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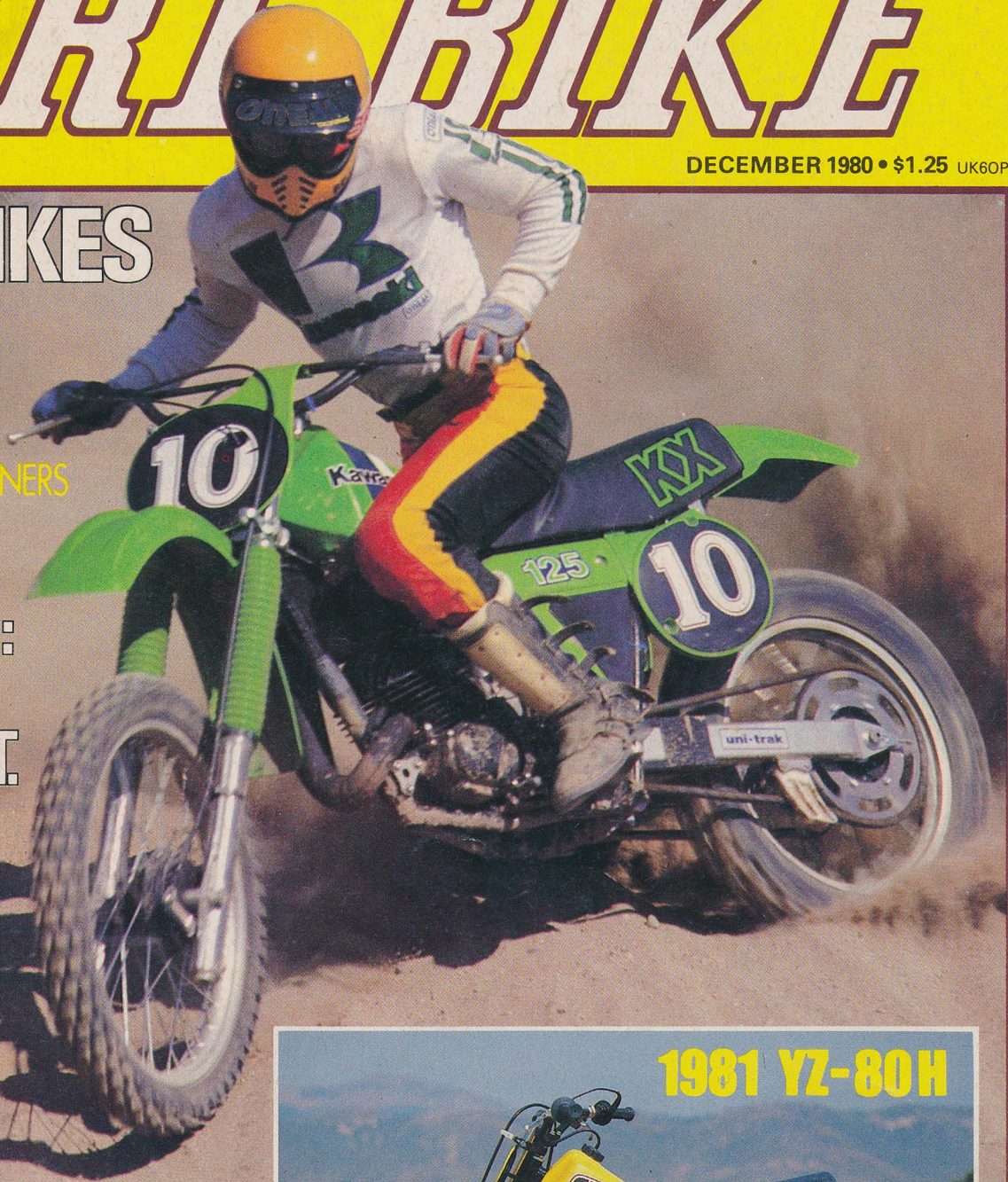
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YAMAHA 81

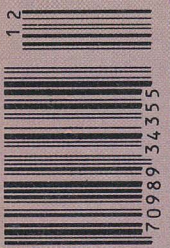
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Can-Am 250 MX6-B



New wave Yamahas



I.S.D.T.

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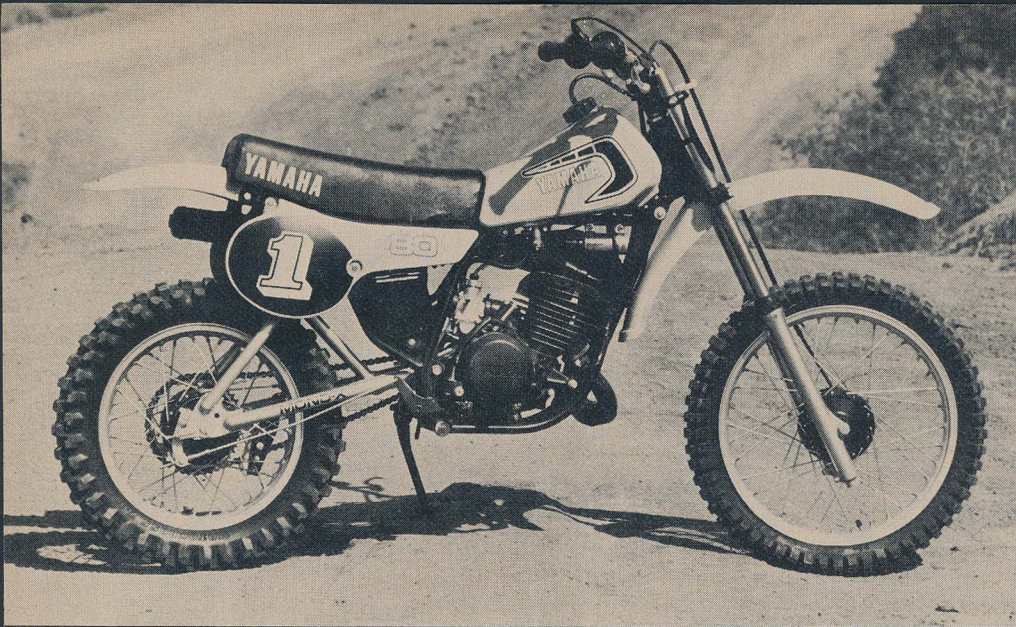
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### ON THE COVER:

Rod Brand winds out the KX125 at Indian Dunes, and the '81 YZ80 makes its debut. Zoot Kwacker photo by Paul Clipper; Yamaha shot by Rick Sieman.

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# 1981 YAMAHA YZ80H MINI MISSILE!

*A new challenge for Suzuki?*

When you consider that the YZ-80H has enough raw power to scare a 200-pound man half silly, it makes you wonder how a seventy-pound kid can even hang on to the thing. In actual fact, three full-grown editors took turns blasting up and down the street in a constant state of borderline loop-outs. Each and every one came back with wide eyes and comments like: "Jeez! That thing is fast! I can't believe it's an 80!"

Mini riders will want to know just *how fast* the new Yamaha is compared to last year's crop of 80 racers. Here's the bottom line: the YZ is faster than the 1980 Honda mini rocket and it was the horsepower King of the group last year. One more plus: the H model Yamaha also has a bunch of low-end power as well.

We frankly don't know how Yamaha managed to pull that one off. Usually, when more peak power is extracted out of a bike, low-end and mid-range powers suffer and the end result is a peaky, unrideable machine. The '81 YZ will pull almost a gear earlier in a corner than last year's bike. We know this to be a fact, because on our first riding session, we had a fairly fresh 1980 YZ80 along for comparison. In a turn where the

rider on the older bike had to use low gear, the new bike would comfortably pull second. And less shifts mean better lap times.

The enthusiasm on these pages is not generated from the overly large editors at DB, because, simply put, we're far too big to properly evaluate a mini. But the younger mini riders who slung a leg over the bike were wildly enthusiastic. Ricky, age 11: "It's as fast as that trick DGYZ80 I rode last year and it's easier to ride. It's perfect. I can't find anything to complain about."

Cindy, age 13: "It's got enough good power to go trail riding without slipping the clutch all the time. And it doesn't feel like a small bike. It's still light like an 80, though."

Keith, age 10: "I've got a Honda and it's as fast as my Honda. Maybe faster. And I can start in second gear on the YZ without any problem; I have to start in low with the Honda."

#### More travel

Minis for 1981 are sporting travel that would have made big bikes envious about three years ago. The newest YZ80 is no exception. More inches are available at both ends and the suspension is heavily updated, as well.

Forks on the G model had 180-mm of travel, a fraction over seven inches. Our 1981 bike boasted 215mm, which translates into 8.46 inches.

At the rear, the new bike has 8.1 inches of travel (205mm), while the old bike had less, 6.7 inches to be exact, or a mere 170mm of metric travel.

Fork tubes are still 30mm, but these should be strong enough for all but the fastest mini racers. Some heavier, faster experts will find too much flex for their hard riding styles. Air caps come standard this year, lending additional adjustability to the smooth stroking Showa forks.

Changes have also been made to the mono unit, or Mono-X, as it's now tagged. A remote reservoir now hangs from the front of the changed shock. The new shock has a longer stroke than the old one and runs a slightly lower nitrogen pressure. A longer mono spring rides on the shock, but the coils are the same diameter as those on the G bike.

This all-new suspension can only be called plush. In fact, it worked so well, that, initially, some of our test riders thought the bike might have been set up too soft. The long travel fooled them. Naturally, all the usual preload adjustments can be made to the mono to suit different riders' weights and riding styles.

### Cornering habits

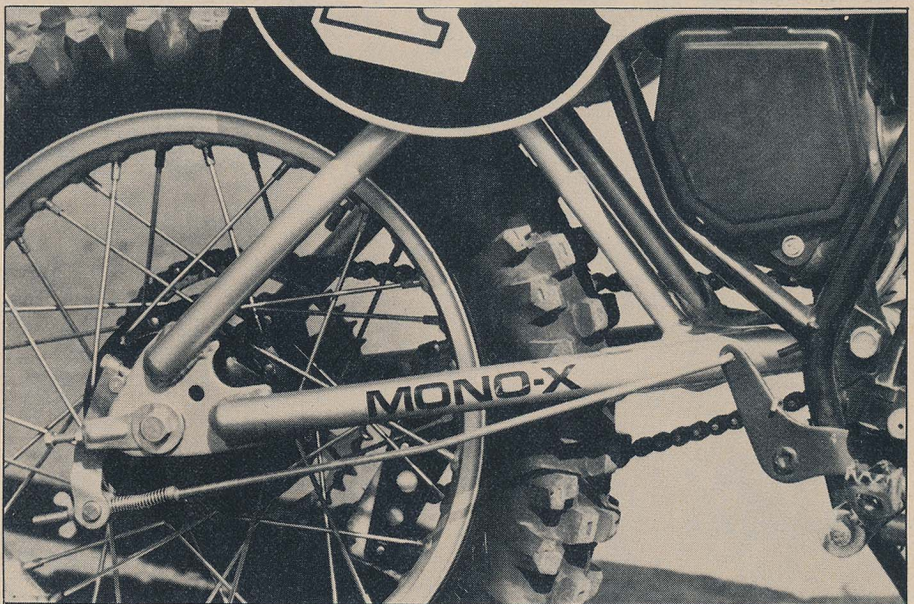
Finally, Yamaha has made a YZ-80 that's happy in the corners. The rake of the front end has been drastically altered. On the G bike, a 28½ degree made the front end push and tend to wash in the turns, especially the flat, bermless ones. The new 27-degree rake lets the YZ H rider go for the inside line without a hint of washout or plowing. This bike will carve through the turns like an electric knife.

A tiny loss of high-speed stability is the trade-off for this increase in steering accuracy, but since most mini tracks tend to be tighter and on the twisty side, this should be of no real concern.

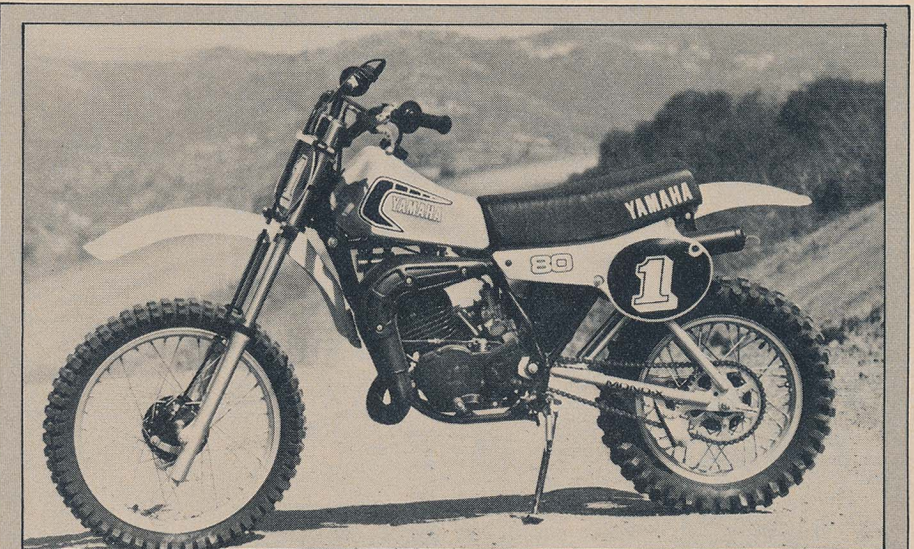
### Other changes

Our H model had a silky smooth gearbox with a very short throw. Gone is some of the traditional stiffness associated with the YZ80's shifting. The new shift mechanism makes changing gears a pleasure.

The gas tank is redesigned, much shorter and is now plastic instead of steel. A welcome



*New swingarm is painted aluminum, but made of 4130 chrome moly tubing.*



### 1981 YAMAHA YZ80H

#### Specifications

|                    |                                |                           |                  |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| ENGINE TYPE        | Reed-valve, two-stroke, single | STEERING HEAD ANGLE       | 27 degrees       |
| BORE AND STROKE    | 49.0x42.0mm                    | WEIGHT (CLAIMED)          | 132 pounds       |
| DISPLACEMENT       | 79cc                           | INTENDED USE, MRF         | Minicycle racing |
| CARB               | Mikuni, 26mm                   | COUNTRY OF ORIGIN         | Japan            |
| FUEL TANK CAPACITY | 1.2 gallons                    | PRICE, APPROX.            | \$739            |
| GAS/OIL RATIO      | 32:1                           | DISTRIBUTOR:              |                  |
| TRANSMISSION       | Six-speed                      | Yamaha International      |                  |
| IGNITION           | CDI                            | 6555 Katella Avenue       |                  |
| WHEELBASE          | 47.4 inches                    | Cypress, California 90630 |                  |
| GROUND CLEARANCE   | 10.0 inches                    |                           |                  |

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# YAMAHA YZ80H

change, for sure. Fenders are supposed to be more flexible, but the rear one looks just as vulnerable to breaking in a loopout as the old ones. We'll see.

A longer wheelbase, increased ground clearance and a slightly higher seat height are all part of the new bike. Somehow, Yamaha only added 3/4-inch to the seat height with all of the other radical dimensional changes. Again, amazingly good engineering.

One more plus: Five pounds of weight have been shed in the process. Lighter is definitely better.



**Remote reservoir on the shock, just like the bigger YZs.**

The clutch actuation rod is now gone, and the new setup is just like the bigger YZ's. Aluminum alloy rims are now standard.

Even though the gearbox remains a six-speeder, all of the internal ratios have been changed.

The CDI has been changed slightly, and the ignition timing now runs much closer to top dead center on the H model.

A slim looking swingarm connects the rear axle to the mono-shock. It's painted aluminum, but is made of chrome moly. The Yamaha R&D people told us that it was much lighter than an aluminum accessory arm and at least as strong.

**Summing it up**

The bottom line is this: if we reheld the mini shootout of last year right now, the YZ80H would be the hands down winner. Power and suspension wise, it stands out.

The only thing that remains to be seen is what the competition will offer. We've had a glimpse here and there, but this is the first test from the Big Four. One thing for sure: The YZ80H is a fantastic little racer and it'll be a tough act to match, let alone beat.