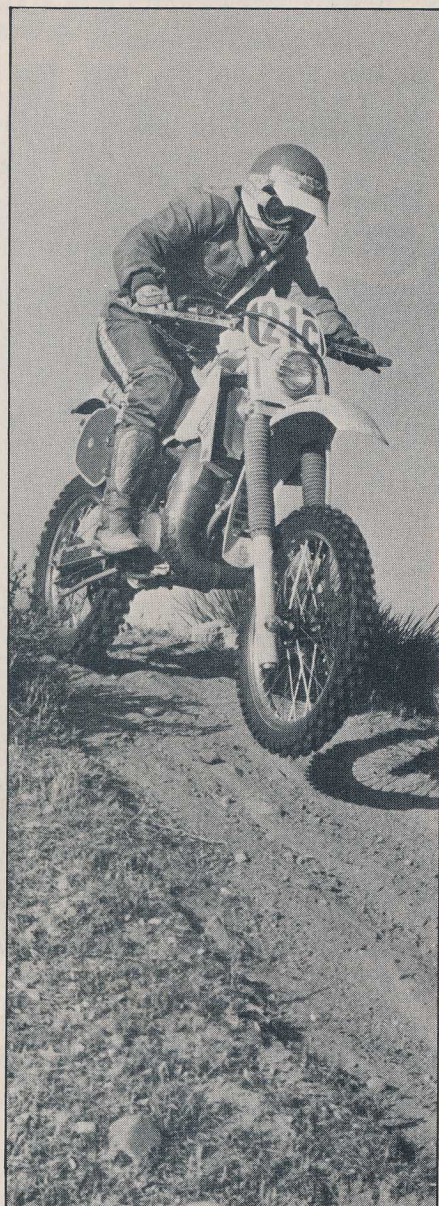


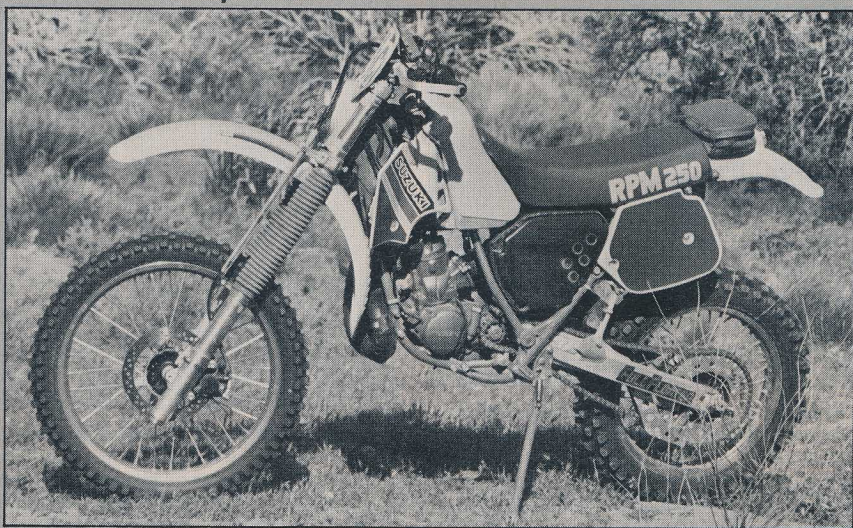
**PROJECT RPM:  
THE FINAL CHAPTER**

# RIDING THE ENDURO- CROSSER

*We end up with more than an enduro bike*



*In competition, RPM was limited only by the ability of the test rider to stay on time.*



*By the DB editors, with special thanks to U.S. Suzuki*

After three months of fitting, fiddling and fidgeting over our project enduro-crosser, it's complete and ready to ride. For those new to this project, our goal was to take a standard 1985 Suzuki RM250 and turn it into a competitive enduro bike. Much of what we used on our '85 bike could also be applied to most any 1982, '83 or '84 RM250.

## **BEFORE WE FIRE IT UP, A NOTE ON CHANGES SINCE WE LAST MET**

Initial testing and set-up jetting gave us a base line for the small 34mm round-slide Mikuni carb. After getting the bike good and hot, though, we came up with some better numbers and improved low-end response considerably.

Here's what worked:

- Pilot jet..... 50
- Needle jet..... Q2
- Needle..... Standard, but move from #3 to #4 (richer) clip
- Air screw..... 1½ turns out
- Slide..... 2.0 instead of 2.5

Note: All jetting was done at a 40-to-1 gas/oil ratio. Conduct your jetting accordingly should you choose to deviate from our pre-mix guide.

According to Suzuki whiz Bob Elliott, you'll get even better response with a 34mm flat-slide carb, as used in the RM125F, but use a 2.5 slide with the flat-slide carb, instead of a 2.0.

Our jetting was done with only the Answer silencer in place, and not the spark arrester. With the spark arrester we had to go leaner on the main and the mid-range circuit. You have to experiment from our base jetting for your altitude and climate.

## **RIDING THE RPM SPECIAL**

Our project bike started easily and settled into a contented idle after a relatively brief warm-up. It took a few passes through the gears for RPM to clean out and stop running ratty, much like a stock RM250 in that respect.

Once it cleaned out, however, the bike pulled hard and strong from very low revs through a powerful mid-range. Then surprisingly, it revved out on top like a road-racer. Amazingly, Project RPM was faster through the gears than a standard RM250 with a much bigger carb.

Logic told us that this could not be right. A smaller carb should mean more torque at low and mid-range rpm and an early flattening out on top.

Project RPM did just the opposite; it pulled the upper rev range like an MXer that has received the best porting job in town. Could we be onto something here? It is certainly worth a try to experiment with a smaller carb on our regular test RM250.

Response was all that could be expected on a serious racing enduro 250 throughout the whole range. The only thing that remained unanswered was how well it would work in the rough stuff—the tight and twisty that is the heart and soul of enduro riding.

For this test we pointed RPM to the hills and tight trails of the Hungry Valley mountains. It scampered up the fire roads with ease, dispatched some rocky trails with ease, then got its first test under fire when the bike was ridden into a dried-up river bed laced with boulders the size of portable television sets. Here RPM required some clutch use to get over the obstacles, but no more than any other hybrid 250 enduro bike. It also displayed amazing stability in the rocks.

## **TIGHT AND TWISTY TESTING**

On level ground and moderate hills there's

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*Tight sections proved to be natural for Project RPM. Smaller riders will want to lower the forward edge of the saddle by about an inch for woods work.*

enough low-end torque to simply work the throttle over and through whatever obstacle is in front of you. On steeper grades some clutch work is needed, as Project RPM cannot by any stretch of the imagination be throttled down like a 400 Husky. However, we were able to work the bike quite well in some truly nasty sections and RPM responded well. For woods we think the stock rear sprocket and dropping one on the countershaft would be the hot ticket.

Deep sand did not bother the bike at all, and it excelled in straight-line charging over bad whoops, just as its MX heritage promised it would. Our gearing choice of plus-two on the rear shortened the top speed a bit on the fast fire roads, but certainly kept enough top speed for any enduro condition.

The one place we did not have access to for testing was tight woods. Unfortunately, very little of this kind of terrain is available in and around our area. Time did not allow a trip back to Ohio or New Jersey for tree dodging.

## ENDURO TESTING

RPM was entered in a local family enduro and handled all the terrain with ease. All the instruments worked as advertised and the

Super Pro computer proved its worth once again.

Once you get past the weirdness of learning how to use it, it simplifies the bizarre Western timekeeping system of multiple speed changes and lets the rider concentrate on riding, rather than rolling charts.

Mileage with the stock gas tank was slightly over 50 miles, with a combination of easy, medium and hard terrain, enough for most enduros you're likely to encounter.

## THE VERDICT

Bashfully, we'd have to call Project RPM a raving success. Not only does it work well under enduro conditions, it would make a great Eastern hare scrambles machine and would probably be competitive in motocross in anything but the Expert class.

As a desert racer, a change of gearing would give it the top speed needed, and the gas tank range would increase. And for just plain old fun play riding and trailriding, RPM would be hard to match and near impossible to beat on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

In our quest to make a good enduro bike, we seem to have made the best all-around bike in the 250 class. And we did it by accident! That's the best part. □