

STANDING IN THE STRIKE ZONE

All-star or aging vet?

By the Staff of *Dirt Bike*



A new type of fever is out of control —full-blown entry-level 60cc racers. We're not talking foo-foo beginner bikes; more like hot, well-suspended pint-sized go-fasters. In the 60 class, Yamaha has been dominant for the past few years. For 1983, they elected to pull back rather than push on, and their YZ60K hasn't been wildly changed or updated. This isn't to say that it's bad; it's just that the fever is highly contagious and the Kawasaki doctors worked overtime finding a cure for the KX. The KX60 is an advanced machine; just how does the YZ stack up?

BATTER UP

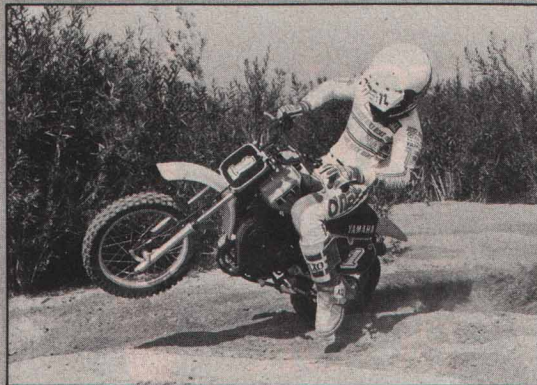
Visually, there's little that is different from the '82 to the '83 bike. A nicely shaped safety saddle, works-type gas tank and plastic that looks like shrunk-down YZ material make it appear sharp. The future stars fit perfectly on the bike. All controls,

Keith O'Neal flicks the YZ for the cameras. Suspension is a little soft for bigger riders.

YAMAHA YZ60K



| | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Engine type | 2-stroke, air-cooled, reed valve |
| Bore and stroke | 42mm x 42mm |
| Displacement | 58cc |
| Carburetion | Mikuni VM25SS |
| Gas/oil ratio | Yamalube R at 20:1 |
| Fuel tank capacity | 3.3 L (.9 gals.) |
| Transmission | 6-speed |
| Gearing front/rear | 13/42 |
| Ignition | CDI |
| Suspension: | |
| Front | Kayaba, 165mm (6.5 in.) |
| Rear | Monocross, 178mm (7.0 in.) |
| Wheelbase | 1065mm (41.9 in.) |
| Ground clearance | 215mm (8.5 in.) |
| Seat height | 670mm (26.4 in.) |
| Weight, no gas | 116 lbs. |
| Retail price | \$769 |
| Country of origin | Japan |
| Distributor: | |
| Yamaha Motor Corp. | |
| 6555 Katella Ave. | |
| Cypress, CA 90630 | |



Overall, the YZ60 is light, making it good for berm railers on the inside or outside line.

pegs and rider positions are well thought out.

Enginewise, a little more snap has been added with minor porting changes and a pipe that makes more juice. Nothing startling, just more. The six-speed gearbox mates nicely to the power characteristics, giving the rider no huge gaps to contend with. It still has a boost bottle, which attempts to keep the low-end response around and not make it a crazed, unridable revver. It works.

Up front, the forks are leading axle KYBs that give 6.5 inches of travel. Rearward, the Monocross unit has seven inches of movement with adjustability limited to preload only. The swingarm is aluminum painted but made of steel. Rims are steel and the tires are IRC.

BASE HIT OR THROWN OUT?

Because the engine has been punched on, the power aspect of the YZ is its main strength. It pulls harder and stronger than the '82, mainly right off the bottom and into the fat part of the powerband. Riders can actually short-shift the bike and make faster lap times than by overrevving the paint off the fins. Heading into the upper revs and shifting right before sign-off time lets the YZ smoke from corner to corner without any animal abuse on the clutch.

Our biggest complaint against the YZ is the suspension, basically its lack of sophistication. The Kawasaki forks extend a full 7.9 inches, and the CR, 7.1. With only 6½ inches of travel, the YZ rider has to work harder in the rough terrain to maintain control at higher speeds. The Monocross rear is decent, but when put up against the long KX and CR, the YZ feels only "good." Next year Yamaha will have to go to a rising-rate setup (like the CR and KX) or plan on losing all the YZ-mounted Expert talent.

Still, tight tracks and smoother conditions will make for some interesting racing. With a snappy motor and quick manners, the YZ can be maneuvered quickly and aggressively around the course. With some money forked out for suspension work, the YZ is still in the ballpark. Experts will demand the travel; Juniors can get away without it... but for how long? □

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BOB HANNAH

I don't know if my cornering technique is different than other riders or not, I've never really paid attention to what other riders do when they're in a corner. To tell the truth, I'm either inside 'em, movin' 'em out, or outside 'em trying to pressure a mistake. I do know that I rely a lot on sliding my foot through corners and for sliding, there's only one way to go... That's Hi-Point.

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