or an RM rider, plan on some adjustment time.

After a few laps, another aspect of the bike stands tall: It's a handler! No twitchy, strange manners on this baby. More like stable, confidence-inspiring, and it likes to turn. Stay on the gas and the behavior further improves. We couldn't really find a fault in this department; it was all smiles.

With the suspension, things flattened out a little. The forks, 40mm Marzocchi units, are too soft, needing an oil-level adjustment, or heavier springs, or both.

We went with ten-weight oil, six inches from the top of the tubes. This helped. The action is decent, but not great. Give it an average rating. Because the air valves are located directly under the handlebars, bleeding them is a pain. Like most forks, they do pump up.

The Ohlins-based single-shock rear end needs some work. It's stiff to the point of being harsh. A change in the compression damping is needed. Even with heavyweight riders aboard, the motion of the rear end rates rough. Tougher, demanding tracks pound the rider into Play-doh. Still, the Ohlins shock can be dialed in by a savvy shock man with little trouble.

POWERIN' ON

Our bike started super easy and was jetted spot-on. Power builds fairly strong after a meek low-end delivery. Like most 125s, it makes all the usable juice from the upper



Acceleration is middle-of-the-road. You'll be mid-pack through the first turn in a field of competitive 125s.

mid-range into the top revs. This isn't bad, as the bike likes to be revved to the melt-down point, and your fastest laps come when it's ridden this way. We'd say the smoke factor rates with the top Big Four scoots. Into the first turn the Cagiva will hold its own at mid-pack or better.

One of the reasons the engine shines is the shifting ease. It's smooth and can be slipped through the gears just right for a 125 and no power-robbing gaps in the six speeder. We do have a complaint about the distance from the countershaft sprocket to the swingarm pivot point. It's too far. Late '70s

bikes placed them closer. Some work is needed here.

Another stick in the side is that the bike burbles on major impacts. Yes, the jetting was on; it just gurgled on sharp taxing loads. This usually means that a screen is needed around the main jet to keep the fuel from frothing.

BITS AND PIECES

The seat is too soft and sacked completely out in just a couple of rides.

We ran the bike through some serious water, trying to drown it out. No way. It's a fish from the word go. While we were swim-

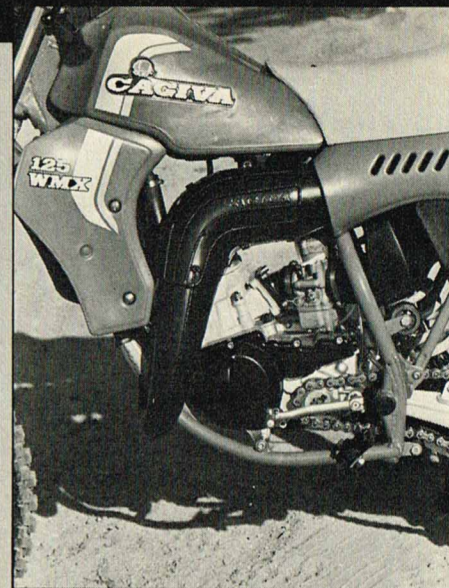
ming, the brakes took a hike. They aren't waterproof at all.

While the rear brake pedal looks like a fine design, it bottoms on an oddly shaped kickstarter. Once it does this, you lose the rear brakes.

Everyone loved the bars, levers, grips and the action of the clutch and throttle. Nice work here. Akront rims are laced with giant-sized spokes. We never had a problem while testing, but we hear that breakage has been surfacing. Keep an eye on them.

WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARS

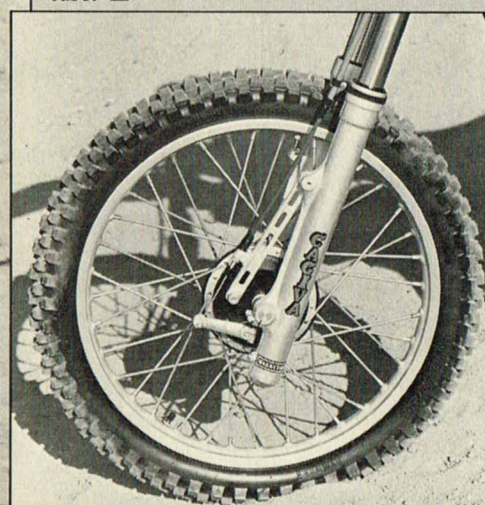
Cagiva has started off on the right foot with a detailed package, heads-up styling and a competitive motor. Some suspension work is in order, as are a few other odds and ends, but basically everything is there. Considering that they're just babes in the motocross world, we expect big things in the future. □



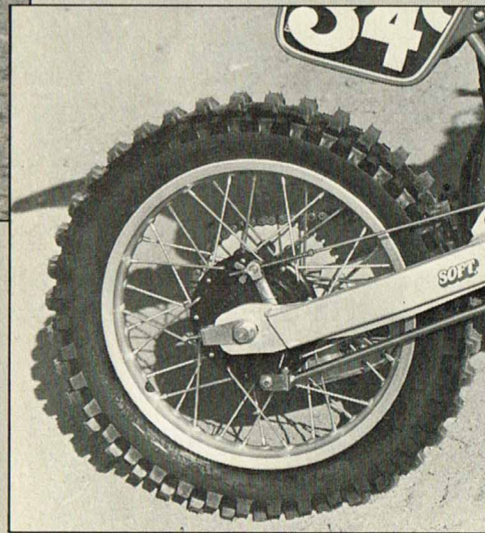
Although the shifting is smooth as pancake batter, the countershaft sprocket is placed too far from the swingarm pivot point. The rear frame section unbolts and there's a nifty heat shield on the belly of the pipe.



Under power, the Cagiva carves a fine line through the corners. It's stable and likes to be ridden fast.



The 40mm Zokes are too soft, demanding an oil level increase or a change in springs. Considering that the front brake is only a single-leading shoe, it works pretty well. Pirelli meats are great for sand, grim for hard-pack.



A floating rear brake is average and goes away quickly at any hint of moisture. The aluminum swingarm looks stout, but we've heard rumors of breakage problems. Ours never gave us any grief.



CAGIVA WMX125

Engine type	2-stroke, water-cooled
Bore and stroke	56.0mm x 50.6mm
Displacement	124.63cc
Carburetion	Dell'orto 36SS
Factory jetting:	
Main jet	180
Needle jet	268CF
Jet needle	U7
Pilot jet	60
Slide number	30
Fuel tank capacity	8.2 L
Lubrication	Pre-mix at 32:1
Gearbox ratios:	
1	2.273:1
2	1.786:1
3	1.466:1
4	1.250:1
5	1.105:1
6	1.000:1
Gearing, front/rear	13/49
Ignition	CDI
Recommended spark plug	Champion N82G
Silencer/spark plug	Yes/no
Wheelbase	1470mm
Ground clearance	375mm
Seat height	990mm
Trail	122mm

Wet weight, no fuel	212 lbs.
Tire, size and type:	
Front	3.00 x 21 Pirelli
Rear	4.25 x 18 Pirelli
Suspension, type and travel:	
Front	40mm Marzocchi, 300mm
Rear	Ohlins based, single shock, 325mm
Intended use	Motocross
Country of origin	Italy
Retail price, approx.	\$1960
Distributor/Manufacturer:	
Cagiva N. America	
469 N. Oak St.	
Inglewood, CA 90302	
Overall rating of bike, keeping intended use in mind:	
Handling	Very good
Front suspension	Fair
Rear suspension	Fair
Power	Good
Cost	Fair
Attention to detail	Average
Effectiveness, stone stock	Good

This rating system is included to aid in comparison of bikes in the same displacement and intended-use categories. Comparing the ratings of two dissimilar machines is a meaningless exercise in futility.

HONDA CR500R SALVAGE JOB



*Klemm Research & Bing carbs
gun down the blues*

By the Staff of DB

No doubt about it, the Honda CR500R is an intimidating motorcycle. A confused engine puts out violent power that is unmanageable, making it tough to ride fast in stock trim. It blubbers off the bottom, hits the mid-range with a rasp, then suddenly leaps into a frantic charge that overpowers the rider with savage intensity. Then, rather abruptly, it signs off, forcing the rider to short-shift to stay in the heat of the erratic flurry.

Compounding the intense onslaught of power is a mid-range detonation that's alarming. Get in sand, and the engine hammers and pings like it's ready to blow. It's not easy to ride this way. In fact, it's not fun either.

There are a handful of homespun cures going around. Different carbs, jetting changes and adding another head gasket are just a few.

HEAD MODS

We turned to the folks at Klemm Research, who claimed they could remove the detonation, make it easier to start, and tone down the violent power delivery by simply modifying the stock head. We quickly tore off the offending lid and shipped it to the Klemm folks.

They reshaped and machined the existing dome in the head. The squish area was altered, as was the compression. As we bolted the modified head back on, a new head gasket was thrown on for good measure. Klemm suggests this. They also feel that the stock jetting hits the mark with the new head, with the exception of the pilot jet. Change that from a 68 to a 65. Also, Klemm recommends using fuel with an octane rating between 95 to 110.

While the starting was better, it still was not easy. The strange location of the kick lever and the positioning are to blame. Yes, the wild pitch power delivery got toned down, making it easier to ride. The majority of the clout can still be felt off the bottom and into the mid-range. Deep sand and high speeds no longer mean instant detonation. In fact, we couldn't get a ping or a bang any time.

Our only complaint now rests in a minor power loss and the meek top-end hit of the

CR. It still has to be shifted early, much sooner than we like. Our next step was carburetion.

TYPE 55 BING TIME

We decided to use what's been working for us, so a Type 55 Bing 40mm carb was chosen. The Bing people claimed they'd been testing the mixer in conjunction with the head mod with excellent results. Some machining was needed on the carb before it would fit into the tight confines of the CR. Still, they claimed a major gain in revs would be readily felt.

With the carb you'll need a throttle and cable. A new 314 Magura throttle with a Terry cable fit our needs perfectly. Next, fitting the huge Bing into the stock manifold and airboot wasn't easy. The unit snugs in, barely, with no excess room.

Starting still proved to be awkward, but not impossible. One lap on the revived CR was an eye-opener. The former dazed and confused Honda was now an Open class monster. Power built off the bottom and climbed to a staggering top-end hit. We

With a simple head mod and a carb change we took the confused CR500 from unmanageable to awesome. The power delivery starts from ground zero and revs with authority to the moon.

can't tell you the exact gains, but they were better than awesome.

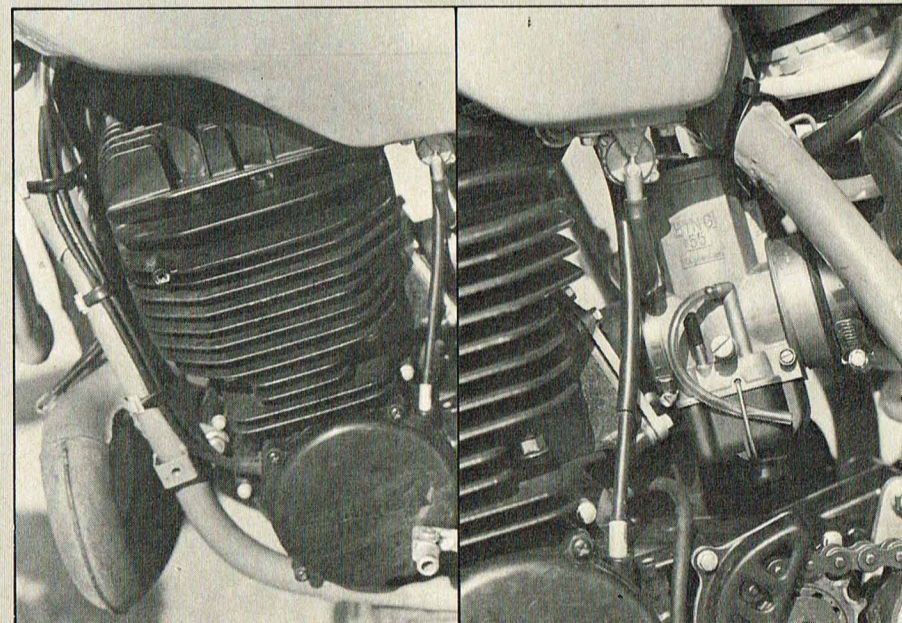
At no time are you at a loss for available punch. Now it revs out like a crazed 125, with a low end and mid-range that border on insanity. Fact is, our modified CR500 turned out to be one of the fastest, strongest Open motocrossers we've ever ridden!

Remember, the evolution of the CR500 is a two-step, bolt-on operation: the head mods and a Type 55 Bing. No doubt about it, Magoo would love it!

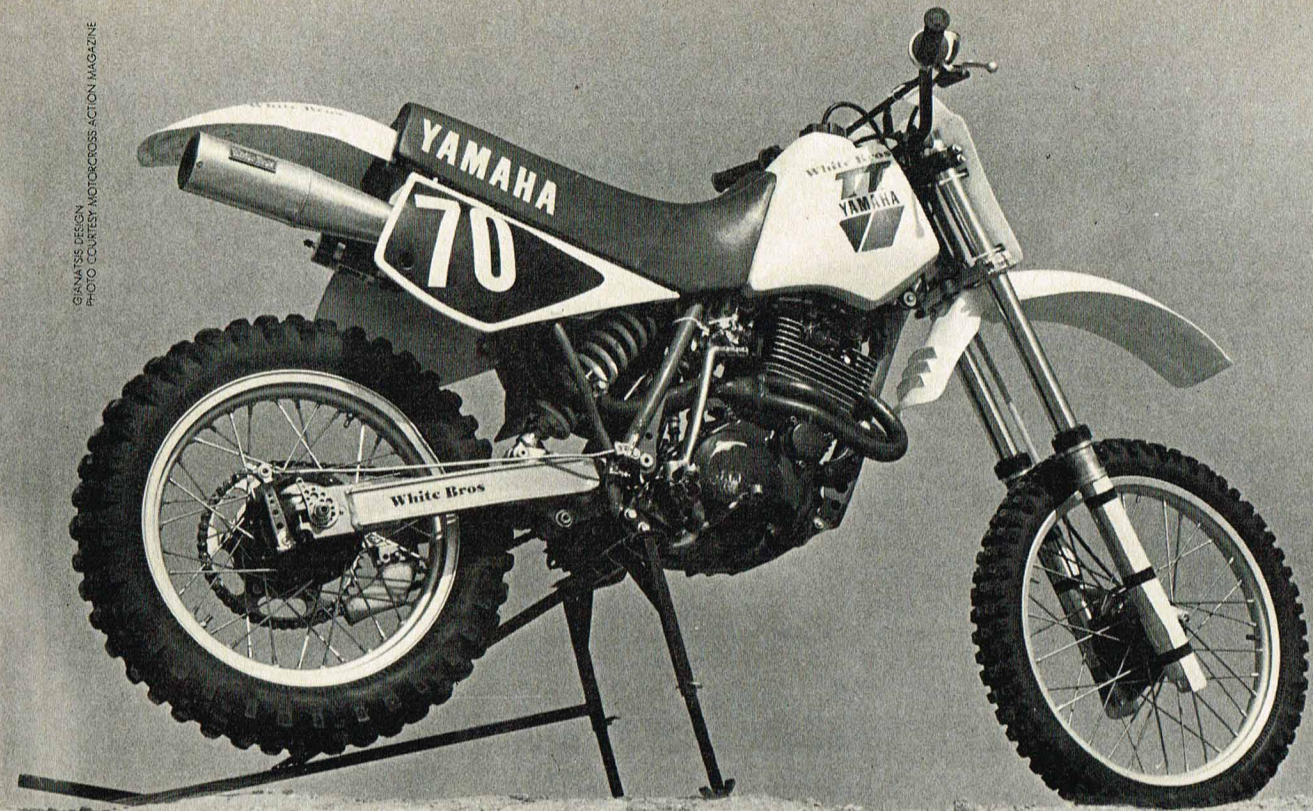
WHERE TO GET IT AND WHAT IT COSTS

Honda CR500R head modification—\$75. Klemm Research, 2761 E. Regal Park, Anaheim, CA 92806; (714)630-9420.

40mm Type 55 Bing carburetor, machined and jetted plus cable—\$185. R.G. Cycles, 16868 Stagg St., Van Nuys, CA 91406; (818)782-5857. □



As far as looks, the Klemm head appears no different. As for performance, it ends the detonation and makes for easier jetting. You'll experience a slight loss of horsepower once the Klemm head is installed. We countered by putting on a 40mm Type 55 Bing. It's a tight fit, but the power gains border on insanity.



GRANT'S DESIGN PHOTO COURTESY MOTORCROSS ACTION MAGAZINE

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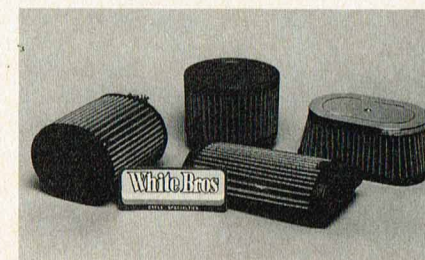
know-how that's taken us to clean sweeps in the Open Pro Classes of the CMC and U.S. 4-Stroke National Championships.

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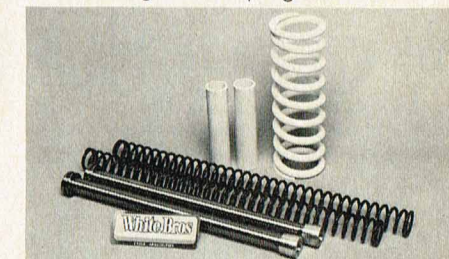


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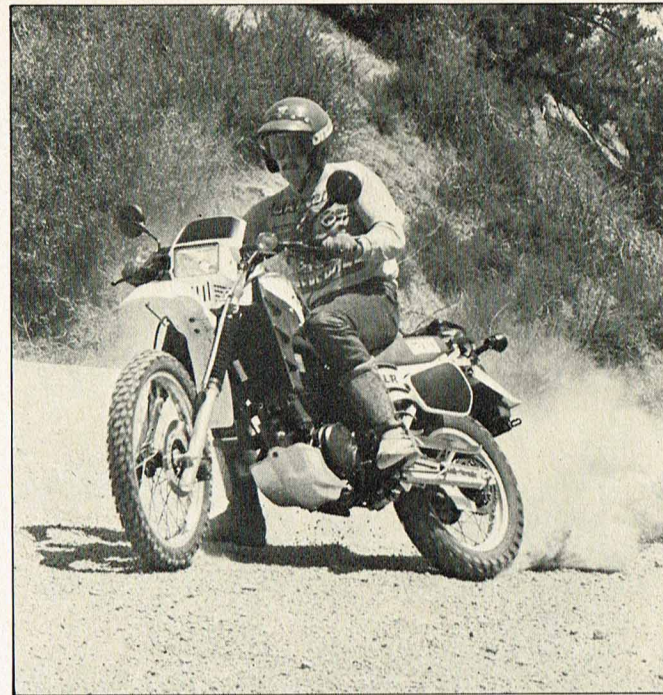
IS IT A DIRT, STREET OR TOTAL TECHNOID MONSTER?

No holds barred

By the Staff of DB



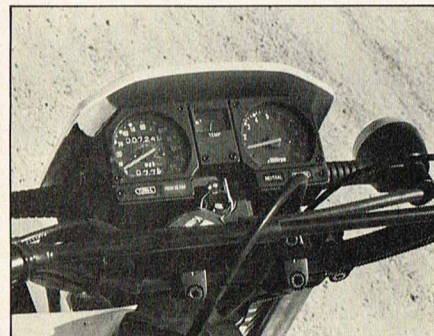
As an off-road plaything, life is exciting on the KLR. Heavyweight and marginal rubber make it a handful.



Our disco, technoid warrior drew rave reviews from the masses. It has more gadgets and trickery than a serious motocrosser. It's impressive.



Stock gearing is too high for trail work but perfect for the street. The power is right in the ballpark, but down a little when compared with the Honda XL600.

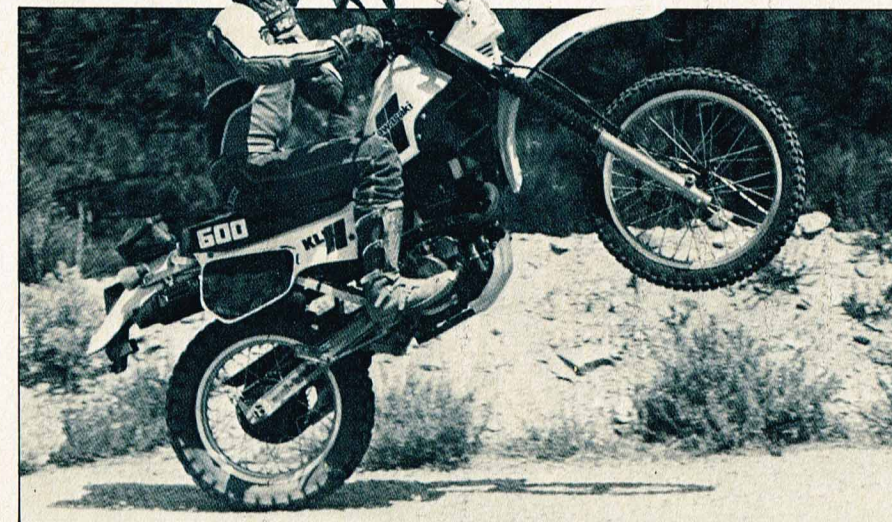


The middle gauge is for the water temperature. Yep, it's the first water-cooled, four-stroke dirt-oriented machine out. There are more fans, plumbing and zoot hardware than can be believed.



KAWASAKI KLR600

Engine type	4-stroke, DOHC, 4-valve, single cylinder	Tire, size and type:	Front 3.00 x 21
Bore and stroke	96mm x 78mm	Rear 5.10 x 17	
Displacement	564cc	Suspension, type and travel:	
Carburetion	Keihin CVK40	Front Leading axle, 230mm	
Fuel tank capacity	11.5 L	Rear Single shock, Uni-Trak, 220mm	
Lubrication	Wet sump	Intended use	Street/trail
		Country of origin	Japan
		Retail price, approx.	\$2449
Gearbox ratios:		Distributor/Manufacturer:	
1	2.437:1	Kawasaki Motors Corp.	
2	1.529:1	2009 E. Edinger Ave.	
3	1.181:1	Santa Ana, CA 92705	
4	0.954:1	Overall rating of bike, keeping intended use in mind:	
5	0.791:1	Handling	Good
Gearing, front/rear	15/43	Front suspension	Good
Ignition	CDI	Rear suspension	Good
Recommended spark plug	NGK DR8ES, ND X24ESR-U	Power	Fair
		Cost	Good
Silencer/spark arrester	Yes/yes	Attention to detail	Very good
Wheelbase	1470mm	Effectiveness, stone stock	Good
Ground clearance	280mm	This rating system is included to aid in comparison of bikes in the same displacement and intended-use categories. Comparing the ratings of two dissimilar machines is a meaningless exercise in futility.	
Seat height	870mm		
Rake/trail	29.5°/122mm		
Wet weight, no fuel	294 lbs.		



Part-time tester and full-time art critic Dennis West shocks the DB cameras with a one-hander. Dennis felt the bike had great canyon road virtues and tolerable off-road manners.

Finally, we nailed down an elusive Kawasaki KLR600. This bike has been the talk of the techno crowd, the cream of gizmo seekers, the buzz of the gadget elite. No other machine in recent times has hit the dirt market with such hyped fanfare. A water-cooled, big-bore, four-stroke, street/trail bike. Why, the motocross world doesn't even have a water-cooled Open MXer yet! Still, staring us smack in the mug is this electrified, waterized, computerized contraption.

Actually, it's not that bizarre. Advanced maybe, but not out-and-out weird. Water-cooling is the accepted rule of the street bike world. Front disc—no news here. Aluminum side stand—getting away from the norm. Removable aluminum rear section—bleacher time. GPZ-styled rear shock linkage—getting panicky. Spage-age buddy pegs that look like they came straight off a starship—Twilight Zone time. Adding a blue tint to the hair is a dashboard that does everything but play Pac-Man, and a host of little odds and ends that look like they came right off a works roadracer.

This isn't your everyday street-legal trail bike. No way!

SOMEWHAT ECCENTRIC, BUT WHAT'LL SHE DO?

Starting the KLR proved somewhat odd. Slide the handlebar-mounted choke on, turn on the gas and kick. Or try to kick. It feels more like kicking through a vat of mashed potatoes. No alarming kickback, but slow and awkward. We got fire almost immedi-

ately. Let her warm up a bit and hit the road. The first thing we noticed was a considerable lack of vibration. In fact, compared with the XL or XT600, there's none.

The second thing we noticed was speed. It's quick, but not as fast as the XL600. Acceleration is steady and smooth, not frisky and abrupt like the Honda. This isn't all bad. On the street the vibrationless KLR motivated through traffic, onto the freeway and into the hills more like a big street bike than a street/trailer. Redline is right at 8000 rpm, but she drops off at about 7500. After that it's shift up or listen to the noise. Short-shifting seems to be the norm with the KLR. It doesn't like to be overrevved and falls on its face when you attempt it.

As far as engine size, the KLR is the smallest of the KLR/XL/XT trio. Its wet sump plant cc's out at 564. Although it's a four-valver, it's the only one opting for a single carb and a single exhaust pipe. Ironically, it's the only dual-overhead-cammed engine of the bunch.

Like the KX lineup, the radiators tuck in nicely. There's a coolant tank mounted on the left side under the tank, which makes for easy eyeballing of the level. An electric radiator fan isn't bothersome until it clicks on and blows hot air on your leg. There's a whole gaggle of hoses and purge systems leading to an Evaporative Emission Control System canister. Nice "touch" for a dirt bike.

MOUNTAIN MOTIVATION

Travel specifications concerning the sus-

pension run in line with the rest of the troops. There is 9.1 inches up front and 8.7 inches in the rear. Typically, the front end is soft, diving with a minor squeeze of the front brake. Going up 15mm on the oil level helped considerably. We'd rate the action as supple, perfect for highway and minor trail-riding use.

While Kawasaki labels the rear single-shock system as a Uni-Trak, it looks more like something off its street bikes than a KX. The damping is adjustable at the bottom of the shock. There are four positions, with number two being stock. We clicked it up to number three for the little bit of two-tracking we encountered. Once off-road, don't expect to clear a gnarly section of whoops without fear—it isn't meant to be. The action is soft to the point of comfortable. A stiffer spring is a must for increased off-highway usage.

A longish rake, 29.5 degrees, thankfully lends itself to stability. Turning the beast in sand isn't a wholesome experience, and we'd suggest sticking to fire roading. Here the stable chassis is at home, and coupled with the electric motor, nothing happens too fast. Head to head with the XL and XT, the KLR holds its own on the jeep roads.

TRIVIA BITS

All the controls are deluxe and easy. The bars are perfect; the seat is comfortable and has room for two. There's a temperature gauge on the instrument cluster to aid (or confuse) the rider.

Up front the disc brake is nice. Most felt it was a little weak, especially in comparison to the strong KX units. Of course, there is a "small" weight difference. The rear brake pedal is aluminum and has that hand-crafted look. Action on the rear binders is average, no better.

Both hubs feature straight-pull spokes and the rear chain is adjusted via eccentric cams mounted in the swingarm. We'd like to see them on the KX lineup.

The skid plate molds nicely around the cases, offering protection, and there are aluminum rubber-ribbed buddy handles that double as grab rails.

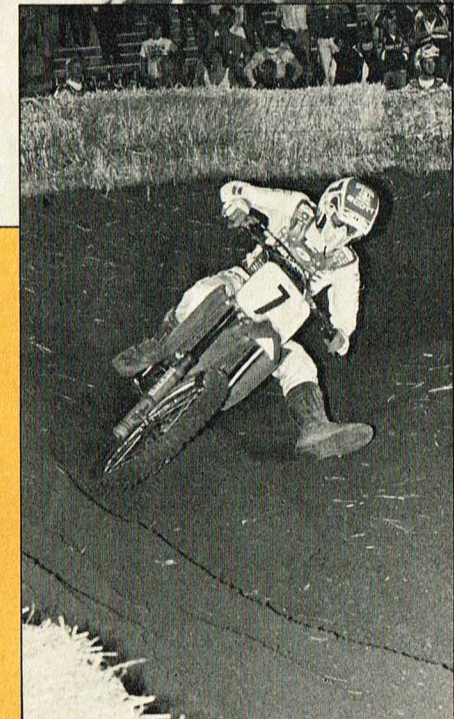
WHERE DOES IT FIT?

Kawasaki's answer to the Honda XL600 and the Yamaha XT600 is one wild approach. This techno monster is smooth, handles with the best in the field, and is fitted with more gadgetry and sophistication than Captain Kirk's Enterprise. The question is, where's the electric start button? □

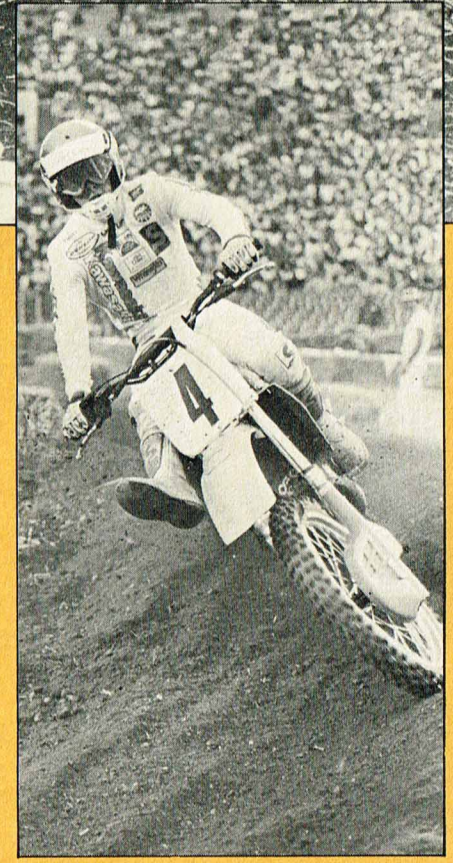


FLATTRACKING IN THE ROSE BOWL

A "poor excuse for a Supercross track" turns the Superbowl into the Stupidbowl of Motocross
 By the DIRT BIKE Staff



Ron Lechien netted himself a fourth- or fifth-place start in the Main, and then bailed off for a second and had to work his way back to tenth. He was ready for better things—earlier in the night he'd won his Semi over a field of heavy hitters.



Jeff Ward complained bitterly about the no-challenge track, but good starts and a right wrist that wouldn't shut off netted him his second Supercross win of the year.

It was a slightly frightening experience to hear 20 riders wail into the first turn without shutting off. Just a twitch of the shoulders got them into the switchback, which was actually turn three. Attentive readers will notice that the top four positions are an exact replica of the finish. What's that tell you?

If the overall attitude wasn't obvious before the opening ceremonies, Johnny O'Mara's reply to a simple question made it evident to all.

Announcer: "Well, Johnny, what do you think of the track tonight?"

O'Mara: "I think this is the poorest excuse for a Supercross track that I've ever ridden on..."

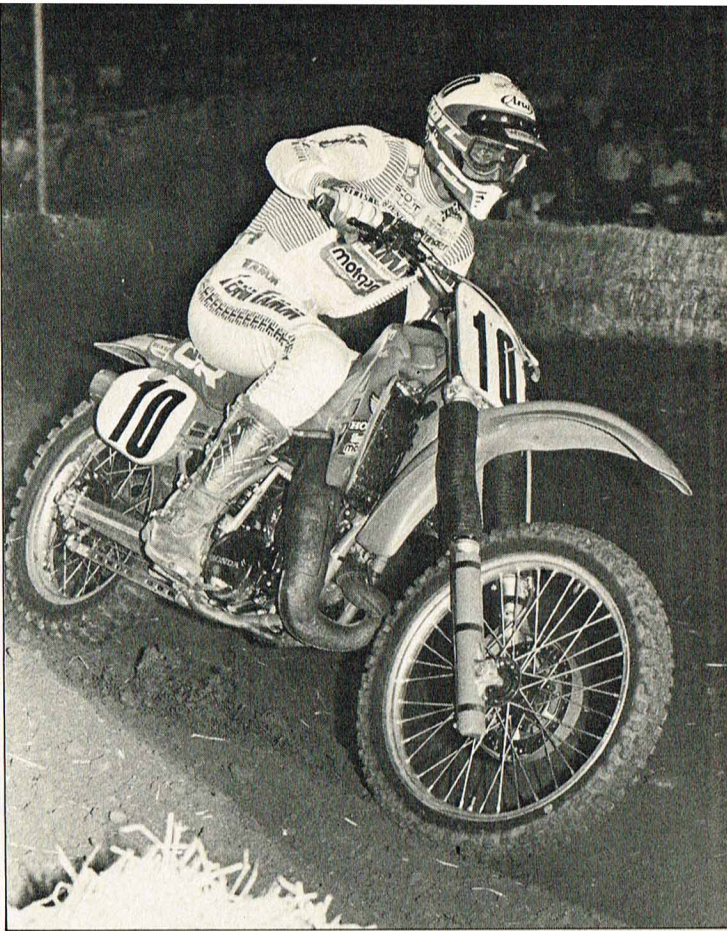
And in our opinion, and in the opinion of nearly everybody else in attendance, he was right. There were no double jumps, very few tight turns or switchbacks, and one set of whoopededos exactly six bumps long. After practice, some riders in the pits were seen raising their gearing to get better top speed down the start straight.





Fresh from a Supercross win in Orlando, Yamaha star Ricky Johnson suffered poor starts all night long. He gated especially bad in the Final, but managed to berserk his way into eighth place.

At a pre-race press conference, Broc Glover said his mediocre finishes so far this year were due to his "not caring, watching too much TV, and not working out or practicing." What a kidder, that Broc. He led for most of the Main, and finally got stuffed in to a hay bale for second. He never lost his visor, though.



Alan King is Team Tamm's top rider, who only recently gave up the 250 class lead in the outdoor Nationals. Riding a more or less stock CR250, he flashed into a fifth-place finish for top non-factory rider. Very impressive.

Mark Barnett knew it would take a holeshot to win this race, and he proved it to the crowd by blasting to the lead in the second heat and taking the win by 14 seconds. Poor starts marred the rest of his evening, and he settled for a sixth place behind King.



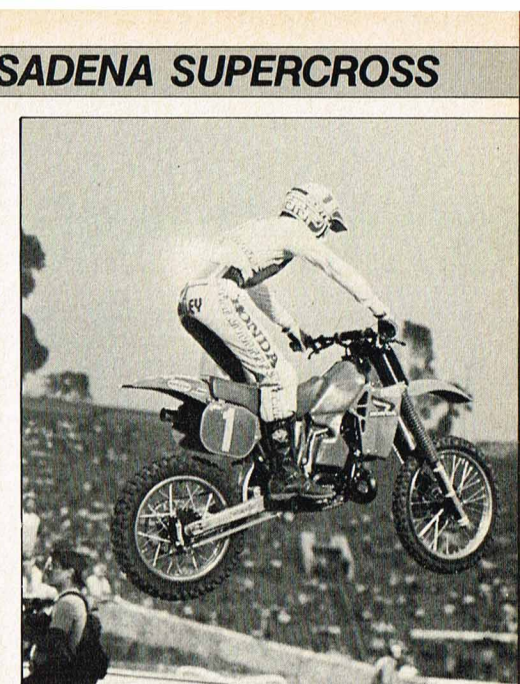
MILLER HIGH LIFE PASADENA SUPERCROSS

He'd rather not follow in the footsteps of teammate Barnett, but with a production bike under him he puts on a fine show. George Holland "tunneled" to a seventh-place finish.



The Honda guys don't train on a TT track. They train on one of the gnarliest private tracks we've ever seen. Johnny O hated the track, wasn't shy about telling people about it, and his performance showed it. Jim Felt had his own worries—this is what he looked like when Ricky Johnson was only three seconds behind.

Jim Holley reflects the spirits of DIRT BIKE Magazine, his sponsor and financial trainer. He claims to have given away a fourth-place heat finish in order to win the "Longest Jump" award. "Two positions for a quick thousand bucks? Sure, it was worth it!"



David Bailey really does worry about the future of motocross. Because of that number one on his plate, he's taken on the job of spokesman for the troops, and he spent most of the night getting more and more depressed about the track conditions. "We're not used to this," he said. "We could have spent the week at Ascot if we knew it was going to be like this." He finished fourth.

Daivid Bailey told us, "I hope you guys don't write another rave story about this race. You should make sure everybody knows it was a TT track. This is ridiculous." Jeff Ward complained long and hard, and Mark Barnett said, "I think it'll be perfect—as long as I get the holeshot. Nobody in second place will have a chance on this track."

For our little part, we have to apologize for the poor quality of the photos. We had plenty of photographers on hand, but everyone was herded into one less-than-interesting part of the track by the security guards. The reason? They were told to chase all the photographers out of the front part of the track because they were blocking the banners strung on fences in the infield. "People pay a lot of money for banner space here, and they don't want people standing in front of them during the race," we were told.

So, without blocking any banners, here is our coverage of the annual Superbowl of Motocross, which until this year was billed as the greatest spectacle in Supercross history. Hopefully, people in high places will try to forget about the Superbowl of '84, and not make the same mistakes in the future. □

RESULTS:
PASADENA SUPERBOWL OF MOTOCROSS,
JUNE 2, 1984

1. Jeff Ward, Mission Viejo, CA	Kaw
2. Broc Glover, El Cajon, CA	Yam
3. Johnny O'Mara, Simi Valley, CA	Hon
4. David Bailey, Axton, VA	Hon
5. Alan King, Troy, MI	Hon
6. Mark Barnett, Lawley, AL	Suz
7. George Holland, Kerman, CA	Suz
8. Ricky Johnson, El Cajon, CA	Yam
9. Eric Eaton, Tacoma, WA	Hon
10. Ron Lechien, El Cajon, CA	Hon

By the Staff of DB

WHITE POWER FORKS

Dialing in the upside-downers

KTM has accomplished several amazing feats in the last couple of years. Its 1983 250MX proved to be the lightest bike in class and was fast and water-cooled. Its 1984 125 is the first competition to the Big Four motocrossers in years. It, too, is water-cooled, superfast and very light. And this year they introduced their Open bikes with an inverted, or upside-down, White Power fork.

The White Power forks appear to be copies of the Simons UDX forks that Brad Lackey campaigned with. Cosmetically, they're similar. Internally, it's a different story.

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

Huge 54mm top tubes are mated to 40mm lower tubes. This makes for zero flex. The damper units rest in the middle of the forks, with the springs running in the lower tubes. There is no damper rod as with a typical fork, but instead a valving system much like a White Power shock. The valving of the forks can be adjusted by changing shims on the damper. Both compression and rebound damping can be altered by playing with the internal shim stack.

So you have big, flex-free, infinitely adjustable forks. The next shocker is that they weigh about the same as a set of 1982 RM250 38mm forks. Not 43mm forks, but the skinny little 38s! This means that you can install a set of these forks and actually save weight in the process.

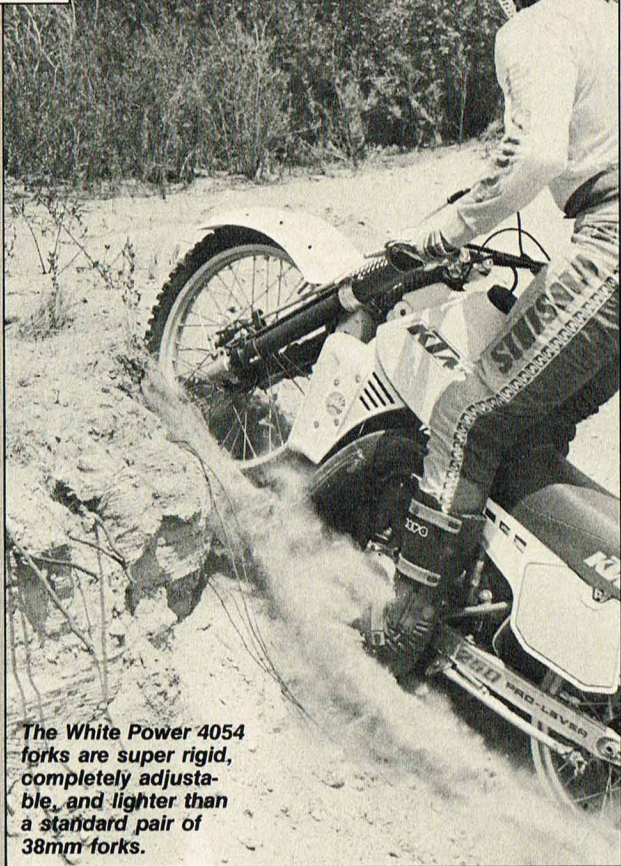
DIALING THEM IN

In comparison with a standard fork, the White Power units are rather complex. Oil weights and levels are critical to good performance.

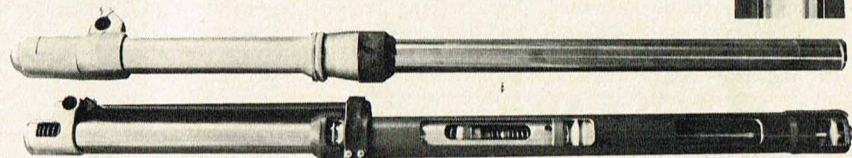
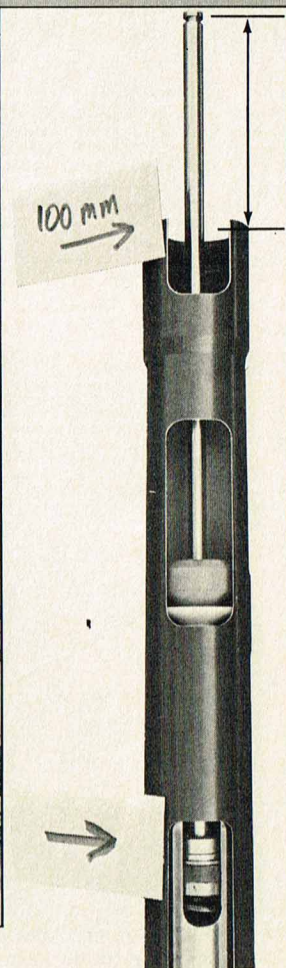
The stock oil is a three-weight, but we had better results with an easier-to-find 2½-weight oil. Changing the oil requires that you remove the fork, then unscrew the upper body cap. Push the outer tube down and remove the clip that rests on the piston rod. Pour the oil out, working it up and down in the process.

Once all the oil is out, extend the fork as long as possible and pour 650cc of 2½-weight oil inside the outer tube. Put the cap back on and push the fork three or four times to force the oil inside all the damping orifices. Take the cap back off and slide the inner tube halfway into the outer tube. Grab the piston rod and move it up and down. This removes all the air in the system.

The oil level is set by the height of the piston rod in comparison with the outer tube. With 50mm of rod showing, the action will be soft. Max is 180mm, which will be superstiff. Our best results came right at 100mm of rod showing. At this point the oil level should be just covering the valving



The White Power 4054 forks are super rigid, completely adjustable, and lighter than a standard pair of 38mm forks.



In comparison with standard forks, which have the damper rod in the lower slider and the spring on top, the WP units carry the spring down low and the damping unit up high. Much like a White Power shock, the damper has shim stacks that regulate the oil flow and can be adjusted both on compression and rebound. (Top right) Setting the oil level on the WP forks is done by setting the damper rod length at the level desired, then the oil level right over the top of the valving unit. We had the best results with 2½-weight oil and the level at 100mm.

stack on the damper rod. Take a flashlight and look inside the fork to check this.

OTHER TRIVIA

There are rock guards on the lower legs of the forks. All of the originals were brittle and broke quickly. The newer guards are more flexible and resist exploding. We had no problems running without the guards.

Because there is no external air bleed on the fork, it's a major task to remove inside pressure buildup. The top fork cap must be removed. An air valve would help.

Some of the European riders are filling the forks with nitrogen, then bleeding off the excess, which forces the air out of the system. They claim they don't pump up at

all this way. We also heard that a small group of riders are running water instead of oil! This isn't suggested.

These forks should be available for most brands of bikes in the near future. We understand that they will be priced very competitively, making them affordable for the privateer.

THE LATEST NEWS

White Power has started a new drive in fork technology. Lighter, more rigid and adjustable, these state-of-the-art forks are the future. We understand that reigning World Champ Hakan Carlqvist is running a set of upside-down Ohlins forks on his Yamaha. The battle has begun. □



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I think the biggest mistakes guys make going up hills are plain old lazy riding mistakes. They start up the hill trying to control the bike with the throttle, and then the bike starts getting into a wheelie. The first thing they do is shut the power off, and, of course, when they shut the power off, they lose all of their drive. Then they think, *Well, I'll gas it again!* and the bike doesn't respond, or the front end comes up again, so they start pumping the clutch.

The clutch is real important on uphills. I think you should never take your finger off the clutch, because if you do, the bike is going to have a tendency to bog or wheelie on any uphill, and by the time you get your hand on the clutch, you're already into a problem.

keep saying, "I'm gonna make it, I'm gonna make it!" and they just wind up looping the bike over backwards. That's really kind of dumb. When you get to the point where you know you're not going to make it up a hill, you should spin it around or lay it over sideways, so you can stop safely or ride back down the hill.

SPEED ISN'T A FACTOR

Another mistake a lot of people make is trying to climb a hill with speed. If you at-

two or three times on the way up. Think about it—do it the right way, and you're powering up the hill. Do it the wrong way, hit it too fast, and you're losing speed all the way up. And, of course, it's easier to control a bike at a slower speed.

If you have to hit the bottom of a steep hill fast, keep this in mind: If you hit it sitting down, you'll bottom out your suspension on impact, and aside from feeling bad, doing this will force the suspension to spring back and cause the bike to wheelie. If you must attack this particular hill at speed, be sure to hit the base standing up and soak up the impact with your legs and arms. This way you keep the suspension from overreacting, and you get a much smoother attack. But don't stand up all the way up the hill, because standing up transfers your weight too high and too far back on the bike, and it's more difficult to keep your weight on the front end when you're standing up. Also, you lose more traction standing up.

DON'T BLAST UP, TORQUE UP

There's a powerband on a bike that people don't know about. I call it the "working powerband," and it's somewhere between bogging down and full revs on each bike. Maybe it's the point in the powerband where the engine torque really starts building, I don't know. I do know, however, that if you use this ultra-torquey point in the powerband for hillclimbing, you can make it much simpler. I get schools where we do a lot of hillclimbing, and after all the guys spend a while shrieking up a hill, I get into the fat part of my engine and just grunt the bike right up. It looks and sounds like I'm idling up the darned thing, but I'm not. I'm just using the fattest part of the power curve, and that point is not necessarily up at peak revs. You need to find this point on your bike and use it whenever you need a whole bunch of torque.

In a nutshell, keep your weight forward. Don't approach the hill with too much speed, and keep the revs as even as possible—use the fat part of the powerband, don't try to use the whole rev range on every hill. And whatever you do, don't let that bike have 100 percent of the clutch. Keeping that clutch slipping is the key to control; I can't stress that too strongly. Learn to use that little lever for more than just starting out in the morning, and it will make you a better rider—on hills, in turns, in the mud, everywhere. The clutch is the key. □

◀ *Getting a big jump off a dip or bump on the way up looks really flashy, but it isn't the hot ticket. You lose so much drive during air time that you have to downshift when you land. If you're already in first gear, you just blew the climb.*

▶ *The Professor tries out his own techniques on a gnarly hill. Torque is important on a short vertical section, as you have to wheelie over it to keep from looping out.*

HOW TO CLIMB HILLS

Not only is it great training, it's fun too!

By Gary Bailey & the DIRT BIKE Staff

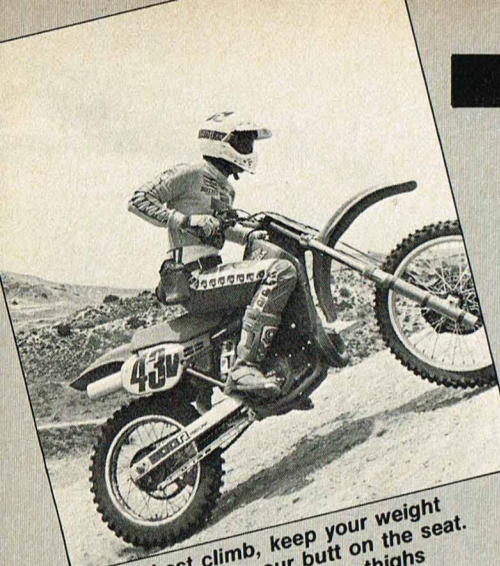
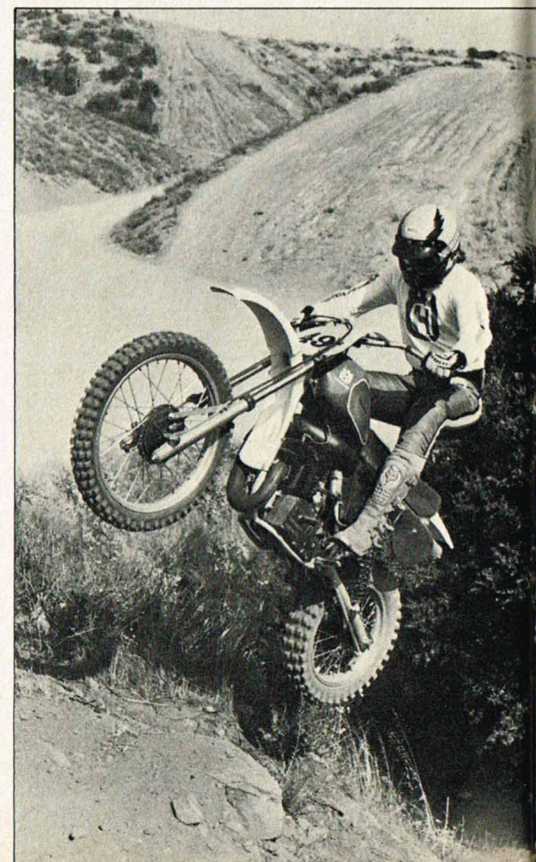
When you're going up a hill, you should never let the bike have all the clutch. In other words, only give it about three-quarters of the clutch—keep your fingers on it and slip it all the way up the hill. It's just like coming off a starting line—if you give the bike all the clutch at once, it wants to wheelie and you lose control, and if you don't let it have enough, you don't get anywhere. The technique you use to get off the starting line is the same technique you use to get up a hill.

NOT QUITE MAKING IT

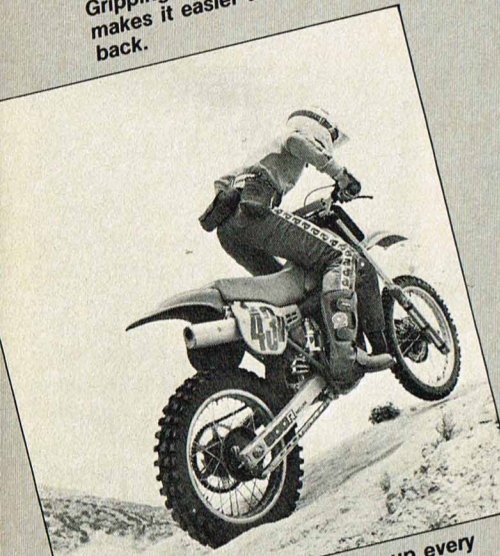
Every now and then you find yourself out of control, and you have to paddle to get up the hill. When you do this, it's important that you stay forward on the gas tank. You can get a grip on the tank with your thighs; that way you can paddle and still hold yourself up. If you get a good grip, you avoid the normal problem of slipping back to the rear of the bike and getting completely out of control. Once you slip back to the middle or the rear of the seat, forget it. You're not going to control the bike from there.

What if you don't make it? Well, a lot of guys try to ride it out to the bitter end. They get almost up to the top, then run out of steam and clutch and energy, and they

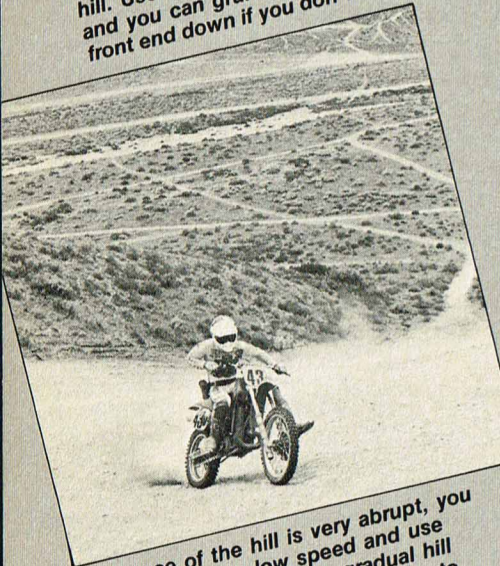
tack a hill as fast as you can, what's going to happen if you hit a bump or a hole or something? It's going to get you airborne; you'll have to downshift when you land. You'll lose all your power on that one little bump. Generally, if you hit a hill at a moderate, controlled speed, in a lower gear, you will go up the hill easier than you would if you hit it wide open and have to downshift



For the best climb, keep your weight well forward and your butt on the seat. Gripping the tank with your thighs makes it easier to keep from sliding back.



There's no need to go full bore up every hill. Use the fat part of the powerband and you can grunt right up. Hold the front end down if you don't like surprises.



If the base of the hill is very abrupt, you have to hit it at a low speed and use the torque to climb. On a gradual hill such as this one, you can blast up to the steep part and then use momentum to roll over it.

YAMAHA XT250



WORKS HARD FOR THE MONEY
Mellow fellow
By the Staff of DB

Soft suspension is fine for medium trail work, but expect some serious clanking when you jump the XT.

◀ A nice seat/tank junction lets the rider get forward in the turns. The brakes are a little weak and the weight is too much, but what street/trail bike isn't too heavy?



YAMAHA XT250L

Engine type	Air-cooled 4-stroke, DOHC	Weight	258 lbs.
Bore and stroke	73.0mm x 59.6mm	Suspension:	
Displacement	249cc	Front	255mm (10.4 in.)
Carburetion	Teikei Y22PV	Rear	220mm (8.66 in.)
Gas/oil ratio	Straight gas	Seat height	845mm (33.3 in.)
Fuel tank capacity	12.0 L (3.17 gals.)	Retail price	\$1799
Transmission	6-speed	Country of origin	Japan
Gearing, front/rear	15/48	Distributor/Manufacturer:	Yamaha Motor Corp.
Ignition	CDI		6555 Katella Ave.
Wheelbase	1430mm (56.3 in.)		Cypress, CA 90630
Ground clearance	270mm (10.6 in.)		

Yamaha didn't skimp when it came to its XT lineup for '84. Of course they did drop the XT125 and 200, but the remaining 250 and 600 got an injection of sophistication over their year-old counterparts. Last year's 250 looked like a relic from the early '70s, with a spindly steel swingarm and a non-business look that appealed to no one. Basically, it was a rehash of parts from years back, and it was never very popular.

This year's XT250 is packed with appeal, from the white and red color scheme, to the YZ-like suspension components. From the lights with their enduro cowling, to the air scoops resting under the tank, the XT looks fun, looks fast and most important, it looks dirt. A rider can bop around town on the XT and feel like a racer.

While looks are important, performance is critical. Both the chassis and the engine have more than just simple updates. Beefier suspension with more travel and an all-new engine with a six-speed tranny top the list of changes.

PERFORMANCE

Starting the XT proved to be a menial task. Turn on the gas, flip on the choke and kick. Nine times out of ten, it fired on the first snap of the lever. After a decent warm-up period, we slid into the mainstream of traffic. For the first few miles or so, we thought the engine just wasn't warmed up.

Then, we thought the choke was still on. Actually, it turned out that the XT looks faster than it really is.

While it can't be considered a dog, it still left us a little disappointed in the acceleration department. It's smooth, with an almost docile thrust. Shifting is typically notchy for Yamaha, but the gears seemed spaced just right. The six-speeder is good for about a 70-mph top end with a slight tail wind. It'll move through traffic all right, but don't expect any wheelies unless you're good with the clutch.

Off-road, the motor manners weren't scoffed at. The smooth acceleration is welcomed on a street/trail bike. The limitations of the tires and suspension in the dirt are further highlighted by a robust engine. We trailed the 250 on minor-league two-track roads and some hairy stuff for a dual-purpose machine. It did just fine. There's enough low end to pull some serious terrain without stalling. First and second gears are low enough that you can plonk and enduro at slower speeds without fear of sinking the bike and walking home.

TRAVEL TUNES

Both suspension ends got the beef and inches this year. Up front the travel has been bumped to ten inches over the measly 8.1 of last year. The rear end not only got more travel, it got the new Monocross design also. Add to that a chassis more in tune with the dirt world, and you've got a bike that isn't afraid of going off-road.

While the limitations of the suspension come quickly, they're worlds better than past efforts. You can actually get loose and slam through a few bumps without fear. A longer wheelbase also makes it somewhat stable at higher speeds in the dirt.

BITS AND PIECES

Everyone gave the XT an "A" in seating comfort and layout. The seat itself is firm, yet just supple enough and big enough to carry a passenger comfortably. The problem here is that there are no buddy pegs!

The O-ring chain proved durable and the steel swingarm comes with snail-type chain adjusters.

To remove the gas cap you need the key. The tank itself holds over three gallons of fuel and gets unbelievable mileage.

Our bike (a California model) came equipped with a canister mounted under the tank on the left side of the bike. It's an emission device that prevents fuel vapors from entering the atmosphere.

The front single-leading-shoe brake is weak. A dual-leading-shoe model, or better yet, a disc, would be nice.

SETTING YOUR SIGHTS

Although we felt that the XT250 could have had more power, it still proved to be an excellent machine. There's enough grunt for the trail-conscious, and it'll move through town fine. The bike looks great, handles fine for what it's designed for, and is definitely a step in the right direction. □

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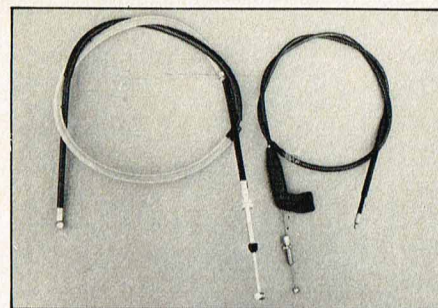
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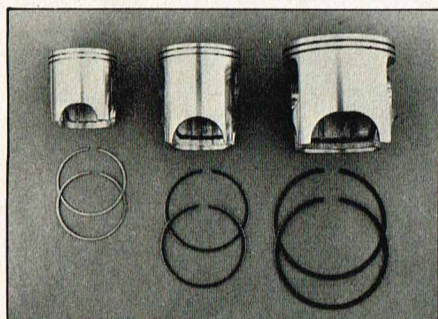
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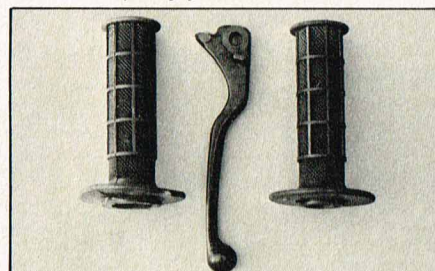
FENDERS, FRONT

CR60/80R	\$23.41—\$32.51
CR125R	19.36—45.50
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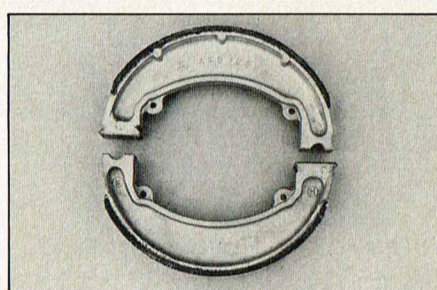
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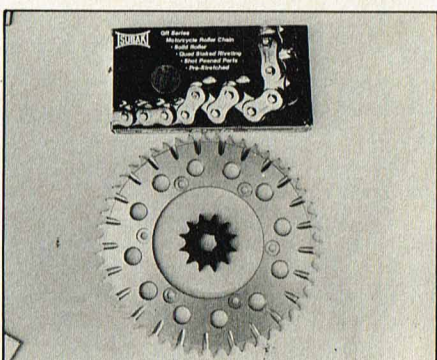
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1985 HUSQVARNA SINGLE-SHOCKER!

the 250 are limited, but here's what we can pass on to you:

Bore and stroke	69.5mm x 64.5mm
Displacement	245cc
Carburetor	38mm Mikuni
Gearbox	5-speed
Fork angle	28°
Forks	Husky made, 300mm travel
Rear suspension:	Husqvarna single-shock system, rockers on bottom, fixed at the top, adjustable Ohlins shock with 330mm travel.
Swingarm	Aluminum alloy
Seat height	930mm
Dry weight	98 kg (215.6 lbs.)

BASED ON THE 400

A look at the engine cases shows that the newest Husky is built around the bottom end of the existing WR400 water-cooled enduro bike. Right now, Mickey Dymond is racing a bike on the Nationals that is also based on the WR400 but has a 430 liner and piston inside. According to Dymond, it's almost fast enough and has very good power. With a full 500cc, it should get rid of that "almost" tag.

Specs on the 500 bike are also limited:

Bore and stroke	86mm x 84mm
Displacement	488cc
Carburetor	40mm Mikuni
Transmission	4-speed
Fork angle	28°
Forks	Husqvarna-made, 300mm travel
Rear suspension	Husky single-shock system, 330mm travel, Ohlins shock.
Swingarm	Aluminum alloy
Seat height	930mm
Dry weight	102 kg (224.4 lbs.)

Other features include a massive right-side airbox with vented and slotted air intakes. A spacey-looking gas tank carries much of the gas down low on the right side. Dual radiators flank the new tank and appear to be the same units currently used on the '84 bikes, but are in fact, lighter.

Internal slot adjusters ride inside the ultra-long swingarm. It's very beefy in appearance but is said to weigh exactly the same as the old-style tubular steel arm of the current bikes.

Side panels, exhaust parts and wheels/hubs appear to be standard Husky items. A rather bizarre-looking saddle climbs well up on the slim tank. Overall, the new machine is not only a radical departure in engineering for the Swedish firm, but an optical adventure as well.

Arrangements have been made for an early test of both machines. Keep a close watch on future issues. □

Being race-tested and developed on the European GP circuits, the 1985 Husqvarna sports the working name "GP500." Long aluminum arm cradles an Ohlins fully adjustable shock. Dry weight is competitive at 224 pounds.

NEXT YEAR'S 500 HUSKY

Water-cooled, wet & wild!

By the DB roving editors

Everyone knows they've been testing single-shock versions of Husqvarnas for some time now... and even racing a few in Europe on an irregular basis. But all of the efforts have been based on the traditional old-style Husky chassis with a full cradle section wrapping around the engine.

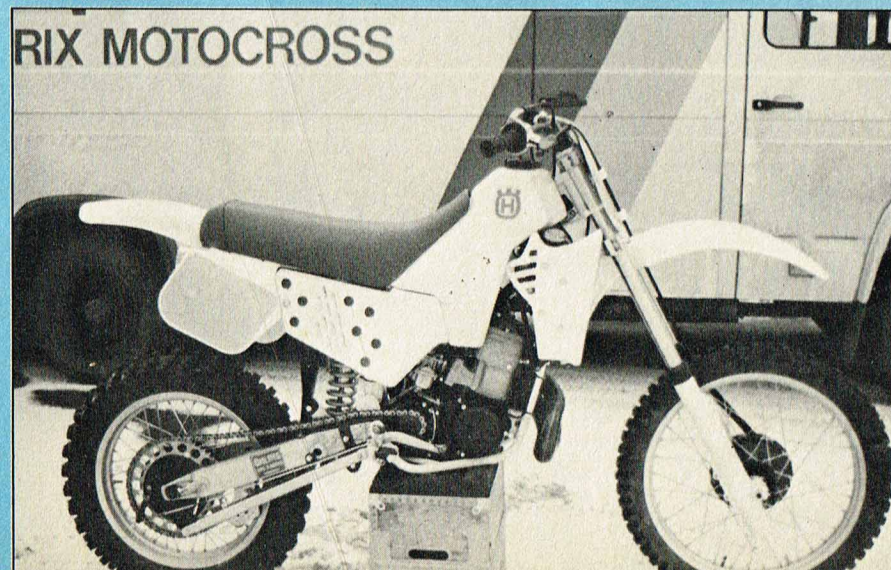
Careful study of the photos shows that the pre-production prototype has a new-generation frame based on a massive single backbone tube. The single tube meets the bottom frame rails at the swingarm pivot area and has no side rails whatsoever. All

of the strength must come from the backbone itself.

This should be no problem, as the tube is well over two inches in diameter and made of the highest quality 4130 chromoly tubing available. By eliminating the side bracing tubes, the Husky engineers have opened up a great deal of space for pipe routing, airbox placement and carb location that was heretofore not available.

LOOK FOR A 250 MODEL AS WELL
Shown here is the 500 bike, but a 250 version is currently being tested, too. Specs on

Perched unceremoniously atop a normal wooden crate, the new-generation Husky CR500 water-cooler shows off its single-shock rear end. A huge airbox is evident on the right side.



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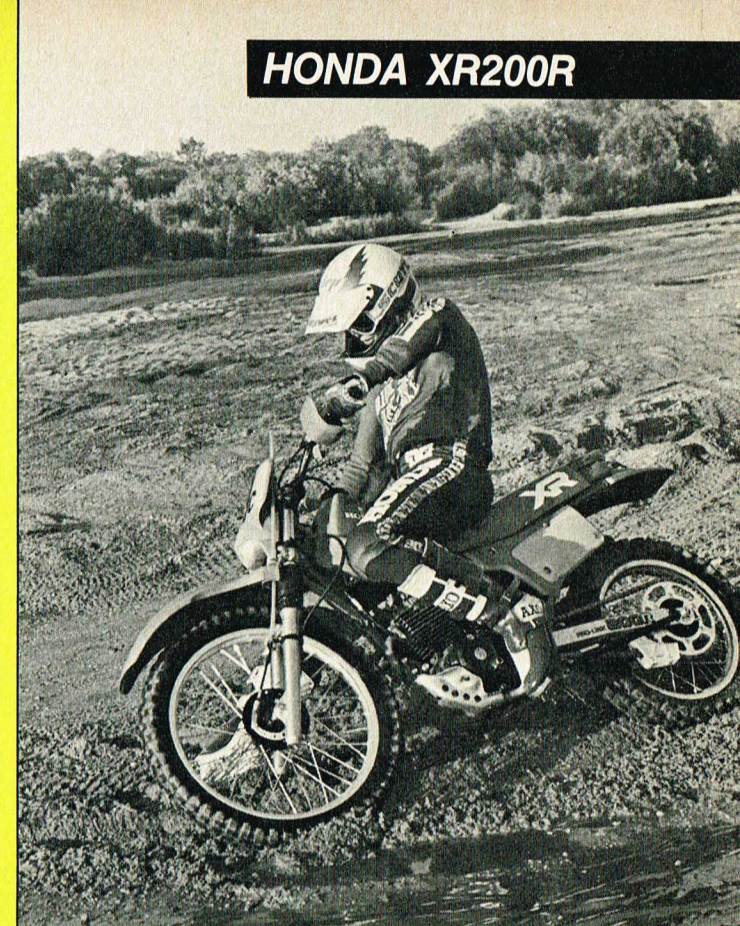
THE FUN FACTOR

Serious improvements to the king of the play bikes

By the DIRT BIKE Staff



While most felt that the safety seat looks good, the big tongue limits rider mobility, making it tough to get forward in the turns.



It seems as if you can lean the XR over so far that it's turning around its own rear wheel. Too much throttle at low rpm can cause it to bog, however.

Just what is the fun factor? We would say that the fun factor is the one ingredient that makes a bike fun to ride, rather than all the other buzz words—fast, competitive, light. In order for a bike to be fun, it has to have a number of good points. It has to have a torquey engine, because peaky bikes are not fun for long. It has to be reasonably light, because nobody likes to drag around a little brother who weighs 250 pounds. It has to be plush, forgiving, and comfortable. And if it meets all these criteria, people will flock down to the bike shop to buy one, even if the magazines come right out and say it isn't the perfect racing machine.

Such a bike is the Honda XR200R. When the XR185 burst on the scene in 1979, Honda knew they had a winner on their hands, and they also knew why it was winning. It was fun. Fun was what sold bikes for Honda. Motorcycling was fun. And because of all this, Honda, rightfully so, chose to ignore the magazines and their pleas for mods that would turn the XR185/200/200R into the most radical racing four-stroke on the face of the earth. They could do it—make the XR200 into a flame thrower on the race track—but they left that up to the aftermarket people and just continued to sell a fun cruiser to the masses.

They took the same approach to updates, and every year they came out with an XR that was just a little bit better than the previous year. If you wanted to upgrade a skosh,

you could buy a new one; if you were content with what you had, you could hold out for another year and pick up on an even more improved version. The XR would still be around; it is a bike that endures.

UNDER THE SKIN

Once again, the XR200 appears unchanged, but never let the looks deceive you when you're looking at a Honda. This 200R is perhaps the most radical one ever to roll off the Honda assembly line. In no obvious order, here are but a few of the '84 improvements:

- More horsepower. More than just a claim, this year Honda took a big step in the hp wars. The engine grew from 195cc to 199cc through the use of a shorter stroke and a larger bore. The XR also sports the Honda four-valve head and dual 20mm carbs. The '83 200 put out 17.75 bhp at 8500 rpm with 12.2 foot-pounds of torque at 7000 rpm; the '84 has been boosted up to 23 bhp at 9000 rpm and 14.5 foot-pounds of torque at 7500 rpm. These figures were taken on the Honda dyno, of course, but they should at least be relative to each other.

- The frame is brand new. It is the same frame they are using on the XR250 this year and is slightly bigger than last year's frame overall, resulting in a 10mm increase in wheelbase. The most significant change out of this is the rake and trail—the '83 featured a rake of 28 degrees, 40 minutes and a trail of 125mm, and the new bike numbers are

26 degrees and 105mm. If you were one of the astute people who complained that the XR200 steered like a '79 Husky, be assured that the new bike *can't* do it with numbers like this.

- Better suspension. The travel has been increased a slight two tenths of an inch, but the rear linkage has been reworked to provide a better rate, and the shock is new, featuring adjustable compression and rebound damping, in much the same manner as the Honda CRs. For the record, the damper and linkage are the same as that on the XR250, although the 250 spring is stiffer. So now you know the first place to find a stiffer spring for your '84 200. The new forks use 36mm tubes rather than the 35mm tubes found on the '83. The forks and shock are made by Kayaba.

There are innumerable minor improvements to the rest of the bike, but we'll mention the most significant of them as they pop up. Before we go any further here, let's ride it and see how all this works.

SOIL TESTING

You still have to use the XR drill to start the 200 effectively—choke on, no throttle, full kick—but it does start rather easily because of its small size. The tail pipe emits a good four-stroke bark, and we were happy to learn that it is a little quieter than past 200s. Even so, Honda saw fit to include a silencing kit with each bike that will make the exhaust practically noiseless.

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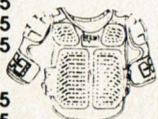
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HONDA XR200R

The power delivery is excellent. This 200 is practically as fast as the XR250. There's more than enough low-end grunt to get you moving with no fancy clutch work, and when the revs hit the fat part of the torque curve, the XR practically leaps forward. It will rev out from there, but you really don't gain very much above 8000 rpm. This is the perfect type of power for trailriding. You can grunt along with your butt planted firmly in the seat all day long, but if you get the urge, you can downshift and ride it like a two-stroke.

We noticed only one fault in the system. If we intentionally let the engine speed drop way down and then tried to accelerate in too high a gear, the carbs would gasp, make a groaning noise, and nothing would happen. On a two-stroke, this is a sign of overcarburation, and with two 20mm carb bores wide

The new XR just loves to knife through tight vegetation. A 26-degree rake has cured the old "XR plow."



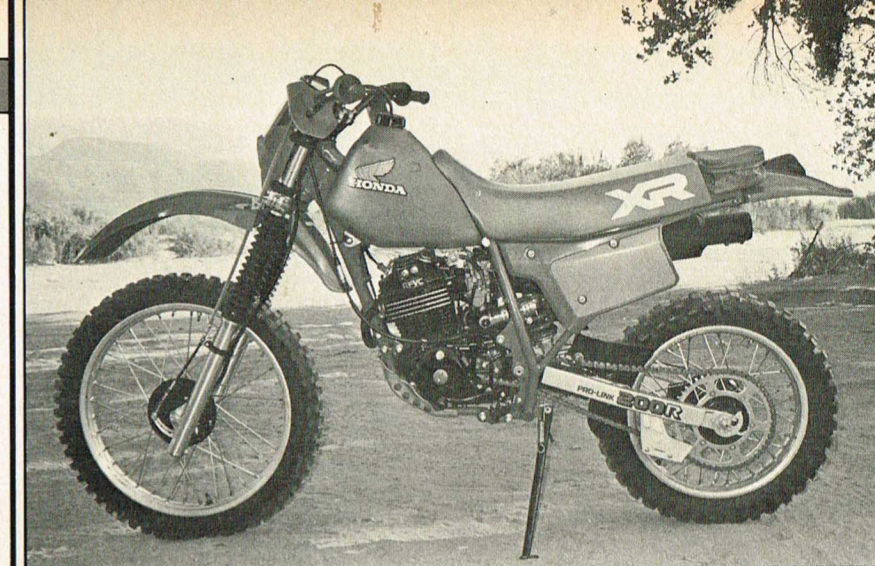
The 36mm Kayaba forks are skinny compared with the tubes found on the XR's two-stroke competition, but they work fine for trailriding.



The XR200 is a natural jumper. The bike is quite neutral, even though its all-up weight is 228 pounds, no gas. If the suspension had been stiffer, we'd never have been able to get our testers back on the ground.

open, it is probably the case here. The only time you'll have this problem is when you are in far too high a gear, and the engine wouldn't pull it even if the carbs could respond. Take it as a signal to downshift, and don't worry about it.

The suspension improvements weren't for naught, either. At medium speeds both ends

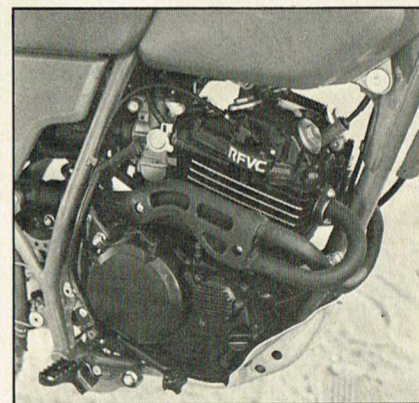


HONDA XR200R

Engine type Air-cooled 4-stroke
Bore and stroke 67.0mm x 56.5mm
Displacement 199cc
Carburetion (2) 20mm Keihin
Factory jetting: Pri/Sec
Main jet 98/95
Needle jet No optional parts
Jet needle E23510-4/E2353D-3
Pilot jet 42/NA
Slide number No optional parts
Fuel tank capacity 9.0 L (2.4 gals.)
Lubrication Wet sump
Gearbox ratios:
1 2.769:1
2 1.941:1
3 1.450:1
4 1.174:1
5 0.960:1
6 0.815:1
Gearing, front/rear 13/50
Ignition CDI
Recommended spark plug NGK DPR9Z
Silencer/spark arrester Yes/yes
Wheelbase 1365mm (53.7 in.)
Ground clearance 315mm (12.4 in.)
Seat height 905mm (35.6 in.)
Rake/trail 26°/105mm

*Wet weight, no fuel 228 lbs.
Tire size and type:
Front 3.00 x 21 IRC
Rear 110/90-17 IRC
Suspension, type and travel:
Front Kayaba 36mm forks, 254mm (10.0 in.)
Rear Pro-Link, adj. comp/reb., 246mm (9.7 in.)
Intended use Off-road, enduro
Country of origin Japan
Retail price, approx. \$1625
Distributor/Manufacturer:
American Honda Motor Corp.
100 W. Alondra Blvd.
Gardena, CA 90247
Overall rating of bike, keeping intended use in mind:
Handling Very good
Front suspension Very good
Rear suspension Very good
Power Excellent
Cost Very good
Attention to detail Very good
Effectiveness, stone stock Very good

This rating system is included to aid in comparison of bikes in the same displacement and intended-use categories. Comparing the ratings of two dissimilar machines is a meaningless exercise in futility.



Nearly five more horsepower really makes a difference in the XR200's manner this year. The actual horsepower peak is higher in the rpm scale, but there's so much more all over that the bike doesn't feel peaky.

will soak up typical gnarliness with few complaints. Small square-edged holes and chop-piness are absorbed and left behind. If we had to find one complaint, it would be that the forks seemed to bounce back too fast, but this is only a sign of a too light oil, which is easily corrected by an oil change. At high speeds the inherent softness be-

comes evident, and the XR will start bottoming and moving around. We never had it completely out of control, but it did demand attention. For serious competition events and aggressive trailriding, we would recommend heavier springs at both ends.

While all this bump soaking is going on, the XR knifes around just like a snake in the mud. It will cut in and out of trees with wild abandon, thanks to the short wheelbase and the steep rake, but during high-speed blasts, it is a little busy. Once again, firming up the suspension is the answer.

BITS AND PIECES

As with any good bike, you need to be forward in the seat to really slice up the turns. The XR is quite comfortable, but the forward torque of the seat can be a little uncomfortable to the males of the species. We've noticed this on some other bikes, but we really noticed it a couple of times on the Honda. Safety seats sure are pretty, but manufacturers should spend a little more time designing them to fit the human body better.

Everything fits on the XR. The bars feel good, the tank/seat junction feels very slim, it's easy to move around on the bike, and

(continued on page 72)

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MOVING VIOLATION

Remember that the asphalt trails have speed limits

By the DIRT BIKE Staff

Remember the original XR500? It was a big, heavy bike, but it had horsepower that was hard to beat—plenty of torque and a mid-range that wouldn't quit. If you wanted a street/trailer, you'd take the XR and fiddle around for a few weeks trying to make it street legal, or you'd go out and get an XL500 and try to make it lighter.

Well, times do change. If you woke up this morning and decided that you wanted a four-stroke dual-purpose bike with the same kind of power, you wouldn't want to look at the 600. Honda has been working on horsepower ever since the new series of XR/XLs were introduced, and the current 600 feels as if it will rip both your arms off and wheelie away from every stoplight if you don't go easy on the throttle. No, nowadays you'd go out and test ride an XL350—it's smaller and lighter than the 600, and you can pick up just as many moving violations if you don't make a conscious effort to behave.

THE MEANING OF TORQUE

The most notable feature of the XL350 is the powerband—it is wide, wide, wide.

What is it about a four-stroke street/trail bike that makes you want to put it sideways? The Honda even comes supplied with bar protectors if you drop it.

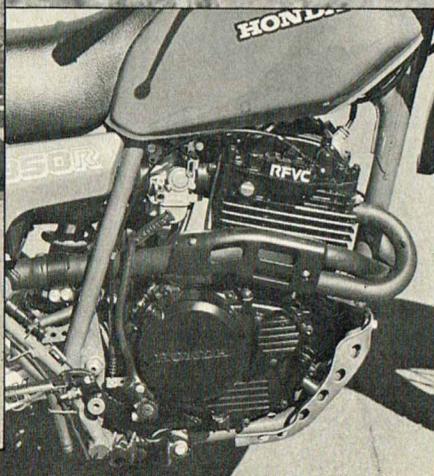


Most of our testers expected a much wimpier powerband. Just rolling on the throttle causes the XL to chug forward with authority, and when the mid-range takes over, it will snap your arms straight and lift the front wheel if you don't watch what you're doing.

At 271 pounds, the XL350 is not the lightest four-stroke on the market, but jumping was still easy and controlled.

The 350 doesn't seem to rev quite as high as the 250 we tested last month, but having all the 350's torque on hand means you won't miss the extra revs.

The only hitch we noted with the powerband was a tendency to bog when the throt-



The XL350 shares its lightweight componentry with the XR350. If a 250 isn't enough and a 500 is frightening, the 350 should be just right—there's plenty of oomph in that engine.

tle was snapped open at low revs/speeds. It felt exactly like an overcarbureted two-stroke—snap the throttle and all we got was a low *buuuuuuhhh*. It was most pronounced when the engine was cool, but it happened often enough to train us to go easy on the twist.

TURNING THE CORNERS

Being just ten pounds heavier than the XL250, the 350 is about as much fun in the dirt. There's no getting around the fact that the 350 is bigger, and the extra size and weight means you won't be attacking quite as hard on the 350, but this machine will take to the dirt with style. The front end sticks well on the fire roads, and smooth trails are a cruise. As the trail difficulty factor goes up, you will begin to feel the need for better tires. Although the stock rubber works very well on the street and in good dirt, anything steep, muddy or bone dry will have you wishing for a set of Metzlers.

The suspension, of course, is set up soft. It feels great out on the road, but when the trail gets rough, you will find yourself limited by the amount of punishment you can take. For really serious trail work we would suggest stiffer spring on both ends and some serious tuning on the damping units. For occasional off-road use, tuning on the rear preload and rebound damping, as well as setting up the forks, will allow you to dial it in fine.

Seating position, comfort and attention to detail is all typically Honda—you can just climb aboard an XL and feel comfortable. The 350 starts easily, just as long as you follow the manual, and the action of all the controls is excellent.

CRUISING THE RIBBON

This may just be the perfect-sized street/trailer. In the past, people have claimed that you need a 500 for highway horsepower, and we all know you need something small and light to remain nimble in the dirt. Well, the 350 comes really close in both categories. There's plenty of power for the road, and not a whole lot of weight to fight back in the boonies. It looks like a serious effort, and one that's definitely worth a serious look. □

HONDA XL350R

Engine type Air-cooled 4-stroke
 Bore and stroke 84.0mm x 61.3mm
 Displacement 339cc
 Carburetion (2) 22/24 Keihin
 Ignition CDI
 Fuel tank capacity 2.9 gals.
 Transmission 6-speed
 Gearing, front/rear 14/40
 Brakes, front/rear Hydraulic disc/mech. drum
 Suspension:
 Front 39mm Showa forks, 8.7 in.
 Rear Honda Pro-Link, 8.1 in.
 Wheelbase 1415mm (55.7 in.)
 Ground clearance 260mm (10.2 in.)
 Seat height 840mm (33.1 in.)
 Weight 271 lbs.
 Retail price \$2098
 Country of origin Japan
 Distributor/Manufacturer:
 American Honda Motor Corp.
 100 W. Alondra Blvd.
 Gardena, CA 90247

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MIDDLEWEIGHT MX MODS

Here's what worked best for us... so far

By the Staff of DIRT BIKE

KAWASAKI KX250 HOP-UPS

• Of all the Big Four 250s offered this year, less is being done with the KX250 than with any of the other racers. When we talked with the various race-oriented shops, they noted that most of the interest is with CR, RM and YZ 250s, with the Kwackers being almost dismissed.

Still, there are a reasonable number of the green middleweights out there, and you can make them perform better than stock. The lack of interest can be partially explained by the fact that the KXs are merely updated 1983 bikes, rather than fresh efforts like the Honda, Yamaha and Suzuki.

BASIC IMPROVEMENTS

As delivered, the KX can be dramatically improved by minor changes in jetting and setup. Stock, the carb can be counted on to be in a too rich condition. Leaning out the main and mid-range will add to the response and the ability to rev.

Boyesen reeds will help with the punch off the bottom end in a stock engine. The problem, however, is with the way the power is delivered on a 1984 KX250. On paper the bike is a rev monster, but it merely makes revs, not forward thrust.

In reality the KX snorts off the bottom and has a solid mid-range hit, then makes revs but not much power after the mid-range burst.

Even though the KX comes with a new "R"-type slide Mikuni carb, it could use a larger carb for increased revs. We tried a 2mm larger round-slide Mikuni and found very little loss down low and a nice increase at mid-range and upper revs.

Even though we do not have the specs on the 40mm Bing application with the KX250, initial reports show that the magnesium Bing carb turns the KX into a rev monster. You'll have to contact Rocky at R.G. Cycles for details on this, as we did not have a chance to ride the Bing-equipped bike before press

time. Field reports indicated that it made the KX at least as fast as a stock 1984 Honda through the gears. Phone (818)782-5857 for details. Do not call us.

Porting changes are very cautious things on any KX, as the liner is alumferric—a very thin coating on an aluminum casting. Most smart shops merely clean up the edges and the shape of the transfers, and limit metal removal to the back inside shape of the transfers. Some rpm freaks raise the exhaust about 2mm, but a great deal of care must be taken when working with the liner.

Most of the actual engine work seems limited with the KX250, but we've received good reports about FMF pipes and Klemm Research porting pipes.

HANDLING PREPS

Most of the chassis setups seem to center around making the KX a bit lower. Cutting and shaping the front half of the saddle for a narrower profile and an inch less height is very common. This can be done with an

ordinary body putty filing tool.

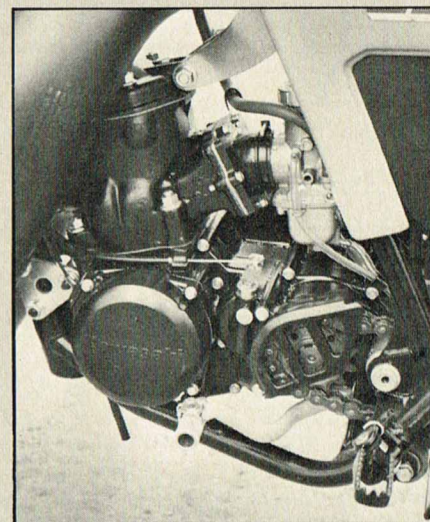
Raising the fork oil level and reducing the compression damping help the forks quite a bit. Many riders are running ultra-light fork oil and ultra-high fork oil levels. This makes the stock forks suppler over small bumps, yet helps reduce bottoming.

Simons, Inc. has an Anti-Cavitator fork kit available for '83 and '84 KXs that makes a big improvement. The cost is \$139.

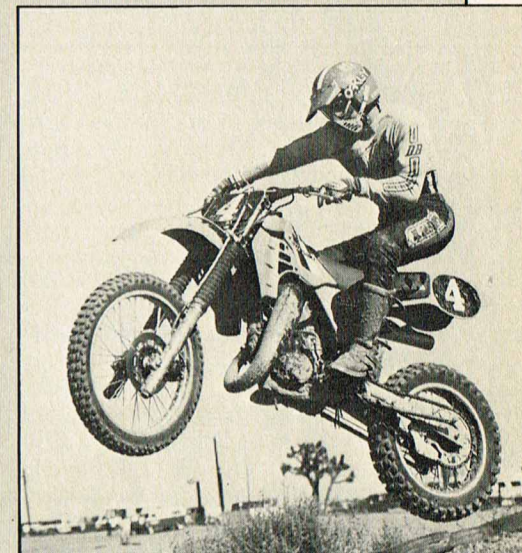
No matter what you do, the stock rear end seems to be soft and rebounds too quickly. Here, a switch to an Ohlins shock seems to be the most effective (but expensive) cure.

Admittedly we don't offer much here in the way of full-scale mods, but our extraction of information is based solely on what's being done in the field. And sadly, we must report that not much is being done with the 1984 KX250 Kawasaki MXer.

Reports have it that 1985 will be the big year for the KX250. •



Best gains for the least money in the KX are realized with Boyesen reeds, a larger carb, careful porting cleanups and an accessory pipe.



In stock trim, the KX250 is a good all-around bike with none of the outright brilliance of the littler KX125.

HONDA CR250R HOP-UPS

• Much like last year, the 1984 Honda CR250 has a dynamite motor packed in a chassis that turns on a nickel and spits out change. Its major shortcomings fall in the suspension category. Once again the forks get an average rating, with the rear Pro-Link not much better. This year's Pro-Link has a mild rising rate in the suspension leverage, so shock setup, as well as shock fade, is critical. The stock Showa shock doesn't make the grade.

We spent some effort coaxing more power out of the engine. Time went into carb fiddling and changes. The majority of our effort went into suspension tuning.

CARBS EQUAL ENERGY

First off, we bolted on a 40mm flat-slide Mikuni from FMF. It took the stock throttle and cable and, in fact, came pre-jetted just about dead-on. They told us that the 40 is aimed mainly at the aggressive rider looking for more mid-range and top-end performance.

With the carb in place, a minor amount of low-end performance is lost. This is picked up in the mid-range and top end. While the gains aren't mind-altering, they can surely be felt. The bike revved further plus had a solid growth in the mid-range portion of the powerband.

The second carb we tried was a Type 55 Bing. We've had amazing luck with these units, and bolting one on the CR250 proved no different. Again, don't expect any im-

provements down low with this carb. It basically bypasses the low-end circuit and moves directly to the middle and top-end aspect of the bike. Yes, the gains are more than potent. The power hits suddenly with plenty of impact. Too, it revs a good deal further than the stock unit.

We suggest this carb for the more advanced rider, as the power delivery is more for Supercross than mellow fun. Experts will love it.

THE BROTHERS HIT THE MARK

We opted for a White Power rear damper and can tell you that the shock made the single biggest improvement in the bike's handling. With the White Power unit, life on the track was no longer a hit-or-miss game. You can slam through, over and around whoops and uglies that would normally spell doom with the stock shock.

Setup on the WP damper is just as critical as the stocker. The White Brothers send instructions with damping settings and preload numbers. We ran ours with 3½ inches of sack (as per instructions), the rebound setting at number five and the compression on number one. If, for some reason, the shock feels wrong, the White Brothers have a 60-day setup guarantee on WP shocks. They'll change the spring and/or valving to suit your needs.

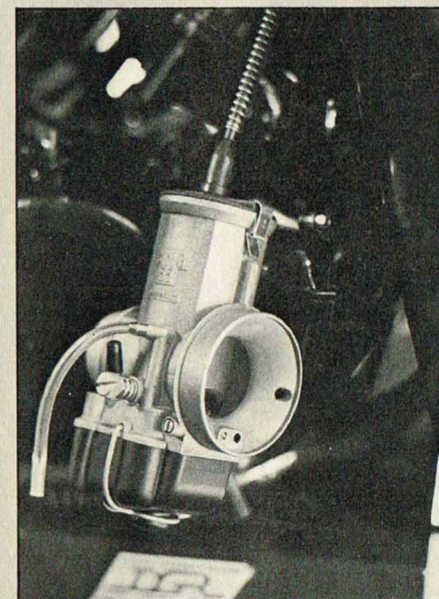
Up front, an ATK triple-rate fork kit was installed. The White Brothers also handle these, and they told us that the kit should eliminate the harsh bottoming of the stockers. This ATK kit is cheaper than most kits,



On David Bailey's practice scoot the engine is left stock and a set of works forks are installed. Both suspension ends are painfully average on the production CRs.

selling for \$49.95. It consists of springs and a modification to the compression damper bolt.

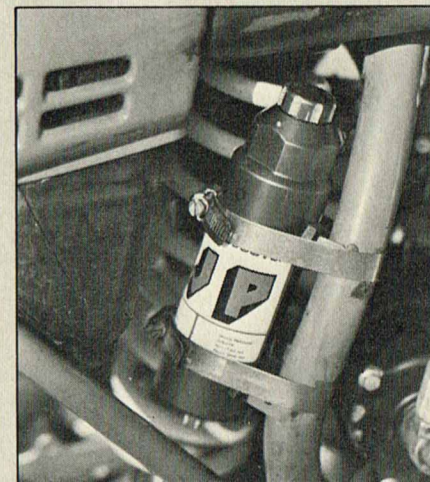
The springs are triple rate; you can set the forks up according to your weight and ability. They're either 21 pounds, 19½ pounds or 18 pounds. If you need stiffer springs, simply use the one long spring—that's 21 pounds. With the long spring and one short, the rate is 19½ pounds, and all three together make the rate 18 pounds.



A Type 55 40mm Bing was installed. You lose low end, but the gains on top are incredible.

Modifying the damper bolt is simpler than it sounds. A collar replaces the spring on the compression adjuster. This changes the compression adjustments. Stock, there's too much compression damping on the little stuff and not enough on the crushers. The ATK mod, simple as it is, works.

We ran ten-weight oil, six inches from the top, with the adjusters set at six turns from fully closed. While the forks aren't radical-

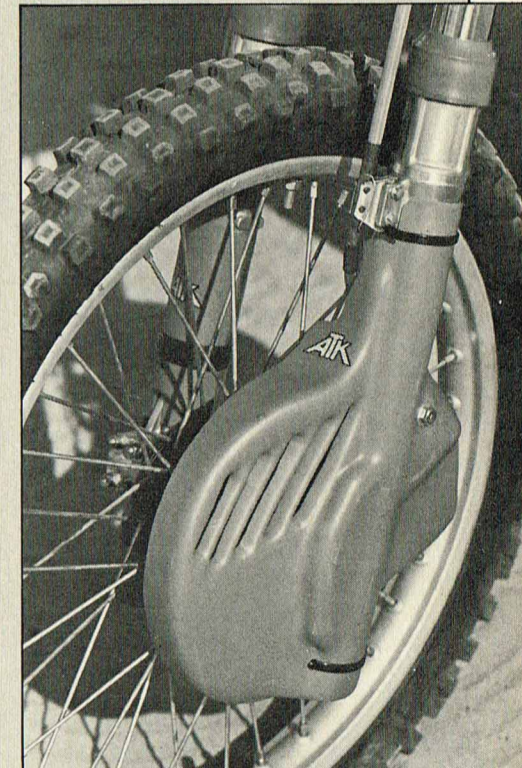


A White Power rear shock got rave reviews from our staff and was considered to be the single biggest improvement made to the Honda. It's completely adjustable, comes set up for you from the White Brothers, and has a 60-day warranty that includes damping adjustments to suit your style.

ly changed, they will take the crushers better and are suppler on the stutter bumps. A definite improvement can be felt, and the overall action of the forks is refined.

RED ALERT

Once again, suspension, or the lack of it, makes up the big news on the CRs. Once we popped on the White Power shock and the ATK fork mod, the CR was transformed from good to great. •



We went with an ATK fork kit and felt that the kit improved the action by eliminating the harsh bottoming and refining the damping over the smaller square-edged bumps. While we were there, a nifty set of White Brothers disc brake guards were bolted on, as were some Gator Products fork boots.

YAMAHA YZ250L HOP-UPS

• All of the motor mods we used on the YZ were provided by Yamaha in its *Competition Support Wrench Report*. Last month we did a story on these reports with the specs and changes Yamaha recommends. The YZ250 has a hit-and-thrust-type motor that lacks a little in the top-end department.

With the *Wrench Report* mods it snorts like a works bike, from down low into never-never land. Many of the changes require machining and welding, but they do work. We're not going to cover them again, so if you're interested, see last month's story on the *Wrench Reports*.

We do have simple modifications that will enhance the bike's top end. All that's required is cutting holes in the airbox, installing Boyesen reeds and cutting the header section of the pipe. As per the *Wrench Report*, drilling out the airbox is necessary. The stock airbox is restrictive, and more air is a start toward more power.

Next, cut a 15mm chunk out of the header pipe section of the pipe. Weld the sections back together and bolt the pipe back on. The third item is replacing the stock reeds with Boyesen reeds. With these changes you

can expect a gain in the mid-to-top-end performance of the bike, with just a slight loss down low.

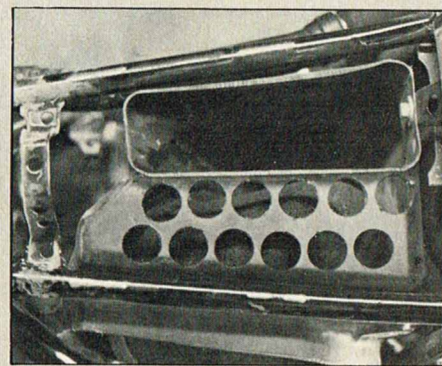
SUSPENSION

The best thing we did with the rear end was bolt on an Ohlins shock. Yes, it's an expensive change, but worth the extra bucks. All of Team Yamaha uses Ohlins dampers on their stock/works race bikes. There's a reason—the shock is far superior to the standard unit.

Stock, the forks are too soft. You can up the standard oil level from 6.3 inches to 5.5 inches from the top. This helps remove the dive effect. You're better off going to the stiffer accessory springs (part number 39X-23141-20), setting the compression at number 6 (from fully closed) and setting the oil level at an even six inches from the top of the tubes. For summer riding we chose 12½-weight oil. The recommended ten-weight feels too light.

BITS AND PIECES

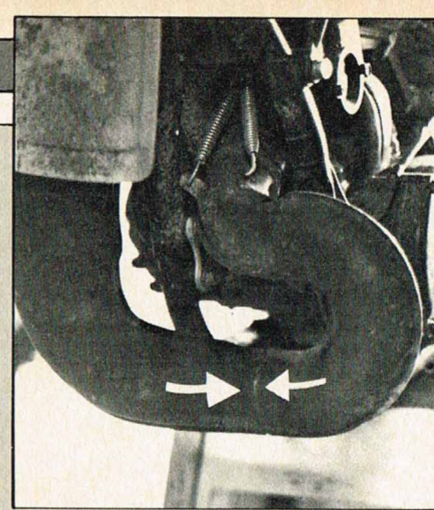
There's no stiffer on the front brake cable, so it flops and twists around quite a bit. We installed a 100% cable stiffener and ended the problem. While you're in the area, safety-wire the cable to clamp on the left fork leg.



Drilling the airbox lets in some needed airflow. Poke some holes in the top of the airbox, and three bigger holes in the left-side cover of the airbox.

We bent a number of brake pedals straight out from the cases. During a race, this isn't a good thing. The remedy is simple—run a cable or a length of safety wire from the pedal to the bottom frame member. Leave enough slack so that it doesn't impair movement but will keep the soft aluminum pedal tucked in if it's caught on something.

Some riders are breaking the aluminum block in the end of the swingarm. The re-



By cutting 15mm out of the headpipe, the bike's revvability will improve. Check the photo for the exact location of the cut on the pipe.

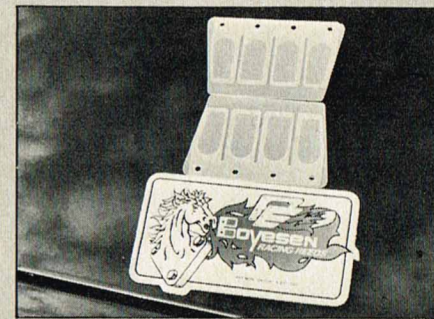
sults equal an instant chain derailment. Your dealer should have a fix-it report that shows the exact procedures needed to remedy the problem. Some drilling and a tap are necessary.

ONWARD HO

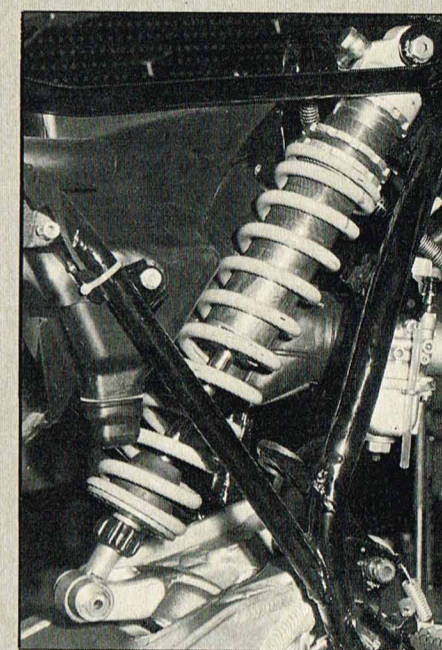
While the engine mods done to the YZ are more involved than the other 250s, they come straight from Yamaha, and they work. We've been racing our 250 week in and week out; it's reliable, fast and competitive. •



At the tail end of 1983, Ron Lechien took a showroom stock YZ to the overall win at the San Diego Supercross. He used the "Yamaha Wrench Report" motor mods and an Ohlins shock to best the other factory machines.



Besides the "Wrench Report" engine mods, we put in a set of Boyesen reeds. These reeds equal an instant gain off the bottom and into the mid-range portion of the powerband.



An Ohlins rear damper is the sole update we did to the rear end. It vastly improves the performance and is an absolute must for the Pro riders. If you've got the bucks, it's worth it.

SUZUKI RM250E HOP-UPS

• After having lived with (and raced) the RM250 for about seven months, we can most assuredly tell you what worked best for us. But before we do that, let's tell you what we tried and how it worked out.

BASIC STUFF

First off, the stock bike is jetted absurdly rich; many of them arrive with a 300, 310 or even a 320 main jet. We dropped to a 270 main and ran Yamalube R at a ratio of anywhere from 32-to-1 to 40-to-1, depending on track conditions and temperature. This helped the RM rev out a bit and got rid of most of the blubbering. We also moved the needle one notch leaner for hot days, but left it stock for cool days.

STOCK CARB JETTING

Main jet 270 Slide 4.0
Needle jet RO Needle 6FJ40-3
Pilot jet 45 (middle notch)

Our next mod was a larger carb, a 38mm flat-slide Mikuni. We experienced a nice gain in the mid-range and upper rpm with this unit. Here's what worked:

38mm MIKUNI CARB

Main jet 270 Slide 4.0 (or 3.0)
Needle jet RO Needle 6FJ40
Pilot jet 40 (2nd notch from top)

Our last carb attempt was a 40mm Type 55 magnesium Bing carb. This was a tight fit in the stock airboot and didn't leave a whole lot of room to spare, but it gave us a huge boost in the mid-range and upper rpm range. Before we tell you what work-

ed with the jetting, let's proceed and tell you about the other experiments.

BOLT-ON MODS

We tried a 1982 head on our 1984 bike. With the stock carb we experienced a bit more snap throughout the range, but the motor ran hotter and demanded good gas or the use of an octane booster.

The '82 head worked okay with the 38mm carb conversion, with the biggest gain being in the mid-range. Again, our bike tended to run a bit hot. The 1982 head did not work well with the Bing carb. It completely screwed up the powerband and almost made the bike unridable.

With all of the carb swaps (and the stocker), we used Boyesen reeds. These made a nice improvement in throttle response under all conditions.

ELECTRICAL DIDDLING

We then resorted to black (box) magic in an attempt to make the Suzuki run at its best. A 125 stator and black box were tried, with a resultant increase in mid-range punch, and odd spots in the power everywhere else.

We were told that Ross Pederson (the Canadian champ) was running an RM80 black box on his bike. So we tried the 125 lower stator with an 80 black box. The bike ran like a frightened mink and was outrageously powerful, but refused to run smoothly and had odd power surges.

Eventually we seized the bike with this combination, our only real mechanical failure in over half a year of racing.

BACK TO BASICS

We settled on the following after much trial and error: a 40mm Bing carb, stock ignition, Boyesen reeds and an Answer pipe and silencer. As is, the RM will out-pull a Honda 250 through the gears. The low-end power is decent, but not overwhelming, but the mid-range and upper rpm is awesome.

40mm BING

Pilot 60 or 65 Slide 160
Needle jet 284 Needle 6L6
Main jet 215 Vaporizer #4

THE REST OF THE BIKE

While pleased with the stock suspension, we found that the stock shock would wear out quickly and that we would run out of preload after a few months of hard racing.

After going through two stock shocks, we tried an Ohlins and found it not only longer-lasting, but hassle-free. After initial break-in and spring settling, the Ohlins went 14 races in a row without so much as a preload adjustment needed.

Not every rider will need the Ohlins shock, but if you are serious about your racing, we highly recommend it. You set it up with 100mm of sag, dial in the desired rebound damping, and that's it. The action is superb—even better than a fresh stocker—especially over square-edged bumps, and it does not fade, even during one-hour GPs in midsummer.

FORK MESSAGE

Even though we liked the stock forks, Steve Simons (of Simons forks fame) talked us into trying a set of his Anti-Cavitators



Once we got our RM250 dialed in, it became a holedshot special.

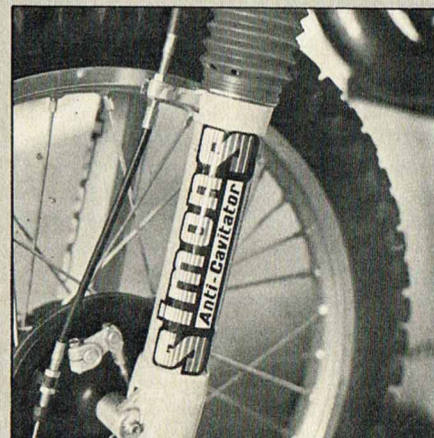
in the Suzie tubes. On an "average" track you won't find much difference between the action of the stock forks and a Simons set-up.

However, on a nasty track filled with ruts, ledges and square potholes, the Anti-Cav kit does, indeed, work. We had a chance to race test the bike at Carlsbad and Sunrise under some true-grief conditions, and can tell you that they work best when the front end is being pounded to death.



The installation of an Ohlins shock gave our Suzuki a world-class rear suspension and ended fiddling with preload.

Simons Anti-Cav fork kits helped the bike a great deal on the really rough tracks, but the benefit was not noticeable on smooth or less-demanding tracks.



With a Bing carb, deluxe Ohlins at the rear and a Simons kit up front, the RM was more than competitive.

Other valuable items that contributed to the performance of the Suzuki are Metzeler tires, front and rear, with one of the ultralight 4.60x18s at the rear. . . a good piece of rubber that's three pounds lighter than an ordinary 4.50x18 "anything else." We used the 4.60x18 Hard Track version, a featherly 11-pound tire.

THE FINAL VERDICT

As it stands, our Suzuki RM250 is a good enough bike for a National-level privateer to go out and be competitive on. We've had some top riders straddle the bike and express amazement.

The Suzuki itself has been reliable, good-handling, and with a simple carb swap, fast enough to give Open class bikes fits on the starts and straights. □



A low bike, the RM80 is best suited for smaller riders.



Jim Wardle works the clean-turning Honda through a Dunes berm.



A strong runner-up to the KX, the YZ80 is a good all-around bike.



Joel Tokarsky pilots the KX80 for the DB lens.

HONDA
VS.
KAWASAKI
VS.
SUZUKI
VS.
YAMAHA

THE MAXIMUM MINICROSSERS!

80cc Shootout

By the Staff of DB, as reported to us by a number of wild-eyed mini racers

Strange things are happening in motocross. The Mini and the Vet classes are usually the biggest at most tracks around the country. The 125 sales have fallen off a bit and 250s are gaining enormously in popularity.

This can be interpreted as follows: MX riders are getting younger and older, in general, at the same time. Hence the rush by the manufacturers to give those riders what they want. Not necessarily what they need...but what they think they need.

In the Mini classes, riders think they need mountains of revs, unreal long travel and pocket-rocket acceleration. They also demand to have the same trickery that the bigger bikes sport. That is, watercooling, super

single-shock setups and space-age plastic-shrouded exotica.

THE BIKES

All of the Big Four 80cc miniracers are water-cooled two-stroke singles. All have some sort of rising rate and single-shock suspension. Six-speed gearboxes let the high-revving engines find the right cog for most any track situation. The scales note that all four tilt the needle at under 140 pounds, dry. And, with 20 horsepower plus from any of the four, acceleration can safely be described as fierce for the slowest of the lot, and intimidating for the fastest.

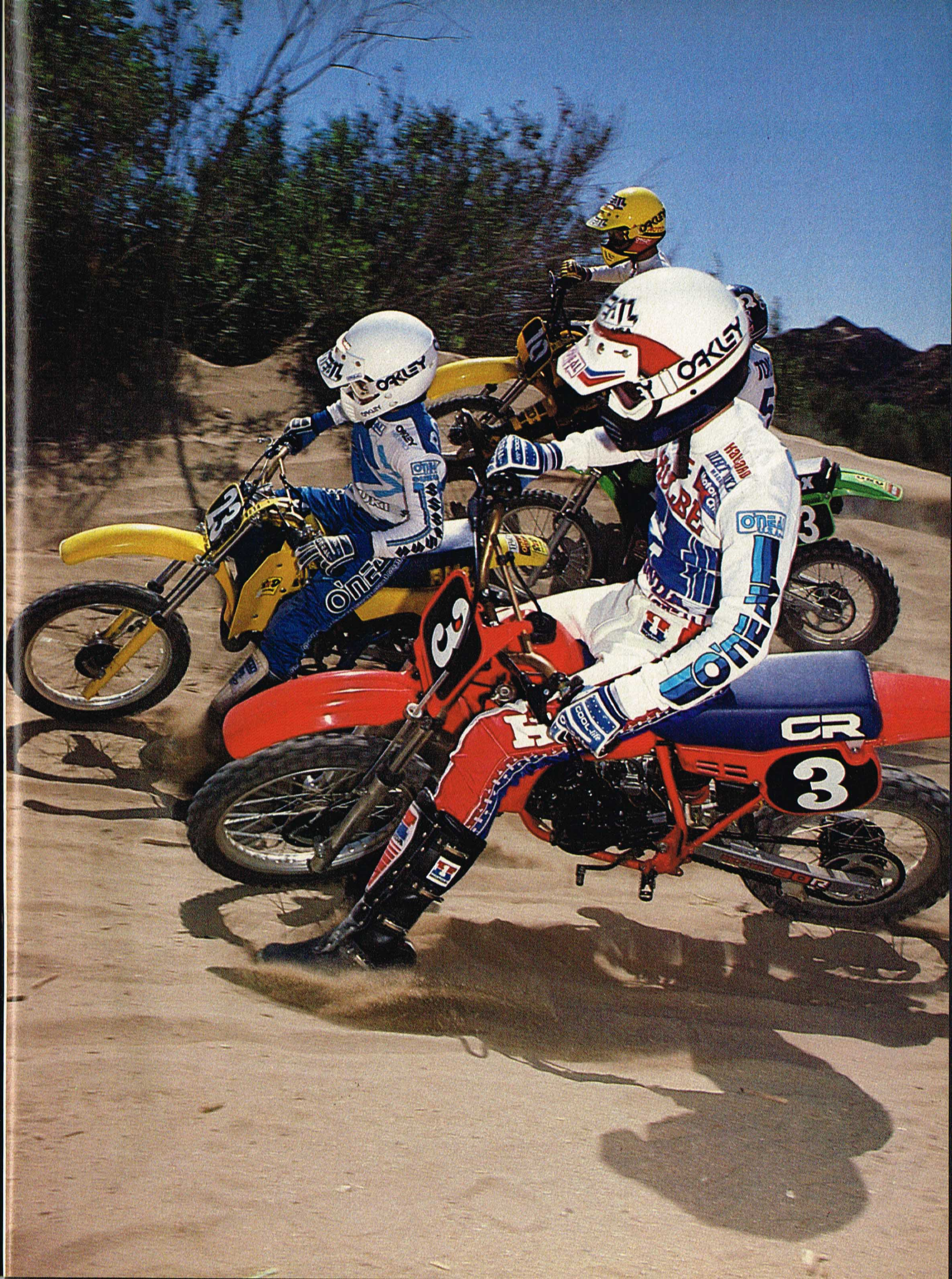
SPEAKING OF THE FASTEST...

In a drag race under any conditions, the KX80 is clearly the fastest of the minicross-

ers. The YZ and the Suzuki seemed to run side by side through the gears, with the Yamaha having better power and the RM having more on top. Call it a tie. In fourth place and about half a length behind the RM and YZ, you'll find the Honda CR80. While not slow, the CR just doesn't have quite the pure power of the other three machines.

SUSPENSION, FRONT AND REAR

In stock trim the KX has the most suspension, but it's too soft and wallows when pressed. We rated the YZ forks best, the KX next, the Honda third and the outdated Suzuki forks (only 30mm tubes!) last. Three of the four bikes have 33mm tubes, but all could benefit from 35mm units. Ten inches of travel demands it.



**HONDA
VS.
KAWASAKI
VS.
SUZUKI
VS.
YAMAHA**

At the rear we rated the YZ the best-suspended stock bike. Secondly, in spite of being too soft, the KX gets the nod. Call the RM and the CR a tie, with neither having an inspiring rear suspension, the CR being a bit harsh and the RM being a bit light on the rebound for most riders.

HANDLING—TURNS

We'd call the Honda the best-turning bike of the group. It steers sharp and clean. Second would be the YZ, with the RM in third. The low saddle height of the Suzuki added confidence in the corners. Lastly, the very

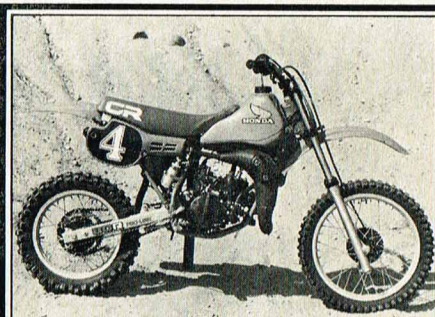
tall and mushily suspended KX makes the turns hard work.

HANDLING—STRAIGHT-LINE CHARGES

Run 'em all through the gears over rough ground and you find out really quickly which one handles best at speed: the Yamaha! We rated the RM and the CR even here, in spite of the shorter, less sophisticated suspension units. That wallow on the KX relegated it to fourth in this department.

GOOD THINGS

Rate the KX at the top for the great



HONDA CR80E

Engine type 2-stroke, liquid-cooled, reed-valve single
Bore and stroke 49.5mm x 41.4mm
Displacement 79.7cc
Carburetor 30/28 PE67A
Ignition CDI
Starter Kick, right side, primary start
Transmission 6-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate
Fuel tank capacity 5.0 L (1.32 gals.)
Wheelbase 1230mm (47.5 in.)
Ground clearance 285mm (11.0 in.)
Seat height 779mm (30.7 in.)
Claimed weight 136.7 lbs.
Tires IRC knobbies, 17 in. front, 14 in. rear
Brakes Conventional drum, front and rear
Approximate retail price \$998
Distributor/Manufacturer:
 American Honda Motor Corp.
 100 W. Alondra Blvd.
 Gardena, CA 90247



SUZUKI RM80E

Engine type 2-stroke, liquid-cooled, reed-valve single
Bore and stroke 49mm x 44mm
Displacement 82cc
Carburetor 26mm flat-slide Mikuni
Ignition PEI electronic
Starter Kick, primary start, right side
Transmission 6-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate
Fuel tank capacity 1.3 gals.
Wheelbase 1224mm (48.2 in.)
Ground clearance 274mm (10.8 in.)
Seat height 779mm (30.7 in.)
Claimed weight 132 lbs.
Tires Bridgestone knobbies, 17 in. front, 14 in. rear
Brakes Conventional drum, front and rear
Approximate retail price \$998
Distributor/Manufacturer:
 U.S. Suzuki Motor Corp.
 3251 E. Imperial Hwy.
 Brea, CA 92621

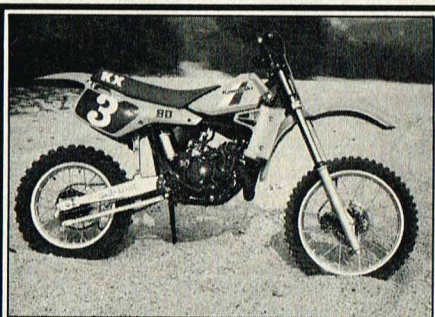


With soft suspension front and rear and buckets of power, the KX was made for a small, fast rider.



Nicky Pounds aviates the Suzuki RM80.

The Honda CR80 had good power but would still get pulled by the KX to the first turn.



KAWASAKI KX80E2

Engine type 2-stroke, liquid-cooled, reed-valve single
Bore and stroke 48.0mm x 45.8mm
Displacement 82cc
Carburetor 29mm Mikuni
Ignition CDI
Starter Kick, right side, primary start
Transmission 6-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate
Fuel tank capacity 4.7 L (1.2 gals.)
Wheelbase 1224mm (48.19 in.)
Ground clearance 310mm (12.20 in.)
Seat height 860mm (32.3 in.)
Claimed weight 136 lbs.
Tires Dunlop knobbies, 17 in. front, 14 in. rear
Brakes Conventional drum, front and rear
Approximate retail price \$999
Distributor/Manufacturer:
 Kawasaki Motors Corp.
 2009 E. Edinger
 Santa Ana, CA 92705



YAMAHA YZ80L

Engine type 2-stroke, liquid-cooled, reed-valve single
Bore and stroke 48.0mm x 45.6mm
Displacement 83cc
Carburetor 26mm Mikuni
Ignition CDI external rotor
Starter Kick, right side, primary start
Transmission 6-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate
Fuel tank capacity 5.35 L (1.4 gals.)
Wheelbase 1230mm (47.5 in.)
Ground clearance 285mm (11.0 in.)
Seat height 800mm (31.1 in.)
Claimed weight 136.4 lbs.
Tires IRC knobbies, 17 in. front, 14 in. rear
Brakes Conventional drum, front and rear
Approximate retail price \$999
Distributor/Manufacturer:
 Yamaha Motor Corp.
 6555 Katella
 Cypress, CA 90630

Keith O'Neal on the Yamaha YZ80. Keith liked the bike, even though he normally races Hondas.

brakes, slick shifting and top-class potential (when dialed in).

Give the YZ a second slot here because of good all-around power and no real vices. It's a decent-shifting, predictable-stopping bike and is easy to work on.

A super-slim shape and relatively low sad-

dle height make the Honda a natural for smaller riders. It's the easiest starting of the four.

The lowest saddle height to be found makes the Suzuki comfortable for shorter racers, and the ultra-high-revving engine will run with anything if the rider is good enough

to keep it up there at the top.

GRIPES

Boos for the KX on the worst airbox design around. Honda could use some re-designing on the pipe. It leaks over everything.

Wimpy forks on the RM and minimal changes in the last few years are more than noticeable. Lack of a modern saddle design hampers the RM rider.

The YZ headpipe hangs too low and will get flattened easily. Ask any YZ racer.

THE RATINGS

Very straightforward. We'd have to rate the KX at the top, based mostly on having the fiercest engine of the group by a long shot.

Second place is earned by the Yamaha, which, while not outstanding in any one area, nonetheless does a good job under most any condition and doesn't require a lot of setup hassle to just go racing.

Give the Honda a third, and it's easily the most improved bike of the year. Rate the Suzuki last because of poor forks and a two-year-old design that is basically unchanged.

BEYOND THE RATINGS

In the very real world of racing, the ratings would be a bit different. Once the KX has its suspension stiffened up properly, it simply vanishes from the other three bikes.

Applying the same amount of setup time and money to the other three bikes makes them a bit better, but not enough to challenge the KX. In stock trim the Kawasaki is a winner. Properly set up, it's devastating, and only the Yamaha can come close. □

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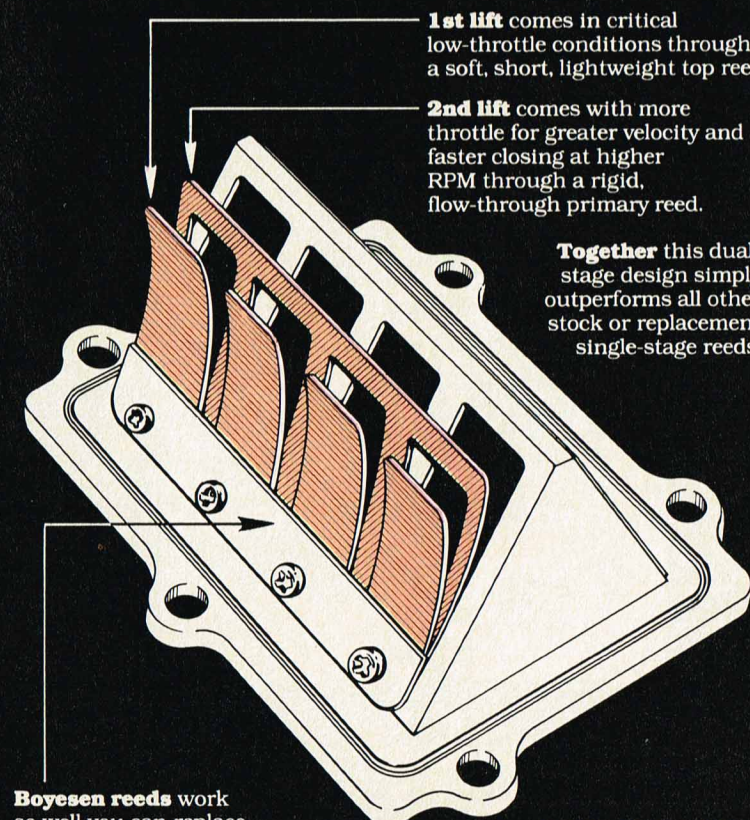
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ATV SHOOTOUT



**ATC vs. KXT:
THE FIGHT OF THE YEAR**

*A small advantage
is all it takes*

By the DIRT BIKE Staff

The Honda ATC250 has enjoyed the top of the muscle heap too long. This year Kawasaki decided to do something about it and introduced the KXT250 Tecate. There was nothing subtle about the attack. The ATC was a fun machine, but it made its name racing. When the KXT was taking shape, the powers that be decided to go straight for the Honda's home ground and attack them where it would hurt most—right out next to the checkered flag.

It was a smooth move on Kawasaki's part. The racers were ready for a Honda challenger, and when early reports noted that the KXT was slightly faster than the ATC, hordes of riders made the switch to Team Green practically overnight.

Was the move premature? Are former Honda owners who now race a Kawasaki regretting their decision to jump ship, or has the KXT proven itself a worthy competitor? In our book, there's only one way to find out—shoot 'em out!

WHICH ONE'S FASTEST?

There's no doubt about it, the KXT is faster than the Honda. There is a marked difference in the power delivery of these two ATVs, the Honda being rather mellow (although by no means slow) and the Kawasaki feeling snappier, especially in the mid-range.



The KXT has a roomier layout—even a bigger rider will feel less cramped on the Kawasaki.



Crack ATV test rider Professor Phil gets some air while aboard the plush Honda 250R.

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ATV SHOOTOUT



The ATC rider will feel the advantages of a better suspension in a bumpy turn or berm-slaming corner.



Former bouncer and big-league squash player Randy Russell attempts to get vert on the Tecate.

The liquid-cooled cylinder of the KXT may help to explain its horsepower advantage. For many years we have known that a water-cooled jug can be ported more radically and actually run leaner than an air-cooled cylinder. Also, the Honda uses counterbalancers in the engine to help damp vibration—you can feel a real buzz in the



HONDA ATC250R

Engine type	Air-cooled 2-stroke	Wheelbase	1275mm (50.2 in.)
Bore and stroke	70.0mm x 64.4mm	Ground clearance	121mm (4.8 in.)
Displacement	247cc	Seat height	740mm (29.1 in.)
Carburetion	30mm Keihin	Weight	293 lbs.
Ignition	CDI	Retail price	\$2148
Fuel tank capacity	2.8 gals.	Country of origin	Japan
Transmission	5-speed, manual clutch		
Brakes, front/rear	Hydraulic disc	Distributor/Manufacturer:	American Honda Motor Corp.
Suspension:			100 W. Alondra Blvd.
Front	Oil/spring forks, 8.7 in.		Gardena, CA 90247
Rear	Pro-Link, adj. comp & reb., 8.1 in.		



KAWASAKI KXT250

Engine type	Liquid-cooled 2-stroke	Wheelbase	1280mm (50.4 in.)
Bore and stroke	70.0mm x 64.9mm	Ground clearance	135mm (5.3 in.)
Displacement	249cc	Seat height	760mm (30.0 in.)
Carburetion	32mm Mikuni	Weight	286.7 lbs.
Ignition	CDI	Retail price	\$1999
Fuel tank capacity	3.6 gals.	Country of origin	USA
Transmission	5-speed, manual clutch		
Brakes, front/rear	Mech. drum/hyd. disc	Distributor/Manufacturer:	Kawasaki Motor Corp., USA
Suspension:			2009 E. Edinger Ave.
Front	Oil/spring forks, 8.7 in.		Santa Ana, CA 92705
Rear	Uni-Trak, adj. reb. damp., 8.3 in.		

Kawasaki that is absent on the ATC—but all that extra spinning mass helps slow the engine down some.

So, a clear distinction exists between the two. If anything, the Kawasaki has more of a racing powerband than the Honda. Coming out of a corner side by side, the KXT will jump ahead of the ATC before both

powerbands level out. This could be a great advantage on the race track, but for recreational riding the mellower powerband of the Honda may be desirable.

The transmission and clutch of both bikes work very well, although the Kawasaki has a screeching clutch problem, much like the noisy unit found on the '83 KDX250. We

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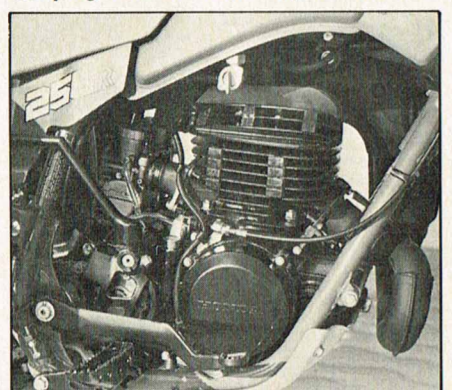
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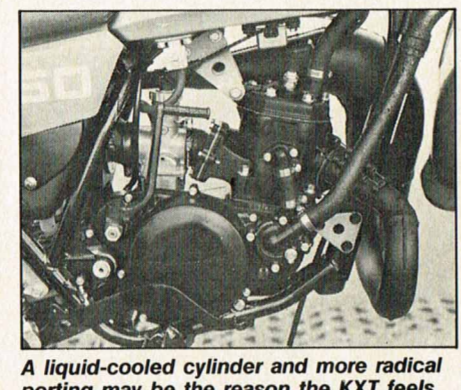
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ATV SHOOTOUT
 Both machines are natural jumpers, but the ATC will land smoother, due to better damping control on the suspension.



The Honda engine is air-cooled (so far in '84) and has the mellower powerband of the two. Forward-kicking kickstarter is easier to use than KXT's rear kicker.



A liquid-cooled cylinder and more radical porting may be the reason the KXT feels peppier than the ATC. Hoses and pump are pretty much out of harm's way, but we would like to see the radiator moved off the triple clamps.

never had a problem with the clutch, but it sure does like to complain.
SOAKING UP THE BUMPS
 Both machines sport essentially the same amount of travel, and they use the same single-shock progressive linkage design as the motocross bikes. Without riding them side by side, we would be hard-pressed to pick the better suspension of the two, but in a direct comparison the nod must go to the Honda.

The ATC has had a few more years to work out its suspension requirements, and the extra time shows. Shock and fork damping are near perfect. Because of their weight and shortness of travel (compared to a bike), the best suspension action can be felt through regular old medium-sized bumps. The ATC simply shines here, soaking up the stutters with a minimum of slam and bounce and moving on to the next section. The Kawasaki can handle the same terrain, but it feels busier. The back end is springy—it needs a lighter spring or more rebound damping before it can be perfect.

The KXT's Uni-Trak uses adjustable rebound damping to assist in tuning, while the ATC is adjustable for both rebound and compression. Both sets of forks are adjustable through oil weight and level.

GETTING THROUGH THE TURNS
 This year Honda went to a larger, narrower front tire and really improved the high-speed handling of the ATC. In a straight line it is much stabler, especially in rough terrain. Because of the greater tire circumference, the front end is less likely to get swallowed by a hole.
 There is a negative side to it, however. Because the bigger wheel raised the front end and the center of gravity, the ATC is slightly more top heavy in a tight turn or slide. It makes the ATC feel as if it wants to tip over, which is a very unsettling feeling on a three-wheeler.

In comparison, the KXT is a longer, wider machine, and it uses low-profile tires to help keep everything closer to the ground. It works. The KXT is easier to slide, easier to bounce off berms, and very stable when the throttle is tweaked. Almost to a man, our testers liked the KXT better, just because it was easier to ride. To put the KXT sideways, all you have to do is turn on the throttle, crank the bars, and throw your weight to the inside. You can start a slide just as easy on the Honda, but we often found ourselves having to overcorrect a slide in order to control it.

(continued on page 72)

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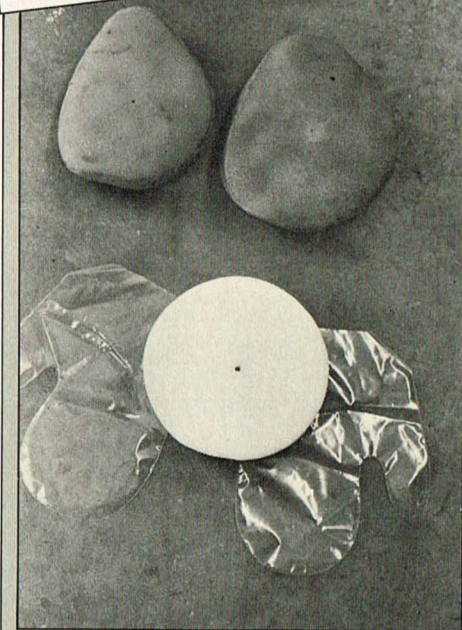
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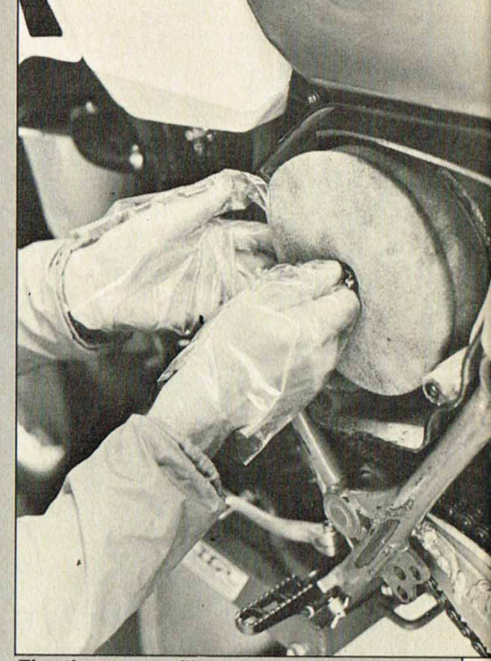
PRODUCT EVALUATION R.A.T. DISPOSABLE AIR FILTERS

We answer your question before you ask it

By the Staff of DIRT BIKE



A pair of plastic gloves comes with each R.A.T. filter, making in-the-field swaps easy.



The throwaway filters are round, unlike the oddly shaped stock RM filters.

At first it seemed like a useless gimmick and the ultimate in sheer laziness. We received a four-pack of R.A.T. disposable filters and promptly put them up on the shelf. However, about a week later, a bike had to be prepped in a hurry for a race and the R.A.T. filters were eagerly retrieved from the shelf. The usual tedious job of air filter cleaning was reduced to a less-than-five-minute affair.

Especially welcome was the fact that with each of the sealed R.A.T. filters comes a pair of plastic gloves. This means that you can put the filter oil properly into the filter without getting your hands all greased up.

The filters themselves are not overly sturdy; even the directions tell you to treat them with special care and not to abuse them when you squeeze the oil in. We removed the first R.A.T. filter after two 30-minute motos and a one-hour GP and inspected it. No dirt had passed through to the inside. The foam had done its job.

Before you ask it, we'll answer the question for you. Yes, you can clean the R.A.T. filter and reuse it, but it is not recommend-

ed. The foam tears very easily. We cleaned one of the filters and hung it up on the end of a tree branch to air dry. When we came back to retrieve the dried filter, the motion of the air had let the branch wear a hole right through the center of the foam, rendering the filter doomed.

As an experiment, we washed a R.A.T. filter three times very gently in soap and water before it started to fall apart. Wash it in gasoline (a big no-no) and it may not last the first cleaning.

All things considered, we consider the R.A.T. filters a nice thing to have around when you're in a hurry, and they are especially nice to have tucked away in your truck or van for those emergency times when you've gotta have a clean filter. It would make a great gift for any dirt biker, but will never replace a good stock or accessory filter for durability.

R.A.T. Racing, 6294 Anderson Rd., Forestville, CA 95436; (707)887-7776. Set of four \$12.95, plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling. They're available for most popular bikes. □

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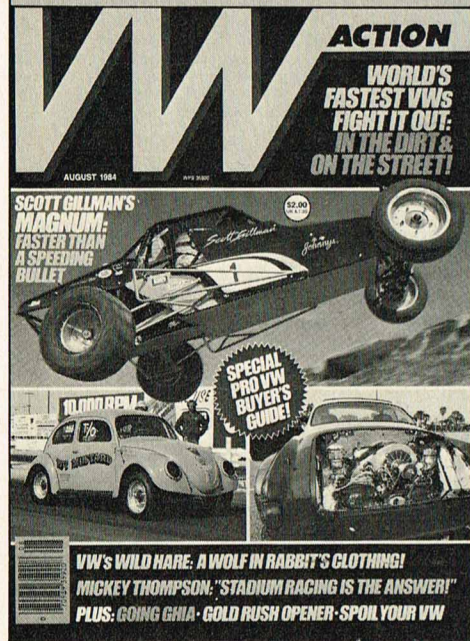
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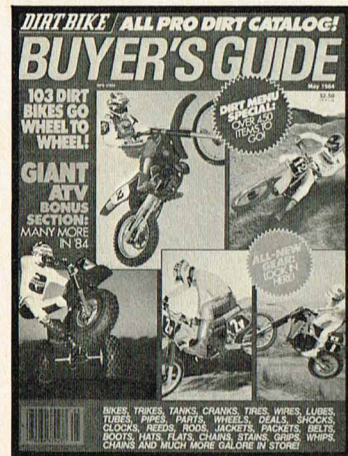
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FROM THE SADDLE
(continued from page 7)

but she kept arguing with us, telling us we couldn't do things like that and that we were breaking some sort of law. When she said she was going to call the cops on us, Ernie threw her a fiver and told her to keep the change, and we just split from there, with her yelling and waving like a Looney Tune.

"So we stopped off for a bite to eat, then headed for the spare at Eddie's house and picked that up with no problem. Then we got back on the turnpike at another entrance, just to play it safe. The lady gave us a card and we headed east at exactly 55 miles per hour.

"When we got to where the trailer was, it was on the wrong side of the turnpike. We figured we had already broken a few laws so far, so we crossed over the divider to the trailer and made quick time putting on the spare tire.

"Then we blazed back west again. We were going to go past that original tollbooth, but the gas gauge was on "E" and we didn't have any choice. Anyway, we figured the lady would never remember us. It had been three hours since we ran her tollbooth, and we had also put some mud over the license plates to play it safe.

"When we pulled up and handed her the card and the money, she never even looked at us, but when she looked at the card, she let out a gasp. 'You people have a card that says you're going the wrong way on the turnpike. How did this come about? And not only that, it's for a two-axle vehicle, and you have a trailer on the back, which calls for a three-axle card. Something's wrong here... dreadfully wrong!'

"We all looked at each other, nodded our heads in agreement, yelled, 'Keep the change!' and roared off. We drove as fast as we could and took all the small side roads to get away from the area sudden-like.

"Then, to play it safe, we figured we should stop at a restaurant and kill some time off the roads. So we pulled into this Howard Johnson's parking lot, and Ernie said we should park in the back so the car and the trailer couldn't be seen from the road.

"Anyway, when we pulled behind the building, there were four cop cars there, with all the officers out and talking. They probably wouldn't have noticed us, but I hit the brakes real hard and squealed the tires. When six of them drew their guns and came at us, we knew the jig was up. We surrendered without a fight.

"So that's why we're calling you. They've got us on 52 counts, with everything from evading arrest to stolen trailers. Bail is \$1476.99, so if you could just pop on down here with the mon—"

"Hello, Operator? I think we've been cut off. Hello. Hello? Is anybody there?"

You might think that I was cruel, but let me point out that the license plates on the trailer were from my old pickup truck and had expired in 1977. Those boys were in a heap of trouble. □

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DB8-4



Donnie Hansen

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Donnie Hansen is setting off on a cross-country trek, conducting motocross schools and full-on motocross camps throughout the States. The MX schools will feature both private and group lessons, with daily classes and weekend seminars at various locations. Also, a full four-day motocross camp will concentrate on riding skills, Pro racing techniques, diet and training. For all class dates call and ask for Lisa at (805)252-2445.

HONDA XR200R
(continued from page 47)

the controls drew nothing but raves. It's hard to imagine someone not liking the layout of the XR.

We spent a lot of time cruising a local river during our test and can report that the XR is as tolerant of water as a walleyed pike. We did the stupidest things in the drink and never managed to drown it out. The brakes got wet and faded; the rear seemed more affected than the front; but they both dried out after a little bit of dragging.

LET'S GO RIDING

A good rider on an XR200 will have little trouble staying with the two-strokes in an enduro, but if it comes down to a contest of brute acceleration, the IT200 and KDX200 will easily leave it behind. We would be foolish to say that the XR isn't competitive—there are more winning XRs in the eastern half of the country than decent restaurants—but if you want the easiest route to an overall win, you should stick to a two-stroke.

The XR200's forte is fun trailriding, and it is amazing how enjoyable it is to ride. One day spent riding this bike on some nice woods trails could convince you that this is the best bike in the world, that riding motorcycles heads the list of pleasures of the flesh, and that it wouldn't be a bad idea to quit your job and spend seven days a week in the saddle. Honda struck the perfect chord when they built the XR200...and they know it. □

ATV SHOOTOUT
(continued from page 64)

BITS AND PIECES

The front and rear disc brakes on the ATC are superb—just the right amount of feel, and they seem to be completely unaffected by water. The KXT uses a front drum brake that is mushy and prone to water fade. It could be much better. We had no complaints with the KXT rear brake.

Both bikes use kickstarters, the Honda being a forward kick and the Kawasaki being a backward (standard motorcycle) kick style. They are equally easy to start, although on the KXT you have to aim your foot through a tunnel molded in the rear fender. Odd. We occasionally hit the KXT's brake cylinder with our foot; it could probably be better thought out.

Speaking of bodywork, the KXT is a more comfortable machine for a bigger rider. Everything is spaced out perfectly, leaving you a lot of room to move around. The ATC is slightly more cramped, which would not be a drawback to a rider under five-foot-five.

The Honda uses a thumb-type throttle; the Kawasaki uses a twist throttle, and that alone is enough for us to award it the best controls category. Somewhere there must be a good reason for the existence of the thumb throttle, but we don't want to hear about it—give us a twist throttle any day.

The KXT is water-cooled; that's good, but the radiator is mounted up on the triple clamps, and that's not so good. We all know about swing weight and turning resistance of rubber hose and all that, so we respectfully ask Kawasaki to put the '85 radiator in a more sensible position. The ATC, of course, has little excess baggage in front of the bars, but then they also use an air-cooled cylinder...still?

**WHAT COLOR ARE THE
EMPEROR'S CLOTHES?**

Honda has had more than a few good years to work out the bugs on the ATC, and that time really shows in the quality of the suspension, the attention to detail, and the overall finish of the machine. It is a good...no, make that a *great* three-wheeler, and one that just about any tripod-inclined rider would enjoy immensely.

But then there's the Kawasaki KXT. Its finish is a little rougher, and it needs to have a few wrinkles ironed out, but it is faster than that red machine on the other side of the ring. It also handles a little better, and sitting on it gives you the feeling that it means business.

Remember too that this is the first production year for the KXT, and as long as development continues in the years ahead, the KXT is liable to be one big burr in the side of Team Red for years to come. We're amazed at how well it turned out in its first year of manufacture, and with that fact in mind, as well as the superior speed and handling, we declare the KXT the overall winner of this shootout—not by a wide margin, mind you, but then it only takes a little bit extra to win a fight...or a race! □

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DB8-4



Crash & Burn



Early bike retrieval systems proved less than successful. Here, in one of the first "hands-off" tests, Diphthong Pewt tosses away the prototype Yamaha in the approved fashion. However, the elastic on his Fruit of the Loom shorts proved too powerful and the bike snapped back violently and blasted him in the flatula gland. Adjustments in the elastic strength and length proved fruitless, and eventually the rear fender ripped off and injured a nearby whooping crane, thereby incurring the wrath of the Sierra Club and Benito Mussolini's nephew.

Photo by Mark Chernoff

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	5.10 x 18 PERFECT X	
REAR	140/80 x 18 PERFECT X	
4.50 x 17 MULTI X	REAR-HARD TERRAIN	
5.00 x 17 MX	120/90 x 18 PERFECT X	
3.50 x 18 MX	4.60 x 18 PERFECT X	
3.75 x 18 MX	5.10 x 18 PERFECT X	
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