

# YZ125 & 250 POWER VALVE TRICKS!

# DIRT BIKE

JUNE 1982  
\$1.50 UK80P

**STEVE WISE:  
"WHAT ARE THEY  
AFRAID OF?"**



**CAN-AM 500  
THUMPER:  
SUPER SONIC!**

**SUZUKI'S NEW  
HI-FLYING DRs**

**MAICO 490E:  
OPEN CLASS  
CHAMP?**

**HONDA  
CR80R:  
LITTLE RED  
ROOSTER**



ISSN0364-1546



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# DIRT BIKE



CAN-AM 500 SONIC



ATLANTA & DAYTONA



MAICO 490 ENDURO



THE ALL-NEW DRs

## TESTS

- 22** CAN-AM SONIC 500  
Working out on the Rotax rocket
- 28** HONDA CR80R  
More boost for the rooster
- 42** SUZUKI DR125/250Z  
Dual test of the 4-stroke floaters
- 48** HUSQVARNA CR250  
Why change a good thing?
- 54** MAICO 490 alpha E  
The "E" stands for enduro; the 490 stands alone

## COMPETITION

- 32** ATLANTA/DAYTONA SUPERCROSS  
Stadium racing in the muddy Southeast
- 41** UPSET AT ASCOT  
Wise didn't win it, but a Can-Am did

## FEATURES

- 36** STEVE WISE: MISTER DO-IT-ALL  
Superbike Champ rattles the TT cage
- 46** SIMONS UPSIDE DOWN FORKS  
We finally get a chance to try them
- 62** HARDEN/ROESLER OFF-ROAD SCHOOL  
Learning from the Baja Champs

## TECHNICAL

- 60** POWER VALVE TRICKS FOR THE YZ  
Make it buzz, not bend

## DEPARTMENTS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>6</b> FROM THE SADDLE<br>Tool respect . . .<br>or lack thereof | <b>14</b> MR KNOW-IT-ALL<br>A rude shock to the<br>uninitiated |
| <b>8</b> LAST OVER<br>The Father's Day<br>Massacre                | <b>16</b> RIDERS WRITE<br>A rude shock to us                   |
| <b>10</b> BITS AND PIECES<br>Random notes and<br>race results     | <b>20</b> NEW PRODUCTS<br>Buy till it hurts                    |
|   | <b>74</b> CRASH AND BURN<br>Pork rind on special               |

**On the Cover:** Jim Holley and Steve Schmitz playing around on Suzuki's new DR playbikes during a normal afternoon test session at Indian Dunes. Before you ask, that's Holley on the top and Steve on the bottom; the shot is not a fake; and no, they didn't kill each other. Photo by Paul Clipper; color separation by Valley Film.

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BUTCH

O'REILLY

SCOTT  
O'REILLY

O'REILLY

29  
O'REILLY

DR

400E

FULL FLOATER

DR

400E

FULL FLOATER

O'REILLY



# FLOATING FOUR-STROKERS

6 valves, 8 strokes, 2 shocks

By the Staff of *Dirt Bike*

**W**hat we have here is the start of something new, like the song goes. Basically, you have one (1) each DR125 and DR250 4-stroke Floater dirt bikes. You heard it right, Elwood... Full Floater thumpers.

These two bikes are important mostly because they spearhead what you're going to be seeing a lot of in the next 5 years. The 4-stroke enduro/playbike will most assuredly phase out the 2-stroke, just about to oblivion. This does not mean that you won't have a hard-core cluster of 2-stroke racers. No way. It's just that most of the other dirt bikes will have valves... and not the reeded ones, either.

The reasoning behind this direction is fairly simple. Four-strokes burn less gas than comparable 2-strokes, they're easier to quiet down and getting one to meet emission standards is a piece of cake.

Up until now, 4-strokes have, in general, been heavy and as sophisticated as a toaster. Most 4-strokes consisted of a dated engine wrapped in a heavy, ill-handling frame that was suspended by junk components. Honda made a step in the right direction with its XR line, but not the giant step we see here.

The DRs are the start of something new; they are completely fresh designs, with very little thought toward making leftover parts do the job. Both engines are totally new and the frames borrow technology from the RM racers of today. The DR250, in particular, is bristling with goodies, such as adjustable damping on the Floater shock and an aluminum swingarm as sanitary as any in existence.

## DA LEETLE ONE

The smallest 4-stroke Floater around, for sure. The DR125Z is a jewellike small bike that's almost too pretty to get dirty. Weighing in at a featherlike 209 pounds (dry), it's clearly made for the younger or smaller rider. A list of the specs reads like a wish book. Consider:

- Full Floater rear suspension.
- Leading axle forks, with 7.1 inches of decent travel.
- 6-speed gearbox.
- Pointless PEI ignition.
- Primary kickstart.
- Enduro odometer, resettable.
- Small but enduro-legal lighting.
- Real knobbies with aluminum rims.
- A 31.5-inch saddle height.



All new for '82, the DR250Z is a fresh package with nothing carried over.



With a low saddle height and decent travel, the DR250 is an ideal compromise.

Specs aside, what you have is a no-hassle bike that has good manners and far better than average 125 trailbike suspension. Don't kid yourself into thinking that you could race the DR125Z, however. About the most serious competition it could handle would be a family enduro. Basically, the 125Z is a playbike with some race bike breeding.

Because it's only a 125, power output is limited. Still, we were able to climb some fairly tough hills in second gear. Deep sand or mud will let you know right away that you have only 124 cc's at your disposal.

An interesting note: the liner on the barrel is rather thick, indicating that the 125 might just be able to be bored out to 185cc's or more. No doubt accessory folks like White Bros. will be massaging these little units shortly.

The surprisingly pleasant part about riding the DR125 is that you can go like stink on hard-packed, level ground. The chassis has very good handling traits, with no suggestion of washing out or head shaking. When the bumps are hit, the rear end



## SUZUKI DR125Z and DR250Z

is definitely superior to the front. The Floater is a true progressive rising-rate rear end and does an amazing job, considering it delivers a mere 7.1 inches of travel. Adjustment on the shock is limited to preload changes only.

Power starts mild at low revs, but builds well at an early mid-range. When the little engine is allowed to rev its guts out, acceleration is brisk. With the fairly close ratio 6-speed gearbox, it's fairly easy to keep the engine in the most effective part of its power range. As the engine is worked hard, the exhaust is so quiet you can hear the valves being abused at a near-float condition.

Starting the bike couldn't be easier. When cold, pull the choke out and give it an easy boot with no throttle. First-kick

engine stumbles fractionally before starting to pull.

As delivered, the DR is geared way too tall. The 14-tooth countershaft sprocket, combined with the 47-tooth sprocket, makes for a nearly unuseable 5th and 6th gear. However, by simple gearing changes, the bike gets an entirely different personality.

Because the bike was so new, gearing was hard to come by. We did find that TS125 and 250 sprockets would fit. A TS rear sprocket, part #64511-28721, 58-tooth, made a huge difference. Also, a countershaft sprocket from an RM125T or N, part #27511-41700, 13-tooth, would be an ideal option.

Most new riders would not be bothered by the stock gearing, but heavier riders, or

- Long travel; nearly 10 inches of stroke, front and rear.
- Aluminum swingarm, with adjustable damping and a remote reservoir, just like the RM racer.
- Decent air/oil forks.
- Full enduro goodies.

So, what you end up with here is a full-sized bike that is light (for a 4-stroke) and has a stunningly good frame with excellent suspension at both ends.

As with any 250 4-stroke, the DR is not going to beat any 2-stroke racer/enduro in a drag race. Power output must be considered mild... about the same as a Honda XR250, with a little more punch at peak revs. The Honda just might have a bit more snap at low revs. We'll see, as a comparison test between the 250 4-strokes is in the works.

One place the Suzuki has it all over the Honda, though, is in the suspension race.



Steve Schmitz said the 125 handled well and had no bad habits.

fire results most of the time; 2nd kick when you do something wrong. When hot, an easy prod with full throttle does the job every time.

A quick trip through the simplistic owner's manual reveals the nature of the intended owner: one who doesn't tamper with his bike. In fact, there aren't even any jetting specs listed and the manual says, "The carburetor is factory-set for the best carburetion. Do not attempt to alter its setting. There are 2 items of adjustment, however, under your care: carburetor idle rpm and throttle cable play." Whoopee.

### BUGS

A few rough ends meet the eye. The footpegs are on the end of long, extended arms and look weak. The filter is tiny and looks restrictive. On the right side, the brake pedal hangs out too far and is begging to get bent back under the peg. There's a slight hitch in the carburetion if the throttle is yanked open at very low revs. Here, the



Wolfman Webb noted that the 250 worked well on the trails.

those who want to ride at higher speeds, will want the gearing changes.

### HOW IT STANDS

Invariably, the DR125Z will be the first bike grabbed by girlfriends, wives and smaller riders. It's fun to ride, with no surprising bad habits, and has enough steam to go most anywhere. In fact, if we were forced to place the DR125Z into a nutshell, we'd call it the perfect bike on which to teach someone how to ride.

### DA BEEG ONE

Quite naturally, we gravitated toward the DR250Z and let the kids play with the 125. And why not? After all, the DR250Z is a full-sized bike with fairly long travel suspension. A glance at the DR250 spec sheets shows some serious hardware not found on the DR125.

- A 4-valve head.
- Dry weight of only 246 pounds.
- Fairly low saddle height of 35.0 inches.

Here, both ends simply put the XR on the trailer, in terms of sheer performance.

### HANDLES?

It certainly does. With the best of them, as a matter of fact. You can actually take the DR250Z out on a motocross track and have fun with it. You aren't going to beat anyone from corner to corner, but you'll sure give them some grief in the rough stuff.

The forks are probably as good as most motocross forks of 2 years ago, and the rear end is almost as good as a current Floater. Travel is less, of course, with 9.8 inches at both ends—enough for trailriding and enduro work. Four-stroke classes are getting more popular in enduros and the DR250 would be completely competitive in tight woods.

As with the 125, we looked at a stripped-down 250 engine and noted that it had plenty of room for an oversized piston. Perhaps a liner thick enough to go to 320cc's or more.



Stability in a straight line was good, especially when the tape showed a wheelbase of not quite 56 inches. Steering accuracy was spot on. Combining the mellow delivery of power with a biting front end, the DR could be stuffed to the tight inside line of most any flat corner. It was also very happy sliding around like a TT bike, something we'll keep in mind when the Dirt Digger's Dinosaur Run rolls around again this year.

#### BITS AND PIECES

It was very easy to get the DR250 fired up. A half-hearted prod was usually more than enough. It took a long time to warm up the engine... perhaps a good 4 minutes at fast idle.

The bike proved to be exceptionally waterproof. We crossed a 3-foot-deep river a good half-dozen times in one day and not a burble or a hiccup.

At less than 250 pounds, the DR250 is

not heavy for a 4-stroke and there is an easy 20 pounds that could be removed with the judicious spending of a few well-placed bucks. The exhaust system alone appears to weigh the same as a small redwood tree.

A compression release is mounted on the bars for easier starting.

A great PE-style odometer rides up on the bars.

There's a smallish 28mm carb on the engine. The bike will easily handle a 32—especially if an accessory pipe is used. Like the 125, the 250 has mystery jetting specs in the poor manual. A pity for the owner who might live, say, in Colorado.

Neither the 250 nor the 125 has the excellent straight-pull-type RM and PE hubs that we like so much. Perhaps next year.

With a 2.4-gallon tank, you have a riding range of over 80 miles.

Several goodies, like automatic cam chain tensioner adjustment and primary

kickstarting, are taken for granted on the DR250.

A counterbalancer is part of the engine, but we feel it's not needed on the DR. It's there because the basic engine is shared in a 250 street-bike version.

#### SO, WHAT ARE WE SAYING?

We're saying that we'd like to see a DR250 that's been breathed on a bit. As it stands stock, the bike is fun, but not overly exciting. It takes power to make any 4-stroke exciting.

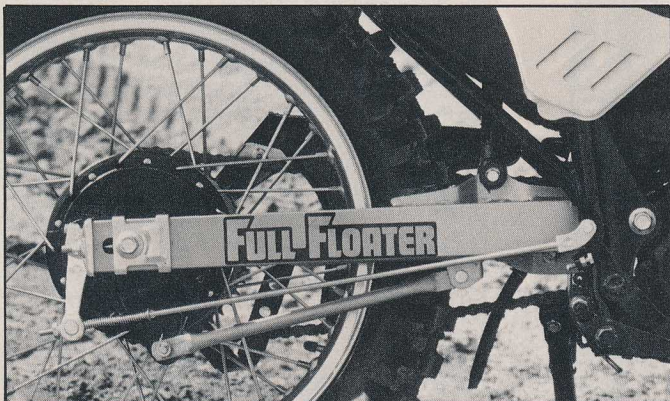
Because the DR250 is in such a mild state of tune, we feel that the potential hasn't even been tapped. We think this is worth exploring, mostly because of the astonishingly good chassis and suspension.

Yup, 5 years from now we'll be looking back on the DR250Z as the forerunner of a whole new breed of bikes.

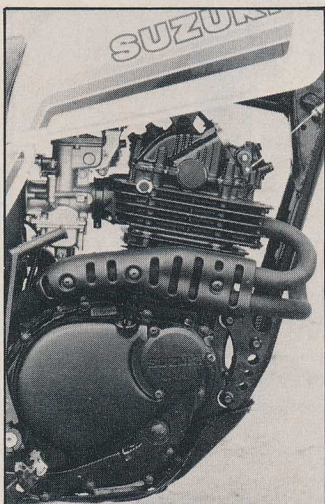
Can a DR500 Floater be much further down the road? □



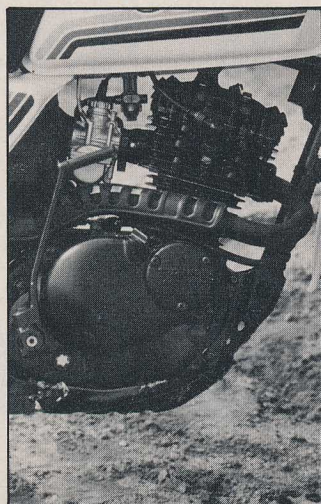
That's a real aluminum swingarm on the 250, folks. No scrimping here.



The 125 swingarm is steel, but painted aluminum. Floater rear end is decent, but not as elaborate as the 250 setup.



Engine on the 250 is a 4-valved twin-piper.



Tiny 125 engine is a 2-valver that revs out nicely.



### SUZUKI DR125Z DR250Z

ENGINE TYPE	4-stroke, air-cooled	OHC
BORE AND STROKE	57.0mm x 48.8mm	72.0mm x 61.2mm
DISPLACEMENT	7.6 cubic inches (124cc)	15.2 cubic inches (249cc)
CARBURETION	Mikuni VM22SS	Mikuni VM28SS
IGNITION	Suzuki PEI	Suzuki PEI
TRANSMISSION	6-speed	5-speed
FUEL TANK CAPACITY	2.5 gallons (8.5 liters)	2.6 gallons (9.5 liters)
WHEELBASE	53.0 inches (1345mm)	55.9 inches (1420mm)
GROUND CLEARANCE	10.4 inches (265mm)	12.6 inches (320mm)
SEAT HEIGHT	32.3 inches (820mm)	35.0 inches (890mm)
WEIGHT (CLAIMED) DRY	209 pounds (95 kg)	249 pounds (113 kg)
SUSPENSION:		
FRONT	Air, oil-damped 7.1 inches	Air, oil-damped 9.8 inches
REAR	Full Floater 6.3 inches	Full Floater 9.8 inches
TIRES:		
FRONT	2.75 x 21 full knobby	3.00 x 21 full knobby
REAR	3.50 x 17 full knobby	5.10 x 17 full knobby
INTENDED USE	Trail, playbike	Trail, playbike
APPROX. RETAIL PRICE	\$998	\$1598
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	Japan	Japan
DISTRIBUTOR:		
	U. S. SUZUKI MOTOR CORPORATION	
	3251 East Imperial Highway	
	Brea, California 92621	