

FOUR FREE BIKES - Contest Inside

DIRT BIKE

NOVEMBER 1977

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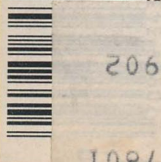
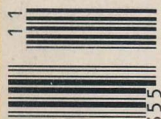
**SUZUKI
RM250C:
IS IT STILL
THE BEST?**

**YAMAHA
DT250
& 175:**

**DUAL
PURPOSE
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OF AGE**

**RACE
WRAPS-
125 & 250
MX &
TWO-DAYS**

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GP and GEORGIA'S 500 MX

DIRT BIKE

NOVEMBER 1977 VOLUME SEVEN NUMBER ELEVEN

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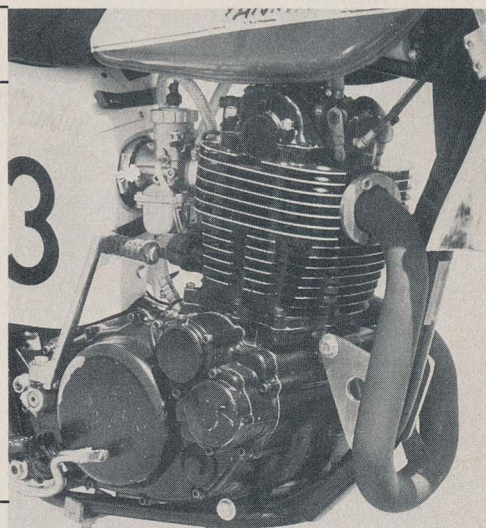
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ON THE COVER: Sherman Unlimited dusts off the new Tony D. personal transport vehicle. Blimpton takes the credit.

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE NOVEMBER 17

DIRT BIKE TEST

YAMAHA'S DT175E and DT250D

*If trailbike motocross
ever catches on . . .*

by the staff of DIRT BIKE

You've seen it all before. Even your friendly DIRT BIKE staff must plead guilty. Once or twice a year the average moto-mag does some kind of test or shootout of dual-purpose bikes. In every test, regardless of which mag prints it, certain catch-phrases usually show up. Such as:

"For its intended purpose, the bike performs well . . ."

"Fine for going to the corner store, and for easy rides down smooth trails."

Or, "Those interested in serious dirt riding would be better off buying one of the many "real" enduro bikes available."

Etc.

You see, magazine folks are spoiled. Along with the usual chills and thrills of putting out a monthly rag comes the opportunity to straddle some of the hottest machinery available today. Because of constantly having fine motorcycles to ride, race and break, editor types tend to get an exalted opinion of their own abilities, sort of a contact high caught from the bikes themselves.

It's all a matter of, if you'll excuse the expression, forgetting one's roots. Motorcycles are fun, almost all of them, and screwing around on a dual-purpose bike can be right up there with blitzing the first corner on a factory prototype Zambisi 4Q 125 MF.

This time we decided to do it right, and for a full month before taking delivery of the new monoshocked DTs we went into training, a desperate attempt to, if we couldn't get our innocence back, at least reach it with a postcard or something.



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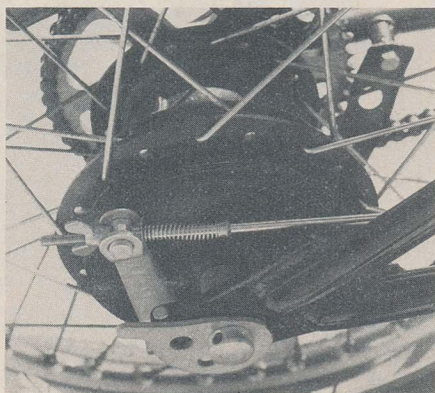


After four weeks of a steady diet of fast-food hamburgers, pizza and tacos with Summer Lime shakes, after listening to KISS, ELO and Peter Frampton, after completing a temporary swap of our zootest test machinery for several late '60s rat bikes owned by friends, we were ready for the DTs. Hoo boy, were we ready!

And, after our forced abstinence from trick machinery, the Dits seemed ready, too.

Of course, the first notable feature on the DTs is their "monocross" suspension. Though their 5.5 inches of travel sounds small by *today's* motocross standards, it would have been impressive a few years ago. More





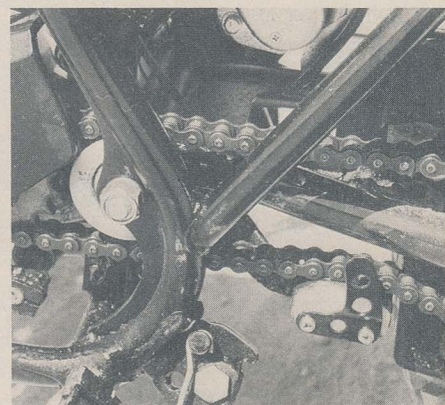
The DTs incorporate a quick-change rear wheel, similar to that pioneered on the IT series. A nice touch.

on that later.

The DT styling is distinctive; introduced last year on the first monocross 250, it resembles the Montesa Cota T. The bikes look purposeful and competent. Even those old bugaboo turn signals are now set up out of the way on the handlebars, and, in the rear, have a real, functional rubber mounting.

Here it comes. Right in the middle of the test where it will be well hidden. The single most important conclusion come to by the bulk of our testers was that the DTs were the first "dual-purpose" bikes to come along that will actually qualify as trailbikes.

Continued on page 60



An efficient chain tensioner and roller system.

YAMAHA'S DT175E and DT250D

Continued from page 39

We played motocross with them, trail-rode them, even ran down the street for some organic papaya juice on them. In every application, they were fun. Funky at times, but fun.

Which is not to say that there weren't bitches. Moto-snobism may well take more than a month of fasting to completely leave the system, but we did find areas for improvement.

Both bikes, and especially the 250, continue to suffer from the dual-purpose bike gradual obesity malady. This is somewhat similar to, though the opposite of, the incredible shrinking candy bar syndrome. That is, while your Hershey bar will soon

perhaps have barely enough chocolate to cover its almond, your street/trailer may well soon resemble the Hindenburg. Or, in a word or two, they are too heavy. The 250, in particular, has enough heft to feel capable of inflicting great pain should it ever sneak out from under its rider's control. The 175, on the other hand, is much lighter. Some actually used the word "nimble."

Handling and suspension, while much improved on the 175, which is a mono for the first time this year, are still nothing to compare to, say, Yamaha's own IT175. The DT175 was set up very soft, much too much so for

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE . . .

It's the old, familiar question. Preston probably sees these letters in his nightmares. "I want to race. I have this 250 street/trail bike and I plan to put a pipe on it and . . ."

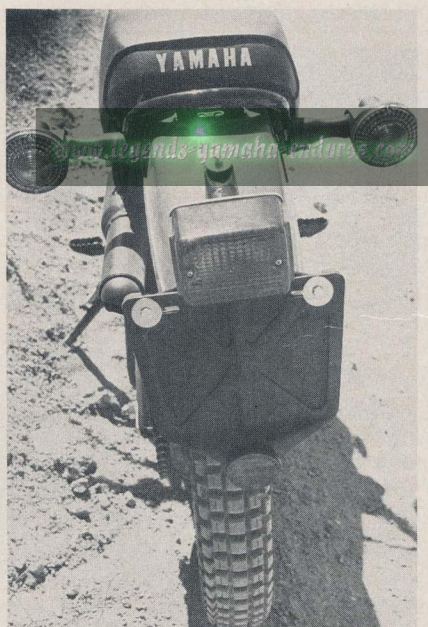
For general purposes, the old, familiar answer holds true. A playbike doth not a racer make.

But the times they are, slowly, a-changin'. Fact is, the dual-purpose bikes of today, especially these DTs, are pretty close to being on a par with some of the "serious" enduro bikes of a few years back.

When faced with the question of which Yamaha, the 175 or the 250, would be most easily modified to make a "competitive" (frankly, we're getting tired of that word. Burleson could blow most folks into the Lonesome Pines riding either one of these, stock) enduro mount, the staff and testers faced the issue head-on, and split right down the middle.

The fans of the 175, who were, for the most part, motocross-oriented, chose it for its lightness and good power. They felt that it could make as good time as the 250 without the extra weight.

Those who favored the 250 were, for what it's worth, trail freaks, and were generally heavier (in terms of weight rather than depth of conceptualization) than the others.



Their complaints about the 175 mostly concerned the soft suspension, which became a bit skittery in the rocks.

For the beginning enduro rider, either bike would likely, with the obvious addition of knobbies and subtraction of turn signals, do the job. An added plus is the fact that either bike could likely take the abuse and abasement that a beginner usually dishes out.

In fact, if our proposed "trailbike motocross" class ever gets off the ground, we would be very surprised if a number of DTs didn't show up regularly in the winner's circle.



YAMAHA DT175

ENGINE: Air-cooled two-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 171cc
BORE & STROKE: 68x50mm
COMPRESSION RATIO: 6.8:1
CARBURETION: Mikuni
CLUTCH: Wet multiple disc
PRIMARY DRIVE: 71/22
TRANSMISSION RATIOS:

- 1) 35/10
- 2) 31/14
- 3) 28/18
- 4) 25/21
- 5) 22/23
- 6) 20/25

FINAL DRIVE:

- 16-tooth countershaft
- 49-tooth rear sprocket

AIR FILTRATION: Wetted foam

LUBRICATION: Autolube

RECOMMENDED FUEL: Premium

RECOMMENDED OIL: Yamalube 2-cycle

FUEL TANK CAPACITY:

- 7.0 liters (1.85 gallons)

FRAME: Tubular double cradle
SUSPENSION:

- Front: 180mm
- Rear: 140mm

STARTING: Kick

WHEELS & SPOKES:

- Front: 1.60x21
- Rear: 1.85x18

TIRES:

- Front: 2.75x21
- Rear: 3.50x18

DIMENSIONS:

- Wheelbase: 135cm (53.1 inches)
- Ground clearance: 265cm (10.4 inches)
- Seat height: 83cm (34 inches)
- Weight: 221.2 pounds without fuel; 45.8 percent on front, 54.2 percent on rear

BRAKES:

- Front: Leading/trailing
- Rear: Leading/trailing

INSTRUMENTS: Lots

LIGHTS: Yes

SILENCER: Yes

SPARK ARRESTOR: Yes

WARRANTY: Yes

many of our riders. A bit of tuning, in the guise of a change of oil in the forks and some monoshock machination, would likely do much to alleviate the problem.

The 250, on the other hand, is very little changed from the model that we shot out with the TS250 Suzuki last year. Some jetting changes in the carburetor, and paint-and-decal engineering, make up most of the differences. Still, whether it was because of our adaptation regimen or whatever, we are more impressed now than we were then.

The turn signals stayed on and blinking. The sole mechanical



YAMAHA DT250

ENGINE: Two-stroke single
DISPLACEMENT: 246cc
BORE & STROKE: 70x64mm
COMPRESSION RATIO: 6.7:1
CARBURETION: Mikuni
CLUTCH: Wet multi-disc
PRIMARY DRIVE: 65/23
TRANSMISSION RATIOS:

- 1) 33/13
- 2) 34/19
- 3) 26/20
- 4) 23/23
- 5) 20/26

FINAL DRIVE:

- 14-tooth countershaft
- 47-tooth rear sprocket

AIR FILTRATION: Wetted foam

LUBRICATION: Autolube

RECOMMENDED FUEL: Premium

RECOMMENDED OIL: Yamalube

FUEL TANK CAPACITY:

7.0 liters (1.85 gallons)

FRAME: Tubular double cradle

SUSPENSION:

Front: 1.95mm

Rear: 140mm

STARTING: Kick, primary

WHEELS & SPOKES:

Front: 1.60x21

Rear: 1.85x18

TIRES:

Front: 3.00x21

Rear: 4.00x18

DIMENSIONS:

Wheelbase: 141 cm (55.7 inches)

Ground clearance: 2.51 cm (10.0 inches)

Seat height: 835cm (34.5 inches)

Weight: 129 kilos (284 pounds) without

fuel; 45.9 percent on front, 54.1 on rear

BRAKES:

Front: Drum

Rear: Drum

INSTRUMENTS: Lots

SILENCER: Yes

SPARK ARRESTOR: Sure



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NO KIDDIN', IS THIS REALLY LIKE KENNY ROBERTS' PRACTICE BIKE?



malfunction, after numerous giggling getoffs, was one DNFed horn.

But, and this is the central point, these bikes are now fully capable of handling real trail riding; even capable, if you take the time to adjust air pressure before leaving the pavement and then again before returning, of taking their riders out to the trail and allowing them to enjoy themselves while there.

See, we did it! An honest and objective dual-purpose bike test. Nyah, nyah, we told you so. Now, can we have our YZs and RMs, our Huskys and Pentons and Bultacos back, please? Please?

What? Pavement? Here in the heart of dear old DB? Yep, we decided to break down and give a few paragraphs to the neglected half of the "dual" in "dual-purpose."

It's hard to say how large a percentage of street use most of these machines see. As they become more and more fit for dirt riding, more and more serious dirt heads will buy them.

Still, the very fact that Yamaha recommends a tire pressure of around 25 psi for "normal riding" on the 250 suggests that they expect it to see a good bit of street use. Dropping

that pressure by about half, depending upon the terrain to be traversed, will bring about a miraculous change in the DT's dirt manners.

But, back to asphalt kicking. Both DTs work fine on the street. In fact, the very things that make them superior dirt bikes have also improved their pavement readiness.

Of course, they come with trials universals, which are compromise tires and perform compromisingly. With a set of street rubber, either of these machines could be transformed into dynamite little canyon cutters.