

DUAL PURPOSE DUEL: DT250 vs. TS250

DIRT BIKE

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APRIL 1977

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*Mach snell, mein wagen fuhrer.
Der Amerikaner tank!*

*Achtung! Preparen zee flamen
thrower. Vee must stoppen zat
Sherman.*

*Nein worry, mein capitan. Wid
our new Monotrack zuspension
dat Sherman ist no matchen fur
our Panzer.*

*Ach du lieber. Haven't you
heard? Zey have somezing new.
Laydown treads.*

*But zey don't have zee John
Wayne, vee are safen...*

*Ground to air. Ground to air.
Come in Capitan George
Blimpton.*

*Commander Blimpton here.
We're ready for you, just as soon
as Gungo finishes Foggy
Mountain Breakdown.*

Gungo? Foggy who?

*Gungo. My navigator, Gungo J.
Calrose. He's playing his banjo.*

Well, get him hopping. We're

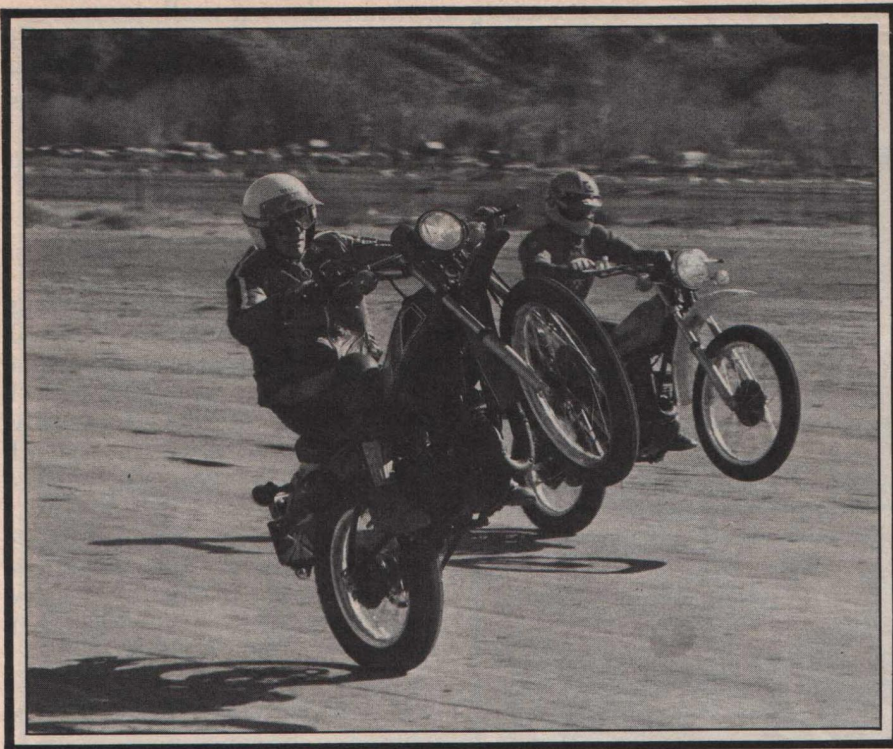
SHOCKER! MONO MEETS LAID-DOWN

YAMAHA DT250D vs. SUZUKI TS250B

*First Mono, first Laid-Down, first street
test where nobody got hurt*

by the Staff of DIRT TRAFFICATOR





NO-NONSENSE INTRODUCTION...GIGGLE

What we have here is the great, great, great, great, great, great grandson of DT-1, the father of them all. The dual-purpose bikes. It was back in 1968 that the DT-1 and all that historical boredom and so on and so on, etc. Add torque reed valving around '70 or so, who can remember. But there's something new and exciting about the 1977 model. The DT has inherited the monocross chassis and suspension developed and refined on the YZ motocrossers. A big long one instead of two short suspenders.

So Yamaha has the monostreeter. But Suzuki has countered with the first laid-down trafficator. The two significant suspension and geometry breakthrough of the '70s go head to dual-purpose head. And where it stops, nobody knows. But it sure is a beginning.

What could we do but shoot them out? Read on, if you're interested. We have a winner. But no fair peeking ahead to see who won Miss Congeniality.

SHAPING THE ONE-SHOCKER

The DT-D has a new frame to accommodate the monoshock suspension. The conversion ups rear wheel travel to 5.5 inches, an increase of two inches. Fork travel was upped close to an inch, 7.6 inches is claimed. The new frame ups ground clearance from 8.6 to an even 10 inches. Seat height is over an inch taller too, at 33.7 inches. Rake was steepened one half degree, it now reads an even 30 degrees. Front/rear weight bias has been altered in favor of a lighter front end.

Yamaha claims no change in horsepower, but an increase of 1½ ft/lbs of torque. In the porting department, exhaust duration was reduced four degrees, intake and transfer timing weren't changed. Oil injection output was reduced some to reduce smoking and emissions.

The new model has a small MX-type screw-on gas cap with breather hose, replacing the locking cap of previous models. Handlebar width has been trimmed to 33 inches. The flexy rear turn signals and taillight are new for '77. The new Takasago

standing by for national TV.

Roger. And Gerrit too. I'll try, but you can't rush Gungo. He's a perfectionist, you know.

You just fly your blimp, Blimpton, and get Zeal on the camera. The tanks are a test lead-in. You know how weird those guys from DIRT BIKE are.

Sure do. I didn't have a very good time at Tombstone, you know. I'm still paying off on the last blimp. What do those tanks have to do with the 250s down there?

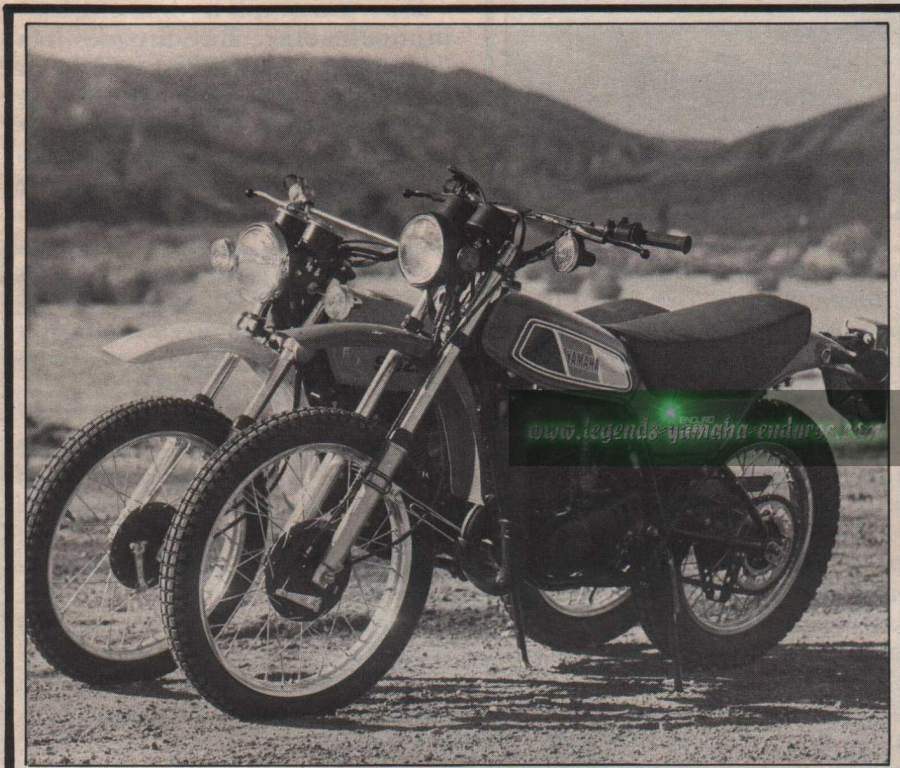
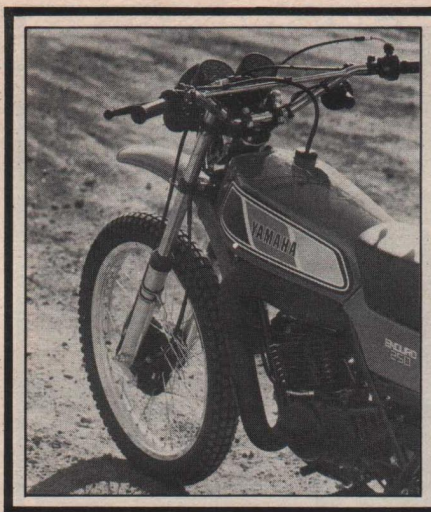
Well, the guys thought that tanks symbolize utility vehicles. You know, slow, dependable and dange...ah, unwieldy.

OK with me as long as their money is good. All I need is another 19 grand to finish my restoration project on the LZ-127.

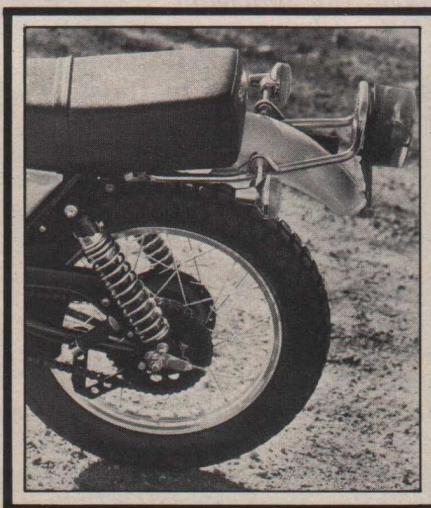
Fine, whatever turns you on, Commander. Ready on the camera; they're about ready. Shhh. I can hear them now...

Just look at those tanks, Gunnar. It's pure genius. Wait and see. This will top the fire engine, Tom's horns and Gerrits' big tooth. This will top them all. Even Kong. But watch out for the flamethrowers. We don't want to make this any more risky than it already is...





Lock to rear of seat pops saddle up to get to tool kit and oil tank. Luggage space measures eight inches behind seat.



That's a helmet lock below seat. Turn signals can be flexed in any direction, best yet for the dirt.

rims are aluminum alloy.

Yamaha claims a six-pound reduction in dry weight to 259 pounds. We measured 268 pounds wet, ready for gas.

The price has been dropped to \$1089.

LOWDOWN ON THE LAYDOWN

The Suzuki's shock mounting angle was changed from 20 degrees to 35 degrees and Kayaba gas/oilers replace the usual straight oil shocks. The new boingers have a softer initial spring rate; the terminal rate has been stiffened.

The new fork springs are three rate progressive. There's less preload and the initial rate is slightly softer. Suspender oil capacity was also increased.

Geometry changes. The wheelbase was shortened a whopping .6-inches down to 55.1. Rake was kicked in two degrees to 29. The same 5.6-inch trail was retained. Suzuki claims ground clearance of 9.4 inches, but we measured 10.2, a decrease of a half-inch compared to the old model.

There's one more tooth on the rear sprocket, lowering drive gearing from 2.60 to 2.67.

The rubber footpegs are gone, replaced with serrated loops.

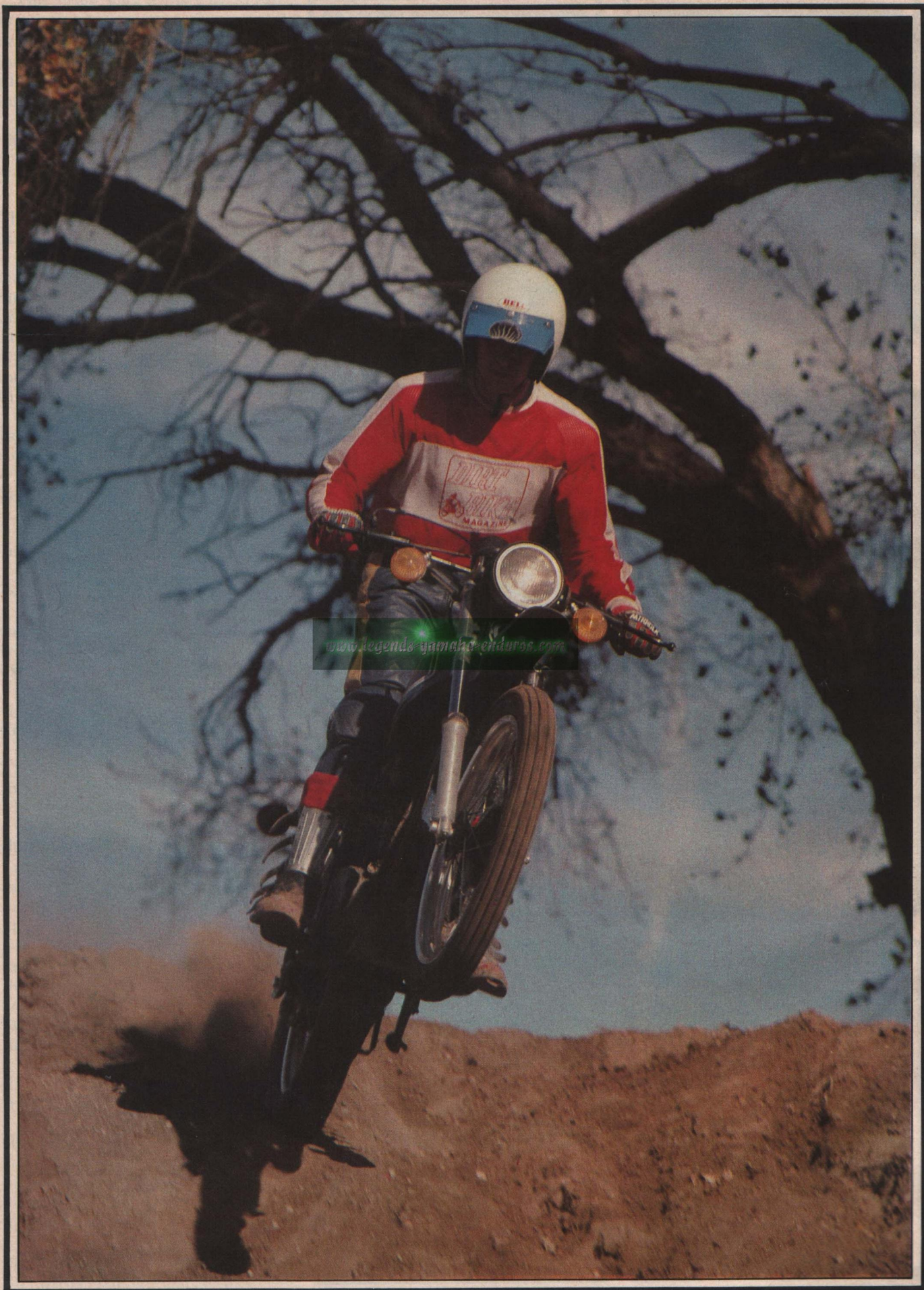
The new gas tank is 1.6 liters larger, now holds 2.6 gallons.

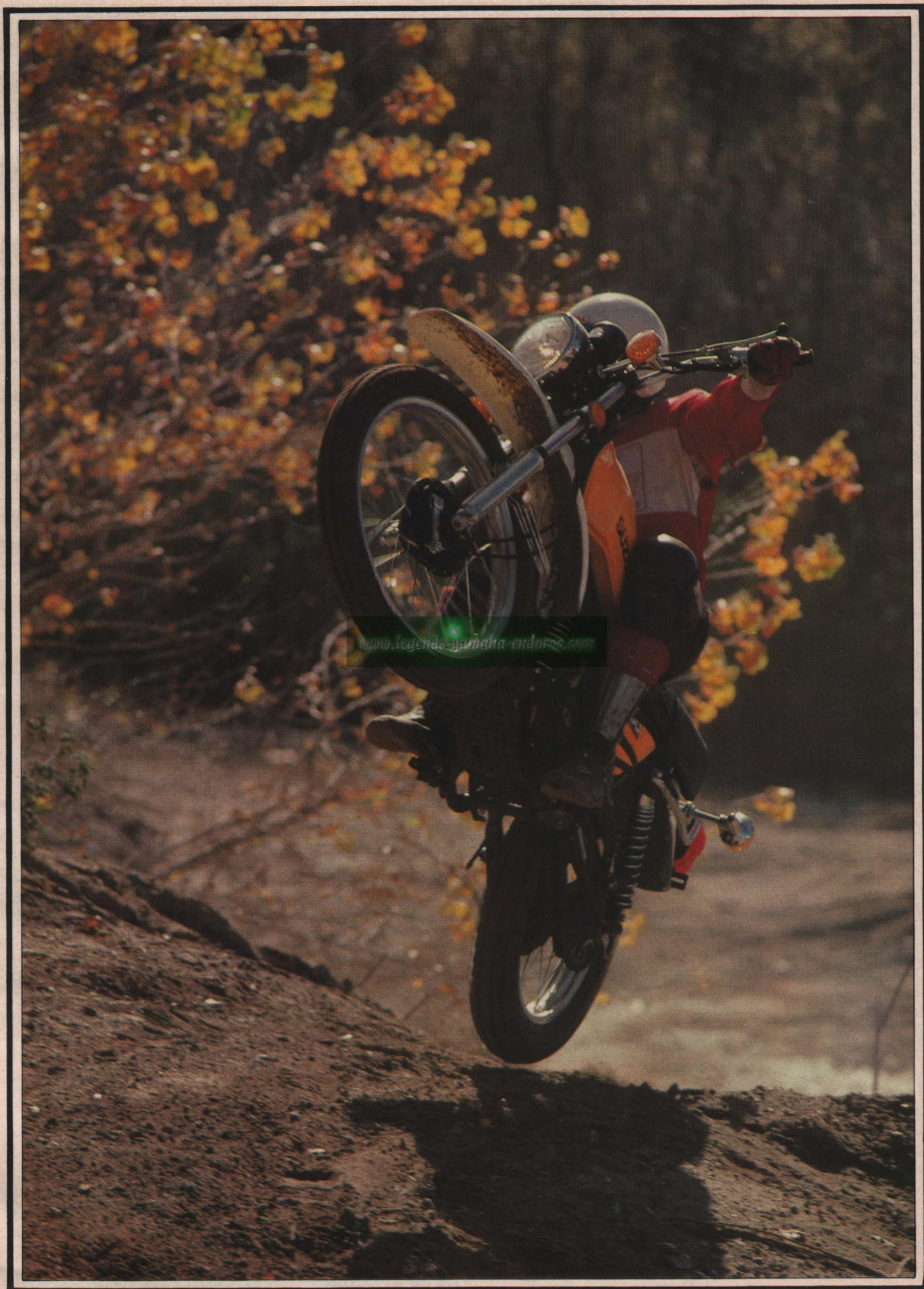
A lot of mill changes. Just like the RM racers, the TS now has case induction reeding (called Power Reed by Suzuki). Porting. Exhaust duration was advanced by 4½ degrees while intake duration was decreased 8½ degrees.

Duration for the transfers wasn't changed, but two new holes were cut, upping the count to six to improve scavenging. The compression ratio was reduced from 7.0 to 6.5:1. Large cylinder fins were added for a claimed reduction of 30 degrees in full throttle operating temperature.

They kept the 28mm Mikuni, but modified the jetting some. They went to a smaller main jet, kept the same jet needle but raised it a notch and switched to a needle jet a tad richer.

The weight, 269 pounds ready for gas, is two pounds less than last year.





The price was upped to \$1140. Warranty went from 12 months/12,000 miles (the industry's only one-year protection plan) to six-months/no limit on mileage.

SITTIN' IN THE TRUCK; OR, RANDOM ACTUAL COMMENTS

"They are both street bikes. They shouldn't be ridden in the dirt."

"It's good to see both manufacturers applying their motocross suspension to the DP bikes. I don't think a street/trailer can ever be a good dirt bike, but at least they're trying to elevate the state of the dirt art from poor to adequate."

"Actually I think the Yamaha is best and I haven't been paid a dime to say this."

"They aren't for competition at any level."

Everywhere you look you can see little detailing improvements."

"The tach is handy to prevent over-revving on the jumps."

"I'd rather ride the Yamaha on the track than the motocrosser we're testing. They also make excellent skis and guitars."

"Both bikes handle best on one wheel. They're more stable with the front off the ground."

"I can remember when the old TS Savages were really out of it in the dirt compared to the others. They've definitely improved it."

"I like the styling changes on the Yamaha."

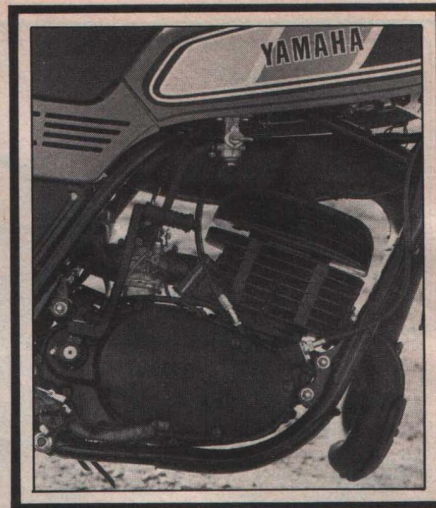
"Though it may sound incredible, it would be easier to modify the Yamaha into a motocrosser than a fast trailbike."

"The TS has always been the tallest geared of the DPs. A tooth off the countershaft sprocket coupled with the new, peppier engine should make it a lot better for diddling around in the dirt."

"The Suzuki front end 'feels' lighter and the engine has more snap to it."

"The DT's ability to stay straight in the whoops really surprised me. Suzuki has the best two-shock rear end ever put on a street/trailer but it's just not up to the Yamaha."

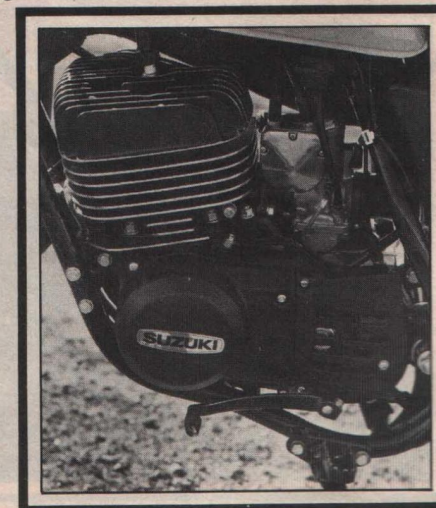
"If you ride either of these on a motocross track don't pass anybody on a real MX bike."



Side panels pop off. Battery and injection oil are behind left panel. Oil tank swivels out for easy filling. Right side cover is locked, has swivel dust protector. Tool kit and air filter access are behind it.



"Look! It's George and Zeal."





During testing we taped over brand names and gave each bike a code name. The Suzuki was coded Ice Pick and the Yamaha was coded Big Stick.

So, Bruce, what's your choice between the Pick and the Stick?

I pick the Stick.

George, pick your pick.

I have to pick the Pick which isn't my pick because Bruce picked the Stick which was my pick as his pick. Can't I pick my pick?

Your pick must be the Pick, after Bruce's pick.

But Bruce picked the Stick, not the Pick.

That's his pick, you pick your

pick.

I don't want to pick the Pick. If Bruce had picked the Pick as his pick I could've picked my pick instead of the Pick.

Let's have Pat Paulsen, who in 1968 asked us to pick him instead of Tricky Dick, get on the stick and solve this fix.

Tank you. Now, as I see it, George, you've picked the Pick as your pick because Bruce didn't pick the Pick which wasn't your real pick and now you've had to pick the Pick which is not the pick you would have picked.

Yeah! They're trying to stick it to me with this pick. What do you have to say about it?

Picky, picky, picky.

They'll go berserk trying to pass you back and hurt themselves, or you, trying."

"The most dirt either of these bikes should see is from spinning circles behind the local donut stand. They should call them the Donut Enduros instead of Enduros. Make that DoNot Enduro.

"They're both much better than they've ever been."

"Neither bike fits in with the mink oil cabin lifestyle. Maybe the factory worker Christmas party Crisco orgy lifestyle.

"They're both better than most purchasers need."

WITCH IS BEST?

Which bike would you ride in an enduro? All but one said: Yamaha. The one holdout said: No.

Which bike would you pick for the street? A mixture of Yamahas and evens.

Which bike is the quickest? Unanimous on the Suzuki.

Which bike had the most low-down grunt power? Unanimous for the Yamaha.

Best rear end suspension: Yamaha.

Best turning bike: Mostly the Yamaha, some mentioned the Suzuki on flat ground.

Best lazy ol' cowtrailer: Everybody picked the Yam except for the fisherman who felt the Suzuki luggage rack made it more desirable.

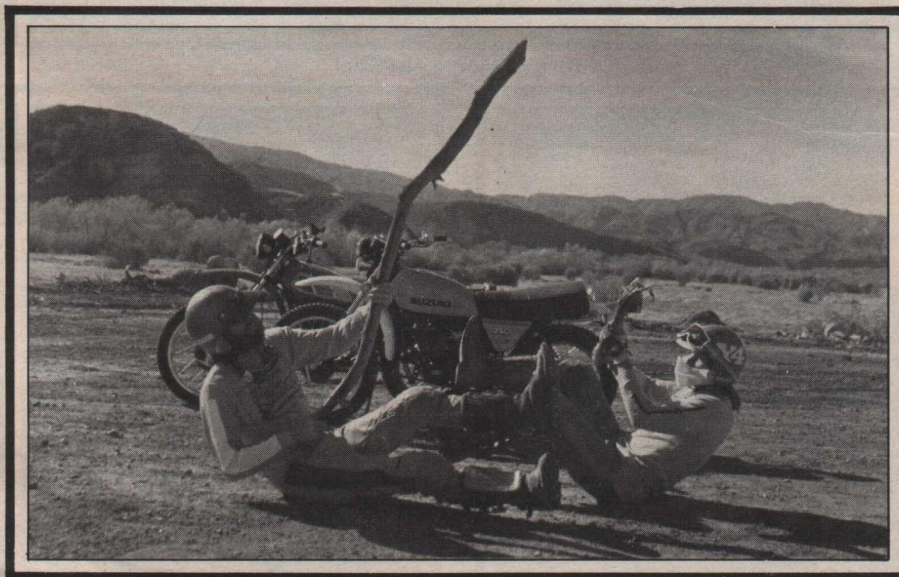
WHAT THEY SAID

The following is reprinted from the current issue of TRANSPORTATION Magazine:

In considering either of these machines one must consider that both are fine, dependable pieces of machinery, well suited to carry commuter or weekend player to his destination in style. Once under way the feeling of weight rapidly disappears. In the end, it is the decision of you the buyer as to which is the bike for you. Keep up the good work, Yamaha and Suzuki. The public needs more fine machines and when they are built we know that you will build them.

The following is reprinted from the current issue of BIKES AND SANDWICHES Quarterly:

With any comparison test we



have to be very careful to mealy-mouth our way through the summary to avoid offending anyone. After all, everybody can be a winner.

We've designated several key categories to better illustrate our findings: Best mono street/enduro we've ever ridden: Yamaha. Best laid-down street/enduro we've ever ridden: Suzuki. Best blue bike: Yamaha. Best yellow bike: Suzuki.

It's a draw! They're both wonderful!

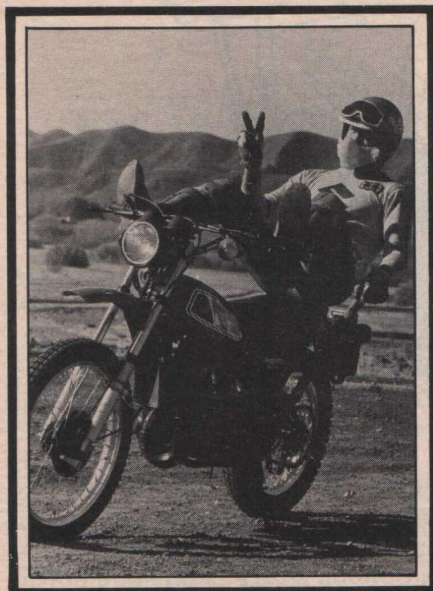
WHAT WE SAID

Every one of DIRT BIKE's testers picked the Yamaha as his first choice. Yep, Son of DT-1, many generations removed, appears to be top dog. (Back in the June, 1975, 250 Shootout the DT250B finished second to the MT250 Honda for which there is no current 1977 model.)

We rode both bikes where they shouldn't be ridden, knowing that many of you may also. Appraising them for their intended purposes: both are good DP choices. Both are better than before.

For more adventuresome ventures into off-road riding the Yamaha emerges with an edge because of its better suspension and gruntier, though not so quick engine power. Those interested in more strenuous antics than bopping on down to the McDonald's to eyeball wonderful Wanda should be advised that these two very same manufacturers also build real trailbikes: the Yamaha IT series (175, 250 and

	YAMAHA DT250D	SUZUKI TS250B
PRICE: \$	\$1089	\$1140
ENGINE:	Two-stroke, single reed induction	Two-stroke, single reed induction
DISPLACEMENT:	246cc	246cc
BORE & STROKE:	70 x 64mm	70 x 64
COMPRESSION RATIO:	6.7:1	6.5:1
CARBURETION:	Mikuni VM 28SC	Mikuni VM28SS
SPARK PLUG:	N2 (Champion) or B8ES (NGK)	W24ES (ND) or B8ES (NGK)
CLUTCH:	Wet, multi-plate	Wet, multi-plate
PRIMARY DRIVE:	2.83:1	3.19:1
TRANSMISSION RATIOS:		
1)	2.54 (24.2 overall)	2.42 (20.6 overall)
2)	1.79 (17.0)	1.80 (15.3)
3)	1.30 (12.4)	1.28 (10.9)
4)	1.00 (9.5)	1.00 (8.5)
5)	0.77 (7.3)	0.83 (7.1)
FINAL DRIVE:	3.36:1, Daido 520	2.67:1, Daido 525
	14 — countershaft	15 — countershaft
	47 — rear	40 — rear
AIR FILTRATION:	Oiled foam	Oiled foam
ELECTRICS:	Magneto, points	Pointless (PEI)
STARTING:	Primary kick	Primary kick
LUBRICATION:	Oil injection (Autolube)	Oil injection (CCI)
RECOMMENDED FUEL:	Premium	Premium
RECOMMENDED OIL:	Yamaha	Suzuki
FUEL TANK CAPACITY:	9 liters (2.4 gallons)	10 liters (2.6 gallons)
FRAME:	Mild steel	Mild steel
CLAIMED SUSPENSION TRAVEL:	195mm (7.6-inch) forks	175mm (6.9-inch) forks
WHEELS:	140mm (5.5-inch) rear wheel	125mm (4.9-inch) rear wheel
TIRES:	Takasago aluminum	Takasago aluminum
	3.00 x 21 Dunlop trials	3.00 x 21 IRC trials
	4.00 x 18 Dunlop trials	4.00 x 18 IRC trials
DIMENSIONS		
Wheelbase:	141.5cm (55.7-inch)	140.00cm (55.1-inch)
Swingarm length:	45.7cm (18-inch)	45.7cm (18-inch)
Ground clearance:	25.5cm (10-inch)	25.9cm (10.2-inch)
Bars, width:	83.8cm (33-inch)	81.3cm (32-inch)
height:	111.8cm (44-inch)	111.8cm (44-inch)
Pegs, height:	32.5cm (12.8-inch)	30.0cm (11.8-inch)
width:	49.5cm (19.5-inch)	45.2cm (17.8-inch)
Seat height:	85.5cm (33.7-inch)	82.6cm (32.5-inch)
Rake:	30 degrees	29 degrees
Trail:	5.3 inches	5.6 inches
Claimed Weight:	118 kg (259 pounds) dry	118 kg (259 pounds) dry
Measured Weight:	121.6 kg (268 pounds)	122 kg (269 pounds)
	ready for gas	ready for gas
BRAKES:	160 x 25mm front	150 x 28mm front
	150 x 25mm rear	150 x 28mm rear
INSTRUMENTS:	Speedo/tach	Speedo/tach
LIGHTS:	Street legal	Street legal
SILENCER:	Measured 85 dbA	Measured at 84 dbA
SPARK ARRESTOR:	USFS-approved	USFS-approved
WARRANTY:	Six months/4000 miles	Six months/unlimited miles
PARTS PRICES:		
Piston:	\$14.80	\$17.45
Rings:	\$7.24/pr.	\$12.92/pr.
Clutch cable:	\$4.84	\$5.29
Brake pedal:	\$5.76	\$10.21



400) and the Suzuki PE250.

And in the end the final decision does come down to you, the buyer. Not which is the best bike for you the buyer, but rather what is your favorite color. Yellow or blue, either will do.

Wow, that was really something, Zeal. Look at that Panzer burn.

Looks just like my house going up last year, George. I still think they should have signed off by saying: tanks for the memories.

Maybe so. I'll just take her

down a bit for a closer look at the Panzer. No sweat with helium in the gas bags.

Helium? Was I supposed to get helium, George?

Stop kidding, Zeal. Nobody would think of getting hydro...

Ba-loooooooooooooooooom!!!

Well, that about wraps it up for another Wild World of Shootouts. We can see George, Zeal and Gungo now, floating ...ah, make that plummeting down toward the pond. Sure hope they don't land on any of the birds. What good is a handicapped flamingo? ●