

CYCLE CANADA

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OCTOBER 1981



Honda CX500
Turbo

KEN ROBERTS

Inside look
at the king
of racing

TURBO TEST
1982 Honda
CX500 first
in production

TRIUMPH TEST
Push-button
Bonneville

ENDURO TEST
Husqvarna's
quick 250WR

KZ305 TEST
Kawasaki's
tiger twin



CHAMPION

Ken Roberts

AT YAMAHA, IT'S ALREADY 1982.

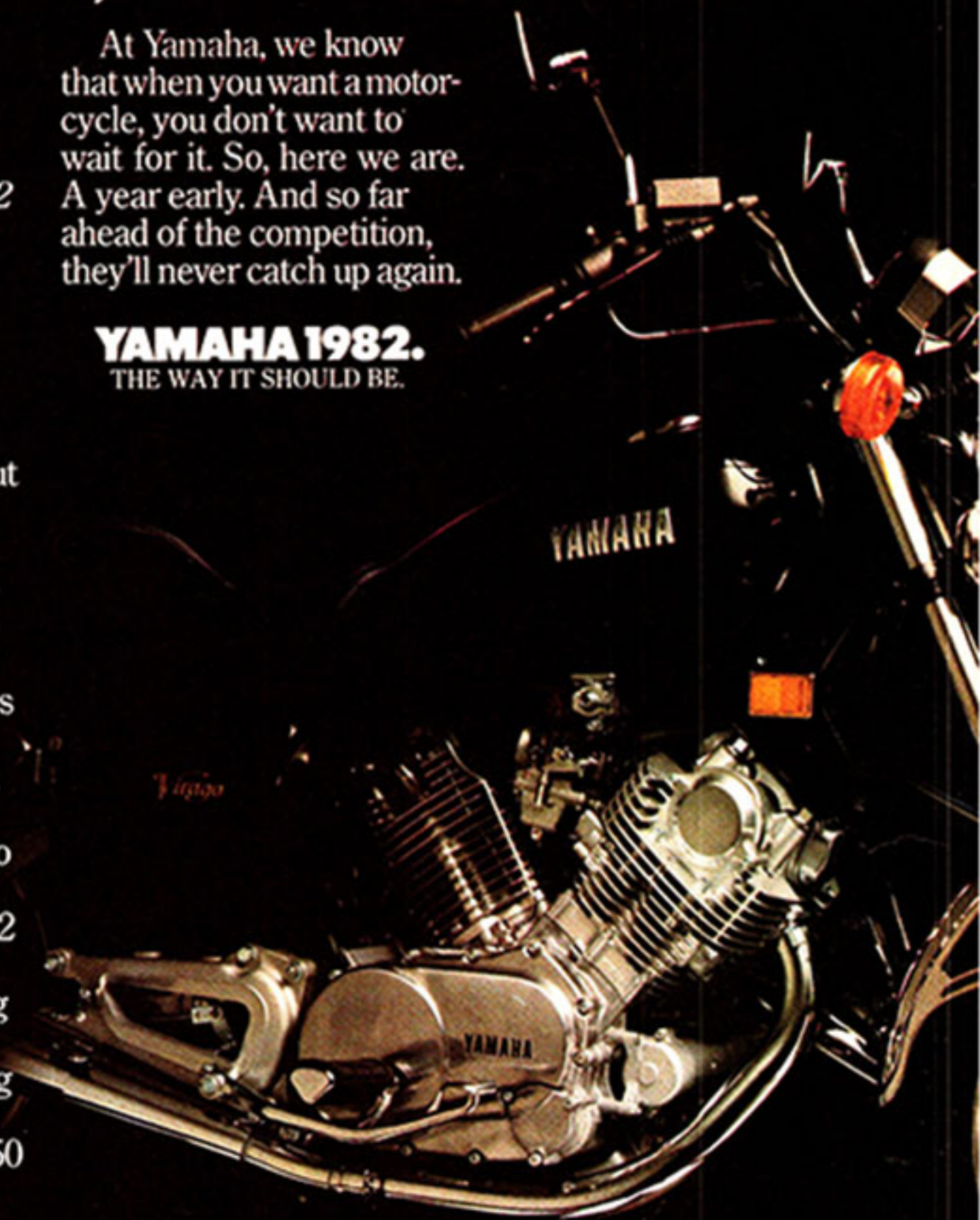
To the rest of the world, it's the summer of '81. At Yamaha, it's the dawn of 1982. Right now, your Yamaha dealer has the 1982 Virago 750. And the brand new 1982 Yamaha SECA 650. We're ready with our new 11.97 SECA 750 for 1982, the 1982 SECA 550 and the 1982 Maxim 550.

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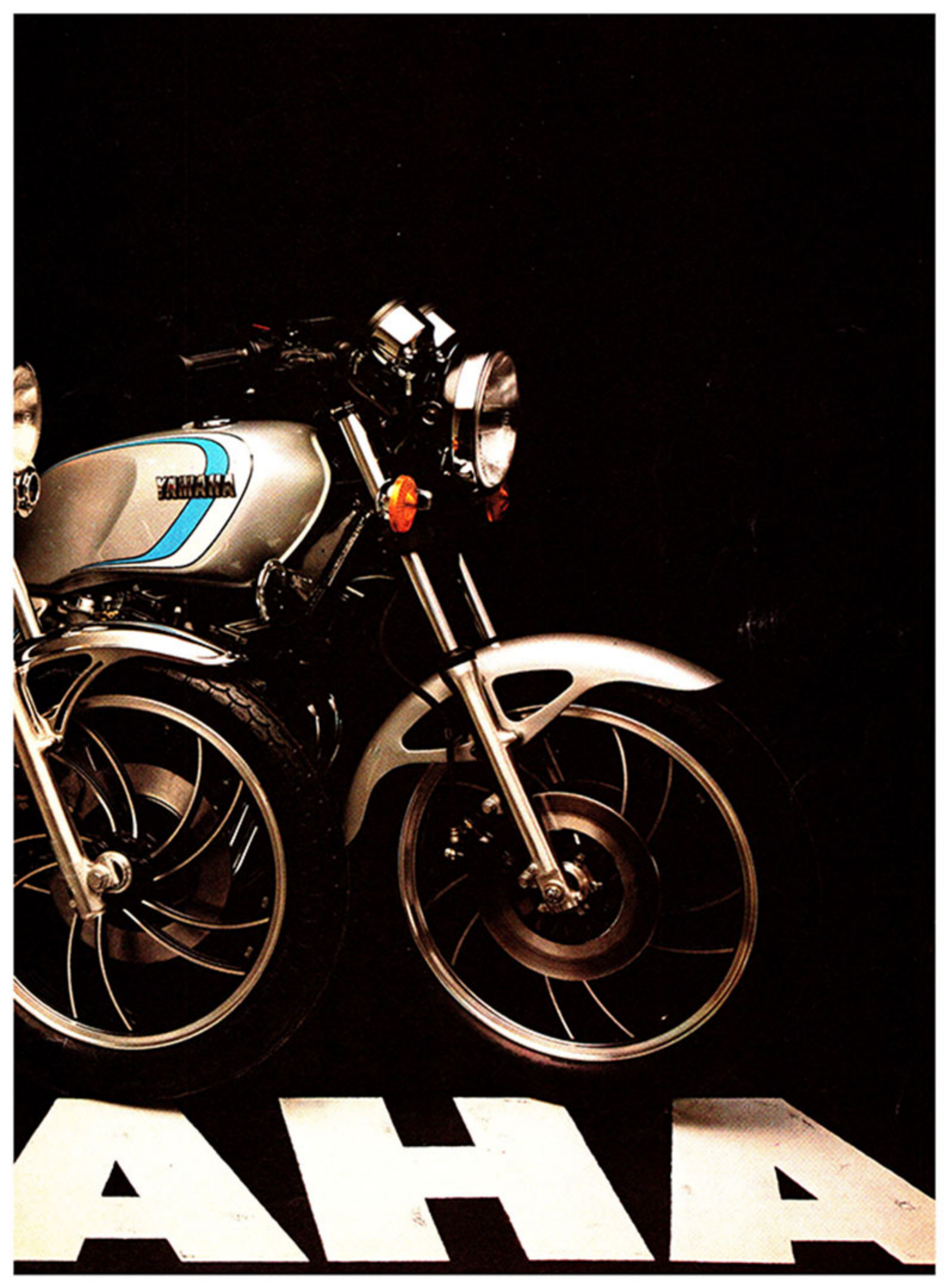
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YAMAHA



YAMAHA

YAMAHA



Honda CX500 Turbo's dash combines a light show and information display. Page 22.

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If you don't belong to the power-mad, wide-eyed gonzo school of enduro riding, you might find that a 250 is the size for you. And if you like to do it differently, why not try European for a change?

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A 305 cc LTD-styled twin is dull, you say? Just another little econobike, you say? Designed solely to tempt Chevrolet drivers onto two wheels, you think? Boy, have you got this bike wrong.

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Personality it has in spades. But this incarnation of the classic British twin doesn't use that as an excuse for a myriad of problems. Everything works and it doesn't leak. At all.

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Ken Roberts sat still only long enough for Robin Riggs to capture his likeness for our cover photo. Riggs also shot the Honda CX500 Turbo.

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Charitable clubs raise \$25,000

SAINT JOHN, N.B. — Members of seven Atlantic region motorcycle clubs raised more than \$25,000 to donate two kidney dialysis machines to the Izaak Walton Killman Hospital for children. The riders, members of clubs belonging to the Atlantic Road Riders Council, presented the cheque in company with New Brunswick finance minister Joel Matheson.

The clubs represented were the Golden Eagles of St. John, the Moncton Road Riders, the Cape Breton Road Riders, the Annapolis Valley Road Riders, the 74th Crusaders, the BMW Owners of Nova Scotia and the Open Road Touring Club.



John Williams is going for a fifth world hillclimb title.

Monster motor promised for '82

MARKHAM, Ont. — John Williams, the professional hillclimber whose latest exploits you can read about in Cyclesport on Page 56, is preparing a new weapon to assault the hills in 1982 to replace his trusty Honda 500-based STP Special.

The king of the hill says that he and long-time friend and tuner Nick Kemp are building what Williams calls a "secret



A dice run was popular at the third national rally in Welland, but not as much as the wine-tasting tour later.

Tours of local wineries a hit of third national rally

WELLAND, ONT. — Touring riders aged 16 to 72 from as far as B.C. and Oklahoma converged on southern Ontario's Welland County Motorcycle Club grounds July 17-19 for the third annual CMA national rally. The national rally name is given to one existing rally each year; in 1979 it went to the Bluenose in Nova Scotia and in 1980 to the Cariboo in B.C.

Despite registration problems caused by the mail strike and rain that washed out Saturday night's dirt track racing, more than 250 enthusiastic rallyists turned up, most of them on long haul machines. Harley dressers, Gold Wings with trailers, a few sidecar outfits and trikes made up the bulk of the entry. One do-it-yourselfer did show up on a 350 Honda four with plywood saddlebags and top box.

Most entrants were local riders from Ontario or the northeastern U.S., but for Martha and Robert Verill this was a last stop on an 18,000 km circle tour from Maine to Detroit via Florida, California and B.C.

Ed Olesen had a much shorter ride, from Oakville, Ont., but he did it on his 1926 Nimbus. The ride earned him the plaque for oldest bike at the rally. Among the many other prizes were those for best-dressed machine and best of marque in several categories.

Without doubt the most popular events of the weekend were the tours of local Niagara peninsula wineries, in particular the tasting sessions at the end of each visit. Dice runs on both days attracted a large number of entrants, while the curious tested their mettle on the FLT loaned by Harley-Davidson.

For those who wanted to arrange their own schedule, the Welland/Niagara Falls/Port Colborne area offered back-road riding, swimming and an assortment of tourist attractions.

new monster" for next season. It'll have an all-black engine, produce 300 hp, be fuel-injected but not turbocharged and run on 97 per cent nitro.

He won't say what the engine is, but states that it isn't available in North America. Maybe a Triumph?

Commuter group plans to fight for rider rights

BURKE, Va. — A new group calling itself the National Motorcycle Commuter Association has been formed for the purpose of promoting the goals of energy conservation and improved conditions for the commuting motorcyclist. The fledgling group has received support from the Motorcycle Industry Council, a non-profit group funded by the distributors of major motorcycle brands in the U.S.

NMCA chairman George Brousseau says the group was formed because of "the consistent failure at all levels of public policy formation to recognize the motorcycle as a transportation option." The group plans to act as a lobby and a spokesman for commuting cyclists with federal, state and local agencies.

Among the goals of NMCA are: motorcycle access to priority and car pool traffic lanes; parking for motorcycles in urban centres; automatic traffic signals sensitive enough to respond to motorcycles; equitable gasoline allocations in the event of fuel rationing; safer road conditions such as better designed rain grooves and sewer grates; a better deal for motorcycles on toll roads; and financing for proper rider training, safety education and licensing.

Those interested in NMCA can reach the group at 9341 Kite St., Burke, Va., 22015.

Malherbe repeats as world champ

ETTELBRUCK — Andre Malherbe has repeated as world 500 cc motocross champion, making it two straight, after the final race in Luxembourg, Aug. 9. His Honda team-mate Graham Noyce of Britain, winner two years ago, finished second and Hakan Carlqvist, Yamaha's No. 1 rider, ended up third.

The Belgian rider finished the season with 214 points, while Noyce had 206 and Carlqvist 201.

1982 models set for introduction

TORONTO — Our record in 1980 was pretty good, so once again we'll stick out our necks and tell you what to expect for the next model year. We predicted the Honda Pro-Link dirt bikes, the new CBX, the turbo CX500, Kawasaki's use of fuel injection in a new hot rod, the Suzuki GS650 series and the Full Floater dirt bikes and Yamaha's RD350 and line of V-twins.

What's 1982 to bring? From Honda, don't be surprised if more V-configuration bikes turn up, and don't be surprised if they don't all have an even number of cylinders. In an effort to maximize parts interchangeability, the story goes, Honda will have a line of bikes with anywhere from one to six cylinders that share the same cylinder parts. Want more power? Add another cylinder or two.

Another tale says Honda was going to use the NR500 V-4/V-8 racer to promote the line of engines, and since the NR500 has been less than a blinding success so far the Vs are being pushed into the background. A new 400 or 500 is rumored to fill the gap in

Light weight, low price features of new helmets

ACTON, ONT. — A new line of helmets is about to be released on the Canadian market, and for a change they'll be manufactured here, too.

Racer Helmets, a division of Escort Manufacturing Ltd., was set up by Ray Topelko in March of this year and was manufacturing helmets by May. Topelko plans to have sufficient stock built up to make a full-scale sales pitch for the late 1981 and early 1982 seasons.

The helmets use a fibre-glass shell and meet CSA and DOT standards. Topelko says he expects to have Snell approval late in 1981 or early in 1982. The line will include a full face, an open face and a motocross style full face helmet, with what Topelko calls a "Porky Pig" model expected for 1982. The helmet looks something like a Simpson Model 30 from the front, or, when painted white with ventilation slots added, like the storm trooper helmets in Star Wars.

Topelko says his helmets will be among the lightest on the market, and among the most comfortable. A moulded foam liner is covered with tricort and



Prototype Racer helmet for 1982 should have Snell approval; another version has ventilation slots.

padded leather. Shells are imported from the U.S., but there are plans to begin manufacture in Canada, making the entire manufacture and assembly process Canadian.

Racer sells helmets under OEM brand names as well as its own — Yamaha, for one, has purchased some — and also supplies helmets to the snowmobile industry. The only difference in product, says Topelko, is that snowmobilers favor brighter, fancier graphics.

The bottom line is always price, and Topelko says he'll be more than competitive. He hopes to hold the prices of even his best helmets around \$100.

Honda's performance line-up in that size. Three or four cylinders are to be expected, with Honda's now-standard twin overhead cams and four valves per cylinder.

Performance is the name of the game at Kawasaki for 1982, too. Kawasaki isn't big on turbos, but more use of fuel injection is likely since the big

GPz1100 has worked out so well. You may see Uni-Trak single shocks applied to street bikes to improve chassis behavior. Further away, in 1983, there are whispers of a liquid-cooled and turbo-charged GPz550.

Suzuki in 1982 is also expected to chase the go-fast crowd. There will almost cer-

tainly be more Katana models — there are five in Europe now — and turbos seem a good possibility. Look for one on a version of the new-in-1981 650 line. Upscale, Suzuki still doesn't have a luxury Gold Wing class tourer. Talk of a line of big V-4s has been circulating for some time.

Yamaha introduced many, many new models in 1981, so don't expect anything too radical in '82. A revamped XS1100 is likely, although the turbo prototype shown to the press earlier in 1981 isn't a good bet. A turbo on a higher-performance version of the 550 Seca may be in the works, as is better handling for the RD350.

In the dirt things aren't likely to change that much. More models from all the manufacturers may go to monoshocks and existing designs will be refined.

Roberts loses his chance at a fourth world title

IMATRA — Ken Roberts lost his chance for a fourth world 500 cc road racing title in Finland Aug. 9. He ran second for a while behind Italian Marco Lucchinelli, but suffered machine problems with his factory Yamaha and dropped back to finally finish seventh. A profile on the three-time champion, written before this race, begins on Page 30.

Lucchinelli, a factory Suzuki rider, won the race to consolidate his hold on the 1981 championship. His only rival is American Randy Mamola, also on a factory Suzuki, who trails by 10 points going into the final race at Anderstorp in Sweden. Mamola must win while Lucchinelli finishes fourth or lower, or Mamola finish second and Lucchinelli finish 10th or lower, for the Ameri-

NEWSFRONT

can to win.

The previous weekend, at Silverstone in England, Roberts had kept his hopes alive by getting through a third-lap accident that took out Lucchinelli. Pole-sitter Graeme Crosby fell, and the Italian and Roberts's Yamaha team-mate Barry Sheene went with him. Surprise winner was Dutch privateer Jack Middelburg, riding a private Suzuki RG500. Middelburg moved up through the field as Kork Ballington on the lone Kawasaki suffered machine failure and Mamola, who dived with Roberts for the lead for most of the race, gradually fell off the pace with a souring engine.

Middelburg caught up to Roberts at the end of the race and passed the defending world champion on the second-last lap. Roberts, poised to repass before the final flag, was balked by lapped traffic and couldn't get by.

There was a Canadian entrant at the British GP. Toronto-based Steve Gervais, who took his Yamaha YZR500 for his first crack at a grand prix. He failed to qualify.

Longer warranty now can be yours

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. — Extended warranty protection, available for some years for automobiles, now is being offered to motorcyclists.

World Automobile Service Contracts Ltd. offers mechanical protection for new motorcycles for 36 month/50,000 km periods. Called Cycleplan, it covers what the company calls the "reasonable cost" of repair and replacement of any parts of the engine, transmission, primary and final drive, suspension, steering and brakes that are damaged due to failure of any part of the motorcycle. That includes everything from pistons to final drive pinions to brake discs. Crash damage isn't covered.

Details are available from the company at 2306 McCullum Rd., No. 206, Abbotsford, B.C., V2S 3P4, (604) 859-4621.



Tim Thompson (l) got 92.91 mpg from his FLH in Neil Docherty's (r) economy run.

Competition puts Harleys, BSA, Hondas face to face

COURTENAY, B.C. — Can you believe 32.67 km/L (92.91 mpg) from a big Harley-Davidson tourer on a ride through B.C.? That was one result of a promotion run recently by a west coast dealer.

Neil Docherty, proprietor of Riverside Cycles in Courtenay, purchased another shop in Campbell River, 50 km away. He decided to have an economy run to go from shop to shop to introduce his new Campbell River store and to promote the fuel efficiency of motorcycles to the general public in both communities. The ride was organized with the help of Bob DuBreuil, Honda Canada's western zone sales manager.

Classes of under 400 cc, 401-750 cc and over 750 cc were decided on, with gift certificates redeemable at either store to go to class and overall winners. Newspaper ads and word of

mouth spread word of the run; a planned mail drop to existing customers had to be cancelled because of the postal strike. Riders with Hondas, Harleys, Suzukis, Yamahas and a lone BSA turned up.

Gas tanks were filled at the Courtenay store and refilled in Campbell River after the ride up the North Island Highway. Calculations gave the overall win to Terry McEvoy and his Honda XL250B, who recorded 37.98 km/L (108 mpg). That also gave him the under 400 cc prize.

In the 401-750 class, Mike McLelland on his 1971 BSA 500 took first place with a respectable 28.99 km/L (82.45 mpg) and Tim Thompson piloted his 1979 Harley-Davidson FLH to 32.67 km/L (92.91 mpg).

Docherty was so pleased with the results of his promotion he plans to make it an annual event.

Duhamel may join with Yoshimura

MONTREAL — Negotiations are still proceeding to get a competitive motorcycle for Yvon Duhamel for the Formula One motorcycle race in Montreal Sept. 27. Contrary to the report in the Sept. Newsfront, it now looks as though Steve Gervais will be riding — he's recovered more quickly

than expected from injuries suffered in July — so his TZ750 Yamaha won't be available.

Yoshimura is interested and may provide a Formula One machine similar to that of Wes Cooley. Another possibility is the Kawasaki F1 bike based on a European endurance racer that Dave Emde rode at Daytona this year.

Randy Hall, U.S. Kawasa-

ki's race chief, has worked with Duhamel in the past and has expressed interest in doing so one more time.

Endurance race last for track

EDMONTON — A 12-hour endurance race will cap the 1981 Alberta road racing season. It will be held at Edmonton International Speedway Sunday, Oct. 11.

The Alberta Roadracing Club, hosts of the event, say the track has been recently resurfaced and is in excellent condition.

Entries will be limited, and can be mailed to P.O. Box 9543, 10629-103 St., Edmonton, Alta., or phoned to (403) 451-0722.

New Dunlop tire promises superb street traction

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Dunlop is planning introduction of a new street tire which has already been immoderately successful on the race track. It's called a K291 and is scheduled for full production in September of this year.

K291s were fitted to winners of the 1981 running of the Nelson Ledges 24-Hour race Aug. 1-2. The overall winners on a 975 cc Honda and the 600 cc class winners on a Kawasaki GPz 550 both used the tires. The 400 cc class was won by a Yamaha RD350 on K81s. The K291s are intended only for use on large bikes.

The rear looks like a hand-cut slick, while the front resembles the KR91 endurance racing tire. Production K291s are already approved by the U.S. Department of Transportation for street use.

The tire was first raced at the Castrol Six-Hour in Australia this year, and won. The bike running in second place used the tires as well, but seized before finishing. K291s took the first five places at the Riverside Six-Hour and sixth overall/first DOT tire in the Riverside Two-Hour.

It's a superbike special, and will be available in the following sizes: 110/90-19, 120/80-18, 130/90-18 and 130/90-17.

Newsfront is edited by Larry Tate.

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CYCLE CANADA

Editorial

The nobility of grasping for excellence

Imagine the anguish of the man who is brilliantly accomplished at an endeavor about which few even care. Picture the poignancy of the idealistic athlete whose only concern is to deliver value to the largely indifferent public who have paid to watch.

Be that man. Sacrifice your every lucid moment to that one obsessive task during the most vital years of your life; observe that many of your words and actions are misinterpreted and misunderstood; and do what you can to better the lot of your colleagues who reward your diligence with apathy and your exhortations with excuses. If that's been your experience and motorcycle racing your endeavor, your name's Ken Roberts.

Roberts has a 10-year history of being the best at what he does, but "it's not important what people remember about what I've done in the past. What's important to me is whether they get their money's worth." He's tried to organize motorcycle racers to help better their income, their image, even their basic prospects of survival, but "you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink. I'm tired of yelling at them and talking about how they can improve things. I spent more money on a rider's organization than I ever could have made from it."

But he still cares, and he's not loath to give credit to others working for improvement when it's due. An example is his praise for the new president of the road racing committee of his old adversary, the Federation Internationale Motocycliste. "If the FIM would listen to him it would be a lot better sport. The man is good and I'm for him 100 per cent."

There's no rancor there, although it's barely a year since Roberts saw his scheme of overthrowing the monopoly of the FIM with his World Series collapse.

Much of the caring, the adherence to principle his biographer Barry Coleman attributes to Roberts's upbringing by a rural family which still lived in the shadow of the Depression and dust bowl. "He's an Okie and because he's like that he has these values and attitudes about what is right and wrong. When he fought the FIM he did it because what was happening wasn't right," Coleman says.

He's one of the United States' few multi-time world champions, yet the example he could show to his compatriots is largely unheeded. "Americans like vehicle heroes and achievers," says Coleman, "especially those who go abroad and win, but the U.S. public hasn't ever been interested in

motorcycle racing. Ken Roberts is an articulate man, but there are no channels between him and the American public."

Partly because what Roberts has to say has not been channeled to his public, his actions have not always been well understood. His persona is that of a small, cold, machine-like, wealthy and slightly arrogant man who displays technical virtuosity, sometimes to shocking excess, on a race track and then retires to the privacy of his motor home.

**We'll never know
which of them
was truly the better.
Nor will it matter.**

As the most visible and most vulnerable tip of a vast pyramid of supporting people, equipment, facilities and money, Roberts can't afford to be accessible to all who would approach him. His phone number isn't listed and just getting to talk to him involves going through channels.

"It's a lot of work, a lot of things to look after. People want to talk to me even though my manager looks after a lot of things. I haven't had a vacation in 10 years."

The only other rider whose name could be mentioned in the same breath as Roberts was recently lost to the world with the tragic death of Mike Hailwood. They came from different backgrounds and different eras and we'll never know which of them was truly the better. Nor will it matter. Let each of us cherish our own heroes.

Roberts has always witnessed the racing world from the comfort of the Yamaha inner sanctum, yet he had to work his way in and pay his dues to stay there.

The singlemindedness of his devotion to racing eventually alienated his wife Pat into divorce, and he's now only a part-time father to their three children. With his girlfriend's child there are four to look after when he's not away contesting grands prix. It's plainly a task he enjoys.

It seems largely innate in the character of the men and women who take up motorcycle racing that brashness and overt egotism are mercifully rare. After all, what ego-fodder is there to be found in a sport which yields so little acclaim?

Yet the process of grasping for excellence may be ennobling in itself. Roberts is concerned that Coleman's biography of his life not read like a press release. He wants to see himself portrayed as he is seen, warts and all. When I told him we planned to use his face as our cover picture, he wanted to know if Cycle Canada had "too much circulation, or what? Are you trying to cut it down?"

Won't that be the day? Ride on, KR.

—John Cooper

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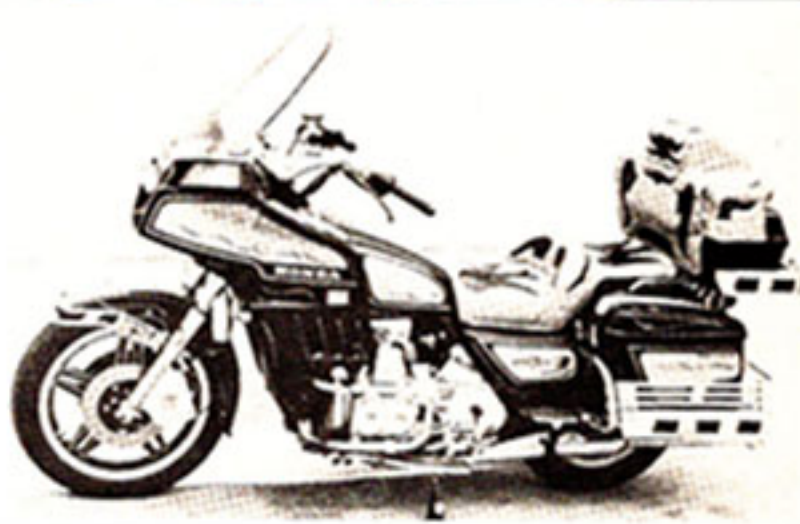
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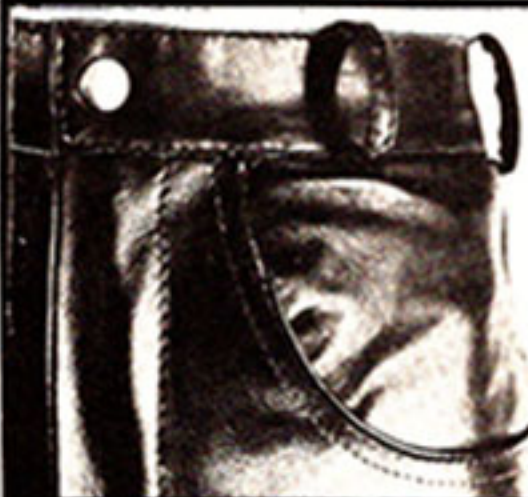
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MASTHEAD

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We were incredulous. The promoter of a major race was threatening to deny us access to his race because he had not received a puff piece in Cycle Canada. This is as rare as an advertiser openly demanding favorable coverage for a product, and it came as a rude shock.

The promoter eventually relented. Editor John Cooper took the opportunity to suggest he was giving extortion a bad name. He reminded the promoter that advertising space in Cycle Canada is for sale, editorial space is not.

The reason why this is worth mentioning is that many readers may not fully realize how distinct a division there is between editorial and advertising in a publication such as Cycle Canada.

Here's an extract from an editorial policy memo written in our early years:

"Never give an inch of space to an advertiser or promoter unless it's for legitimate news. Never slant a story for a special-interest pressure group. Never try to do anyone a favor in editorial copy.

"Remember that a publication grows effective as an advertising medium largely because of the quality and appeal of its editorial content. Publications which are not worthwhile reading are worthless as advertising media.

"Never ever consider for even a split-second giving up a smidgen of editorial control to an advertiser. Although there might be some short-term financial benefits, on the long run it would be suicidal.

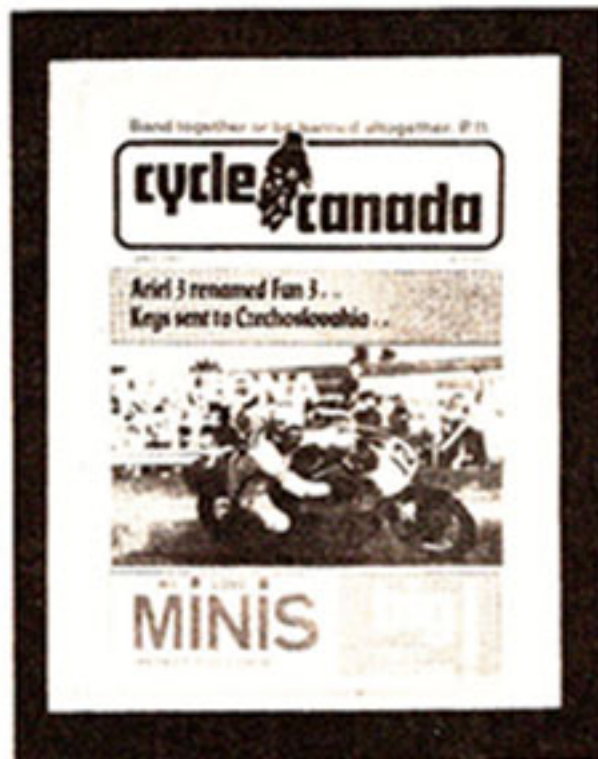
"No reader will long support a publication once he learns, or suspects, that what he reads, or doesn't read, is influenced by advertisers and promoters.

"If Cycle Canada is to continue to be a meaningful and useful publication, for readers as well as advertisers, we must be able to consider the reader the most important person in our work."

And there you have the secret behind the success of Cycle Canada: We believe the reader to be of supreme value, and thus the editorial product takes on a sovereign nature.

The editorial product is the heart of the business of publishing. The quality of the editorial determines the circulation that a publication can establish and, therefore, the advertisements it will attract.

So we take great pains to protect the editorial heart of Cycle Canada from outside influences.



Since the beginning, we have taken
steps to protect our credibility.

We do not make deals with anyone—advertisers, promoters, motorcycle manufacturers, whoever—about what will or won't be said editorially. We don't want anyone to think, even suspect for a minute, that we owe them a favor in print.

We largely pay our own way in everything we do. We generally do not pay for use of the motorcycles we test, but we certainly pay for most service, repairs and damage. When we want to test a new product, we will just as soon go out and buy it as ask a distributor for a sample. And we will just as soon buy a ticket to get into an event as accept a working-press pass from a promoter who thinks it will guarantee favorable coverage.

We do not accept gifts, and company policy prohibits any employee from accepting a discount on motorcycling products or services that is offered as some sort of favor to the press. We expect no favors, and we give none.

When motorcycling manufacturers invite us to visit and test their latest offerings, we pay our own way, whether it be to Valcourt, Milwaukee or Hamamatsu. The appearance as well as the reality of independence is important to us.

We take all these steps—some of them quite expensive—because we believe you, the reader, deserve the utmost in terms of accuracy, fairness and honesty.

—Georgs Kolesnikovs

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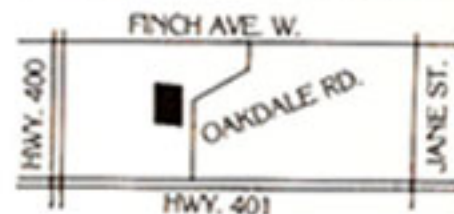
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READERS WRITE

READERS ACCUSE TESTERS OF BEING UNFAIR TO YAMAHA XV920

East and west unite in defense of bike

Your test article on the 920 Yamaha has prompted me to write this letter. I am left with the impression this is one terrible motorcycle, and I should not accept one if it were offered to me free.

Maybe this is the exact feeling the tester intended to convey to the public, for I have seldom read a test which was such an effective assassination of a specific model.

I can't help but wonder if the tester conducted an objective test of a new model or whether his personal dislike was so strong it affected the results.

Meaningful criticism of new models is to be applauded and expected. Personal, and to my feeling, extraneous items add nothing but verbiage to the article.

Even when your writer found something good about the machine, he invariably made that a minus quality by a following comment. Examples: "liked rear drive set up BUT the 920 is heavier than the 750." Hmmm, don't know many 900s-plus that aren't heavier than the same brand 750! "The rear wheel is almost quick detachable, BUT Vincents had 10 second removal without tools." Show me. "The engine is noisy — screams — much worse than the harmonious (?) noise of the noisy Ducatis." "The owner's manual is full of warnings which indicate the owner is an idiot." "The dual discs are nice, but not necessary for the weight and potential speed."

In short, the whole negative test smacks of an article more suited to Moto X Action where failure to criticize a bike seems to be regarded as an incompetent tester.

In future, I'll be just as happy if you stick to bona fide and useful criticisms, leaving out the comparisons with 50 year old models. Further, criticisms can be made validly without odious comparisons to other makes (some Hondas have discs that warp). Phooey.

Stick to evaluating the lovely motorcycles coming down the line and we'll all be a lot more appreciative of your unbiased and objective road tests.

Jim Kelly
Hamilton

Having just read the article on the new



Few bikes in recent memory have been as controversial as Yamaha's XV920.

Yamaha XV920, I felt that I had to voice my comments. If I were to take your article to heart, I would surely step out back and thrust a rusty handlebar through my body as I have one of Yamaha's new 920s. However, upon a second look I don't believe we are riding the same bike.

I am absolutely amazed at the nit-picky attitude of your testers and at the method of expression of your writer. According to the writer, the motorcycle that you were testing couldn't have been 100 per cent. Smoking profusely at start-up should tell you that something is amiss and you should have it checked out at your local dealer.

My 920 starts and runs cleanly every time and unlike your test bike, delivers oil changes without additions. Again I say that your testers were nit-picky because at this point in time you should have returned the bike to the dealer for inspection and possibly tried a different unit.

A further confirmation of your testers' bias is their complaint of engine vibration over 4,500 rpm. Well for gosh sakes guys, this is a twin not a four, so let's treat it accordingly. This bike has the torque feel of the old Nortons, balance and tightness like the BMW, and styling so different that it draws attention from everyone. I've had women tell me that they thought my bike was beautiful so it can't be that bad. The rear of the bike, admittedly, does leave one a bit empty but aside from the styling aspect it has to be one of the most func-

tional rear fenders in keeping the bike clean in dirty riding conditions.

And how about the brakes, testers? In one paragraph you say that if the bike is pressed, one end or the other will slide out during braking. Yet in the very next line you come up with a description of the front brakes as, quote, "is unusually good in wet weather or dry. It stops the bike predictably every time." Your poor readers are going to have to do a lot of reading between the lines to figure that one out. I know that if I really get on the binders, I can stop my 920 with uncanny quickness.

Again, going back to my second paragraph, your testers couldn't have had a bike that was 100 per cent because of your terrible mileage claims. I find that with steady cruising at 110-120KM my bike will get 48-50mpg. I really believe that your test bike was ailing and that this was not a fair test.

Another little comment that your testers brought up was that the position of the brake and shifter pedals was inconvenient and that missed shifts were cut down by adjusting the lever. Well, I can't believe that your expert testers would ride and test any motorcycle without setting it up first. Why mention these points in such critical manner when Yamaha has given the owner the ability to set both shifter and brake levers to your own personal likes? It appears that the testers were going out of their way to find anything that they could criticize.

Another point is the self-cancelling turn signals. These have been on Yamahas for years and as far as I am concerned are the easiest to operate. Having ridden another brand last year with the same feature, Yamaha's system is far superior. Maybe your testers are all fingers and no thumbs, but again very nit-picky.

Another example of your biased testing is the comment on the gearbox "scream" or "howl". Unfair! Your use of adjectives gives the impression of a screaming banshee between your legs. Your writers should be a little more accurate in their descriptions. My bike has what I would call a whine and if I wasn't riding mine, your description would definitely turn me off the 920.

I am happy to say that my bike sounds and works great. One concession I will make is that I did change to lower handlebars but this was no direct reflection on the

920 as every bike I have ridden in the past couple of years has received the low bar treatment. Just because your testers are all pro cafe doesn't mean that the bars are only good behind a fairing. The bars just didn't suit your style so let's tell it like it is.

I really enjoy my XV920, Cycle Canada, and am very disappointed at what I feel was a very unfair and biased, not to mention a poorly written, article. I am sure that the American magazines will give this bike the credit it deserves.

In closing, I'll say that any further interest I might have in your magazine will have to be confined to lining my cat's litter box. With past issues that is, because I refuse to part with \$1.75 for the quality of writing that you offer.

Al Neufeld
Edmonton

Town council threatens to hobble motorcyclists

I would like to bring to the attention of Cycle Canada readers the existence of some unreasonable jerks who are trying to make life hard for us motorcyclists.

A town close to me, Haileybury, Ont., has a council that is attempting to lower the motorcycle speed limit in town to 25 km/h from 50 because "motorcycles are a danger because of excessive speeds."

Forget the maniacs that burn rubber on their hot-rod cars. Forget the ones that go twice the speed limit in cars.

People like these seem to forget that six people can usually fit into a car and be killed while only two can be fitted on a motorbike. To hear these people talk we are all members of the Hell's Angels. I have to admit people like this exist, but how many of you carry chains to hit people when you go motorcycling?

This bylaw seems to deprive us of our rights on the streets. I hope the CMA gets involved and voices out our rights. I hope all motorcyclists send letters to the Haileybury town council and join the CMA to voice our rights.

Mickey Garneau
Larder Lake, Ont.

Contributions are welcomed for Readers Write. It's your section of Cycle Canada, a forum for your opinions and ideas. Write to The Editor, Cycle Canada, 290 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Ont., M5B 2C5. All letters must be signed and show the writer's full address. Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication. Personal replies are not always possible.

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Frame design is still a black art

TECHNICS

Weight distribution and frame stiffness are critical to building a good bike

By Mike Crompton

One of the biggest concerns and areas of complaint of the high performance oriented consumer is handling.

What causes handling woes in a high performance bike? Why does it wobble, twitch over bumps, wash out in corners?

Often a rider will find that handling problems appear for the first time or existing troubles get worse after installing hundreds of dollars worth of go-fast goodies. What happens in this case is that the extra loads fed into the frame by more horsepower and increased rider demands are over-riding the basic strength of the frame.

Frame design even now is literally a black art. There are so many variables involved in building a frame that no computer simulation or drawing board design is likely to work without many hours of playing with the finished product.

Variables in the design include front fork angle (rake), steering offset, trail, wheelbase, centre of gravity, total height, swingarm length, shock length, shock angle, size of wheels ... the list goes on.

Two major problems have been found in superbike racing that in one way or another reflect most street handling problems. One is the stiffness of the frame unit or of parts of it, and the other is weight distribution. Adjusting these two variables can do much to change a frame's handling characteristics.

First, stiffness. A major reason that many bikes tend to flex is that the engine is not securely tied into the frame. Production line tolerances lead invariably to some slop in the motor mounting bolts. Looseness here will let the biggest single weight in the motorcycle move around when force is applied to it, playing havoc with the bike's steering geometry and ability to travel in a straight line.

Replacement of the stock mounting bolts with tight-fitted bolts of the next larger diameter and going to thicker mounting plates will lock the motor in,

creating a much more solid frame structure. In the early days of superbike racing, tuners added incredible webs of tubing and gusseting plates to the frames of many bikes in an attempt to stiffen them. We now know that much of that is unnecessary, and even factory superbikes today have surprisingly little about the main frame cradle that's non-stock.

Once the frame is stiff enough to take suspension loads without twisting, the tuner can start adjusting the suspension for maximum effectiveness. Rear suspension in particular can make a great difference. Shock location on a stock bike is dictated in large part by how much wheel travel the designer can allow once he leaves room for a seat, exhaust plumbing, the tire and so on.

Without the need to worry about these items, the high performance tuner can relocate the shock to allow more travel and to get a more progressive rate of springing: softer initially and stiffer toward the end of travel. The commonest way to do this is to lay the shock down; that is, move the top mounting point forward. The geometry of the shock and wheel movement then allow more wheel travel for the same shock travel.

More and softer wheel travel helps the rear tire maintain positive contact with the road surface. It also helps the frame, since loads that previously were fed into it are absorbed more by the shock springs.

Where exactly do you locate the shock? You have to experiment in each case, since it has to work in conjunction with all the other frame design variables. But a rule of thumb used by some superbike mechanics is that the shocks should be roughly parallel to the rider's back when he's in racing position. It's a place to start, at least.

It's not so easy to rectify the second major problem, that of weight distribution. Again, much of this problem stems from the designer having to meet too many conflicting requirements. For maximum stability and safer handling there should be more weight on the front wheel than on the back. Yet this will cause the steering to feel heavy and somewhat slow at the lower speeds that many riders commonly use. Most factories bias the weight toward the back to avoid this, with a consequent effect on high-speed stability.

At high speed or under hard accelera-

tion the front end on many street bikes can get extremely light. Most racing bikes carry about 51-55 per cent of their weight on the front wheel. The 55 per cent figure is extreme and refers to bikes like a Suzuki RG500 grand prix racer; a Honda Formula One bike carries about 51 per cent up front; a common street-going 750 noted for its generally good handling has only 47.

Changing weight distribution isn't as easy as stiffening a frame. Short of actually moving the steering head back, or moving the engine forward, there's not much you can do.

Many handling problems can be traced to the front end, and many of those have to do with improperly maintained parts. Steering head bearings can wear, causing wobbles at almost any speed. Particularly on older bikes, ball bearings were common; improper adjustment combined with age and heavy usage can cause the balls to indent the races, which tends to introduce detents or click stops in the smooth operation of the bearing.

A common fix for front end wandering is a steering damper, but it should not be seen as a cure-all. Used properly on a well-adjusted machine it can minimize the impulses through the steering that may result in a wobble. Many people tend to use one to cover up wobbles resulting from other causes such as worn bearings, and this will only cause grief.

Spring and damping rates play a crucial part in front end stability while cornering. Keeping the tire in contact with the road is the important thing, so too-stiff springing is to be avoided since it may cause bounce that overcomes damping force and skips the tire off the pavement.

Stiff springs also raise the front ride height, which shifts more weight to the back of the bike — an undesirable feature. Too soft springs, on the other hand, will cause dive during braking or cornering; the suspension travel is too quickly used up and rough roads can cause bottoming and consequent lack of control.

And there's much, much more. If you've decided that perhaps you don't want to get into heavy-duty frame modifications after reading this, you've probably got the right idea. It's expensive and time-consuming, and can as often as not end up giving you a machine worse than stock in some ways. □

The author is a tuner and race mechanic who has worked on superbikes for a number of years. During the past two winters he has worked with American Honda developing and building the superbikes ridden by Freddie Spencer, Steve McLaughlin and others.

Diplomatic riding is a strange game

ON THE ROAD

Motorcycling in China is a struggle with roller skates and donkeys

By David Smith

Being in the Canadian diplomatic service has over the years provided me with many opportunities to indulge in my long-standing hobby of motorcycles. Once, in 1974-76, I owned the only Honda in Cuba. It got so that I filled up with gas from a can at home because of the mob I picked up whenever I stopped at the pumps.

Now I'm in the People's Republic of China, and my hobby has been enlarged to the point that I'm the diplomatic corps' resident motorcycle mechanic in Peking. Only last weekend I assembled two 1981 Honda CB750Fs that had been shipped from up from Hong Kong in varying states.

The Canadian embassy staff here are all running around on Honda CK90s, which was one of the first types of Honda to be imported into Canada in the early Sixties. We imported nine of them from Tokyo and now jockey for position with the bicycles.

As for motorcycling in China... With the exception of the rare motocross, usually a cultural event between China and some other country, motorcycling for the man in the street is a rather mundane affair. Motorcycles are transportation, nothing else.

There are of course your Yangtze Rivers complete with sidecar and spare tire, something along the lines of a primitive Dnepr. Certainly the Canadian Ministry of Transport would never approve the one square inch of taillight, nor, I doubt, would it become too excited about the turn signal—a lighted arrow which is twisted, rarely, in the direction the rider is about to turn. No Q-switches or quartz headlights here.

There has appeared on the streets a horde of Suzuki FA 49 cc motorbikes, as well as a conglomeration of Chinese mopeds. Add to these the bicycles with add-on motors, or indeed, home-made motors, and about three million regular bicycles and you get utter confusion at rush hour.

Peking has eight million residents, give or take a couple of souls. There is no private ownership of automobiles, so while we in the western world save for our dream car these folks dream of owning a



Motocross racing in China is almost always a cultural event between two countries. Author says crowds for a race with Italy were huge; the army provided crowd control.

Suzuki moped. For a Chinese, this will set him back 1,000 Yuan (1.40 Yuan to the Canadian dollar). With the average worker receiving between 40 and 80 Yuan per month you can see they have to save a few years to purchase their dream.

China does not have enough vehicles, whether it be buses or bicycles. One can not simply purchase a bicycle once one has saved the 170 Yuan, but must have somehow earned the right to purchase one. Imagine, then, the meritorious deeds that must be accomplished before a moped can be purchased.

Still, if I were a Chinese, a moped would be my goal. It can't be much fun pedalling to work everyday rain or shine, heat or cold. Not to mention the horrendous dust and sand storms that Peking is so famous for. There are some days that the wind is so strong riders have to dismount and push the bikes along. You can always tell which way the wind is blowing in the morning just by watching the cyclists.

Rush hour here is amazing. It consists of thousands of bicycles, each with its cursed bell, donkeys, mules and horses (sometimes all three together) pulling "honey carts" destined for our strawberries, Shanghai and Red Flag automobiles (the Chinese version of an official limo,

except they still think it's neat to have three-inch wide whitewalls), pre-revolution American clunkers such as 1957 Chevys for which I think they manufacture their own parts, three-wheeled motorcycle-engined things (call them what you wish) and trucks, trucks and more trucks. Plus all the new mopeds.

Driving at night is even more exciting. That's when the roller skaters and card players come out to play. They just built a four-lane ring road here. Since it's nice and smooth the populace has taken to roller skating in both lanes each way. They're the kind of skates you strap to your shoes; remember those? You're not allowed to turn on your headlights here, which just adds to the fun.

What about the card players? Well, the street lights give enough illumination to play poker, provided you sit directly under the light. It doesn't matter that this means you sit in the middle of the street. Besides, it's cooler than in the apartment and the maximum power light bulb they can have at home is 40 watts.

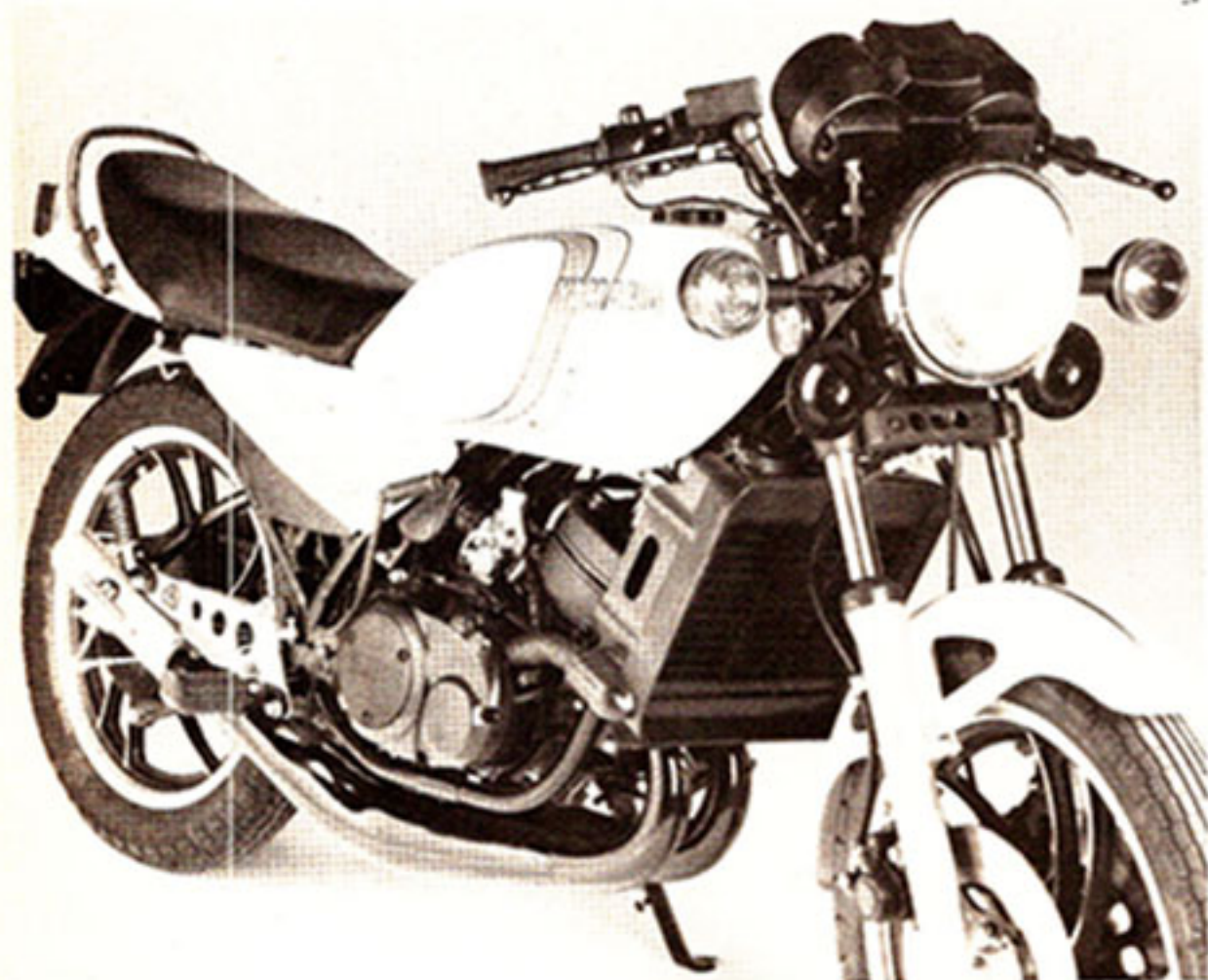
So it's not the hot place to cruise a Gold Wing. Helmets? Never heard of them. Lights on during the day? Can't even use them at night. Protective clothing? Not a

Continued on Page 19

David Smith is an attache at the Canadian embassy in Peking.

NEW PRODUCTS

IF YOUR YAMAHA 350 ISN'T FAST ENOUGH, GET A SET OF CHAMBERS



Everyone knows that Yamaha's RD350H is a slug, barely able to get out of its own way. DG can change that with a set of expansion chambers claimed to increase horsepower by 15 per cent and

take 1.1 seconds off a quarter mile run. Aluminum silencers are repackable; chambers are made from stamped steel. \$299 from Aurora Cycle Supply; also distributed by R&M Motocross Specialties.



It's claimed the Super Guard Cycle Alarm produces more sound for its size than other alarms. It can be mounted at any angle on any tube on the bike. Movement sets off a piercing buzzer which goes for one minute, then resets. Several speaker outlets make silencing it difficult. Suggested retail \$38.50 from Nican Trading.



Ross Pederson, Dennis James and Mike Harnden all use Pro-Cycle Products number plates and cable sheathes. Plate has double straps and meets all 1981 identification requirements, while the cable protector has a slippery inner surface to minimize cable binding. Retail \$8.95 for the plates and \$3.95 for the protectors from Pro-Cycle Products.



Harley-Davidson's New Breed Compact helmet is the equivalent of a vinyl roof on your Eldorado. Underneath it's a regular fiberglass jet-style helmet, but on the surface is a layer of vinyl stitched to give the appearance of leather. The H-D logo is embossed on the front of the helmet. Available in sizes small through extra-large from Harley dealers; price hasn't been determined, but it will be high, says Harley.



Light Strobe is a recent Canadian entry to the headlight modulator field. The unit makes the light pulse approximately four times per second to increase visibility to other motorists. It can be wired to the stop light as well, has a one year warranty and is said to have a higher wattage capacity and lower price than other units. Suggested retail \$44.95; manufactured by Light Strobe.

ON THE ROAD

Continued from Page 17

chance. Some of the People's Liberation Army motocross riders, the guys who race other country's racers, use hockey pads on their knees.

I went to see a race when Italy and China went at it near Peking. Needless to say, the Italians and their Gileras swept the field, but the Chinese, riding Kawasakis and Suzukis, gave a pretty good account of themselves even though they have a long way to go. Most Chinese are too short to reach the ground on a motocross bike, so they have a buddy carry two bricks to the starting line for the racer to stand on. The buddy takes the bricks away after the race starts...

Believe me, crowd control is something else here. I swear that half the PRC army, three million all together, were at the track. That still didn't stop the crowds from rushing onto the track, and one poor soul is now pushing up daisies. Why would anyone want to stand in front of a speeding Gilera?

Motorcycling in China is indeed restrictive, even for us. We have three places from which to choose: the Great Wall, about 60 km north, the Ming tombs and the airport. Except for these places, we're limited to a 40 km radius from the embassy or a 20 km radius from the centre of the city. Anything beyond that requires a permit.

Add to that the difficulty of getting gasoline: foreigners can purchase gas at only two authorized stations in Peking, and tops is 85 octane. Who's heard of unleaded? Then there are the incredibly



Officials give photographers trouble in China, too; worse, they're in the army and can cause a lot more difficulty.

crowded streets. You'd be wise to think twice before bringing over your CBX.

I've left a 1979 CX500 in storage back in Canada. Sometimes I wish I'd brought it. It would be the only liquid cooled, shaft driven bike this side of Shanghai; talk about crowds! I can only dream about returning and taking it along a highway with clean air, no bicycles, no donkey carts, no '57 Chevs (or at least fewer) and perhaps best of all, other riders who'll wave as you pass. Come on, 1982.

In the meantime, I'll just fire up a Honda 90 and putt off into the sunset, to the Great Wall and beyond. Provided I get permission. □



Monsoon rainwear is made in Canada of silicone-impregnated nylon coated with polyurethane. Nylon liners reduce sweating; back and armpits are vented. Color is electric blue with vivid orange striping. Available in one or two piece suits; two piece has a high bib on the pants. Zippers and Velcro fasteners allow tight fit to reduce wind whip. About \$120 for the one-piece and \$140 for the two-piece. Distributed by Action Accessories and Techno Sports.

SOURCES

Action Accessories Ltd., 77 Enterprise Dr., London, Ont., N6N 1A5, (519) 681-0990.

Aurora Cycle Supply, P.O. Box 433, Aurora, Ont., L4G 3L5, (416) 727-6044.

Light Strobe, P.O. Box 232, Postal Station M, Toronto, Ont., M6S 4T3.

Nican Trading Co. Ltd., 7442 Fraser Park Dr., Burnaby, B.C., V5J 5B9, (604) 434-7575 and 3225 Lenworth Dr., Mississauga, Ont., L4X 2C6, (416) 625-3890.

Pro-Cycle Products, P.O. Box 123, Oshawa, Ont., L1H 7L1.

R&M Motocross Specialties, 1441 Kingsway, Vancouver, B.C., V5N 2R6, (604) 873-4554.

Techno Sports, 5-2000 Rue Watt, Ste. Foy, Que., G1X 3Y8, (418) 652-9200.

The New Products section of Cycle Canada is a free service offered to manufacturers and distributors for listing new products available in Canada. Information, a black and white photo, the suggested list price and a list of Canadian distributors should be addressed to New Products, Cycle Canada, 290 Jarvis St., Toronto, Ont., M5B 2C5.



The Yangtze River with sidecar is China's motorcycling workhorse, complete with spare tire, flat twin engine and quilted fairing. It's a copy of a Thirties-era BMW.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID SMITH

PRODUCT TESTS

CANADIAN-BUILT BIKE TRAILER COULD SOLVE ALL PACKING PROBLEMS FOREVER

Feathertow lets you take it all along

More and more motorcycling trailers are hitting the market. The manufacturers claim they offer great luggage space and convenience without unduly affecting the operation of the motorcycle.

A new trailer with a difference is the Feathertow, from Winnipeg. Built by a long-time touring rider — company owner Don Fisher has been to South America, among other trips — the Feathertow is different from most trailers in that it is merely a space frame that holds two suitcases. This makes it unusually light and extraordinarily flexible, since the Samsonite bags are slightly modified versions of one of that company's biggest standard suitcases.

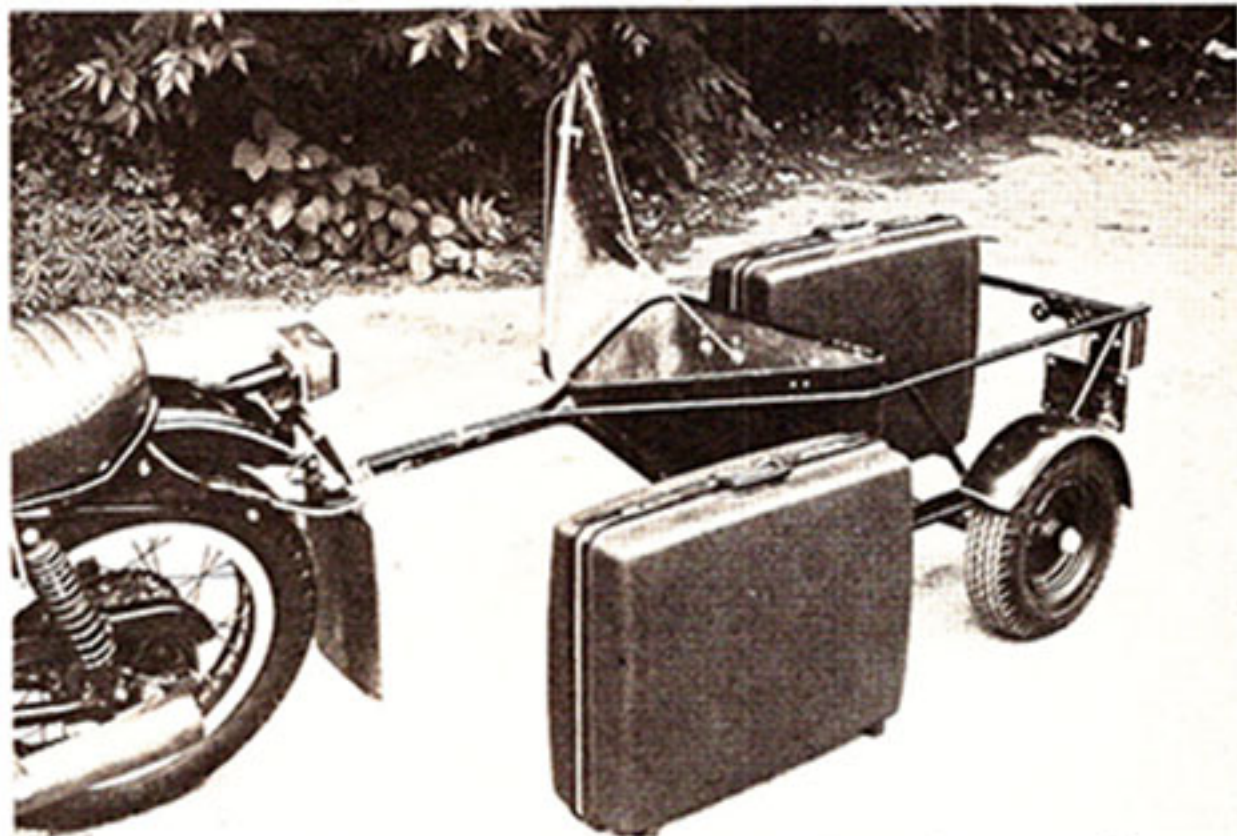
The cases have a ridge running all around the opening. This ridge locks into three sets of runners mounted to the trailer's frame tubes. The runner/ridge system prevents fore and aft or lateral movement, while a bar locks across the top of the suitcases and under the top frame rails to keep the suitcases from bouncing.

The trailer itself is light and strong, using round steel tubes assembled into a triangulated structure. Standard trailer wheels and tires are fitted. A Heim joint at the bike hitch allows more than sufficient rotational movement for any lean angle the bike might meet. There's an additional storage compartment, made of fibreglass, permanently attached to the frame in front of the suitcases.

The hitch on the bike is a model of lightness and simplicity. It attaches to the top shock mounts and the rear subframe that carries the seat.

We rode a Yamaha XS650 twin with the trailer attached. Without a load in the suitcases, we found it literally impossible to feel the trailer rolling along behind. With some weight, you're conscious of the bike being a bit slower, but certainly no more so than with a pillion rider. The trailer itself weighs only a claimed 34 kilograms. Not under acceleration, braking or cornering did the trailer noticeably affect the motorcycle.

We were impressed. Many riders still have a negative opinion of trailers, in large part because they "just don't look right" on a bike, but our experience has been posi-



Feathertow exhibits good workmanship and minimal effect on the motorcycle.

tive. Fisher says many of his sales are to sporting riders who want luggage room but don't wish to clutter their bikes with brackets for saddlebags and top cases.

If you can get past any problems you may have with image, we'd recommend you take a look at the Feathertow should you want that much luggage space. It's built extremely well of high-quality components and looks as though it'll last a long time. The suitcases are Samsonite's best, and should last a lifetime. For a suggested retail price of \$950 the Feathertow looks pretty good, particularly if you check out the cost of a conventional luggage system and the cost of two suitcases of similar quality.

Manufactured by KP Engineering and Design, Bay 1, 1329 Niakwa Rd., Winnipeg, Man., R2J 3T4, (204) 256-6428.

Built-in kidney belt doesn't help a lot

The Hannah Hi-Back motocross pants come attached to one of the most respected names in motorcycling, Bob Hannah. Everyone knows who Bob Hannah is but the pants will have to make a name for themselves. Good as they are, there are a few points that could use attention.

The pants fit well, especially in the

upper part. They are comfortable even after a long ride. The built-in kidney belt is better than nothing but does not eliminate the need for a regular belt. The built-in belt is too short and the front Velcro closure is too low to keep tension on the upper rear portion of the belt. The closure should be taller.

The knee has a plastic cup which has a felt type impact-absorption padding on its inner surface. The knee cup slips into a nylon pocket inside the pant leg which is closed by Velcro.

The pant leg closes along its lower length by more Velcro. This is good because a rider with a sore foot won't have to take ballet practice to get his foot through the pant, and bad because the resulting tightness behind the back of the knee when the Velcro is secured is more than some will be able or want to live with. Tall riders found the pant short when compared with other brands and shorter but more heavily built riders found the knee area tighter.

Construction is good. No split seams or holes appeared after rough use during enduros and playriding. The knee cup is responsible for one editor still being able to walk when a small boulder scored a direct hit on the knee while he was following a hard-accelerating Honda XR500R.

The leather reinforced knees allow a



Hannah replica pants stand up well and don't mind a turn in the washing machine after a hard day in the mud.

good grip to be taken on fuel tanks just when you need it most, but because the leather can shrink during washing, the instructions recommend that the pant be hand washed. This can be a problem, as anyone who has tried to hand wash filthy mud-encrusted clothing will testify.

We had to try a machine wash. Set on mild with cold water, the pants suffered in no manner and came out clean.

Overall, the pants stood up well to the usual mixture of crashes and neglect. They aren't cheap at \$179.95 but if they fit well, they aren't a bad buy. Distributed by Kari Products, 25 Brookridge Dr., Scarborough, Ont., M1P 3M3, (416) 757-2344.



Soft foam hand guards tore in a crash, but duct tape made a permanent cure.

Protection, warmth provided by guards

Quick, what's the price for a pair of hands? Can't buy any, can you?

The Hi-Point Handguards are probably the best thing an enduro rider could put on his bike to improve his comfort. They do such a good job of keeping crud and bruises from fingers and hands that they should come standard with every enduro machine. Notice that Yamaha has fitted plastic versions to the TT250 off-roader.

The guards are made of dense foam with a vinyl cover on the outer portion. There are turnclips fitted which hold the guard in place on the motorcycle's handlebar just inboard of the lever mounts and switches.

They are soft, which we think is better than a hard metal type which could do serious injury to the hand should it fold back. They protect the hands from low lying branches, which in a 200 kilometre enduro can batter a hand to extreme pain.

Another excellent point about the handguards is the wind protection they offer. If it is wet or cold or both, air does not get to work its way into the rider's sleeve to send him into fits of shivering. Warm hands are always nice to have.

Because they are soft, they can be torn in a hard drop. A crash on railway tracks ripped one in half but duct tape joined the pieces and they are still going strong.

The price of \$24.99 is reasonable and the protection excellent. We wouldn't ride an enduro without them. Distributed by Performance Cycle and Snow, 91 Maitland Terrace, Strathroy, Ont., N7G 1L2.

Sonic sounds good but is undependable

The Sonic intercom, made in England, is a rider to passenger radio system. It consists of a small set of earphones and a microphone for each helmet, plus connecting cords and a small pack for the battery and the transmission equipment. The pack has volume controls for both sets and is small enough to slip into an average jacket pocket.

The earphones and microphone are tiny and easily attach to the inside of most helmets by means of Velcro backing. They are small enough not to get in the way. For open face helmets, a boom brings the microphone in front of the rider's mouth.

When it's working properly, the Sonic is quite effective. We found that rider and passenger could converse at normal conversational levels up to about 120 km/h, by which time wind noise began to interfere with the microphone. The adjustable volume controls are convenient, and the Velcro attachments allow positioning of speakers in just the right place.

But, we've tried three units now and have had problems with all three. On one the volume just faded away after a couple of days; we were told it was a faulty battery. On the other two, we found intermittent problems with one set or the other; sometimes transmission was interrupted by static or just stopped completely, sometimes volume mysteriously faded out, then returned.

We checked batteries on the second pair of units and found them okay. We can only guess that there was a poor connection somewhere inside.

Suggested retail for the Sonic is \$199. When it's working it's quite good, but our experience indicates that it may be a source of trouble. The importer, however, does offer a one-year guarantee and a 14-day money-back guarantee should you wish to return your purchase.

Available from Sonic Intercoms Canada, 1584 West 13th, Suite 6, Vancouver, B.C., V6J 2G4, (604) 731-5994. □

CYCLE CANADA

TEST

*Autobooks
for
Black
35' 2777*

Honda's new CX500 Turbo delivers stunning performance from its 497 cc, as you'd expect from the world's first production turbocharged motorcycle. You might also expect that rampant technology would produce a civilized, economical and extremely complicated machine in limited supply. It has.



The first motorcycle was on the perfect line for the corner, so the second rider turned the throttle off a bit, touched the brakes more than he would have liked and waited. It definitely would not do to destroy one of the seven prototype Honda CX500 Turbos in the world.

Straightening up out of the corner, he could see the fast, sweeping corners that lay ahead and turned the throttle to the stop. The deceptively smooth surge of power tried to break the rear tire loose as the turbo boost pressure gauge quickly lit up to its horizontal limits and the turbo's impeller climbed toward its overspeed limit of 240,000 rpm.

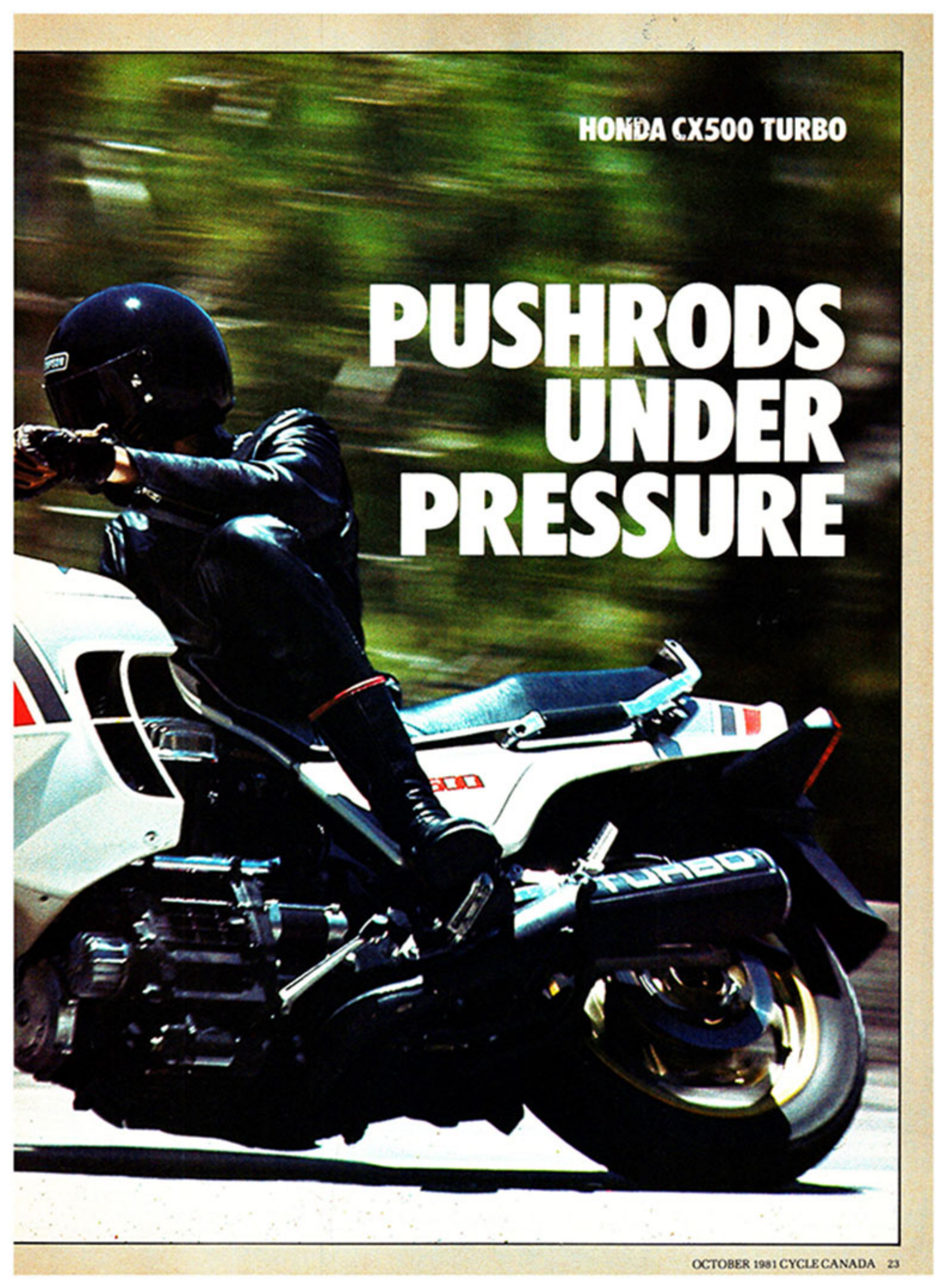
The Turbo pulled up beside the Suzuki GS650G that had slowed it in the corner as the tachometer needle swept past 9,000 rpm into the red. The rider clicked up a gear and with an almost inaudible moan from the intake was gone.

Ahead was the closest thing to a straight-away on the road, a steep climb with a partially blind right curve at the halfway mark. At full throttle, the speedometer took a sharp swing to the 185 km/h mark within three hundred metres.

Hard on the superb brakes, the Turbo slowed to 100 km/h for the next corner. Letting off the brakes and turning on the throttle, the rider glided through, hearing a metallic rasp as the forward part of the left exhaust touched the pavement.

Flying along the mountain crest road, the CX500 Turbo felt ready for anything.



A rider in a black leather suit and helmet is leaning into a turn on a white Honda CX500 Turbo motorcycle. The background is a blurred night scene with green and white light trails, suggesting speed. The motorcycle has 'TURBO' written on the side panel.

HONDA CX500 TURBO

PUSHRODS UNDER PRESSURE

TURBO

The Honda CX500 Turbo is the first production turbocharged motorcycle in the world. Forget the Z-1R-TC. That hyper Kawasaki was not technically sold by Kawasaki, but rather by a separate company. It was not subject to the warranties and conditions of Kawasaki production motorcycles.

Turbocharged motorcycles have been basic, crude affairs capable of numbing acceleration and little else. They are in the twilight zone of motorcycle performance. A nice place to visit—for some—but you wouldn't want to live there.

This turbo is a complete motorcycle, the work of 50 of Honda's best engineers and technicians combined with a vast quantity of money. The CX500 Turbo project was started in early 1980. That seems like a very short gestation period for such a complicated device, but the groundwork, Honda's experimentation with forced induction, had been going on for about six years previous.

Honda's goals for the CXT, as it is often called, are twofold. As a machine, it was engineered to provide the performance of bigger machines with the weight and fuel economy of middleweight motorcycles like the CX500 from which it is derived.

As a corporate flagship, the CX500 Turbo is intended to stand outside and above the motorcycle industry. Honda doesn't expect to flood the world with Turbo CX500s; rather, the bike is a symbol of the high level of technology attainable by the industry. Honda wants to uplift the image of motorcyclists by changing the perception of motorcycles as noisy, crude playthings. The objective is to increase sales by attracting non-motorcyclists to the sport.

This is a very tall order for any motorcycle, even if it is being built by the biggest motorcycle company in the world. As with any complex machine, the bottom line is how it works. Motorcycles have so many contradictory demands made upon them, so many forces which have to be controlled and so many undesirable engineering attributes when compared to an automobile, that success on the road can be annoying elusive.

The Honda CX500 is a successful

machine. It impresses by its form and its complexity and its audacity, but function hasn't been neglected. The CXT works.

Visually the motorcycle is stunning. Who says beauty cannot be combined with function? Honda gave the bike a futuristic look with the ducted and multi-planed fairing, the result of one month of wind tunnel research. The company claims that it is the best Honda fairing built to date. Rider comfort and protection, wind resistance and cooling requirements have been juggled to an optimum.

On this Stage II prototype, the front signal indicators are positioned to protect the rider's hands from the wind blast. They do. On an earlier model, first publicly seen at the Cologne show late in 1980, the indicators were in the outer front air ducts. The large fairing-mounted rear view mirrors are clear at any speed and offer good rear visibility.

Many water-cooled bikes dump hot air on the rider's legs whether he likes it or not. On the CXT, radiator air is vented through ducts in the side of the fairing just in front of the cylinder heads. While riding, the rider can stick a hand out and down and feel where the hot air's going. It is not going to cook his leg.

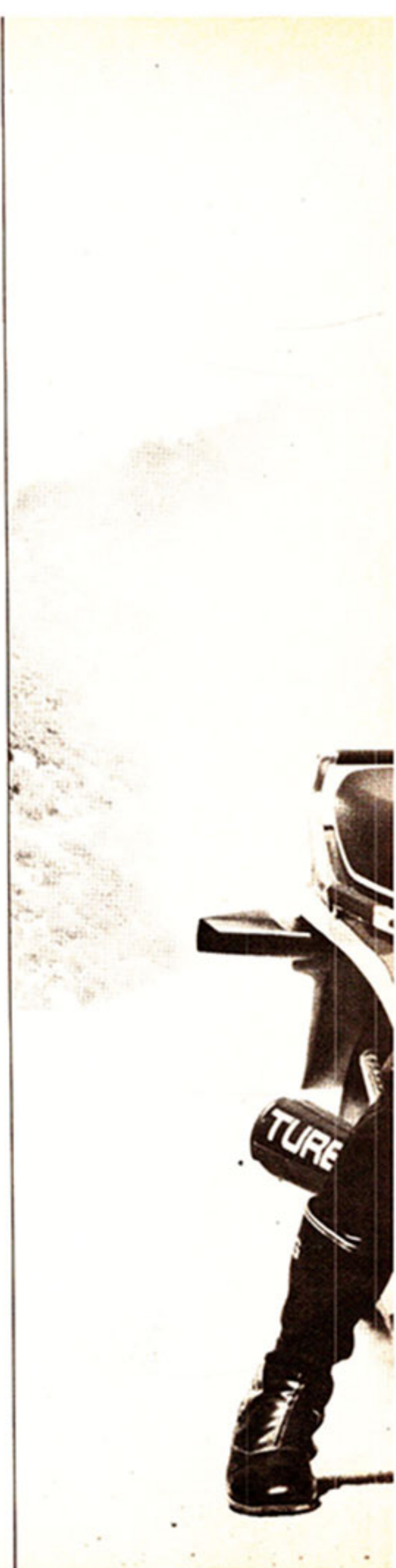
Sitting on the comfortable seat and reaching for the grips as he slips his feet back to the properly positioned footpegs, a rider is encouraged to head for the open road. The bike fits well, although taller riders may touch their knees on the fuel tank's bulge where it comes out to meet the fairing.

The seating position is designed for covering long distances at speed but still works well in town. The handlebar, concealed under a plastic cover, has alloy caps on the ends and carries the usual Honda switches.

It starts instantly and sounds shockingly like a regular CX500 at low revs. Bringing the revs up to about 2,500 rpm allows the 1100-sized clutch, which still has a light pull, to be slipped slightly and off the bike goes with a quiet but menacing rumble.

At low speeds, the steering has a heavy feeling, probably due to the relatively wide 3.50x18 front tire. It's not a bother,

Tremendous mid-range torque smokes the rear tire easily and provides rapid acceleration.





TURBO

but it's noticeable. After filling the 24 litre tank you also notice a top heavy feeling. It doesn't hamper the rider, but is just there. It does demand more body movement in turns.

One of Honda's biggest problems with this bike, a problem faced by all turbo bikes, is obtaining brisk throttle response. The V-twin engine is no asset in this respect as it has relatively long time intervals between power strokes. This is only slightly offset by having shorter plumbing from the exhaust valves to the turbine blades compared to an inline four.

The CX500 Turbo has a good throttle response but it still does not have quite the snap at low revs that many normally aspirated carbureted motorcycles have. Once the revs are up to the 3,500-4,000 mark the bike accelerates with a vengeance. The response is incomparably better than other turbos, but even Honda cannot refute the laws of physics completely. Only at very low engine speeds is the lag noticeable.

With a dry weight of 226 kg (499 lb) it is no lightweight. The miracle of this bike is that it makes 77 horsepower, 50 per cent more than a stock CX500, and yet gets better fuel mileage; Honda claims 20 per cent better.

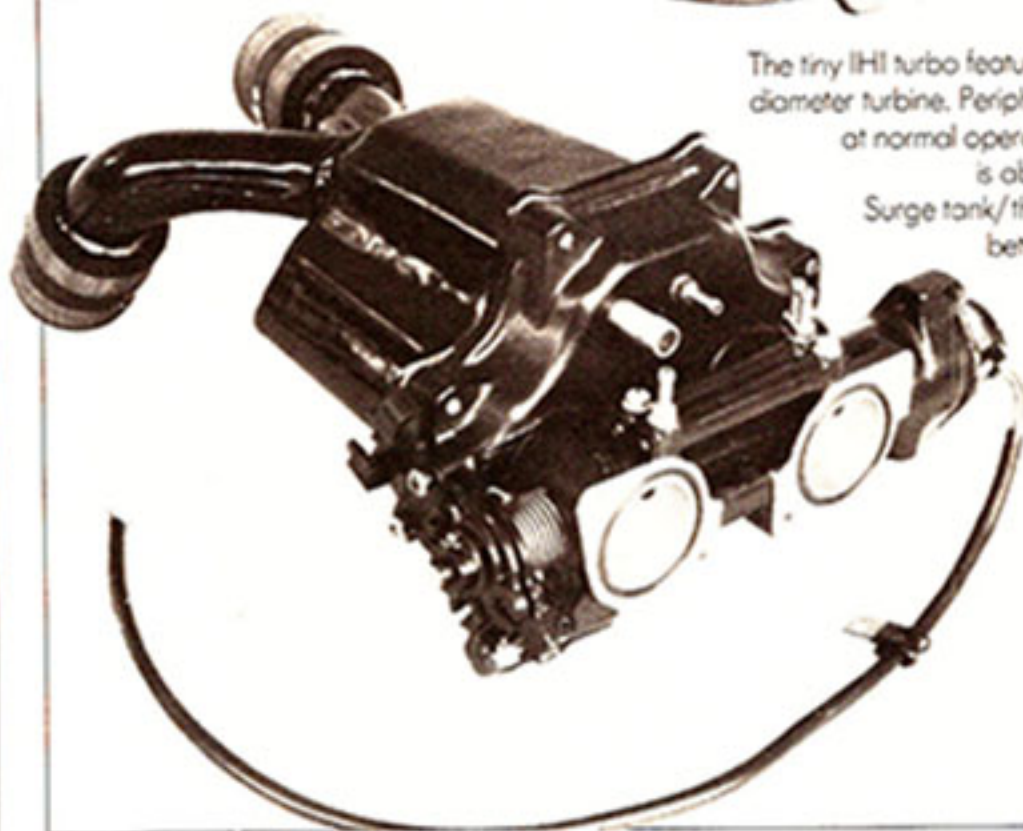
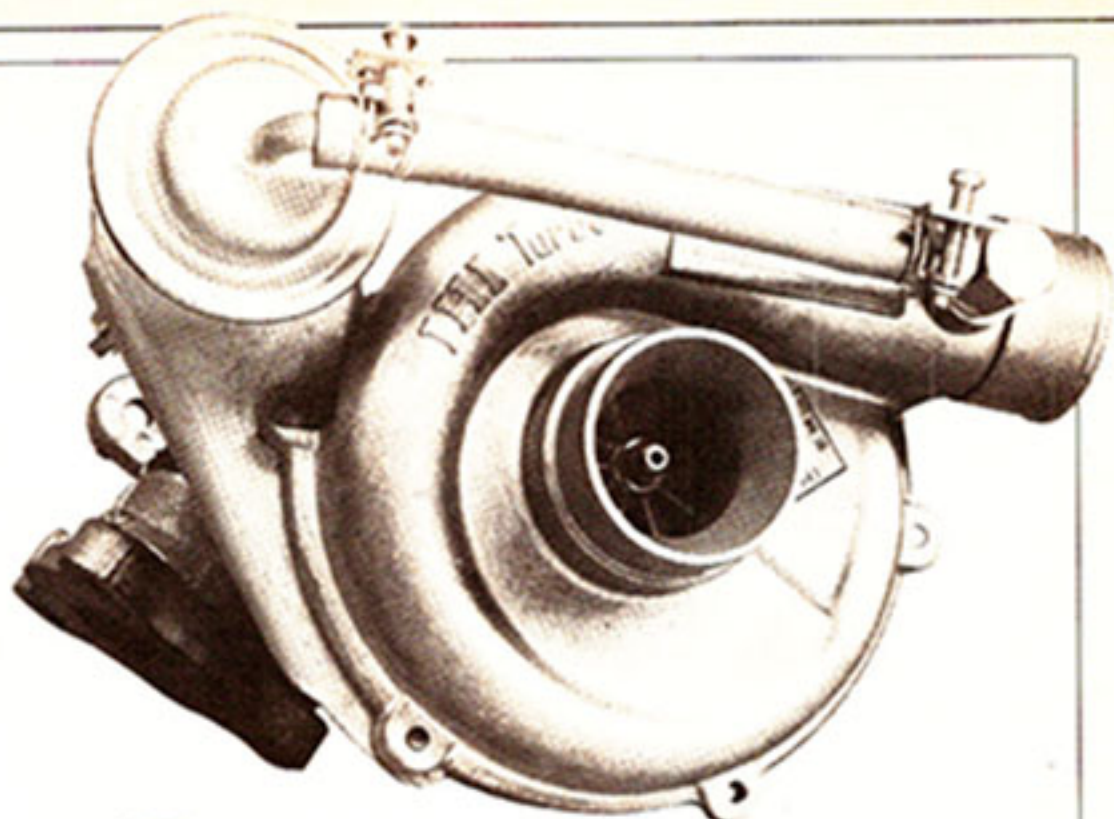
The gearbox and clutch operation is flawless. They have been revamped to handle the added stresses. Shifting is precise every time and the clutch never fades or drags. Clutch diameter and the number of plates have been increased. In the transmission, different and larger dogs ensure positive engagement.

The brakes are excellent. The twin piston calipers are identical to those offered on current big Hondas but the pads have a higher metal content. They never fade even after the front discs get very dark on a hard ride.

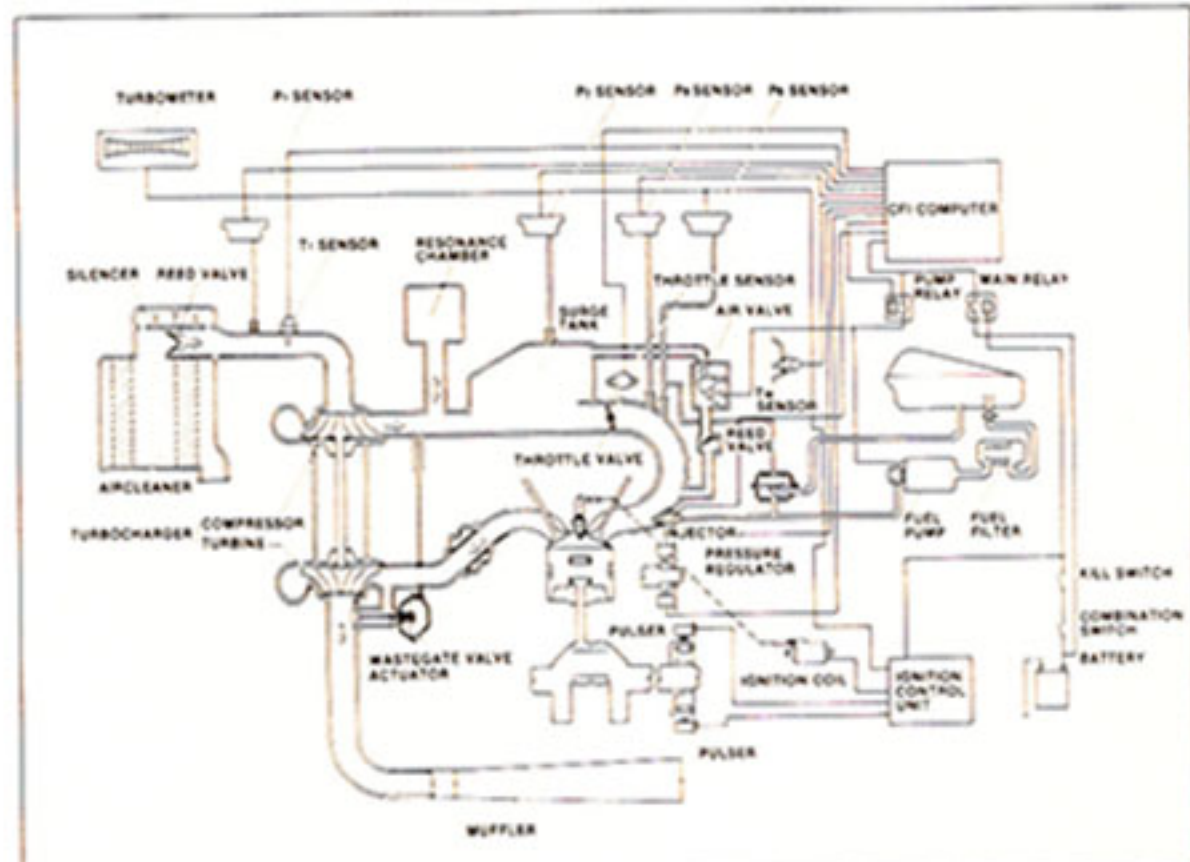
At the altitudes we were riding, over 1,700 metres above sea level, another aspect of the fuel injection system became apparent. The mixture remained optimal, affecting the bike less than others using carburetors.

Handling is excellent. The CX never wobbles or misbehaves. Even deliberately backing off the throttle and rolling it on again in a corner doesn't provoke unpleasant behavior. Many people mistake cornering clearance for handling, but not here. The CX500 Turbo is a great handler and it has plenty of cornering clearance. When the metal starts hitting the pavement the rider is far, far over. Clearance will not be a problem for street riders. Honda claims 40 degrees static lean angle. It's enough.

Straight-line stability is also reassuring. It could be the result of the clean aerodynamics of the fairing or the weight transfer to the front wheel from the installation of a longer-than-CX500 alloy swing-



The tiny IHI turbo features a 48 mm diameter turbine. Peripheral velocity at normal operating speeds is above Mach 1. Surge tank/throttle unit fits between heads.



Schematic of the Turbo system illustrates complexity but the actual parts are very compactly fitted into the machine, defying observation and tampering by the curious.

PEERING INTO THE CX TURBO

Curing a turbo's inherent problems creates mysteries which can thwart road-side fixes.

Turbo is the magic word. It's splashed over the CX500 in no less than five places. In a technical discussion of the latest from Honda, the turbo-charger is what people want to hear about.

Turbocharging is not new. It is commonly used in airplanes as a means of overcoming the power loss from reduced air density at high altitudes and in heavy-duty trucks to increase top-end power. A naturally aspirated engine makes power in direct proportion to the density of the intake air. Air at sea level has a density of .0765 pounds per cubic foot. At 3,000 metres altitude, this drops to .0565 pounds per cubic foot. A 100 horsepower engine at sea level will produce fewer than 74 horsepower at 3,000 metres.

Of course for the power hungry, this means a turbo-charger will give more power than a normally aspirated engine at sea level. It goes faster, for a price.

On a motorcycle engine, which is small compared to automotive and industrial units, there has been limited success in getting a fast and constant flow of exhaust gas at low enough engine speeds to get good on-the-road performance. That was the major problem which Honda faced with the development of the CX500 Turbo.

With the 497 cc V-twin,

the exhaust pulses are few and far between compared with a four-cylinder engine. A resonance chamber and surge tank provide enough volume that intake manifold pressure does not drop at high or low engine speeds. In these two parts of the CX turbo system are most of the 230 patents that Honda applied for during development of this bike.

The shapes and volumes of these two parts are critical to the whole system. There is also a reed valve between the air filter housing and the turbine compressor. This has no horsepower benefit, but prevents backwards pressure flow on deceleration, which prevents backfires.

The turbo unit was developed by Honda and IHI, a turbocharger manufacturer in Japan known for its work with small turbos. The CX500 is fitted with a tiny 48 mm inlet impeller. Until this was made, the smallest readily available turbo had a 60 mm impeller.

The CX turbo unit uses backward compressor wheels. The blades are not straight but instead curve backwards from the direction of rotation. This design does not have as high a pressurizing ratio as the 90 degree radial design. But raising the operating speed of a turbocharger increases the pressure ratio proportionally more than the flow so Honda got the best efficiency and flow by using a small, efficient turbo and spinning it very fast.

The CX unit's normal operating speed is 180,000 rpm. This is incredibly high when compared with previous small turbochargers. Automotive turbos rarely operate higher than 130,000 rpm. The Honda turbo can turn as high as 240,000 rpm.

The increase in speed of the Honda CX's nickel alloy steel impeller wheels does not necessarily indicate an increase in stress when com-

pared with the slower but larger automotive types. The peripheral velocity and centrifugal force of the wheels are much less since the wheels are smaller in diameter and lighter in weight.

Boost pressure is developed to a maximum of 19 psi before the wastegate opens. This is also an extremely high figure. The Z-1R-TC had its boost pressure limited to about eight psi and the CBX turbo we tested in September 1980 issue was limited to seven psi. Exceeding these figures on stock engines can have dire consequences. Needless to say, the CX engine is super strong.

An interesting note here is that the Honda NS750 dirt tracker was put together by Honda R&D in Japan using CX500 Turbo parts. The Honda engineers knew just how much power each component of the CX500 could take, so when the request came from American Honda for a bigger version of the original CX500-based flat tracker the homework was already done.

To complement the induction system is the most complex and advanced ignition and fuel delivery system on a production motorcycle.

Honda describes the fuel injection as a "dual-map, computerized fuel injection system programmed for engine starting, warm-up and high altitude calibration with internal diagnostic system and built-in fail safe circuit".

The components of the fuel injection system are basically off-the-shelf. Technical advances are mainly in the digital computer. Honda chose a digital system for reasons of reliability and adaptability. The company felt that an analog system like that used on Kawasaki's fuel injection units was not sufficiently flexible.

Honda made the basic prototype computer which was further refined and developed in conjunction with the Japanese ignition firm Nippondenso. The firms share the patents.

The injection of fuel is dependent on engine rpm,

boost pressure and throttle opening. A fail-safe function comes into play should sensors monitoring boost or throttle fail. The computer then automatically switches injector volume control to throttle opening or boost pressure. Air flow is controlled mechanically by two throttle valves. "Dual-map" refers to the injector volume being based on either boost pressure and engine rpm or throttle opening and engine rpm. Should one circuit fail, the problem would be indicated by the computer.

The computer has five LEDs on one side. These light up in certain sequences should any part of the computer system fail. The sequence tells the examiner what part of the device has to be fixed. Honda expects to have a lifetime partial warranty on the computer, with a core charge of approximately 25 per cent of the estimated \$400 replacement cost should it need replacement for warranty problems.

The ignition system is fully transistorized, using pulsers triggered by the crankshaft. The advance curve is determined electronically rather than mechanically. The electronic method allows a spark advance curve that is determined by both boost pressure and engine speed.

Much of what goes on in the myriad systems of the CX500 Turbo is still a mystery. The motorcycle we rode was a prototype, and as with all prototypes, changes may be made for the production model. We don't expect anything drastic. As a small example, the fairing Turbo lettering on the bike ridden was different from some others we've seen. Ours had reversed letters with fluorescent orange coloring, while others are black and written in the normal fashion.

What you see here is essentially what you will be getting when the Honda CX500 Turbo appears on dealer showrooms—certainly the most complicated motorcycle ever offered to the public, and one of the most competent.



Beauty is as beauty does. The space-age styling gives advanced rider protection.



Cornering at 125 km/h, the CX Turbo is steady. There are no wobbles or surprises.

TURBO

arm. The bike is rock steady, even down a less than perfectly smooth road at up to 200 km/h. Anyone who has ever had the dismal experience of a tankslapper at over 160 km/h will appreciate this aspect of the motorcycle.

The brakes, as mentioned before, work well, but they do tend to straighten up the bike when cornering. The best thing is to brake before getting to the corner and then lean it in as the throttle is applied. Doing that on a normal turbo bike while cranked in a corner is usually a prelude to disaster as the minimal traction is overcome by the stab of power. There is little control.

But on the Honda the throttle response is positive enough to get hard drives out of turns with no sudden bursts of uncontrollable power. After riding the bike for about 10 kilometres, throttle response feels almost natural and is no bother to the rider. At riding speeds above 4,000 rpm, which is normal, there is always plenty of power available.

The overall feeling of the Turbo is one of solid stability. The fact that our prototype bike was 85 per cent hand made could account for this, but it undoubtedly has the most together feel of any Japanese street machine.

We had an opportunity to ride a number of other Hondas and some competitors' bikes that are likely to be compared with the CX500 Turbo. There was a CB900F, a GL500, a Yamaha Seca 750 and 550 and a Suzuki GS650G. None of the other bikes could pull the Turbo on a straight.

The real surprise came when we got off the Turbo and rode the Yamaha Seca 550. It's a particularly rapid, smooth and stable machine and so could give a valid indication of just where the Turbo stands in relation.

What a shock. The Seca felt slow, rough and nervous. Compared with the Seca the Turbo was extremely smooth with no apparent vibration anywhere. It had tons more power—as expected—and glided through turns as if it were on rails, although the test location was not the Honda's ideal element. Fast sweeping corners and tight switchbacks reward light weight and agility. The slight top-heavy feeling of the new CX500 was apparent. It had more weight to stop than the Seca 550, more often. Precise throttle operation and response is important if a rider is not going to lose ground to normally carbureted machines. All the power in the world is of little use if the rider cannot have as much of it going to the road as the tires can stand.

So the Turbo's performance is impressive. So is its mechanical and electronic complexity, which will limit its appeal despite the lure of the performance. It is water-cooled, electronic fuel-injected, turbocharged and Pro-Linked. It has the first

digital computer ever on a motorcycle. There is a reed valve, a surge tank, a resonance chamber, a radiator, an electric fan, a digital clock, and a boost indicator.

In inverse proportion to its complication is the maintenance required. All that has to be done is an occasional check of rocker-valve clearances, which is easier than on most big street bikes, and a look at the battery level. There are no shims, no points, no chain and no spokes to keep tight.

You will want to keep an eye on the battery because the bike uses a transistorized ignition fed by the 14 amp-hour battery. If the battery goes dead, so does the bike. This system was chosen because it offers a stronger spark at low engine speed, the speed at which the starter will turn it.

The heart of this beauty is the engine, and 60 per cent of the internals have been beefed up to deal with the added power output and stresses. The pistons are forged, a first for a Honda street bike.



Valves are smaller to increase gas velocities in the cylinder head, and valve guide and valve seat materials have been changed to better deal with higher operating temperatures. Connecting rods and piston pins are stronger and the crank has been strengthened. As previously mentioned, the clutch and transmission are changed.

Water and oil capacities have been increased, and a bigger water pump circulates the coolant. The original oil pump has been retained and pressure remains at the 75-80 psi level. Close observers of the engine will notice an extension to the sump. This finned addition is a pressur-

ized oil cooler that pumps hot oil through passages near the surface to dissipate heat to the air. Honda does not like external oil lines; no line, no leak. The market demand for the high-performance look prompted the few exceptions to the rule, as on the 900F.

As important as the good things the Turbo has are the bad things which it avoids. It is not temperamental, doesn't wobble or shake, doesn't leak anything despite the heat, doesn't drink much gasoline and doesn't alarm or annoy the rider. The complication of the machine may stall potential buyers but complication is not necessarily proportional to unreliability. A look under the hood of any late model car will dispel that myth.

So it's trick, but when all the technical wizardry is absorbed the Honda CX500 Turbo still stands out as a fast, competent and comfortable device that is as easy on the rider as it is on gas. It's like having your cake and eating it too. And that's what motorcycling should be all about. □

SPECIFICATIONS Honda CX500 Turbo



MODEL 1982 Honda CX500 Turbo prototype
TEST DISTANCE..... 150 km
PRICE N/A

ENGINE

TYPE Four-stroke 80-degree water-cooled
V-twin, four valves per cylinder
actuated by pushrods

DISPLACEMENT..... 497 cc

BORE AND STROKE 78 x 52 mm

COMPRESSION RATIO..... 7.2:1

HORSEPOWER 77 at 8,000 rpm (claimed)

TORQUE 7.5 kg-m from 4,500 to 7,500 rpm
(claimed)

CARBURETION Honda/Nippondenso
computerized fuel injection

STARTER Electric only

OIL CAPACITY N/A

ELECTRICAL

IGNITION TYPE Transistorized CDI

GENERATOR OUTPUT..... N/A

BATTERY CAPACITY 12 volts, 14 amp-hours

HEADLIGHT N/A

TRANSMISSION

TYPE Five-speed constant-mesh, wet clutch

PRIMARY DRIVE N/A

INTERNAL RATIOS N/A

FINAL DRIVE N/A

CALCULATED DATA

WEIGHT/POWER RATIO 2.9 kg/hp

SPECIFIC OUTPUT 154 hp/L at 8,000 rpm

PISTON SPEED AT REDLINE 15.6 m/sec
at 8,000 rpm

RPM AT 100 KM/H N/A

MAXIMUM SPEED IN GEARS N/A

FUEL

CAPACITY 24 litres including reserve

RESERVE CAPACITY N/A

CONSUMPTION N/A

CHASSIS

WHEELBASE 1,496 mm

RAKE AND TRAIL N/A

SUSPENSION Telescopic front fork with
126 mm travel and air assist; Pro-Link
rear suspension with 100 mm travel

BRAKES..... Dual front discs 276 mm,
rear disc 296 mm

TIRES Bridgestone 3.50 x 18 front and
120/90 x 17 rear

DRY WEIGHT..... 226 kg

LOAD CAPACITY..... N/A

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF

Ken Roberts is as well known by his own name as by his honorary title of King Kenny. But some will say that calling the three-time world champion merely king is not enough.

Therein lies a tale.

Once upon a time, motorbike racing being the risky sport that it is, one of our young dirt trackers suffered prematurely the tragic fate that comes sooner or later to all mortals. Consequently on that hot afternoon he found himself suddenly at St. Peter's pearly gates, shuffling forward in line, papers in hand, just as though he were waiting at racetrack signup.

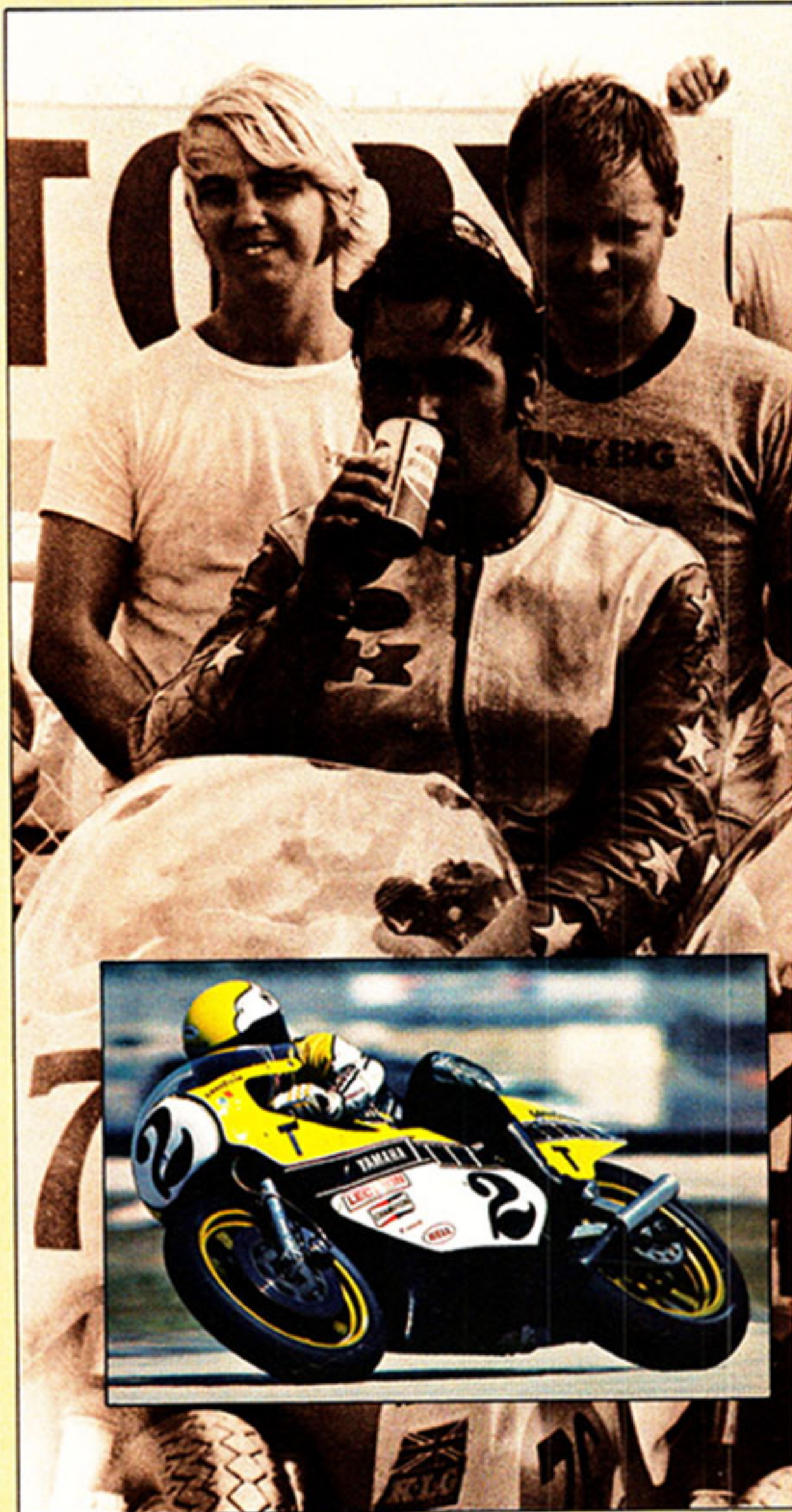
He was, understandably, shocked by this dizzying change of status, almost fainting away. There was a roaring in his ears and he had to keep blinking to clear his vision as he looked around himself. Most of the other folk waiting at the Heavenly Portal were old and infirm, and many muttered unintelligibly in foreign languages, but somehow, just to be with other people was some comfort. It was all too strange, too shattering, to be snatched from the midst of life this way, to be spirited off heavenward into this throng of other pilgrims, seeking entry into the sight of the Almighty.

The roaring in his head seemed to rise and fall and he had to blink several times just to see who was speaking sharply to him.

"Next!", said the voice.

He gathered himself together to look up into the kindly, if somewhat harried countenance of the ancient gatekeeper himself. In a few moments his paperwork was finished and he stood alone before the towering gates as they swung ponderously inward, dazzling his eyes with a thousand reflections.

He was astounded at what he saw. The roaring wasn't in his head. It was real. Here, so far beyond all earthly care in this Celestial Kingdom was the most beautiful mile dirt track this young man had ever seen, and running hard out on that perfect track was a single rider on a well tuned 750 twin. He stared incredulously as the dust billowed past him, stinging his eyes. The



THE KING OF RACING



By 1971 Roberts (80) was AMA novice champion with backing from Yamaha. His Kawasaki-sponsored junior competitors of the day were Mike Lane (4) and the late Robert Wakefield.



His Life Behind Bars

Undisputed champion
in North America,
Roberts rocked the
European racing establishment

Odds are good that Ken Roberts is the greatest motorcycle racer ever. It couldn't be proved, of course, but contenders for the title have always been few. He is at least the premier motorcycle racer of our time.

Not noted for his accomplishments in motocross, trials, hillclimbs or bite-the-weenie contests, Roberts has won everything else. After years of waxing his U.S. opposition, he took on the Europeans at their own game and won three successive world championships.

As this was written, Roberts had little hope of retaining the 500 cc road racing title for the fourth consecutive year. However, King Kenny was little concerned. The setbacks of 1981 were expected. His mind is already immersed in 1982.

At 27 years of age, Roberts has been racing bikes for 14 years. He's no longer the fresh-faced youngster seen in photos of his earlier days. But after half a lifetime behind handlebars he's neither bored with racing nor tired of trekking across the Atlantic. He's ready for more.

His decade-long affiliation with the Yamaha brand has in large measure shaped his career. Roberts entered AMA expert ranks and the front-line Yamaha racing team simultaneously in 1972. At that time, despite opposition from Kawasaki and Suzuki triples, a 350 Yamaha twin could still win Daytona; Harley-Davidson was the only factory beginning to take over from fading BSA/Triumph as successful competitors to Yamaha's bored-out 650 twin on the dirt.

In retrospect, King Kenny's consecutive U.S. titles in 1973 and 1974 should qualify as no great surprise. He was the youngest rider—21—to ever win the AMA grand national championship in 1973; in 1974 he won six races and scored points in all 23.

The arrival of the TZ700 in 1973 guaranteed Yamaha success in road racing and made the Kawasakis and Suzukis instantly obsolete. But the four-stroke twins couldn't cut it on the horse tracks any longer, and Roberts became one of the few to battle the tide of Milwaukee power in the dirt.

In 1975 Yamaha built a TZ750-powered dirt tracker as a sort of final statement on the subject. But even Roberts, who rode it to victory at Indianapolis, applauded the AMA's decision to ban it.

By 1977 Roberts was winning not a single race on the dirt, although he took every road race except Daytona. That was the

year Steve Baker won when a deluge shortened the 200-miler.

His leaning toward European road racing was reinforced with victories at Imola, Italy in the 250 and 750 cc classes and at Paul Ricard, France in the 250 cc class. Baker won the 750 cc race at Paul Ricard, but Roberts shone in the Easter match races in England, beating then-world champion Barry Sheene.

The transfer became complete in 1978 when Yamaha dropped Baker, who had won the final Formula 750 world championship the year before, and sent Roberts to Europe aboard the new YZR500.

It was a year of accommodation for Roberts, not the most cosmopolitan individual, and for the European racing establishment whose most solid perception of Americans was perhaps formed by John Wayne movies. Roberts emerged with the world 500 cc road racing championship and a growing antipathy toward the Federation Internationale Motocycliste.

In 1979, Roberts declared war by refusing to accept the trophy for his win of the Spanish GP from the race organizers who reneged on their start money offer. He later led a rider revolt at the Belgian GP to protest a track surface which was so slippery a person could scarcely walk across it unaided in the wet.

The fact that he'd suffered the worst injuries of his career in a high-speed crash in Japan earlier the same year may have increased his caution.

The FIM termed his behavior shameful and tried to suspend Roberts and runner-up Virginio Ferrari. Later reinstated, Roberts again won the world title but vowed to torpedo the FIM's monopoly with a racing organization of his own, the World Series.

The World Series had support from most leading riders, but finally failed to materialize. However, it did have the effect of producing much-improved prize money in 1981.

Teamed with England's darling and former Suzuki star Barry Sheene, Roberts carries the Yamaha banner against the might of Suzuki's official three-man team and a horde of privateers on time-tested RG500s. Yamaha's new weapon is a rotary-valve square four which demonstrates ample potential to do the job—next year.

For now, it's up to either Marco Lucchinelli or Roberts's fellow Californian Randy Mamola. Roberts and Yamaha regard this recess as merely a breather.

—John Cooper

yellow and black of the machine and the leathers, the bold No. 1 on the number plates ... could it possibly be? He shook himself and covered his face with his hands. He had to think, try to remember!

No, it just couldn't be. He remembered that machine, that man, leading the race. He remembered himself, losing the front end, the slide, the wall ... no, it was just impossible.

"He couldn't have got here first!" he said out loud. He began to shake his head, still staring in bewilderment at the machine and rider gliding effortlessly around that perfect oval. He began to babble protests, looking frantically around him for some answer.

Nearby, up in the otherwise empty stands, lounged a single spectator, an old man in a leather stroker cap, eating from a generous bag of popcorn. The young man rushed breathlessly up to him, pointing, his lips mouthing questions.

"Is that, is it, did he ...?"

"Naw," said the old fellow. "It ain't him. You can rest easy. Sit down here and have some of my popcorn."

"But then who ...?"

"I can see you're new here," said the old man, smiling indulgently as he jabbed a stubby forefinger at the figure out on the track. "That's God. He thinks He's Kenny Roberts."

—Kevin Cameron

Kevin Cameron is a free-lance journalist from Massachusetts who has been involved with motorcycle race tuning since 1964, working with Ron Pierce and Richard Schlechter among others. Cameron recently spent three months in Europe where he was a close observer of 500 cc grand prix racing.

To Win, Start Young

The determination of a competitive, active kid compelled him to seek perfection in riding a motorcycle.

The rolling foothills of central California breed a certain strain of native of a type difficult to describe to someone who has never travelled through its dusty foothills and lush green valleys of fruit orchards, or felt the tempering heat of its warm winter evenings and dry crackling summers with midday sun baking hot as a fumarole.

The men and women of this region constitute a hardy group of souls rarely found nowadays except out in the remotest reaches of civilization. They are not quite cowboys, nor are they hip, co-opted urbanites in spangled ten-gallon Stetsons. Yet still they form a society steeped in the long-standing traditions that formed the code of the early Western pioneers: a mixture of stubborn individualism, plain horse sense and rugged self-reliance.

Native Californians are earnest, purposeful folk, silent to the point of sullenness at times, yet with a disarming combination of swaggering confidence and sudden, quiet humility all congealed in a healthy, humorous skepticism that percolates through the manners and the slow rhythms of their speech. To Easterners, Californians are an abiding mystery, a group possessed of the bemused detachment and exasperating self-assurance that comes of having never felt the urge to set foot further than one's own back porch to learn the lessons of the wider world.

Kenny Leroy Roberts was born in Modesto on the last day of 1951, the younger of two children, and a second generation Californian. His mother's family migrated West by way of Oklahoma, Louisiana and Texas while his father was born less than a hundred miles to the south in Fresno.

From an early age, Kenny showed signs of the grit and determination that his society demanded of him and that would later make him a world champion. His slight build and youthful appearance seemed to exaggerate the sense of stoic responsibility and self-discipline he possessed even as a child. They provided more incentive for

Paul Gordon is a free-lance journalist in Los Angeles.



Known today as a road racer, Roberts first attained stardom on the dirt.

Kenny, highly competitive from the first, to set about the task of making himself the best at whatever he did.

Wrestling in school, he used to suck lemons for days to keep his weight down in order to compete in the 95-pound class. He played touch football, baseball and even basketball with the ease and grace of a natural athlete.

The pastures and orchards near his parents' acreage on the rural outskirts of Modesto were his playground and he became an "outside" boy, playing late into the evening at a wide variety of sports or working busily at some project or another; taking the motor out of the family lawn mower to power a go-kart or hammering pieces of scrap lumber together to make a wagon for his pet pony to draw.

Kenny moved from bicycles to horses then, finally, to motorcycles. His parents bought his older brother a 50 cc Honda for him to ride back and forth to summer school and Kenny caught the bug. Soon after, he also was given a small Honda to play around on and he took to the machine like a long-lost friend.

With some farming machinery Kenny cut out a motocross course in the sprawling back yard, a jump and a few turns, and spent hour after hour either racing around the home-made circuit, riding through the orchards and fields nearby or piloting his little Honda at break-neck speed along the narrow concrete abutments of the canal banks near his home. For weeks at a time he would come home from school, wash up and change his clothes, then ride round and around the back yard track until dark, often riding late into the night under floodlights.

Fate took the inevitable hand when family friends who were involved in motorcycle racing came over one day, observed young Kenny roaring around in the back yard aboard his battered Honda and suggested that his talents would find greater appreciation and challenge on the race track. So, the following weekend, against his mother's wishes, Kenny rode his little pony two miles over to the track, hitched the horse up at the gate, and walked in to see his first motorcycle race.

From that moment on, he was hooked. His life became a schedule of practice, entirely devoted to learning how to go truly fast on a motorcycle. He traded his Honda for a faster bike and entered the races, but every time he came off the line something would break down. A short time later his father bought him a 90 cc Hodaka and he started to win.

"He had a regular system back then," his mother recalls. "He would ride outside every night after school into the dark on weekdays, then, 'long about Thursday evening he'd tear down the bike and tell me what parts he needed. I'd pick them up Friday morning at the shop and he'd put them in that afternoon, then go racing Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. The next week it was just the same and the trophies started filling up his room."

His racing schedule soon put him in Dutch with the school authorities and he was forced to drop out when he started riding the circuits a few years later. But Kenny didn't care. At that point he was eating, thinking, breathing and sleeping motorcycles.

"He'd often go to bed wondering about a problem with his bike," his mother said, "and, seven times out of 10, I'd find him out working on the thing in the middle of the night with a screwdriver in his hand. 'I figured it out,' he'd say. 'I dreamed it was in the carburetor!' — and it usually was. I'd say 'Never mind the carburetor, get to bed!' but he was always like that. Everytime I'd see him tossing and turning in his sleep I knew he was just thinking about motorcycles. Even when he was young he could go to sleep with a problem on his mind and wake up in the morning with the problem solved."

Even today he follows the same pattern of commitment to whatever he does. If he wants to learn something he gets a pro to teach him and goes about it with a will; tennis, racquetball, skiing — Kenny does them all.

And, when he sleeps over at his mother's house in Turlock, a few miles from his home in Oakdale, he exhibits the same patterns he did as a child. Sometimes his right hand twists involuntarily during a conversation and, in nights of restless sleep, he dreams of riding motorcycles.

—Paul Gordon

Continued on Page 40

ENDURO COMPROMISE

If you're not a wild-eyed gonzo artist but want more power than a 175 has, try a 250

The 250 cc enduro class seems to be becoming less popular. Most attention is riveted on the under 200 cc or the open classes. Most riders start on the small bikes and, if they're good, jump right into the open bikes. They're attracted by all that wonderful horsepower, which is a necessity for those in the wide-eyed gonzo school of enduro thinking.

Still, you have to ask yourself whether the difference in horsepower justifies the difference in size and weight, whether having a bigger engine doesn't merely increase the difficulty of riding the bike.

It used to be that 250s were thought of as an ideal compromise between the 175s and the open-class bikes. More powerful than the little ones, lighter and better handling than the big ones. Is that still the case? Despite the improved 175s and open class bikes, can a 250 still hold its own on the enduro circuit? We decided to have a look at one and see.

We chose a Husqvarna to reacquaint ourselves with the Swedish marque. Husky represents a traditional European philosophy of building motorcycles. It's an old company, slow to innovate because of a small financial base that dictates making do with existing models and designs as long as possible to maximize the research and development investment.

Unlike the Japanese motorcycle companies, Husqvarna can't afford to swap entire lines of models year by year.

A benefit of this approach is that many parts are used on all models. This has



The Husky shines in the tight stuff where its short, nimble chassis and torquey engine can be used to best advantage.

advantages for the consumer in parts availability and pricing. Also, while other companies continually have to cope with first-year teething troubles, Husky is better able to refine and perfect each design, getting the bugs out and offering a better package to the buyer.

The bike we tested is called a 240 WR. If you thought the mid-size Husky was a 250 WR, you're right; some 240 cc versions, specially sized to meet insurance restrictions in some European countries, came to Canada this year and we got one. It's

identical to the 250 except for a bore decrease to 68.75 mm from 69.5 mm in the 250. The first oversize bore job will take it out to the "regular" 250's size.

The Husky appears elegant at first glance, rather than spectacular or downright weird like some of its trans-Pacific opposition. It appears shorter and lower than it is, partly because of the squared-off rear fender. The frame is silver, the wheels and fork legs gold, the tank and side covers black, the fenders white. The tank has a softly rounded shape and holds 11 litres of pre-mixed fuel.

Eschewing the current single-shock fad at least for this season, the WR comes with twin Ohlins piggyback shocks that provide an acceptable 254 mm of rear wheel travel. The Husqvarna-built leading axle fork gives 240 mm of travel up front; again, lots for an enduro bike. A benefit of the shorter-than-motocross travel is a reasonable seat height of 850 mm that allows even shorter riders to get their feet down to the ground.

The bike weighs in at 109 kg, right in the ballpark with the opposition 250s, though slightly portly when compared to 175s.

Starting is easy as long as you're beginning from rest. The WR doesn't have primary starting, so if you crash and stall you'll have to hunt for neutral before getting on the move again. When it's cold you'll need the enricher, but it warms up quickly and usually starts without problems.

Good handling of the Husqvarna is obvious at all times. Company's own fork works well, while Ohlins piggyback shocks control the movement of the rear end's 17-inch tire.

**CYCLE
CANADA**
TEST

HUSQVARNA 250 WR





HUSKY

The left-side kick starter will be familiar to those who've ridden Can-Ams or European bikes before. The open class Husky, the 430 WR, does have primary starting, so perhaps it'll show up on the smaller bikes in 1982.

Once rolling, the dominant impression the engine gives is one of flexibility. A new exhaust system and extremely heavy fly-wheel combine to create a torque curve that feels as though it closely resembles the proverbial straight line. What it gains in torque it loses in ultimate horsepower, so the bike works best in areas that don't require a lot of flat-out running. In fact, there's barely horsepower enough to get the front wheel lifted over an obstacle that suddenly appears.

On a tight, twisting trail the flexible engine and short, nimble chassis combine to make the Husky easy to ride. The engine characteristics allow you to maintain the momentum of the bike without worrying about a burst of peaky power breaking the rear tire loose at the wrong time. Unlike a bigger bike on such trails, the 240 suddenly seems to have just the right blend of torque and horsepower. The obedient chassis minimizes the physical work the rider has to do, too, so that after several kilometres of tight woods sections strewn with rocks and logs he feels comparatively refreshed.

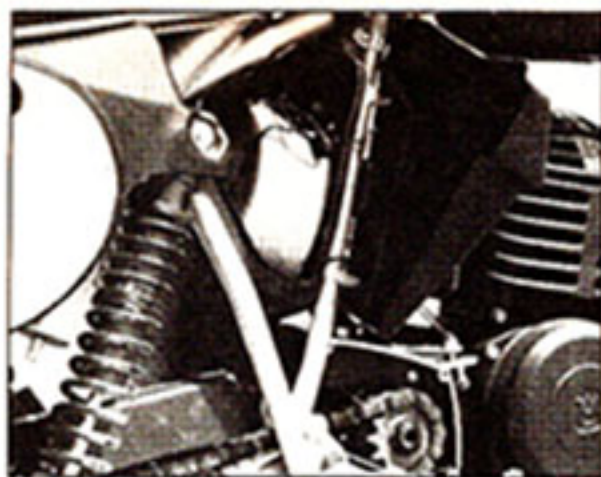
The stock suspension is excellent. The Ohlins shocks are a bit deficient in damping in some conditions, but are better, say, than the S&Ws fitted to Can-Ams. The Husqvarna fork looks a little fragile at 35 mm diameter, but works superbly.

Another facet of the good handling comes when you make a mistake. The WR is a good bike to make errors on because of the suspension and the accurate behavior of the chassis. You can recover from errors with less drama than on many other bikes because the Husky responds quickly and accurately to signals from the rider.

In mud it's better than most. The torque, flexible motor won't cause the rear wheel to dig a grave for the bike and the relatively light weight makes pulling it out, when necessary, less awful than it can be. If you think that a couple of kilos don't matter, think of a weight lifter who falters if one kilo is added to a bar he's lifted with impunity a moment before. Now transfer that picture to a motorcycle in a swamp at the back of the enduro course...

Once out of the goo and into the straight parts, the lack of sheer horsepower of the engine becomes noticeable. Not just at top end, but also in response to the throttle the Husky is somewhat below par. It doesn't rev quickly and takes time to accelerate through its rev range.

Ohlins shocks are a bit deficient in damping in some situations, but handle most of what you throw at them.



Husky air cleaner is a marvel of easy access; it comes out in mere seconds.

The transmission, on the other hand, is very good. It works smoothly up or down, has ratios well matched to the engine and doesn't miss shifts.

The brakes, however, are far from being a strong point. They aren't bad in the dry, but don't come close to those of a Yamaha, for example. Once they're wet they'd have trouble stopping a bicycle.

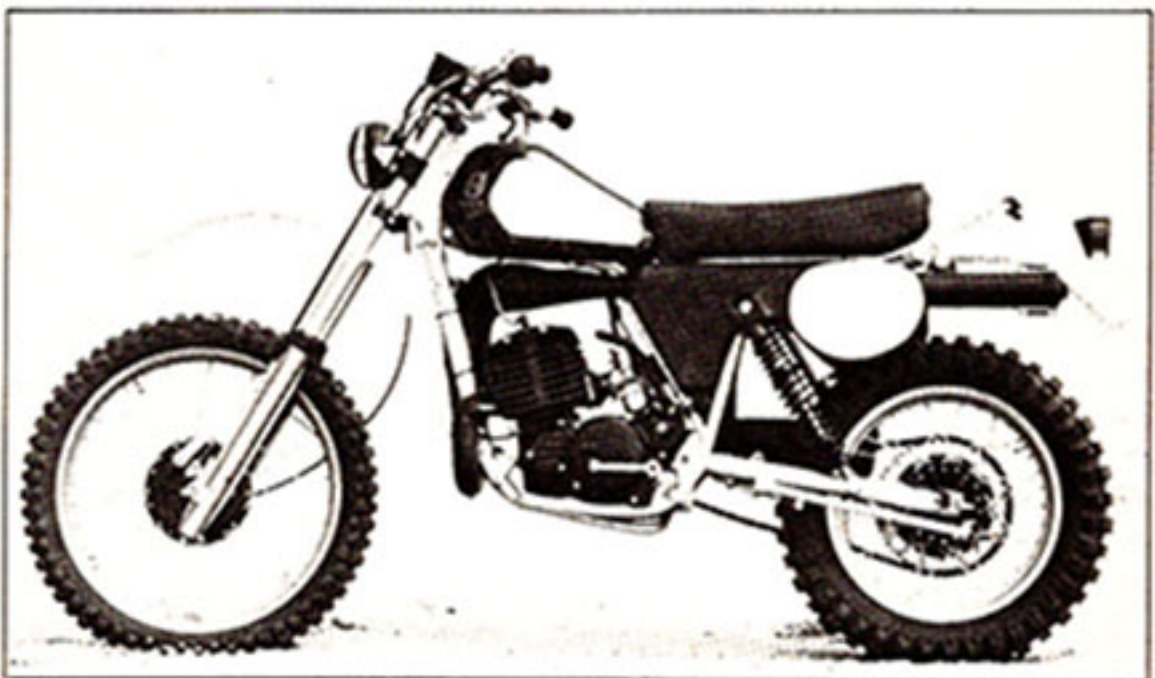
Service is a simple matter. The Motoplatt electronic ignition should never need

attention and the air filter is a marvel of simplicity and efficiency, requiring about 10 seconds to remove. You should learn about fork seals if you don't already know; in time-honored Husky tradition, the seals on the new fork should last about as long as the knobs on the rear tire.

After the riding and analysis is finished, what's the answer to the question about 250s? Are they really needed, or is a 175/200 and an open class all that's really required? We think the Husky 240/250 works extremely well, as well as or better than the Japanese and Canadian opposition in some ways. The torque and flexible powerband of the 250 engine make it better suited to many enduros than a smaller bike would be, while indeed the Husky is more manoeuvrable than a bigger bike.

So from the performance point of view, it's great. From the standpoint of cost effectiveness, however, we doubt that the price difference of \$500-\$600 between the Husky and a similar or smaller Japanese or Canadian enduro bike is worth it. That, of course, is a decision you'll have to make for yourself. □

SPECIFICATIONS Husqvarna 250 WR



MODEL 1981 Husqvarna
240 WR [Model tested]

PRICE \$2,875

ENGINE TYPE Single-
cylinder air-cooled
two-stroke with six-
speed transmission,
non-primary kick
starting

DISPLACEMENT 239 cc

BORE AND STROKE ... 68.75 x
56.5 mm

HORSEPOWER N.A.

TORQUE N.A.

CARBURETION One Mikuni
38 mm

IGNITION CDI

SUSPENSION Telescopic
fork with coil springs,
oil-damped, 240 mm
travel; rear swingarm
with Ohlins piggy-
back shocks, 254 mm
travel

TIRES Barum Motocross
Special 3.00 x 21 front
and 140/90 and 17 rear

WEIGHT 109 kg

FUEL CAPACITY 11 litres

Distributed in Canada by Steen Hansen Motorcycles
Ltd., 9529-63 Ave., Edmonton, Alta., T6E 0G2,
(403) 435-4423.

The rest



1981 GS Model 12-Month Unlimited Mileage Warranty

* See Owner's Manual for full details.

of the 650 class may now be dismissed.

When Suzuki decides to step into a class, other folks can only sigh. And step aside.

Case in point: The new GS-650E, G and GL. Friends, these bikes aren't just new, they're tomorrow-new.

For instance, the G and GL Shafts are outfitted with a unique transmission/shaft system. Get this: When these bikes are shifted into high gear (5th), the power is transferred directly from the engine to the shaftdrive, thus bypassing the transmission reduction gears. Result: More compact

engine, less driveline lash.

You think that's something? Listen to this: The sporty E model comes with an automatic dual damping shock system. So damping rates are automatically adjusted within the shocks as loads and roads change.

You think that's neat? Well, hear this: All three bikes are powered by Suzuki's new Twin Dome Combustion Chamber engine. Without getting into

a lot of technotalk, we'll just say that this 4-cylinder, 4-stroke is a powerhouse. Yet, it is extremely fuel-efficient and clean-burning.

We could go on and on about these extraordinary bikes. All three are appointed with CV carbs, transistorized ignition, Quartz Halogen headlight, digital gear indicator, top-mounted choke and accessory terminal.

And each has its own special features: Like tubeless tires and air forks on the G model. Tubeless tires with raised white letters on the GL. And dual slotted front disc brakes with a rear single disc on the E and G.

Also, of course, each of these beautiful machines is backed with a beautiful 12-month unlimited mileage warranty.*

Sure, you've seen 650 bikes before. But you've never seen 650 bikes like these before.



Suzuki 1981  The Performer.

Be a specialist. Take a Canada Safety Council rider training course. See your Suzuki dealer for details.

The King as a Person

In which observers, a fellow racer and KR himself discuss the unofficial side of the human being.

Continued from Page 33

Barry Coleman

Biographer

Motorcycle racing has attracted some people who in other fields would be seen as geniuses, if those fields had more official approval than what's given to bikes.

He's one of those special people — Dick Mann picked Al Gunter and Bart Markel as others — whose brains didn't work the same way. They travel on parallel tracks but their thinking is different. Kenny has that sort of broad view, that vision, that characterizes why he's not like everybody else.

He's a peculiar man, not your average sort of guy who keeps a confectionist's shop.

In all my years in motorcycle racing, I've found him to be the most honest person I've met. He doesn't say he couldn't get killed; he doesn't tell himself lies about only the other guy being hurt. He was terribly upset with the loss of Tom Herron — still is. He's not one of these people who tells himself: "It's a dangerous sport, but it won't happen to me." He doesn't do any of that.

He's a proper person, not a walking bag of neuroses.

He doesn't waste concentration. He regards it as a life force element, a valuable commodity. His use of concentration is so extravagant in racing that he can't waste it on anything else.

He's very good at answering questions. When I was working on Motocourse I had to do detailed interviews at every GP with 25 leading riders. The interviews covered the race which took place the week before and I had to ask specific questions about what took place on what part of the course, why this happened, and so on. Most riders couldn't remember much of anything, but Kenny remembered everything.

He was always honest. I'd ask why so and so passed him and he'd say: "He beat me," or "He was riding faster." He never made excuses.

Barry Coleman is a British-based journalist who was for several years motorcycle racing correspondent for The Guardian newspaper and edited Motocourse, an annual review of grand prix road racing. He is completing the first book to be written on the life of Ken Roberts.

At the last GP at the end of the 1980 season, Jon Ekerold said he would win the 350 world championship or die. Kenny couldn't understand that, but he had to watch. He said: "Just wait until he gets home and finds out what it's really worth. A world championship and a dime won't even buy you a cup of coffee."

"Once you're world champion you discover that nobody stands by your bed at night and makes sure you wake up in the morning."

His parents led a poor, hard life. Kenny grew up while they were out working all the time. He grew up from being a slightly wild kid into a motorcycle racer. Once he started to race, his parents put everything they had behind him, buying him silly bikes.

I'm appalled by the treatment he gets from the press in England. He's well liked in Italy, France and other places, but they're terribly hostile to him here.

The fact of the matter is that he's a very nice man. He has a heart of gold and all the other stuff as well.

Cook Neilson

Journalist

He's the best motorcycle racer the U.S. has ever produced. He's the last remnant of the type of racer who could do everything, who could ride well on both the dirt and pavement. Everybody knows him now as a road racer but some think he's even better on a mile.

Kenny's most important point as a racer is that he's very bright about at least that. Carruthers will tell you he's just a dummy. Possibly, from Kel's point of view. He may be not smart, or he may be just not verbal.

He teases Kel all the time. By now Kel knows how to set up a bike to suit Kenny pretty well. He can have it just perfect, and Kenny'll come in from practice and say: "It's okay, I guess. It'll get around a race track."

One thing Kenny doesn't have is Kel's patience. I know if their roles were reversed Kenny couldn't put up with Kel giving him what he's given Kel.

Kenny's had a profound influence on American racers and their view of themselves. He showed other American motorcycle road racers that they can be the best in the world.

Kenny's very much of a patriot. He's proud to be an American and it means a lot to him to be a representative of the United States.

In this country there seems to be a tradition of a ranking, first-quality racer teaching younger riders how to go fast. Some times the teacher is only a year older than the guy he's teaching. They'll just dig some guy up like a turnip and show him everything they can.

Kenny's just one of many top riders who've taken somebody under their wing. Skip Aksland was a guy who went very fast because he did exactly what Kenny did. Who knows why he's helping out Mike Kidd and Jimmy Filice today? They're bright and talented and he just likes them, I guess. It's not a commercial venture.

Kenny is a great fan of Dick Mann. He also thought Calvin (Rayborn) was terrific. Calvin and Buggsy would talk to him and show him things.

He's well liked in Europe. When I was over there, I talked to some of the people he made friends with — Ferrari, and some of the other privateers. He used to go fishing with Ferrari, even though they don't speak the same language. They got along fine.

European riders thought of him as the privateer's champion. He wasn't thought of as a Yamaha factory rider. Cecotto had the factory ride.

They thought Kenny was terrific, because he was able to communicate with them.

He has a wonderful sense of humor.

Kenny has great respect for anybody who goes fast. In fact, he has great respect for anybody who races motorcycles.

He also has a great sense of the traditions of motorcycle racing. When (Gary) Nixon got all busted up for the second or third time and then placed second in one heat at Ontario, all Kenny could talk about after he'd won was how great Nixon was. He's very generous in spreading praise around. He doesn't disparage anyone.

As a general breed of human animal, Kenny thinks motorcycle racers are neat.

Cook Neilson is former editor of Cycle magazine.

Ken Roberts

There are very few people who know me as what I am. I don't know everything that's been said or written about me, but I do know there's a lot that isn't true. I spend a lot of time talking to people, but I'll only give my time to writers who I know will be honest about me. Some people don't even ask, they just assume things about me and write that.

It's not important what people remember about what I've done in the past. What's important to me is whether they get their money's worth when they pay to see me on a race track. The first year I went to Europe it blew them away because they didn't know anybody could ride like that.

When I'm home I've got three kids to take care of. That's a heavy-duty responsibility, but it's something I enjoy. To them, Dad isn't the big superstar that people tend to make you into. Being at home is a place to get away from what I do. It's a chance to be normal.

I have a full-time business manager, Gary Howard, who handles all the money.

I'm a racer and I've handled money very poorly in my career. Gary handles everything; I have 100 per cent faith in him. Fortunately, he thinks the way I think in many ways. We're not hungry for the last buck. We'll take less money for a better show — what the people see when we go out to race.

I doubt whether it adds up to any more money for me if I win a world championship or not. There's no big bonus in the sky for me if I win. Since I was 14 I've been paid to ride a motorcycle. I guess Yamaha figures I can do it better than anybody else, and that's why they pay me to ride.

I've sort of grown into one of Yamaha's friendly people. I've been to Japan, seen how they work, grown with them into that Japanese way of thinking. I've programmed myself into thinking that way. If Yamaha has a bad year, I have a bad year.

I don't feel at this point that I'd want to go to anybody else.

Roxy Rockwood

Race commentator

People now just think of Roberts as a road racer, but they forget that he was halfway into his third season as an (AMA) expert before he won his first national road race. He's known now as a road racer because he was the first guy to go to Europe and really do something.

When Kenny started winning nationals, I made note of the fact that only one other rider had won all five types of AMA race events and that was Dick Mann. It took him 17 years. Roberts did it in five.

Right now he's the only one to beat (Bart) Markel's record of 28 national wins. Kenny has 29, but I wish we could keep Jay Springsteen healthy; he has 27, and he races a lot more nationals than Roberts.

He's a very droll young man. He tends to downplay things. Kenny and Randy Mamola are both kind of distant guys, but I think they have a good relationship.

Freddie Spencer understands publicity far better. People want heroes and Freddie has a better idea of how to give them what they want. You'd have to know Kenny's mother and father to know why he's a little short on personality.

Right now, Mamola, Spencer and Roberts have just about equal ability, but if I had to pick one, I'd pick Spencer to win.

Dale Singleton

Daytona winner

He's always telling me about the time he was a novice at Daytona. They had the bikes turned around on the grid and Kenny was in the front row. He thought to himself: "Hey, this road racing is alright".

Then they got the bikes started and turned around for the flag and Kenny was in the back row. He got out on the track and the bike seized on the banking. He pulled off the track and nearly crashed on the apron and he said to himself: "This road racing's a bunch of shit".

Where To From Here?

We asked him what is left for him to do after he has won almost everything in motorcycling.

Ken Roberts

It's difficult, because the only place to go in racing is cars, but that doesn't appeal to me. I don't consider it a step up from bikes, but there's nothing else I could do with motorcycles except motocross and I'm too old for that.

Motorcycle racing still appeals to me. At this point I'd like to get more involved than I am now. I've built up a few things like promoting races; I've got my feet into training riders like Mike Kidd and Jimmy Filice.

I could do more dirt tracks, but I don't have any time. In one international race in Europe I could win more than the entire purse for a national in the States.

If anybody's getting stepped on it's them (AMA national riders — Ed.). They're just a bunch of individuals racing 30 or 40 times a year with no time to organize, or no one who says he has the time. They don't know what professionalism is.

It's very doubtful that I'll win the world championship again this year, but that's not a problem. I don't need another one. We knew we were going to be in a development season, but there have been more problems than we expected. If I hadn't already won a world championship, it would have been a lot more difficult season.

I've given Yamaha a commitment to race in Europe in 1982. Winning will be more important in 1982. People forget quickly how many world championships you've won. It's more important to Yamaha than it is to me. I'll do everything in my power to win for Yamaha and Goodyear.

I have to feel that Yamaha is willing to put out the effort. With four Japanese companies and three tire companies involved in racing there's no way to tell who's going to have the best for the season. If I didn't feel Yamaha was capable of building the best I'd hang it up at the end of this year.

Our new bike is the most successful GP bike ever made. It won the first race it finished, and that was only the second race it ever ran. The bike was built very quick. I first knew about it only two weeks before the first GP and I first saw it just four days before practice for its first race.

There was just one engine — one set of crankcases, one motorcycle — and if anything went wrong with it we couldn't



touch it. If I missed a shift and blew a gear in the transmission, we couldn't have raced. We raced three GPs with one motorcycle, one set of crankcases.

If Yamaha would have spent as much money as Honda, we would have had a six-pack of them.

There's five bikes now, two for Barry Sheene, two for me and one in Japan on its way to England.

We've still had some problems with the basic design of the engine. The engine weight is too high in the chassis, but if you lower it the carburetors drag.

It's a square four. Some people have said there's going to be a V-4, but I've nothing to say about that. Anything's possible.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN COOPER, BILL PETRO AND DON WOODS

**CYCLE
CANADA**
TEST

KAWASAKI KZ305



COMMUTER HUSTLER

The Kawasaki KZ305 is proof that fun shouldn't be measured in cubic inches

I'm going to chain myself to this bike, guys. You're not getting it back," said one of our novice test riders after riding the Kawasaki KZ305. She isn't the only one who feels that way, either. We won't go as far as she did, but we're also delighted with the smallest Kawasaki twin sold in North America. It didn't look very promising on the specs sheet; just another small displacement econobike. Boy, is that wrong.

The Kawasaki KZ305 LTD is the latest entry in the beginner/commuter class. Positioned between the KZ250 single and the KZ440 twin, the KZ305 is small enough that a rank beginner won't feel intimidated by the size, as can be the case with the KZ440. It's still big and fast enough that it won't be quickly outgrown by the novice, as can happen with the KZ250.

So the KZ305 fills an important gap. Small enough for starters of all sizes, yet big enough and fast enough to be worth keeping for quite a while. The displacement harks back to the 1965 Honda 305 Super Hawk, a lightweight machine with—at the time—big bike power. The present 305 is as fast, smoother and more refined.

Riders of both sexes found the short reach to the ground very reassuring. Few things can be as unnerving for the novice rider as coming to a stop and not being able to get firm support with both feet. The low, stepped seat which allows this feature received both compliments and criticisms. Shorter riders like it but taller riders were stuck in one, usually uncomfortable position.

The handlebar is also a mix of good and bad. One rider preferred it to low rise bars but others found that it exaggerated leverage on the front tire and made the steering



Careful design gives the KZ305 the appearance of a much larger bike.

too light, with a resulting tendency to wobble, especially at low speeds. A change to regular medium rise bars would, we believe, give an improvement in steering control.

Oddly enough, considering the bike is sized for smaller riders, the levers are similar in size to those on large Kawasakis. Small hands found the reach to the brake and clutch levers excessive.

The KZ305 sounds healthy. It has a quiet but pleasing exhaust note unlikely to offend either the rider or an onlooker. That's about all they will hear too, because the KZ305 is one of the quietest motorcycles around in the engine noise department. Kawasaki went to a lot of

work to silence the clicking from the overhead-cam motor's valve gear.

The KZ305 is a bored and restyled version of a European 250 twin. It does not have counterbalancers, nor does it have objectionable vibration. The engine is rubber-mounted, and although it does shake a little,—you can feel it through the gear lever—the movement is not passed on to the rider.

Once under way, surprising performance whisks riders large or small away from traffic lights and the like with a fair turn of speed. The engine size may be old but acceleration and speeds through the gears are right up to date.

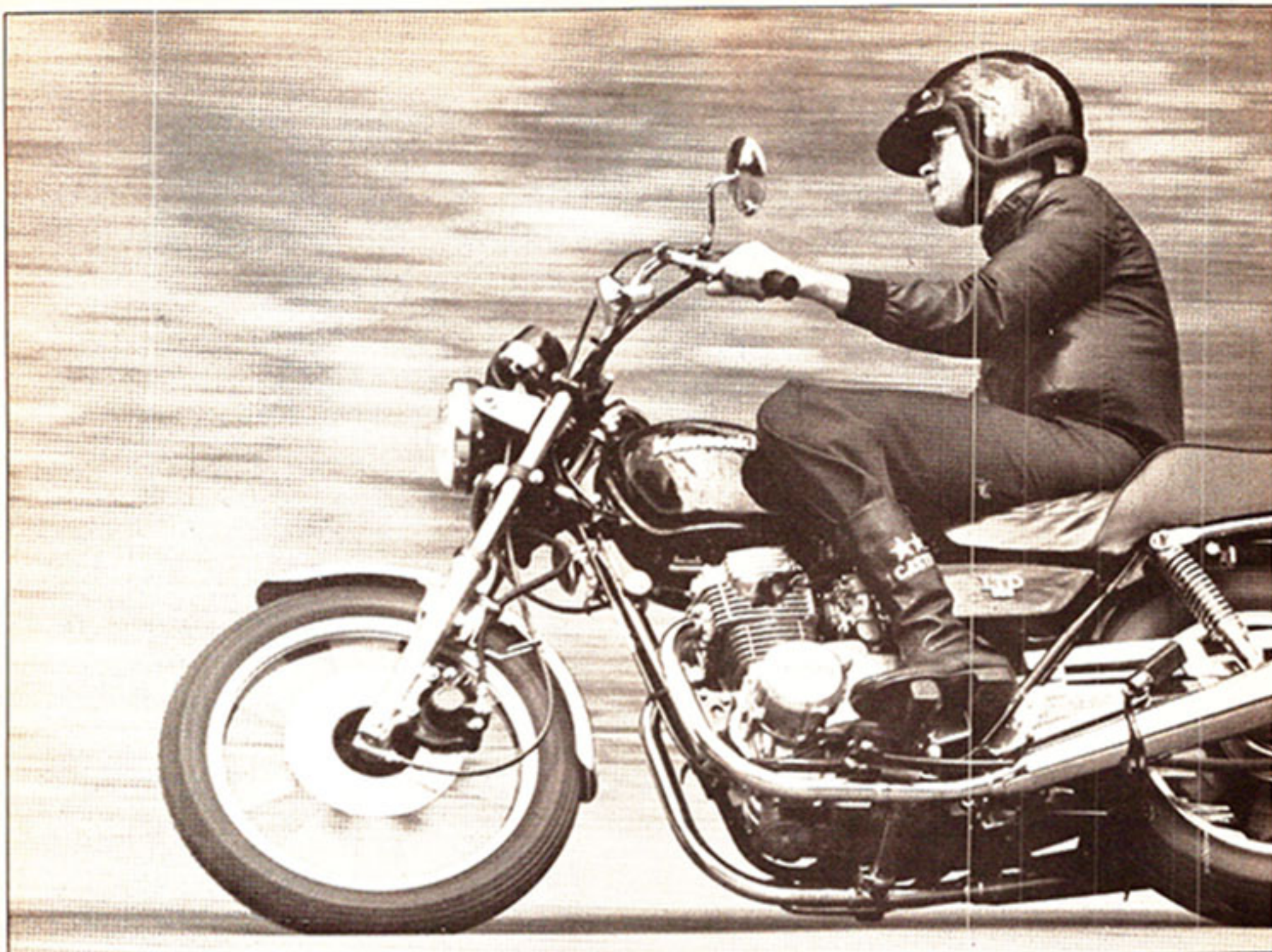
There is a six speed gearbox fitted to the KZ305 and in the usual Kawasaki manner it works very well. Lever throw is a bit on the long side, but that could prevent a novice rider from accidentally selecting a gear. Shifts are precise and effortless.

Even with the engine spinning 7-8,000 rpm on the highway the rider has a clear view of just what is behind him. The mirrors remain clear at engine speeds approaching redline, showing how much vibration control Kawasaki engineered into this motorcycle. Many four-cylinder bikes can't make a similar claim.

Although dressed for the boulevard, the KZ305 is competent when ridden sportingly. The gearing is tall enough to allow reasonable cruising speeds without excessive revving thanks to the six speeds. The spacing between each gear combines with the torquey engine to keep shifting to a pleasing minimum. There is no need to take tap dancing lessons with this motorcycle.

The suspension is normal econo bike but it works well. Travel at the front is 150mm and at the back, 105mm. Spring and damping rates are good compromises between comfort and control. In the twisties, the suspension allows the tires to keep in touch with the pavement at lean

Most commuter motorcycles are economy devices which do little to encourage sporty riding but the Kawasaki KZ305 makes the rider want to take the long, tight way home.



LOVE AT FIRST RIDE

Everyone was dubious at first, but ended up loving the little Kawasaki

Since the KZ305 seemed well suited to beginning motorcyclists as well as those of long experience, we loaned it to two reliable friends and asked them for their comments.

Therese Keating, 23, is in charge of Cycle Canada's typesetting. She has been riding for a year and owns a Suzuki GS400S.

Ken Talbot, 37, is a civil engineer specializing in construction and operation of nuclear power plants. He started motorcycling in 1958 and rides a Honda CB750.

It was love at first sight. Since I've only been riding for a year the only bike I can compare it to is my GS400. As a rider who failed her test nine times on the 400 I know I could have passed the first time on the 305.

Handling is the bike's best feature. Since 90 per cent of the riding I did was in the city, handling was extremely important. Weaving in and out of traffic was a piece of cake.

There was enough power for me and I'm sure I didn't even approach topping it out. I did notice it had as much pick-up as my GS400.

The bike did vibrate a lot compared to my GS400 but not anywhere near as much as sitting on the back of a Harley. I felt it vibrated too much for its size, mostly at low rpm.

I like soft seats and this bike has a very soft seat. Because of the chopper style it makes you sit up straight and is very comfortable. I don't like leaning over a bike's gas tank and on the 305 you don't have to.

The turn signals are hard to reach because of the shape of the handlebar. This caused many problems because when turning I had to almost take my hand off the bar in order to indicate a turn.

The very low ride and light weight are the best features but the looks are definitely the worst. If they had put the cafe style into the 305 I would buy it on the

spot. It's a cute bike but it certainly doesn't stand out in a crowd.

The gearbox is very easy to operate and I feel this is important because there is no gear indicator. Gas mileage is great.

—Therese Keating

Learners and commuters alike
This has to be your own special bike.
It's easy and fun to ride
even in traffic, weaving from side to side.

If you're five-foot-two with eyes of blue

This is the bike that is a fit for you.
Wind it wide open and it lunges ahead
You can have trouble keeping the needle off red.

If you're concerned about your riding skill

Have no fear as this one will
Go from 30 to 100 per hour
Without changing gear, just add the power.

Saving gas as you ride it to work
Passing the jams you can cast a smirk.
This bike is a real good buy
For commuters and those with their test still to try.

—Ken Talbot



Although dressed for the boulevard the KZ305 is competent in the twisties.

angles detrimental to footpeg rubbers. The bike is competent far beyond the novice rider; nice to know.

The bike stops as well as it goes. A single 257mm disc on the front provides plenty of easily controlled braking. A drum for the rear wheel does the job.

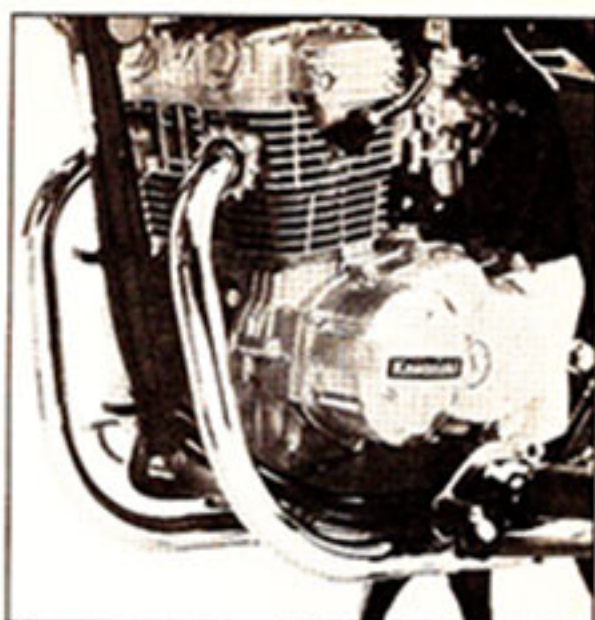
The KZ305 would make an acceptable long haul machine for the person who wasn't in a hurry, except for the comfort factor. It is truly unfortunate that the custom styling which makes this bike look like the bigger Kawasaki machines, and thus creates much of the appeal for the first-time buyer, works against the bike when long runs on the open road are contemplated. Mechanically, it's capable.

The pullback handlebar and stepped seat put the rider into the full force of the wind. Even the most devoted fan of the macho look will feel his enthusiasm dampened after being buffeted by the wind for a couple of hours. It's too bad, because the rest of the bike is so appealing.

Everyone liked the KZ305, 10-day or 10-year riders. That's saying a lot. It's fast, smooth, quiet, light in weight and economical. Who can resist that? □



Sturdy frame tubing keeps the 306 cc engine from overpowering the chassis.



Smooth and quiet KZ305 engine pumps out a claimed 30 hp at 9,000 rpm.



Shorn of bodywork and seat, the KZ305 reveals a simple but strong basic design.

SPECIFICATIONS Kawasaki KZ305

MODEL . 1981 Kawasaki KZ305
PRICE \$1,999
ENGINE TYPE Two-

cylinder air-cooled four-stroke with single overhead cam and two valves per cylinder, six-speed transmission, electric-only

starting
DISPLACEMENT 306 cc
BORE AND STROKE 61 x
52.4 mm

HORSEPOWER 30 at 9,000
rpm (claimed)

TORQUE 2.5 kg-m at
7,000 rpm (claimed)

CARBURETION ... Two Keihin
CV32



IGNITION Battery and coil
SUSPENSION Telescopic
fork with coil springs
and 150 mm travel;
rear swingarm with
dual shocks adjust-
able five ways for pre-
load, with 105 mm
travel

TIRES Dunlop F8 3.00S18
front and K327 120/
90-16 rear

WEIGHT 153 kg
FUEL CAPACITY 10.5 L

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**CYCLE
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The personality of a Triumph is defined less in terms of turbo and computer than in pure motorcycling experience.

"Hey, Mister!"
"What?"

"What kind of a bike you got there?"
shouts the shapely brunette at the curb.

"A Triumph Bonneville."

"It sure looks and sounds like a real motorcycle."

"Wanna go for a ride?" the rider asks.

"No thanks, it's the bike I like."

The Triumph Bonneville has character. People notice it and come over to talk to the rider.

What year is it?

How do you like it?

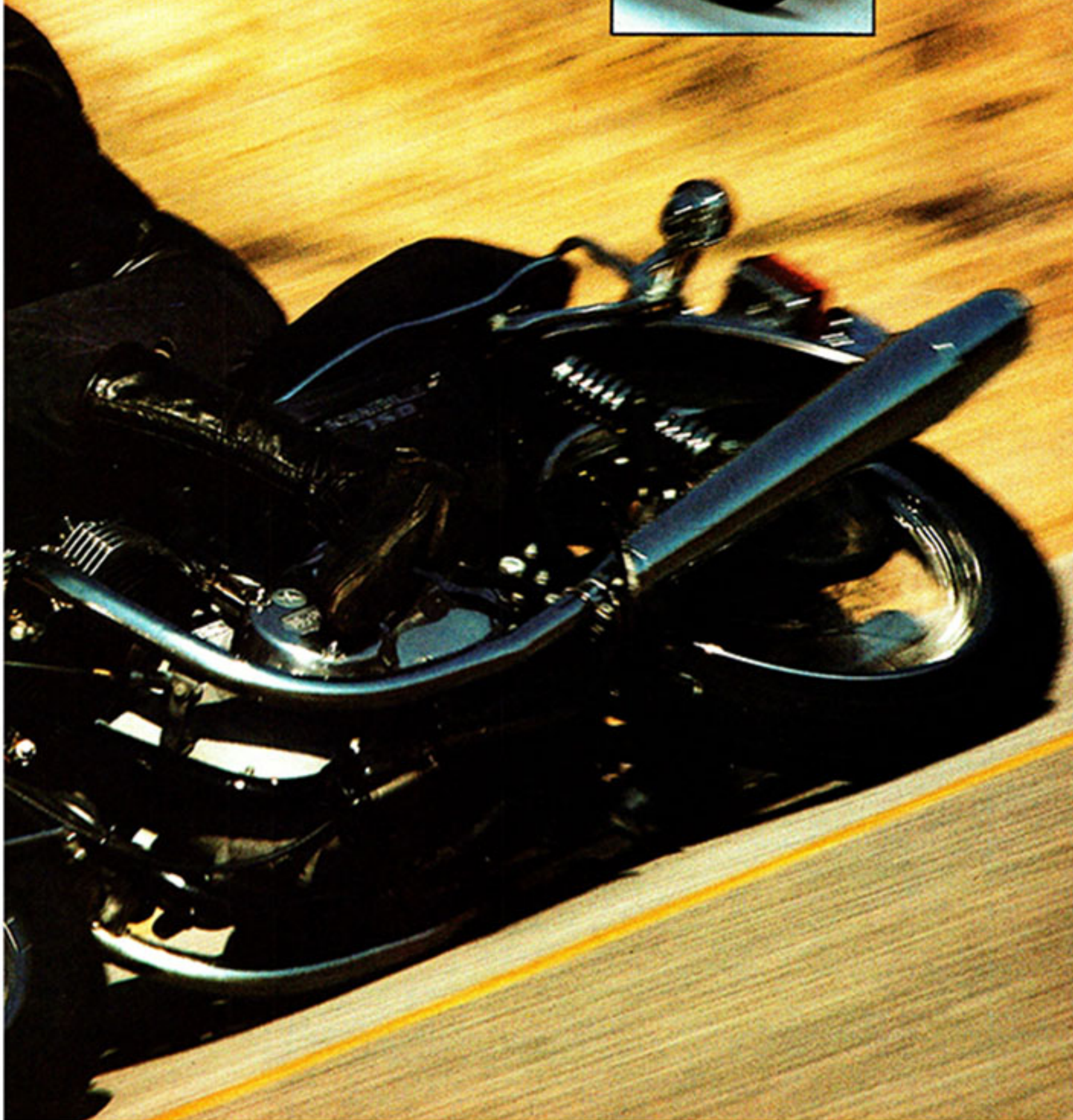
I had one of those when I was your age, son.

It's special.

From the solid metal



TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE



BONNEVILLE

tank badge standing proudly on the gorgeous gas tank to the polished cases of the overhead valve vertical twin, it shouts the traditions of Meriden.

The Triumph Bonneville is beautiful. The smoky blue fuel tank still has that timeless Triumph shape, a sensuous rounded front with a tapering rear section that glides back to meet the seat.

Paint is of a quality approaching art. There are no flaws, no orange peel. Just a deep blue that shimmers under multiple coats of clear lacquer like the Pacific on a clear day.

The hand-painted gold pin-striping tells the viewer this bike didn't roll off an assembly line 20 seconds before its identical twin. The Bonneville is built slowly to last a long time. It is striking just how little plastic there is on the bike. Plastic has its place but often, under the attack of pollutants in the air, it deteriorates and looks old in a short time.

Finish quality is very high. Chrome is lavish, alloy parts are polished to perfection and the frame is coated in a black enamel that looks tough enough to resist a chisel.

Grasping the contoured grips fitted to the ends of the distinctively Triumph handlebar, the rider cannot help but notice how light it feels. "Are you sure this thing is a 750?" asked more than one surprised newcomer. With a dry weight of only 195 kg (430 lb) the Bonneville undercuts a Honda CB750F by 35 kg (77 lb). The difference in feel is even more than what the scales indicate, since the Bonnie has so much of its weight down low.

The seat is slightly stepped and allows all but the shortest of riders to touch the ground with both feet. It can also be narrow near the tank/seat junction since the rider's legs aren't cradling a huge engine. Balancing the machine is easy crawling through traffic or waiting for a light to change.

Everything comes together when the engine is started and the rider heads out to discover just what a Triumph is all about. The 1981 T140ES is fitted with an electric starter which may seem like sacrilege to the die-hard Triumph purist. However, it doesn't spoil the classic lines of the engine nor does it eliminate the kick starter.

The bike starts first try practically every time. A first-time rider on the Bonnie started it on his first kick. Just make sure that the ignition and fuel are on and choke turned on about three quarters as you pump down on the starter lever. The made-in-India electric starter also fires up the bike with little effort; it's a selling

point for the pampered public rather than a necessity.

The clutch is smooth and requires a firm but not hard pull on the left-side lever. The five-speed gearbox truly snicks into gear. It has a fairly long throw considering the short length of the shift lever but selection is precise and no slop is felt in the gearbox.

Gear engagement is so positive that shifts can be made with the smoothness of Detroit's best road hog without using the clutch. Careful co-ordination of rolling off the throttle and slipping it into the next



Bulges for electric starter and electronic ignition change the time-honored shape of the Bonneville's timing cover.

gear results in silky-smooth shifts.

Triumph owners often swear by their bike's handling. Some of the legends all but imply that the bike needs no assistance or guidance from the rider to find its way around the most treacherous of mountain curves. "Sure, the Japanese bikes may beat us on the straights but let them try in the twisties," is the cry of the faithful.

A few years ago that may have been true, but no more. There are Japanese bikes that will beat the Bonneville in a point-to-point race through the canyons, even some of the bigger ones. In an all-out race, the limited cornering clearance and power of the Triumph will be its handicap. Still, handling isn't bad and it is likely that even the above-average rider will never find this to be a problem. Just remember that the footpegs and pipe will touch down when you reach a ten-tenths level of riding intensity.

Riding hard through the twisties is another matter altogether from racing, and here the Bonnie shines. The low centre of gravity and ultra-stable steering allow the bike to be ridden at a rapid pace for as long as there's fuel in the tank. It demands little of the rider except that he be smooth. The Bonnie can be abruptly tossed into each curve if that is your riding style but it rewards smooth riding by cornering with surprising ease.

Engine power characteristics have a lot

to do with the Bonneville's appeal. Good torque throughout the low to middle range of the engine reduces shifting to a minimum. There is no need to drop three gears when the tachometer needle falls to the low digits.

Not having to shift so often, the rider can concentrate on perfecting his riding. Corners can be approached, entered and exited without having to go for the shift or clutch levers. The rider's concentration is undisturbed. He can get the throttle setting, lean angle and line just right. The difference may not be noticeable in a couple of kilometres but when challenging a twisty mountain road the rider appreciates not having to make an extra few hundred shifts. And it is easy to keep up a high average speed.

The tires on our test machine were Avon Roadrunners, 4.10 x 19 front and a 4.25 x 18 rear. This bike was an early model but the full-spec 1981 and 1982 models will be fitted with a wider 4.50 x 18 rear. The tires are very good, even when the temperature is high enough to bubble tar. They also show little wear after an ordeal of back-road charging in warm weather on abrasive asphalt.

Brakes are excellent. Lockheed calipers clamp single 254 mm discs at the front and rear. And clamp they do. The discs have a hard-chrome surface to resist wear from high metallic content brake pads. We were not blessed with rain so cannot comment on wet braking ability, but under the merciless gaze of a hot sun and an equally merciless rider, they didn't fade.

Blasting along winding roads brings out another point of the Bonneville twin. The sound. The exhaust is not loud, and so is somewhat drowned out by the noise of normal traffic. But in the confines of a canyon the sound produced by the large chromed mufflers is like a trumpeting heartbeat.

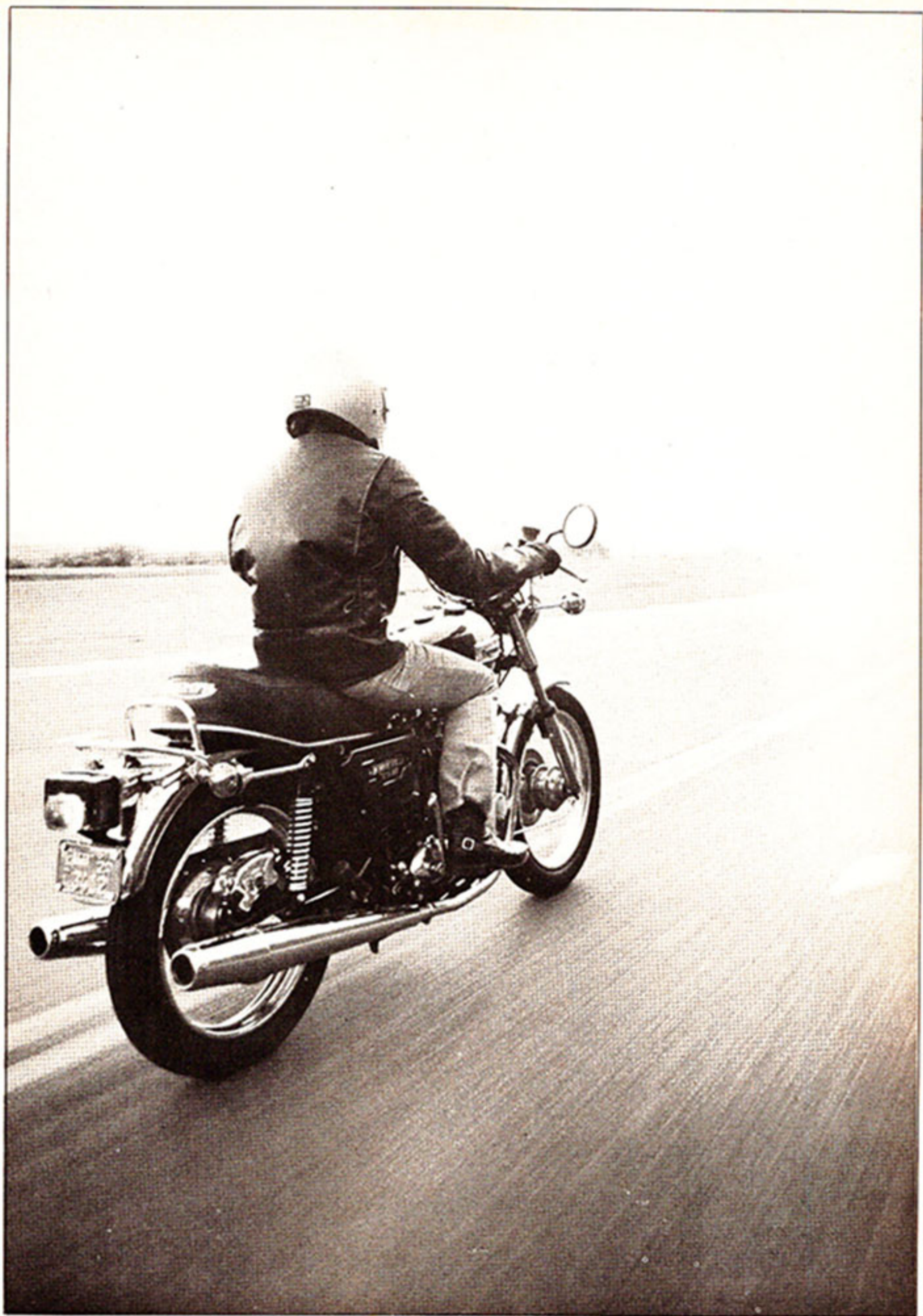
The exhaust note, the metallic rattle from the overhead valve gear and the prominent but hardly annoying vibration impart a feel to the rider that he is drifting back in time to the dawn of motorcycling. The Bonneville especially lends itself to the development of such emotions. Unlike other bikes that are annoyingly perfect at all times, the timeless Triumph twin has its quirks which the rider must get adjusted to, but which seem to grow on him. It has a personality.

Eventually, even the greatest lover of the back roads has to face the world of traffic jams and errant Buicks.

Again, the Bonneville shines. The low centre of gravity which makes the twis-

Continued on Page 52

The light and lean T140ES has impeccable finish and classic styling. Suspension is firm and fares well in sport riding but soon feels harsh on the long haul.



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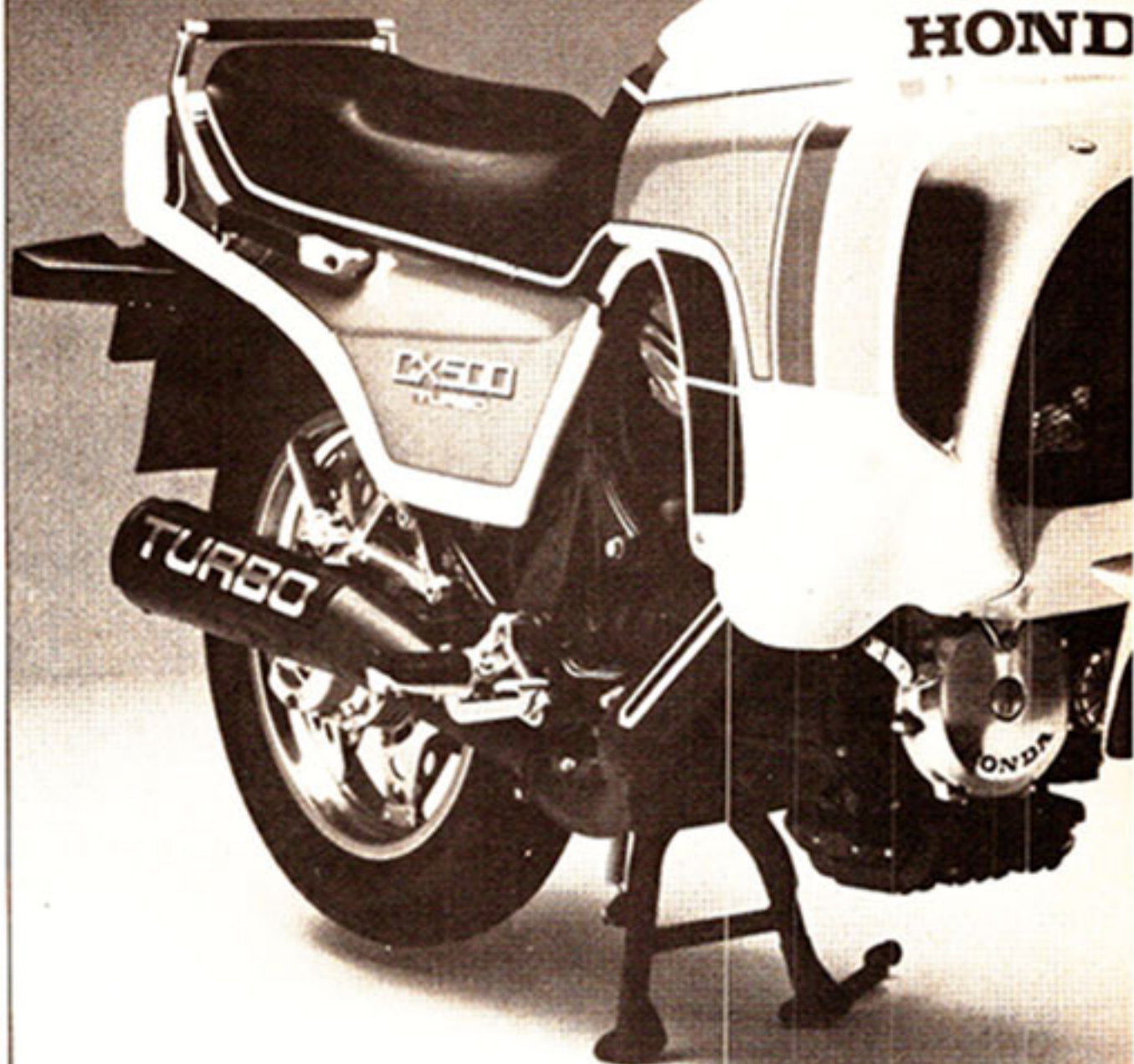
Engine Type:

TURBO

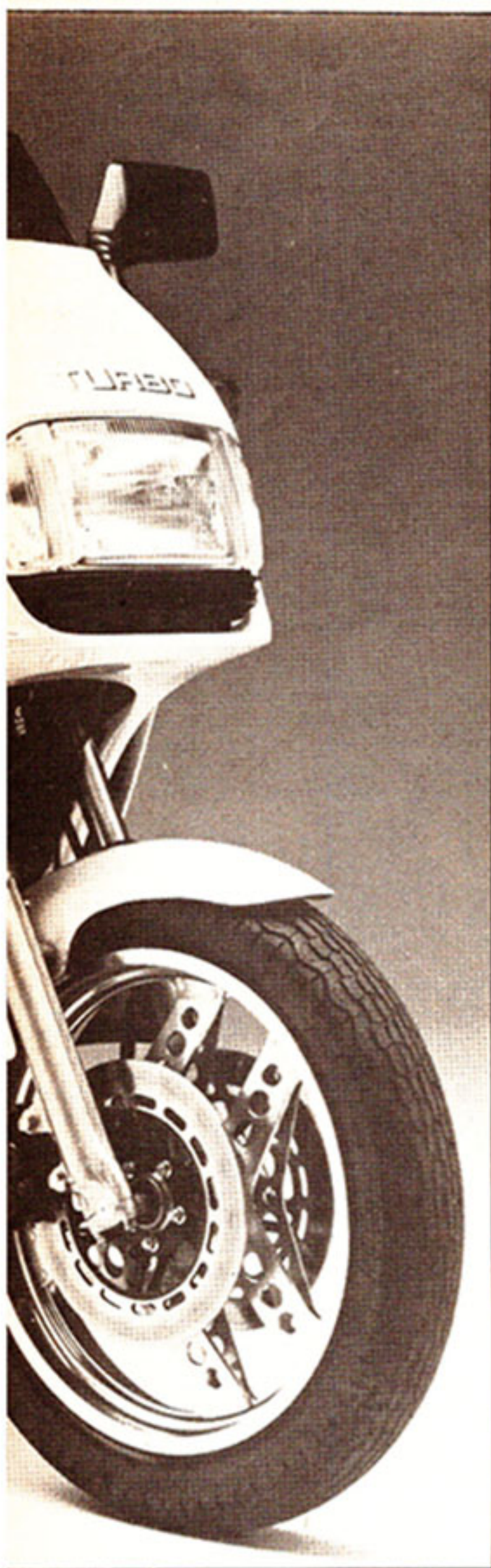
Manufacturer:

HONDA

CX500 Turbo



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Winding roads are the Bonnie's preserve where it can show off its good handling, adequate ground clearance and high cornering power thanks to first-class tires.

BONNEVILLE

Continued from Page 48

ties so much fun is back again with more benefits. At speeds barely higher than idle in first gear, the Triumph is very manoeuvrable. It feels like the average 400 cc motorcycle in such situations and is much better than top-heavy multis.

Neutral is always easy to select when coming to a temporary halt in traffic. It may seem a small point, but after a bout of heavy traffic the blood circulation in your left hand will thank Triumph for a good gearbox.

The clutch is even easier to pull than on previous models. There now are more clutch plates and lighter springs combined with a longer level at the engine end. Throttle response is quick and the light pull of the cables running to the dual Amal carburetors makes the whole speed control aspect of the bike pleasant. Our test bike was fitted with slide-type Amals but the 1981 and 1982 motorcycles will have constant-velocity Bings similar to those on BMWs.

Triumph engineers have found that the Bings give better mileage and throttle response while eliminating the minute flat spot at low rpm found on models fitted with Amals.

Leaving the city for the highway brings out the less desirable aspects of the motorcycle. Foremost on the list of complaints is

the stiction of the front fork.

Stiction is a word condensed from static friction. It refers to the grip held on a fork leg by seals or sliders which does not allow the unit to comply with irregularities in the road surface. It is quite bad on the Bonneville. You notice it less off the highway because braking and throttle use render it almost unnoticeable.

However, at a steady speed on the highway there are no strong forces on the fork to overcome stiction. The result is that the Triumph bobs its head like a hobbyhorse, with a detrimental effect on the rider. It's the infamous freeway thump, made worse where there are expansion joints between slabs of concrete.

Close behind the forks in annoyance are the rear shocks, which have too high a spring rate and too much compression damping. The rear suspension could be much better. The stiff gas Girlings are best left on motocrossers from whence they came.

Vibration is noticeable but in the long run it never bothered the rider. Fewer teeth on the rear sprocket would lower the engine speed on the highway and increase fuel mileage without much affecting throttle response. The bike has enough torque.

Mechanical rattle is there. We doubt if many would object to a reduction in volume by making the valve covers and surrounding castings thicker. It would

add to the bike's appeal.

One aspect of the Triumph Bonneville which did surprise many people was the fact that it didn't leak oil. None, period. Not even after getting hot enough to melt a rider when the plastic Amal carb top came loose and sent the idle up to 3,000 rpm. Some observers cracked: "It doesn't leak because it doesn't have any in there." Well the oil leak is gone and few will weep at its passing.

The ignition system is an electronic transistorized Luca RITA unit. Spark advance is determined electronically and there is no maintenance required. A new, stronger alternator has three zener diodes for better voltage control; running around on high beam during the day for better visibility in traffic will not run down the 14 amp-hr 12-volt battery.

Internal parts of the engine have been changed for better reliability. The crankshaft is machined to closer tolerances and vibration has been reduced as a result. Also, spigots have been fitted to the exhaust ports to cure the thread stripping of the earlier screw-in exhaust pipe flange nuts.

The old-style two-valve oil pump has been changed to a new four-valve model. It will, claims Triumph, eliminate the problem of flooding the sump. Sump flooding occurs in dry sump engines when oil collects in the sump rather than returning to the oil tank.

Fuel economy is one good point of the Triumph. Ours delivered 20 km/L in a combination of fast highway riding, city traffic and back road cruising. Tank capacity is 15.5 litres, good enough to go about 310 kilometres before a refill is needed. Considering the beautiful shape of the container, capacity is enough.

Lighting is under par. The Bonneville needs a quartz-halogen headlight for adequate night lighting. Taillight and indicators worked just fine.

Instruments are Italian Veglia. The speedometer is optimistic and gives the rider the impression he is surrounded by crazies as the traffic whizzes by. It is a cheap part that has no place on a quality motorcycle. The tach, like its partner, wavers a bit. Idiot lights are bright enough to be noticed. No bulbs failed.

Overall, the Triumph Bonneville is a neat bike. It has that rustic and timeless Triumph appeal. The coarse edges of mechanical noise and vibration can grow on the rider till they no longer enter his consciousness. Some riders even like the rough edges, saying that it makes them know that they are on a real motorcycle.

We liked the Bonneville but with a U.S. price of \$3,995 most of the lovers of the marque will have to just look and lust. Attempts are being made by the North American distributor based in Los Angeles, Calif., to reduce the price for 1982 but with spiraling costs everywhere and the sinking Canadian dollar, it isn't going to be cheap. □

EXECUTIVE MODEL IS PREPACKAGED FOR TOURING

Color-matched fairing and luggage create a premium-priced Bonneville



While at the Triumph distributor to pick up the Bonneville test motorcycle, we came across an Executive model sitting quietly in the warehouse. We decided to try the bike to see how it differed from the standard model.

The Executive stands out from the regular Bonneville by having a distinctive set of saddlebags, a top box and a small fairing. The fuel tank is more angular and the handlebar is lower and narrower.

An electric starter is fitted as on the

standard Bonneville. The paintwork is of the same high quality but is a metallic smoked black and red. The color scheme is most attractive and drew favorable comments from many observers.

Similar in quality to the paintwork are the fairing and luggage carriers. The fairing is small but effective. It gives the rider's hands and torso adequate protection and does not vibrate. Mirrors attached remain much clearer than on the regular Bonneville.

Saddlebags and top box are first-class

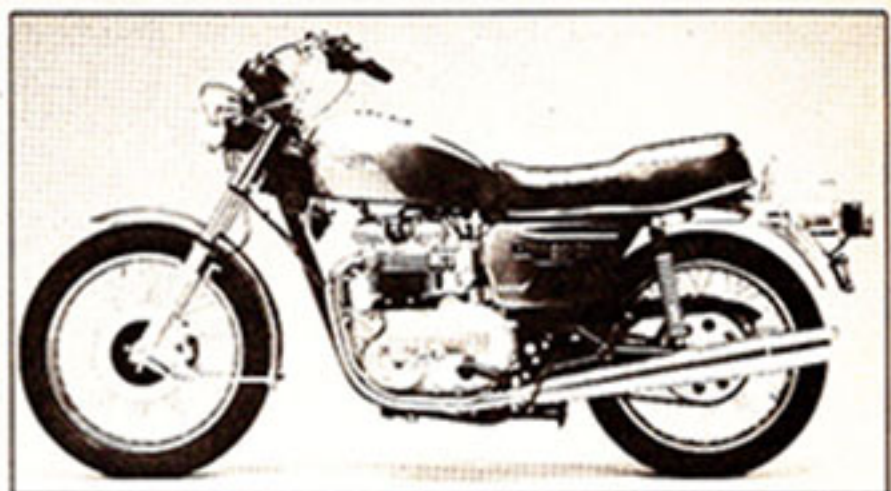
in design and operation. They detach in seconds and have fittings superior to most we have seen. Capacity is enormous.

On the highway the bars vibrate the rider's hands more than on the Bonneville despite the Executive's taller gearing—45 teeth on the rear sprocket versus 47 on our test Bonneville. The front brake, while almost identical to the other Triumph, was much stiffer in feel, too stiff for our tastes.

Suspension is practically identical to the Bonneville but the flatter seat is much more comfortable. Overall riding position is superior to the Bonneville's, especially on the highway.

With a price tag of \$4,995 U.S., you will have to really want one to come up with the ante. If you did manage to gather the funds, it would very likely be the only one on your block. It's not a bad motorcycle, but the price ain't right. □

SPECIFICATIONS Triumph Bonneville



MODEL 1981 Triumph Bonneville T140ES
TEST DISTANCE..... 850 km
PRICE U.S. \$3,995

ENGINE

TYPE Four-stroke air-cooled vertical twin, two valves per cylinder, actuated by pushrods
DISPLACEMENT..... 744 cc
BORE AND STROKE 76 x 82 mm
COMPRESSION RATIO..... 7.9:1
HORSEPOWER 54.7 at 7,000 rpm (claimed)
TORQUE N.A.
CARBURETION Two Amal 30 mm slide type
STARTER Electric and kick
OIL CAPACITY 2.7 litres

ELECTRICAL

IGNITION TYPE Pointless electronic
GENERATOR CAPACITY..... 176 watts at 4,000 rpm
BATTERY CAPACITY 12 volts, 14 amp-hours
HEADLIGHT 45/40 watts

TRANSMISSION

TYPE Five-speed constant mesh
PRIMARY DRIVE Triplex chain, 2:1
INTERNAL RATIOS (1) 2.582, (2) 1.836, (3) 1.4, (4) 1.189, (5) .887
FINAL DRIVE 530 chain, 2.35:1

CALCULATED DATA

WEIGHT/POWER RATIO 3.5 kg/hp
SPECIFIC OUTPUT 73.9 hp/L
PISTON SPEED AT REDLINE 19.1 m/sec
RPM AT 100 KM/H 3,471
MAXIMUM SPEEDS IN GEARS ... (1) 68.8, (2) 96.9, (3) 126.7, (4) 150.3, (5) 200.0 km/h

FUEL

CAPACITY 15.4 litres including reserve
RESERVE CAPACITY N.A.
CONSUMPTION 20 km/L (5 L/100 km)
RANGE 310 km including reserve

CHASSIS

WHEELBASE 1,422 mm
RAKE/TRAIL 27 degrees/113 mm
SUSPENSION ... Telescopic front fork with 159 mm travel, rear swingarm with two shock absorbers adjustable for preload with 89 mm travel
BRAKES..... Single 254 mm disc front and rear
TIRES Avon Roadrunner, 4.10 x 19 front and 4.25 x 18 rear

DRY WEIGHT..... 195 kg
LOAD CAPACITY 167 kg
HANDLEBAR WIDTH N.A.
SEAT HEIGHT 787 mm unladen
GROUND CLEARANCE..... N.A.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBIN RIGGS

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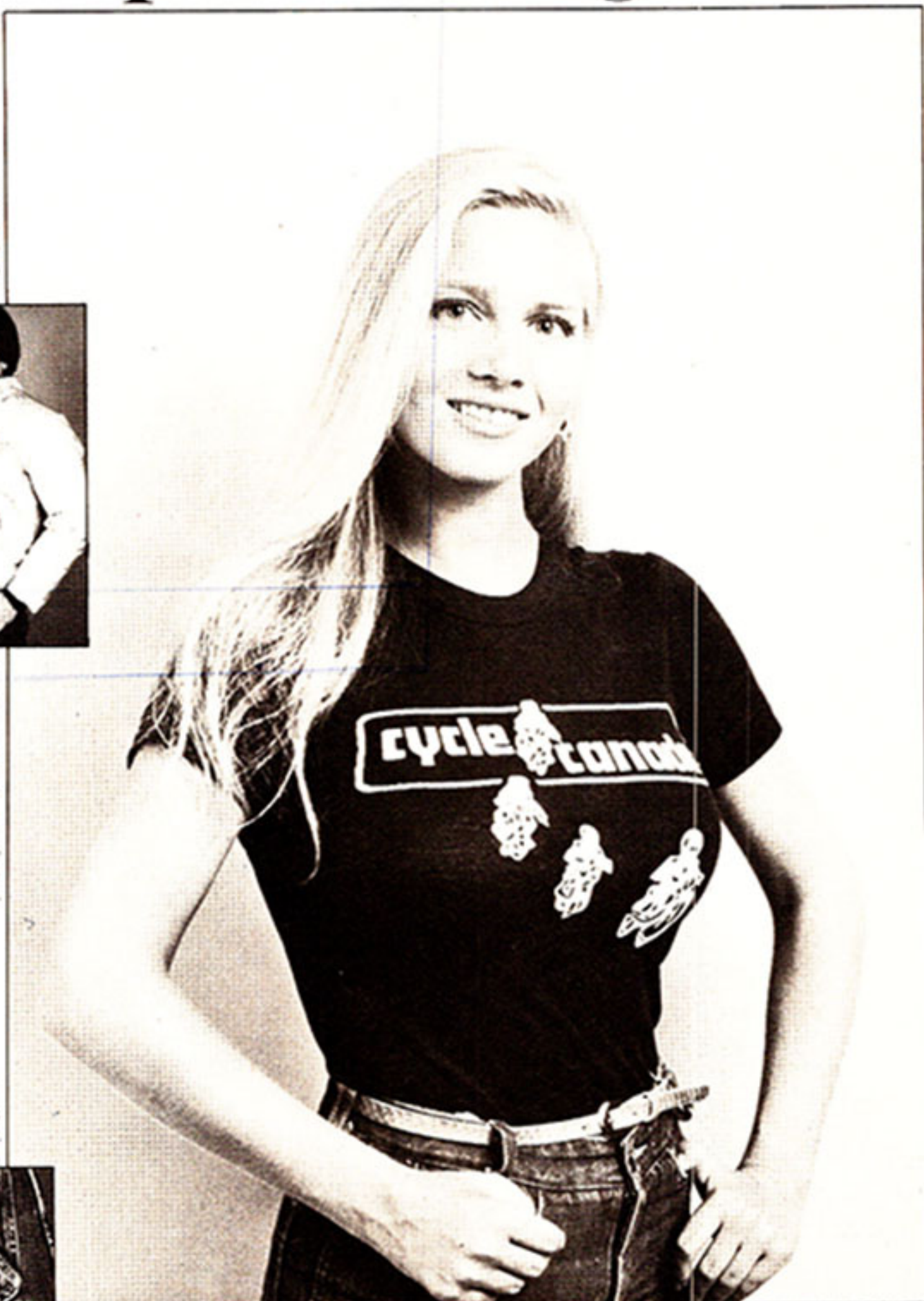
Cycle Canada Spring and Winter Sportswear for an active outdoor lifestyle. She's wearing a lightweight spring galaxy jacket with silver coated nylon shell, velcro collar closure and bottom drawstring. Men's sizes S, M, L, XL. Women's sizes S, M, L. \$21.49 He's wearing a winter silver galaxy jacket with warm borg lining, chest and slash pockets. Men's sizes S, M, L, XL.



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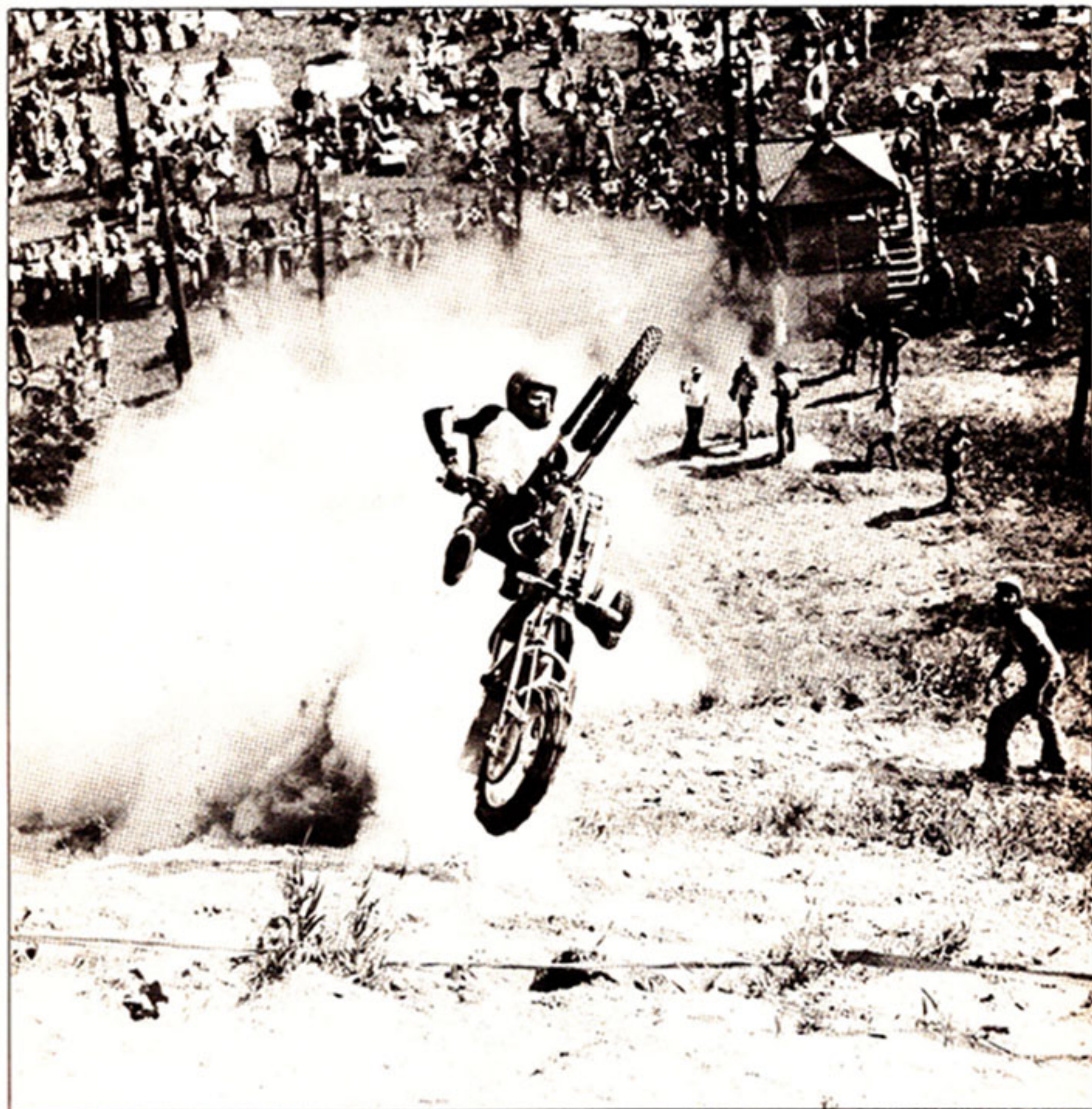
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CYCLESPORT



Tom Reiser Sr. of Columbus, Ohio, looped his Harley out of contention at the York, Pa., national hillclimb Aug. 2

Williams leading the world

Hillclimb champ retakes point lead

Leamington national half mile

Canadian riders give Americans a lesson

Rain blankets Shubenacadie race

Colin Gibb wins superbike and Formula 1

56

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Baldwin beats imports at Mosport

Rueben McMurter severely injured in crash

Cross country events awful

Misery and high repair bills anger riders

Mamola rules at Laguna Seca

Roberts and Spencer suffer engine problems

59

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Williams leading the world

Hillclimb champion takes over point lead

YORK, Pa. — Canada's John Williams, from Markham, Ont., moved back into the lead for the world 500 cc hillclimb title Aug. 2. Williams edged out Keith Grooms from Amanda, Ohio who was leading him by a single point going into the event, which also counted for the American national championship.

The 15 invited competitors in each of the three classes for hillclimbing world championships — unlimited, 750 cc and 500 cc — decided to make only two runs up the hill rather than the normal three since they generally felt that two was enough.

The weather was excellent and the warmth had left the uphill course dry with a dusty layer of clay over a rock-hard base. This was nearly Williams's undoing. His Honda 500 four-based machine, running on 97 per cent nitro fuel, was getting too much traction. He had to back off the throttle on the first run to avoid looping the bike when it reared up higher than normal.



John Williams is charging to his fifth world championship.

With only one run left to beat Grooms, Williams and mechanic Nick Kemp installed a rear drive sprocket with more teeth, to allow the engine

to rev higher into the powerband. They also changed to a smaller skid chain — something like a car tire's snow chain — on the rear tire.

It worked. Williams took the fast time in his class and the points lead with a total score of 84 points.

With three events left to decide the world championship in the 500 cc class, Williams looks good for the win. If he pulls it off, it will be his fifth, and third in a row; quite a record. Consistency has played a strong role as he has not finished worse than second place in any event since the fall of 1979. He attributes much of his success to long-time friend and mechanic Nick Kemp and sponsors STP, Bel-Ray, Champion sparkplugs, The Cycle System, Norris cams, Shoei helmets, ACS Engineering and Steen Hansen Motorcycles.

RESULTS

500 cc: 1—John Hamilton, Cumberland, Minn. (Tri); 2—John Williams, Markham, Ont. (Hon); 3—Jim Clark, Amanda, Ohio (BSA).

750 cc: 1—Earl Bowlby, Logan, Ohio (BSA); 2—Lou Gerencer, Elkhart, Ind. (H-D); 3—Michael Sabat, McKees Rock, Penn. (Nor).

Unlimited: 1—Tom Reiser, Orient, Ohio (H-D); 2—Willard Kinzer, Pikeville, Ky. (Hon); 3—Conley Newsome Jr., Grove City, Ohio.

Short hill was a toughie

Medicine Hat, Alta., grade stops 49 riders

By Brent Skidmore

MEDICINE HAT, Alta. — The Medicine Hat Motorcycle Club's first hillclimb of the year was set on a short, 61 metre hill, that made up for its length by steepness and a loose section near the top that riders called "the cliff".

Fifty-seven competitors turned up for the June 21 event and it seemed at first that none would make it over the top to break the string at the finish line. "Crazy man" Gerry Peters from Medicine Hat made it over the top first but fell over just short of the string and failed to break it. It took Larry Bernath, another local, to make it all the way. Bernath won both the 250 and 500 cc classes with times of 9.1 and 7.5 seconds respectively.

The hill was tough for both



John Wolocuk's 465 Yamaha was fourth in the 500 cc class.

the 80 cc riders — Mark Statler got the highest, 15 metres from the top — and the over 500 cc class as well. Lee Cox from Lethbridge, Alta., on a 750 cc Kawasaki failed to clear the top. His best effort left him 1.5 metres short of the top. Long-time hillclimber Rex Turple

from Red Deer, Alta., also fell short of the top by 7.6 metres on his Triumph 650.

Biggest thrill for the spectators at the top of the hill was hearing and seeing Brian Pierson's 1,100 cc powered Kawasaki "Excalibur" churning its way up the grade. Even

though he crested the hill several times, Pierson failed to set a quicker time than Bernath. Both topped out at 7.5 seconds. Pierson was the winner in the over 500 cc class and in the under 200 cc class.

Of the 57 that attempted the hill, only eight managed to get over the top.

RESULTS

80 cc: 1—Mark Statler, Medicine Hat, Alta. (Kaw); 2—Rod Kraemer, Medicine Hat, Alta. (Hon); 3—Michael Patera, Medicine Hat, Alta. (Suz).

Under 200 cc: 1—Brian Pierson, Lethbridge, Alta. (Kaw); 2—Dale Hallaby, Medicine Hat, Alta. (Suz); 3—Sid Seitz, Medicine Hat, Alta. (Yam).

250 cc: 1—Larry Bernath, Medicine Hat, Alta. (Yam); 2—Sid Seitz, Medicine Hat, Alta. (Yam); 3—Dale Hallaby, Medicine Hat, Alta. (Kaw).

500 cc: 1—Larry Bernath, Medicine Hat, Alta. (Yam); 2—Dale Hallaby, Medicine Hat, Alta. (Kaw); 3—George Newbauer, Medicine Hat, Alta. (Yam).

Over 500 cc: 1—Brian Pierson, Lethbridge, Alta. (Kaw); 2—Lee Cox, Lethbridge, Alta. (Kaw); 3—Rex Turple, Red Deer, Alta. (Tri).

Leamington national half-mile

Jon Cornwell takes the win with Peter Grant second

By Lee Palser

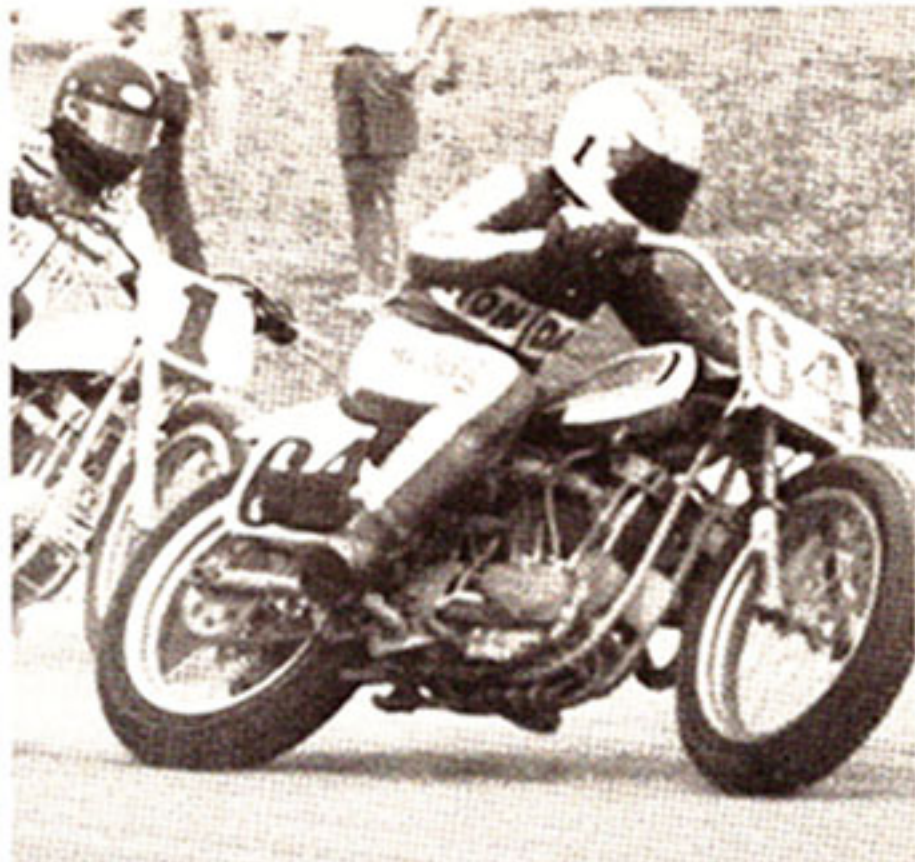
LEAMINGTON, Ont. — Peter Grant is a whipcord tough, canny motorcycle racer with an uncanny sense for finding the shortest line through a tight corner. At 26, he's held the No. 1 plate for Canadian flat track racing for two years, breaking the seeming stranglehold that the Sehl brothers — Dave and Doug — had on the 750 cc class.

Grant's 1981 season did not get off to a promising start. Races on consecutive weekends at two southwestern Ontario tracks left him shaking his head and muttering unhappily to himself. A combination of mechanical problems and bad luck appeared ready to finish him before he'd fairly started.

Grant crashed his 250 cc Harley-Davidson in the finals of the Canadian national half mile championship in Leamington, July 12. Unhurt but shaken, he completed the 500 event on his Honda, but didn't place. Most of the 750 race, back on a Harley-Davidson, he spent jockeying for second place with Chuck Bowles of Michigan, eventually beating him but still finishing well behind winner Jon Cornwell of Georgetown, Ontario.

The following weekend at the national quarter-mile races in nearby Wheatley, he sat nursing a wrenched knee and answering questions after checking out the carburetor and cylinder head on his 250. He was, he said drily, looking forward to the westward swing of the pro series. He had finished a disappointing third in the lightweight event and dropped out of the 500 after catching his foot in a hole on one of the turns, twisting his knee and wiping out his chances to pick up a good position. It had not been, he added, the best two competitive weekends of his career.

For the estimated 4,000 who crowded into the Leamington fairgrounds on a blistering hot Sunday, it couldn't have been much better. More than 140 riders competed in the expert, senior and junior divisions in



Chuck Bowles, No. 64, and Peter Grant, No. 1, battle for second place behind winner Jon Cornwell at the Leamington national in the expert open class. Grant got by for second.



Todd Sharpless from Don Mills, Ont. rode a steady, hard race to take the win in Leamington's senior 500 cc final.

three classes, and while the star performers like Bowles and Grant and veterans like Jim Robinson (whose Kawasaki dealership sponsored the race) appeared to be on the wane, other racers didn't hesi-

tate to keep up the pace.

Hard-riding Dale Kennedy, of Windsor, classed as an expert in the quarter-mile events, survived the buffeting of the half-miler to take the 250 junior division. He didn't fare



Todd Sharpless won in senior.



Jon Cornwell was 750 champ.

as well in the 500 junior when his left boot caught in the dirt and pitched him from his bike.

The race attracted riders from across Ontario, Quebec and Michigan, as well as 55 Motor Maids who had made the ride to Leamington (about 60 kilometres southeast of Windsor) from as far away as Arizona. Sporting everything from glittering new Hondas to ancient Indians, the members of the 43-year-old club were responsible for the biggest laugh of the day — even if it wasn't their fault — when the town's mayor insisted on introducing them as "meter maids".

Other winners in the races included: Charles Bowles (500 expert); Darryl Johnson (500 senior); John McCreath (500 junior); Bryan Hardin (250 expert) and Todd Sharpless (250 senior).

Rain blankets Shubenacadie race

Colin Gibb wins superbike and Formula One races

By Colin Fraser

SHUBENACADIE, N.S. — Colin Gibb, from Guelph, Ont., Canada's fastest rising road racing star, secured victories in both the Formula One and superbike portions of the fourth Castrol series round at Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia, July 5. Riding his Al Teeter-tuned, Zdeno Honda-sponsored Kawasaki 900, Gibb trounced a strong field in wet conditions.

"I really enjoyed that," commented Gibb after sliding, flat tracking and wheelieing his Z-1 through the heavy rain. "The bike ran the same as usual, not bad and not especially good, but I just felt comfortable, even in the rain. I wouldn't mind going out and doing it again."

Gibb's first win came in the superbike race on slick tires under a light drizzle, after Canadian Kawasaki rider Lang Hindle crashed trying to make up time after missing the start. Rob Bartlett placed a strong second on his Microlon-McBride's Suzuki, his best ever pro superbike finish after a season and a half of bad luck.

Series points leader Rueben McMurter was third, his first non-winning performance of the season. McMurter crashed while battling with Gibb in the heat race, and his crew worked all night just to get his Bel-Ray-sponsored Kawasaki straight enough to be ridden.

In the Formula One final, the rain became heavier and all competitors started on rain tires. Gibb once again ran away from the pack, with only an on form Canadian champion George Morin showing enough speed to worry Gibb. Morin's challenge with his CAM 2/McBride's/Rocket Suzuki came too late, however.

Hindle repaired his superbike crash damage only to have ignition problems in the Formula One event, but still placed third by pushing very hard in the corners.

The pro 250 field went to the



First-year racer Steve Galbraith, from Toronto, was second in 555 production and GP as well as third in amateur 750 production riding his Yamaha RD350 at Shubenacadie, N.S., July 5.



Gary Collins, No. 66, the sole rider with rain tires fitted, took the lead and win from No. 102, Clive Ng-A-Kien, who was set to win before rain slowed his Microlon Yamaha 250.

grid with most of the riders hoping the track would stay dry until the end of the race. It didn't. Only Gary Collins and tuner Ron Lefebvre gambled on running rain tires on their Shoei/Rocket Yamaha, and they were rewarded with Gary's first win of the year. Behind Collins, Clive Ng-A-Kien and Claude Leroux battled each other and the wet on slick tires. Clive beat new Team Canada member Leroux with his Microlon Yamaha at the flag.

Local hero Ross Myra won the pro 555 production race in front of points leader Martin Schubert, who won in the 750

class. In amateur 750 production, ice racing champ Michel Mercier won his second only road race, with James Pletsch finishing second. Pletsch later took first in 555 production on his Yamaha RD350, and then switched to his Action Accessories-sponsored Suzuki to take the amateur superbike win on his first attempt.

The weekend was overshadowed by a Friday practice crash involving Castrol/Yamaha Motor Canada rider Steve Gervais. Breaking in his bound-for-Europe Yamaha 500, Gervais lost control coming over the crest of a hill in a

back straight sweeper, and slid off the track. His injuries included a badly mangled finger and severe back injuries.

RESULTS

Am 125 GP: 1—Errol Chapman, Scarborough, Ont. (Yam); 2—Ray DeLyon, Milton (Hon); 3—Graham Read, Halifax N.S. (Hon).

Am 250 GP: 1—Gilles Lefebvre, Laval, Que. (Yam); 2—Mark Hopper, Toronto (Yam); 3—Darrel Horne, Dartmouth N.S. (Yam).

Am 555 GP: 1—Gilles Lefebvre, Laval, Que. (Yam); 2—Steve Galbraith, Toronto (Yam); 3—John Larson, Halifax N.S. (Hon).

Am 555 prod: 1—James Pletsch, Tavistock, Ont. (Yam); 2—Steve Galbraith, Toronto (Yam); 3—Rick Gomes, Rexdale, Ont. (Yam).

Am 750 prod: 1—Michel Mercier, Theford Mines, Que. (Yam); 2—James Pletsch, Tavistock, Ont. (Yam); 3—Steve Galbraith, Toronto (Yam).

Am superbike: 1—James Pletsch, Tavistock, Ont. (Suz); 2—Scott Chisholm, Toronto (Kaw); 3—Don Gray-Wheeler, Dundas, Ont. (Kaw).

Pro 125 GP: 1—Mike Dunsworth, Halifax N.S. (Hon); 2—Jean-Yves Ferland, Montreal (Hon); 3—Robert Moffit, Guelph, Ont. (Hon).

Pro 250 GP: 1—Gary Collins, Barrie, Ont. (Yam); 2—Clive Ng-A-Kien, Pickering, Ont. (Yam); 3—Claude Leroux, Montreal (Yam).

Pro Formula One: 1—Colin Gibb, Guelph, Ont. (Kaw); 2—George Morin, Mississauga, Ont. (Suz); 3—Lang Hindle, Scarborough, Ont. (Kaw).

Pro 555 prod: 1—Ross Myra, Dartmouth N.S. (Yam); 2—Martin Schubert, Willowdale, Ont. (Yam); 3—Rueben McMurter, London, Ont. (Kaw).

Pro 750 prod: 1—Martin Schubert, Willowdale, Ont. (Yam); 2—Glen Whilsmith, Willowdale, Ont. (Yam); 3—Ross Myra, Dartmouth, N.S. (Yam).

Pro superbike: 1—Colin Gibb, Guelph, Ont. (Kaw); 2—Rob Bartlett, Mississauga, Ont. (Suz); 3—Rueben McMurter, London, Ont. (Kaw).

Baldwin beats imports at Mosport

Rueben McMurter severely injured in crash

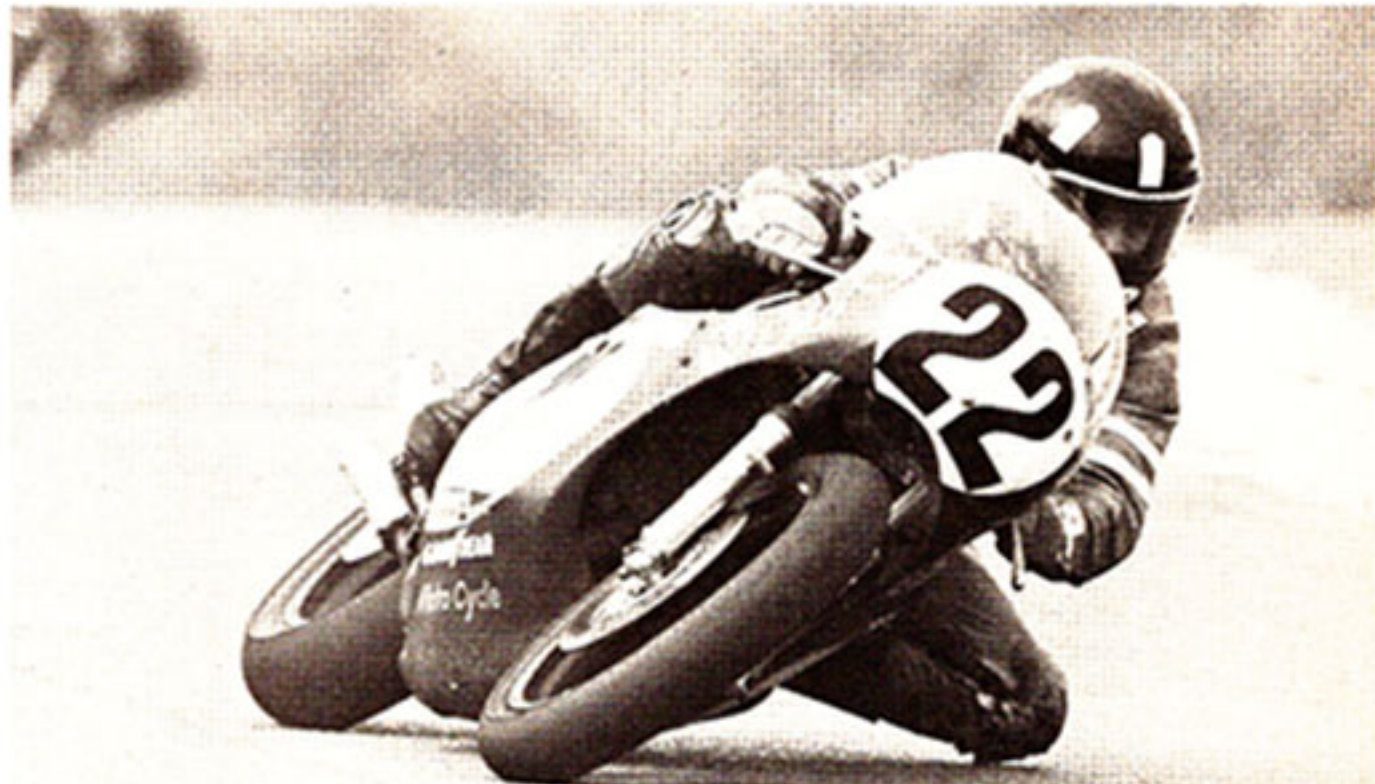
By Colin Fraser

MOSPORT, Ont. — "After the first leg, I knew I had this one in my pocket. No one could mount a serious challenge. So I took it a little easier in the second leg. I was a little less ruthless in traffic, and I still had no real problem at all." So explained a jubilant Miles Baldwin, clear winner of the July 12 Castrol Grand Prix of Canada, fifth round of the Eastern Canada Castrol Challenge.

Baldwin scored over a large field of imported American talent. Early leader in both heats was Michigan's Frank McTaggart, a Mosport specialist who eventually placed second in both heats and second overall, an identical result to his May Victoria Day Sprints performance. McTaggart was the only rider who had the speed to challenge Baldwin, but he was happy for the second place prize money and was conserving his machinery for the next weekend's Laguna Seca, Calif., AMA national. Both Baldwin and McTaggart were Yamaha 750-mounted.

Third overall was Dale Singleton, fresh from Europe on his 1980 Yamaha 500 GP bike. Singleton rode fast in the corners, sometimes using all the road and more, but simply didn't have the speed on the straights. "I thought a European-spec 500 could run with these guys' 750s, but I was wrong. Next time, I'll bring the 750. That was hard work."

Behind the leading trio were the Yamaha 750s of AMA racers Nicki Richichi, Boonie Knott, Jimmy Adamo and Alan Ward. Although fast, none of these riders mounted a serious challenge to the leaders. Eighth overall went to superbike-mounted Lang Hindle, on the old 1980 machine he used to win the previous day's superbike race. His normal mount, a new Canadian Kawasaki-backed KZ1000, was severely damaged in the heat race when the transmission locked up while Hindle was coming off the high speed back straight. He was leading the heat at the time, and even-



Toronto's Miles Baldwin ran away from the rabble at the Castrol Grand Prix of Canada at Mosport, July 12. The "rabble" included 1981 Daytona 200 classic winner Dale Singleton.

tual winner Colin Gibb described the incident as "the wildest crash I've ever seen. Quite a show."

In the superbike final, Norm Murphy on a Suzuki gave Hindle fits throughout the race. Gibb dropped out early with a sprocket-jumping cam chain, and Canadian champ George Morin moved up to challenge the leaders on his CAM 2/McBride's/Rocket Suzuki. Unfortunately, Morin crashed while going through corner three behind Hindle and bounced off the guard rail, cracking several ribs.

Another rider unable to survive Saturday's heat races was Formula One and superbike points leader Rueben McMurter. While battling with Gibb for the lead in corner one, McMurter lost control of his Bel-Ray-sponsored Kawasaki and slid headlong into the guard rail. After an emergency trip to the hospital, McMurter's injuries were diagnosed as a broken nose, wrist and knee cap, with the knee and nose requiring surgery.

The 250 pro race featured another battle between the two top riders in that class, Clive NG-A-Kien and Gary Collins. Perennial winner NG-A-Kien with his Microlon Yamaha won after some hairy



Lang Hindle, No. 20, unloaded his Kawasaki KZ1000 in the heat race but returned to win superbike on his old machine.

moments on the last lap. Collins was inches behind at the flag on his Shoei/Rocket Yamaha. Not far behind the leading duo was the battling pair of Team Canada's Bob Cyr and Roy's Cycle rider Gilbert Rutherford. Cyr set a 250 lap record on his way to third.

RESULTS

Amateur 125 GP: 1—Errol Chapman, Scarborough, Ont. (Yam); 2—Mark White, Brampton, Ont. (Hon); 3—Ray DeLyon, Malton, Ont. (Hon).

Amateur 250 GP: 1—Jon Morris, Barrie, Ont. (Yam); 2—Gilles Lefebvre, Montreal (Yam); 3—Bernard Lair, Ste. Foy, Que. (Yam).

Amateur 555 GP: 1—Gilles Lefebvre, Montreal (Yam); 2—Bernard Lair, Ste. Foy, Que. (Yam); 3—Doug Spratt, Grimsby, Ont. (Yam).

Amateur 555 Prod: 1—Bruno DeRoy, Verdun, Que. (Kaw); 2—James Pietsch, Tavistock, Ont. (Yam); 3—Steve Galbreath, Toronto (Yam).

Amateur 750 Prod: 1—Robert Lawson, Toronto (Hon); 2—Jaramillo Tiberio,

Columbia (Hon); 3—Ron Damaren, Guelph, Ont. (Hon).

Amateur superbike: 1—Steve Nelson, Belleville, Ont. (Suz); 2—Don Gray-Wheeler, Dundas, Ont. (Kaw); 3—Scott Chisholm, Mississauga, Ont. (Kaw).

Pro 125 GP: 1—Robert Moffit, Guelph, Ont. (Hon); 2—Brian Irwin, Pickering, Ont. (Hon); 3—Jean-Yves Ferland, Montreal (Hon).

Pro 250 GP: — Clive NG-A-Kien, Pickering, Ont. (Yam); 2—Gary Collins, Barrie, Ont. (Yam); 3—Robert Cyr, Montreal (Yam).

Pro 555 Production: 1—Richard Jagoe, Toronto (Kaw); 2—Paul MacMillan, Downsview, Ont. (Duc); 3—Paul Stokes, Toronto (Kaw).

Pro 750 production: 1—Ted Redford, Toronto (Suz); 2—Robb Cooper, Markham, Ont. (Yam); 3—Martin Schubert, Willowdale, Ont. (Yam).

Pro superbike: 1—Lang Hindle, Scarborough, Ont. (Kaw); 2—Norm Murphy, Don Mills, Ont. (Suz); 3—Robert Bartlett, Mississauga, Ont. (Suz).

Pro Formula One: 1—Miles Baldwin, Toronto (Yam); 2—Frank McTaggart, Detroit, Mich. (Yam); 3—Dale Singleton, Dalton, Ga. (Yam).

Vintage: 1—Peter Bunt, Navan, Ont. (Tri); 2—Steve Nelson, Belleville, Ont. (Hon); 3—Ron Peter, Ashburn, Ont. (BSA).

Cross country events awful

Misery and high repair bills anger competitors

By Harlow Rankin

CALGARY—The cross country scene in Alberta this year has been a controversial one, to say the least. Organizers and layout people have come under a lot of fire thanks to low finishing rates and miserable rides.

Riders think that cross country racing should be a challenge without the lifting and tugging contests that have almost become the norm. This is not to mention the horrendous repair bills some riders face after an event.

Cougar Mountain started the '81 series, moved up on the calendar due to the uncertainty of the Kamloops Two-Day. Cougar Mountain lasted 32 km. Entries killed time throwing snowballs while waiting for their turn to attempt the hills. Cochrane's Craig Woods snowshoed his Yamaha to the win in this slogger.

Next on the list was the Accessorist. Calgary's Walter Cukavac took another victory for Yamaha while others floundered in the swollen streams. Calgary's Dave Evans found his Husqvarna some 100 metres downstream—two days after the event.

The Budweiser 100 was a complete turnaround and a pleasant surprise for everyone. There were no complaints. The Bud 100 will bring riders back for more. Craig Woods, "Olie" Oldfield, and company did a superb job of promoting the sport and providing the layout.

Walter Cukavac again took the victory, commenting: "This ride really challenged you to go fast." Others had the same sort of comments as well as bruised hands from punching trees. This was no wide open race either.

Last but not least was the classic Moose Mountain, 1981 version. This year's 114 kilometres of meanness was exactly that. Of the 90-plus



Murray Nutt was fourth in the 1981 Moose Mountain event. Only one third of more than 90 starters finished the run.

entries, only a third finished. Many of these guys spent 10 or more hours in and out of the saddle, heavy on the out.

The usually spectacular mass start turned into a mess start, right in the middle of a deadfall section. This was a

good indication of the balance of the route. Bottlenecks created problems, too. One nasty climb looked like a swarming anthill from a distance.

None of this bothered Craig Woods. He completed the show in four and a half hours. His biggest test was waiting for the gas truck to show up. Craig's only printable comment about his ride: "Monotonous. I thought it would never end!"

Gary Brown of Vernon, B.C., motored his Honda 200 into the camp check 15 minutes after Craig's YZ465. The Honda was ideal for this year's Moose, and Gary was well up to the task. Mike Lunn put B.C. on the finishers' list again, bringing his Kamloops KTM in for the third spot one hour after Woods. Murray Nutt brought home his 175 Kawasaki next.

Cukavac had his share of trouble. He was running with the leaders when he snapped his front brake lever bracket. After some hasty repairs, he found himself in 24th spot at the expert gas check. After some rapid riding, he finished the afternoon with a well earned fifth place.

Other finishers had some horror stories. Calgary's Dave Evans literally threw his Husky down the hills as a result of a broken front brake cable. Cochrane's Jerry Nilsson bandaged up his fuel line minus the tap, but still plugged home thanks to a stingy Lectron carb. Calgary's John Arcand had the noisiest finish. His 250 Kawasaki checked in sounding like a garburator munching ball bearings.

Few juniors survived. Clare Martin from Blackie, Alta., brought his Honda 200 Pro-Linker through the last check after six and a half hours to take the top junior gold and an official Moose Mountain T-shirt.

Jerry Nilsson summed the season so far as well as anyone: "If motorcycles were built to be lifted and pushed, why bother selling them with engines?" The season isn't over yet; it couldn't get worse, could it?

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Mamola rules at Laguna Seca

Roberts/Spencer/Mamola battle was the weekend's non-event

By Paul Gordon

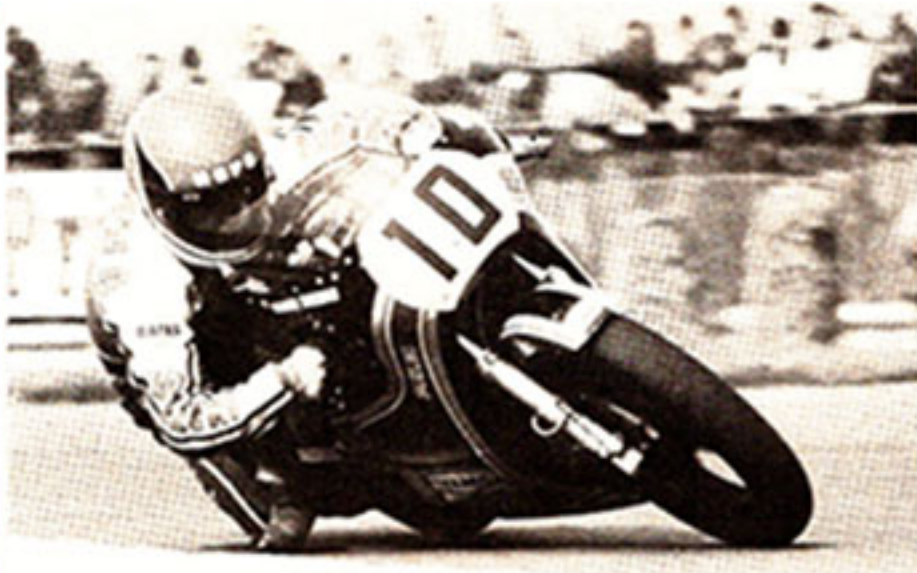
MONTEREY, Calif. — It was sometime around noon on Saturday when the California sun finally succeeded in banishing the last clumps of morning fog from the hills surrounding Laguna Seca Raceway. The ninth running of the Winston Pro national championship road race July 19 enjoyed almost diabolically good weather as the sun beat down mercilessly on the record crowd. Its rays seemed particularly fierce to a trio of lobster-toned, dust-engrained and otherwise bedraggled motojournalists camped at a spot near the wire fence overlooking Laguna's vicious downhill gauntlet Turn Six — the infamous Corkscrew.

Sprawled on a yellow blanket full of burrs laid out amidst a veritable sea of crumpled beer cans, folding aluminum lawn chairs and reeking clouds of Cocoa Butter, the three were staunchly plying their trade while struggling valiantly against gathering forces of spectator's ennui, dust inhalation and near-terminal sunstroke.

Down the hill across the acres of tanned and bikini'd flesh grilling near the Datsun bridge, a shimmering mirage of glinting, polished machinery loomed in a maze of chrome beside the infield lake. Across were the hallucinogenic hotdog stands, the antsy activity in the pits, the helicopter hacking overhead and the gigantic plastic Winston cigarette pack dirigible anchored to a hill in the distance, watched over by groups of armed guards.

At that precise moment Eddie Lawson launched himself over the crest of the hill into the heaving bowl of the Corkscrew and brought the crowd to its feet.

Laguna Seca is a particularly Californian spectacle. Around the umbrella of racing action is hung a great congregation of outdoor scenes, of



Mamola is trying for first place in the world 500 cc series riding a factory-supported Suzuki RG500 square four.

heroes and stars basking in the vortex of their private galaxies: There is Lynn Griffis, the venerable Winston Pro/Camel Pro girl, with eyes as watery, big and blue as Lake Superior, and Kenny Roberts stalking purposefully through the crowd like a leather-draped stevedore. Pit groupies tool around the infield aboard miniature GP bikes the size of alleycats while the Goodyear man mounts stacks of shiny new slicks near the factory corrals.

History is plainly in the making and a bevy of camera and VIP card-laden journalists are there to dutifully record it. Loudspeakers hanging from light poles or hidden in the stands of live oak spew out a sustained hail of lurid and irrelevant details. Much is made of the fact that Randy Mamola's motorhome has now eclipsed that of Roberts in weight, wheelbase and luxury, as if it has been slowly growing overnight. Plainly new stars are on the rise and the King is, conceivably, wanting fast.

Meanwhile, out in the seamy hinterlands of Turn Six, a ghoulish creature with flesh the color of burnt amber is busily knitting a nasty-looking garment of greenish material. She looks like some sort of Madame Dufarge of the

Corkscrew, diligently knitting the names of its victims into her cloth as they go spinning and sliding by.

One hapless rider oversteers the entrance, suddenly committed to a line which leads more or less directly into the waiting arms of public shame. He slews sideways through the twisting apexes on his helmet and shoulder-blades with a lethal tide of riders pouring over him.

He gingerly rights his mount and bumpstarts off down the hill while the crowd applauds. But Madame Dufarge scarcely looks up. It would take more than this to make headlines in the shabby lists of her crochet.

But on Saturday her flashing needles could not hope to snare the likes of Eddie Lawson. The man in lime green leathers was unstoppable from the start. He ran away with both the superbike final and the expert lightweight 250 cc class.

The same was true for Randy Mamola on Sunday in the Formula One race. The promised duel between Roberts and Mamola failed to materialize when the King dropped out of both segments of the Champion Spark Plug 200 with tire and clutch problems.

Freddie Spencer, likewise,



Randy Mamola won Laguna Seca after Roberts and Spencer dropped out.

had troubles with his new 500 cc four square NR Honda and was forced out of both sections of the race. This left the field to Mamola who cleaned up aboard last year's works Suzuki RG500 with Wes Cooley running second on the Yoshimura 1,000 cc Suzuki and Dave Aldana third on a TZ750 Yam.

With Spencer and Roberts both out the crowd made a mad dash for the exits, even though 20 laps remained in the 200. Madame Dufarge scrupulously packed up her knitting. Lynn Griffis prepared the champagne and the hoards of disciples dispersed to their separate venues of yet another year. The three journalists were not greatly looking forward to the 500-plus kilometre ride back to Los Angeles, but the sights and sounds of Laguna Seca sustained them.

The spectacle stays in the mind long after the aroma of burning bean oil and the howl of the TZs have drifted away.

RESULTS

Sidcar: 1—Jack Hart/Bruce Lind, Wash. (Yam); 2—Reg Pridmore/Ken Greene, Calif. (Yam); 3—Larry Coleman/Mark Bevans, Calif. (Yam).

250 cc: 1—Eddie Lawson, Ontario, Calif. (Kaw); 2—Jim Filice, San Jose, Calif. (Yam); 3—Dave Emde, Oceanside, Calif. (Yam).

Superbike: 1—Eddie Lawson, Ontario, Calif. (Kaw); 2—Wes Cooley, Santa Ana, Calif. (Suz); 3—Freddie Spencer, Shreveport, La. (Hon).

Formula One: 1—Randy Mamola, Calif. (Suz); 2—Wes Cooley, Santa Ana, Calif. (Suz); 3—Dave Aldana, Garden Grove, Calif. (Yam).

Cyclesport is edited by
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By Mike Duff

Engine changes can create trouble

Compression ratio
changes do more
than you think

Compression ratio is the comparative difference between the volume of the area above the piston when the piston is at its uppermost position of travel (top dead centre) and the same piston's lowest position of travel (bottom dead centre). By knowing no more than the volume of the combustion chamber (the area above the piston) when the piston is at TDC that cylinder's compression ratio can easily be calculated using the following formula: combustion chamber volume at TDC plus cylinder cubic capacity, divided by combustion chamber volume at TDC.

This gives the calculated compression ratio, a representative figure with which we are somewhat familiar. A 9.5:1 ratio enters the realm of a high compression engine, 12:1 represents an almost impossible figure and 7:1 seems hardly likely to compress enough to even burn.

However, this figure is a calculated ratio and is not the cylinder's actual compression. Due to an overlap of valve operation in a four-stroke engine and the positioning of cylinder ports in a two-stroke engine, actual engine compression varies.

In most four-stroke engines the inlet valve does not close until the piston has travelled past the bottom of the inlet stroke, many degrees up the compression stroke. Obviously, compression cannot begin until the inlet valve has closed.

Also, the spark plug fires some degrees before the piston reaches TDC, and compression theoretically finishes when the fuel mixture explodes. Ignition timing usually varies depending on engine revolutions up to about 3,500 rpm, so actual compression also varies.

By closing the inlet valve later than standard, ie, fitting a sports or race camshaft, more fuel is effectively rammed into the piston area during the time of valve opening, but the engine must be revved higher to extract this power increase. Closing the inlet valve later also shortens the time the piston has to compress the mixture in the combustion area. The actual compression again is less.

The same situation exists in a two-stroke engine when the exhaust port is raised slightly to obtain an increase in performance. With the piston travelling farther up the stroke before the exhaust port is closed, less time is available to compress the fuel mixture. The actual compression is proportionally less.

Again, as with the four-stroke engine, when port modifications are carried out in a two-stroke engine the rpm at which engine power begins is raised. The easiest

way to compensate for the decrease in compression is to remove material from the surface of the cylinder head and thereby reduce the volume of the combustion area above the piston. However, this can be overdone, especially considering the gasolines now available.

Compression creates heat, and the extra heat of added compression can cause pre-ignition, that is, ignition of the fuel mixture before the spark plug fires. This causes a drastic increase in engine heat and usually results in the piston growing larger than the hole in which it is travelling. This is called a piston seizure, a not at all uncommon malady connected with racing two-strokes.

Another negative aspect of more compression is the extra push on the piston during the power stroke. This extra push increases the wear on drive line components from the piston all the way through to the rear tire, greatly reducing durability over a long period.

Extra compression only gives slightly more power, and that usually at lower rpm during initial acceleration. It most often robs performance from the top end or maximum speed range, as the power required at higher rpm to overcome the greater compression is larger than the power increase.

Too much compression most often makes an engine use more fuel, as does too little compression. Using a compression ratio that suits the style of riding of the average rider is best all round for both fuel efficiency and engine durability. Any deviation from the manufacturer's standard figure usually results in a substantial loss in fuel economy and engine reliability.

The fitting of big-bore kits, a common practice for today's rider, increases engine compression ratio. This is a factor few riders consider, or are even aware of. Increasing the displacement of the piston does increase the engine compression ratio. As an example, fitting an 810kit to a pre-1979 750 Honda increases the engine's compression ratio by nearly a full point from just over 9:1 up to over 10:1. This much increase in compression could cause piston failure.

Actual compression is often best measured using an automotive pressure gauge in the plug hole. This should be done with the engine warm and the throttles open. A pressure of less than 110 is too little, while a pressure in excess of 145 pounds per square inch is too great for most uses. Higher pressures can only be used for short bursts, such as a sprint race at a tight race course. □

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Will riders play musical classes?

MOTOCROSS CANADA

Observations on the number system and reducing the high cost of travel

By Carl Bastedo

The Canadian nationals for senior and expert class riders took on a new format in 1981 which has come under a lot of criticism. The series, beginning with a 125/250 round August 23 in Ulverton, Que., will see No. 1 plate holders declared in each of the 125, 250 and open classes.

The No. 2 through 10 national numbers will be awarded to the open class riders only. There will be four rounds for the 125 cc riders and five rounds for the 250 cc and open classes.

The biggest problems facing riders and their sponsors this year is deciding which class they'll compete in. Two classes will be run the same day with very little time between motos. No rider could ride four long motos per race day without tiring and losing his competitive edge.

Spectators will not be treated to the same calibre of riding they saw last year when the majority of top Canadian racers competed together in the 250/open combined class.

The class breakdown of this year's riders should look like this. The 125 cc class will see B.C.'s Terry Hoffoss and Ontario's Robbie Hodgson fighting for the No. 1 plate.

For the No. 1 plate in the 250 cc class, the action will probably feature Alberta's Zoli Berenyi Jr., Ontario's Dennis James and Jay Kimber, B.C.'s Wally Levy and Quebec's Buddy Ford and Jean Bourret.

The open class will likely see the heaviest competition with Albertans Ross Pederson and Stan Currington, B.C.'s Tim Krogh and Jari Heinonen, Ontario's Al Logue, Allan Jaggard and Mike Harnden and Quebec's Pierre Couture and Charlie Desourdy.

This will probably change from day to day as riders switch classes based on how they do in the early rounds. They may also try to ride two classes on any given day or switch classes under team orders, maybe even riding only one of the two motos per race day in a class.

It's enough to make anyone following the race series give up and is bound to confuse spectators too.

As an example, the winner of the 125 cc class at the first round may decide to ride in the final moto of the 250 cc class to help out his team-mates. His races for the day would be over by then.



If, like the owner of this bike you really want to race, you'll find that sharing travel expenses and vehicles will be much more convenient.

Also, we're bound to see all the open class riders competing at a round which does not have an open class. This will further confuse the overall points standings. It is hoped that things will be changed in 1982 but those who follow the series will just have to bear it for this year.

Canadian riders have finally reached a new plateau in their development. Ross Pederson's performance at the U.S. nationals, supercross and other events in 1981 has established him as one of the up-and-coming riders to watch. His three digit U.S. number, 447, is well known to all of the top American riders and his future looks bright. He'll be the first Canadian to carry a double digit U.S. national number in 1982. Mike Harnden and Robbie Hodgson have also made names for themselves and Canada on the U.S. circuit.

The performances of these riders has overnight legitimized Canadian motocross in the eyes of the Americans. Canadian riders competing in the U.S. will find they will be accepted much more readily in the future.

RACING COSTS

The cost of racing has gotten out of hand for many of us but there are some things we can do about it.

I am planning to launch a formal program through motorcycle dealers in Ontario in 1982 and it will probably spread to other provinces quickly. There's no reason for you to wait till next year. You can start reducing costs now.

The program is called "Race Pals" and has been successful in some areas of the U.S. already.

Riders in any given town would fill out a form which would be hung on a bulletin board at their local dealership. Other riders, or even spectators without transportation, could contact each other through the dealership and arrange to share the cost of travel to events.

The program will reduce costs for riders and allow younger enthusiasts to attend events that they might otherwise not have been able to see.

I'm sure there are other ideas out there that can help reduce costs. Let's hear from you if you have any.

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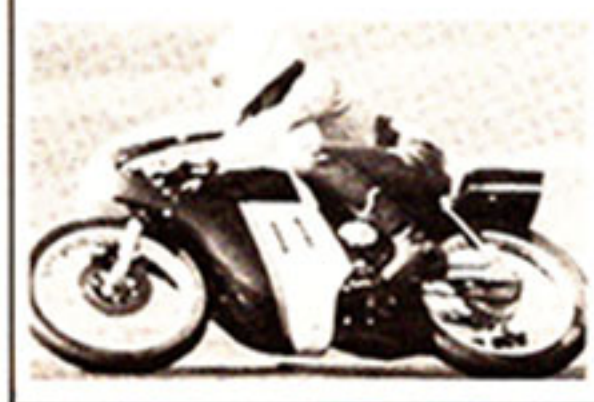
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2—Andrew Lister	Ottawa	Yam
3—Steve Bragg	Dollard des Ormeaux, Que.	Yam

555 cc PRO PRODUCTION		
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2—Peter Ramsay	Toronto	Suz
3—Robbie Meiklejohn	Downsview, Ont.	Yam

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2—Martin Schubert	Willowdale, Ont.	Yam
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3—George Morin	Mississauga, Ont.	Suz

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2—Greg McRae	Queensland, B.C.	Yam
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3—Barry Berezziak	Surrey, B.C.	Kaw

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1—Andy Baker	Delta, B.C.	Yam
2—Brent Parent	Abbotsford, B.C.	Yam
3—Shane Watchel	Oliver, B.C.	Yam

LARGE WHEEL		
1—Kevin Fleming	Revelstoke, B.C.	Suz
2—Darren Healey	Maple Ridge, B.C.	Yam
3—Todd Bazan	Agassiz, B.C.	Suz

125 cc JUNIOR		
1—Marty Lehner	Clearbrook, B.C.	Yam
2—Jim Lemieux	Surrey, B.C.	Suz
3—Larry Visco	Abbotsford, B.C.	Yam

250 cc JUNIOR		
1—Darren Longis	Surrey, B.C.	Yam
2—Joe Lackie	Kelowna, B.C.	Suz
3—Ken Duck	Richmond, B.C.	Yam

OPEN JUNIOR		
1—Brian Nelson-Smith	Mettritt, B.C.	Yam
2—Al Willard		Hon
3—Richard Heppner		Yam

125 cc SENIOR		
1—Richard Szabo	Oliver, B.C.	Yam
2—Ron Howell		Yam
3—Brent Worrall	Chilliwack, B.C.	Yam

250 cc SENIOR		
1—Ron Howell		Yam
2—Rob Clarke	Mission, B.C.	Yam

3—Kevin Knubley	Langley, B.C.	Hon
OPEN SENIOR		
1—Robert Crawford	Surrey, B.C.	Hon
2—Mike Harrison	Witt Meadows, B.C.	Hon
3—Bill Pitman		

125 cc EXPERT		
1—Terry Hoffoss	Surrey, B.C.	Yam
2—Rob Van Dieren	Kreemness, B.C.	Yam
3—Rick Yargreau		Yam

250 cc EXPERT		
1—Terry Hoffoss	Surrey, B.C.	Yam
2—Jari Heinonen	Coquitlam, B.C.	Yam
3—Randy Kingston	Coquitlam, B.C.	Yam

OPEN EXPERT		
1—Jari Heinonen	Coquitlam, B.C.	Yam
2—Tim Krogh	North Vancouver	Hon
3—David Hall	Vancouver	Yam

OVER THE HILL GANG		
1—Paul Tenorio	Vancouver	Mai
2—Norman Twa	Ganges, B.C.	Yam
3—Ron Elliott	Ashcroft, B.C.	Hon

OLDTIMERS		
1—Bob Underhill	North Vancouver	Yam
2—Mel Snow	Langley, B.C.	Yam
3—John Berezavecki	Surrey, B.C.	Yam

Road race Westwood, B.C. June 21

250 cc GP		
1—Ken Botham	Surrey, B.C.	Yam
2—Daryl Cornwall	North Vancouver	Yam
3—Peter Pulakka	Coquitlam, B.C.	Yam

410 cc PRODUCTION		
1—Scott Moon	Seattle, Wash.	Hon
2—Pierce Buck	Surrey, B.C.	Yam
3—Fraser Mitchell	Vancouver	Yam

550 cc CAFE		
1—Bryan Rolls	Vancouver	Yam
2—Tom Farnell	Bellingham, Wash.	Yam
3—Tony Weinberger	Vancouver	Hon

750 cc PRODUCTION		
1—David Roosevelt	Seattle, Wash.	Hon
2—Brian Blangsted	Bellingham, Wash.	Yam
3—Ken Brealey	Surrey, B.C.	Suz

SUPERBIKE		
1—Ray Baker	Seattle, Wash.	Kaw
2—Neil Docherty	Courtenay, B.C.	Hon
3—Ric Perron	Ruskin, B.C.	Kaw

SIDECAR		
1—John Wildman/Rick Davidson	Pt. Coquitlam, B.C.	Suz
2—Don Hubble/Darren Pain	Delta, B.C.	Suz
3—Dave Wildman/Ashley Wildman	Coquitlam, B.C.	Tri

Accessorist cross-country McLean Creek, Alta. June 14		
1—M. Unger	Calgary	Kaw
2—R. Bardwell	Cochrane, Alta.	Yam
3—D. Wittman	Calgary	C-A
4—J. Willemson	Calgary	C-A

OPEN JUNIOR		
1—J. Linner	Calgary	Hus
175 cc EXPERT		
1—M. Nutt	Airdrie, Alta.	Kaw
2—R. Sadownick	Calgary	Kaw
3—R. McBee	Calgary	Yam

250 cc EXPERT		
1—J. Arcand	Calgary	Kaw
2—M. Pettam	Calgary	Yam
3—R. Johnson	Calgary	Hon

OPEN EXPERT		
1—W. Cukavac	Calgary	Yam
2—G. Laycraft	High River, Alta.	C-A
3—D. Hough	Calgary	C-A

CMA

CANADIAN MOTORCYCLING
SPORT AS SEEN
BY CMA

Random rumination on two-wheeled life

By Jim Kelly

Everybody knows enough not to push a street bike around with the side stand down—don't we? Scenario might make a funny move as side stand catches on something, causing rider to lose his balance and he and motorcycle tumble slowly to the ground.

Watch the mirror settings on three lane highways. I had a close call recently, close only because of good ol' shoulder check. I had just passed a car which was in the centre lane and I was ready to return to the centre lane. I was well clear of the passed vehicle but as I started to pull in, a confirmation check of my clear mirror revealed a car swinging out from the inside lane to pass an inside lane vehicle. Close!

Sure would like to see more competition riders carry a garbage bag to the events and ensure all the garbage from their crew is put in it.

Brickbat of the month goes to the idiots who stuffed hot dogs down all the toilets in the brand new facility at Moto Park. About 2:30 in the a.m. People who can't party and still behave would be appreciated more if they'd stay at home.

May Yamaha and Kenny forgive me! Clear shield and bags on a 750 Seca? Sorry, but I did get weary trying to carry all those papers, books, rain suit et al around my neck. Much more comfortable running into the strong winds now. Anyway, Kenny does use a windshield!

MOTOCROSS

Just a great supercross in Toronto. A good track and excellent racing. Congratulations to the promoters. A great crowd at Montreal also. It looks like this is what draws the people.

It's good to see the Ontario promoters and others across the country pouring some hard-earned dollars into facilities. Moto Park at Durham, Ont., is in the process of completing washroom and shower facilities and will also have a permanent snack bar in the near future.

The Ontario "Pro" races backed by a

Jim Kelly is a member of CMA's national board of directors. Marilyn Bastedo is CMA's general manager.



Jim Kelly is a CMA director.



Marilynn Bastedo is CMA GM.

group of persons concerned with motocross has been a great series so far. I'm predicting this will take hold and become, I hope, a financial success for all concerned as well as the racing success it is.

Question: When a rider becomes a very good rider and runs U.S. nationals and all that, does that entitle him to special treatment at the races? Or should the rules and any infractions of same be handled in the same manner for everyone?

DIRT TRACK

Good to see a new dirt track series in Quebec. I hope it will be a success, as this phase of the sport has not been terrifically strong in recent years in that province. The tough thing will be for people to decide between riding Welland and riding to the Quebec races or just choosing between the two.

Prize money breakdowns continue to be a big bone of contention with riders. Maybe if everybody wants more dough, the way to do it is start eliminating dual classes. Lightweight class for juniors only? Or make one class for 230 cc to 500 cc motorcycles in junior and senior grades? Hmmm!

ISDE

Button sales are going well and several

clubs have made cash donations to the fund. We, hopefully, will have enough to pay for riders' gasoline and check point food and drink. C'mon dollars!

The continuing high cost of individual efforts re the ISDE is seeing several applicants drop out of the running. Sure sorry to see some of the six days veterans unable to make it this year.

Contribution thanks to BEMC who not only contributed a cash amount but also purchased buttons and T-shirts (Beaver Mascot) to the tune of another \$150. Also a nice donation from the Edmonton Club and a personal 20 bucks from Bob Kelly, supercross ref. Thank y'all!

THE BLUENOSE

What a fantastic Bluenose Rally this year. An incredible effort by the Apple Valley Riders, who constructed a new site for their event and received final permit, etc., a few days before the event.

Good home cookin' and blueberry pie hi-lited my weekend. More to come next month.

Stolen Bikes

1980 Honda CR250RA. Frame serial No. 2015152. **1981 Suzuki RM 250X.** Engine serial No. 100977, Frame YB 2100738. Gary R. Ponting, 1221 Greening Ave., Mississauga, Ont. (416) 279-3044.

1980 Maico 450 MI and 1979 Suzuki RM250N. Frame No. 3472235 and No. 42844. Jim Atcheson, 50 Panorama Ct., #701, Rexdale, Ont., (416) 745-2297.

1978 RM250C2. Engine serial No. 32411, frame 32299. Lindsey Hall, 1995 Selkirk Ave., Winnipeg, Man., (204) 633-4926.

Race track closing will hurt Alberta

By Marilyn Bastedo

Sad to say, the often rumoured conversion of Edmonton International Speedway into a housing project will become a reality in 1982. The Alberta Roadracing Association will stage a final event on October 10, 11, 12th which will be a 12 hour endurance race.

They hope to make it a really big farewell and will welcome riders from all over Canada and the U.S. □

MOTOPINION

FOR A SECOND OPINION
LOOK NO FURTHER

Motopinion enables riders to exchange useful information about motorcycles. Here's how it works.

Cycle Canada collects names and telephone numbers of motorcycle owners willing to talk about their machines. Then we publish the list shown.

If you want information about a motorcycle listed, you telephone Cycle Canada at (416) 977-6318 or write to us at 290 Jarvis St., Toronto, Ont., M5B 2C5,

and we'll put you in touch with an owner.

If you're keen to talk about your motorcycle, please complete the form and mail it to Cycle Canada.

In order not to inadvertently encourage thieves, we want only your first name for MOTOPINION.

This is a Cycle Canada reader-to-reader service and the publication is in no way connected with, or responsible for, opinions provided by owners.

MAKE MODEL YEAR

CITY FIRST NAME PROVINCE

TELEPHONE NUMBER AREA CODE

Please mail to Cycle Canada, 290 Jarvis St., Toronto, Ont., M5B 2C5

AJS: Stormer
Alouette: AX125
Ariel: All models
Benelli: Tornado 650
BMW: R100RS, R100RT, R100-7, R90-6, R75-5, R66S, R60-6, R60-7
Bridgestone: 350 GTR
BSA: A75 Rocket III, A65 Lightning, A65T Thunderbolt, A10, B44VS, B50SS, B25SS, Gold Star
Bultaco: Sherpa T, Metralla, Alpina 350, Alpina 250
Can-Am: Qualifier 370, 250, 175, 250MX4, 250 TNT, 250MX5, MX125
CZ/Jawa: ISDT
Dnepr: 650
Ducati: 900SS, 900 Darmah, 860 GTS, 750 Sport, 750 GT, 350 Sport Desmo, 250, 160 Jr
Gilera: 300T
Harley-Davidson: 45 Servicar, JD, FX, FXE, FXS, 74 sidevalve, VL, XLS

Hercules/DKW: Boondocker 125
Honda: GL1100 Interstate, CBX, GL1100, GL1000, CB900C, CB750K, CB750L, CB750F, CB750A, CB650, XL500, CB550F, CX500, CB500T, CB500K, CB450, Hawk, CB400F, CB360T, CJ360T, CB350F, CB350T, ATC250, TL250, XL250S, CM185, CD175, MR175, TL125, SL125, CB125, XL100, S90, XR75
Kawasaki: KZ1300, KZ1000, Z-1R, Z-1R Turbo, KZ1000LTD, KZ900, 750H2, KZ750, KZ650, KZ650 Custom, W2-650, GP550, 500H-1, 400S3, 350S2, KZ250, KD175, KD125, KE125, 100G4
Laverda: 1000, 750 SFC
Matchless: 650
Montesa: 247 Cota, 348 Cota
Moto Guzzi: SP1000, V1000 Convert, Le Mans, Le Mans II, 850T, V7 Sport, Interceptor 750
Nimbus: All models
Norton: 850 III JPS, Combat, Combat Roadster, Commando, Atlas
NSU: Max
Royal Enfield: Interceptor 750
Sidcar: American Eagle, Doepf, Veloce
Suzuki: GS1100E, GS1000, GS850, GS750E, GS750C, GS750L, GT750, RE5, GS550E, GS550L, GT550, T500, GS400C, RM250C, RM250N, PE250, TS-185, PE175, RM125C, TC125, RM100B, RM100N, DS100, T20
Triumph: Trident, Bonneville, Trophy 650, Daytona 500, TR25W, T140E, T100R, T100C, Trophy 250
Velocette: Thruxton, Venom Clubman, Viper 350
Vincent: Comet
Volkswagen: Trike
Yamaha: XS Eleven, XV750H, XS750D, XS750D2, XS750E, TX750, XS750SF, XJ750R, XS650SE, XS500, SR500E, SR500F, XT500, TT500, RD400, XS400E, RD350, XS250, YZ250F, TY250, DT250F, DT1-B, IT175, YZ125D, YZ100E, YZ60E

CALENDAR

ENDURO HOPEFULS TUNE UP
FOR CORDUROY NATIONAL
SEPTEMBER 19-20

SEPTEMBER

19-20—Enduro, Haliburton, Ont. Corduroy national event. Information (416) 522-5705.

19-20—Road race, Shannonville, Ont. Tenth and final round of the Castrol Challenge Series sanctioned by RACE. Information Wednesdays only, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (416) 699-1333.

19—Toy Ride, Peterborough, Ont. Information (416) 522-5705.

20—Motocross, Gibson, B.C. Information (604) 931-7811.

20—Road race, Westwood, B.C. Information (604) 931-7811.

20—Dirt track, Mt. Waddington, B.C. short track season championship event. Information (604) 931-7811.

20—Trial, loco, B.C. CPTA Guildford Big Scoop Trial. Information, Don Clark (604) 936-7746 or Graham Jackson (604) 596-0757.

20—Enduro, Victoria. All-day enduro.

Information Roger Boothroyd (604) 477-6387.

20—Motocross, Calgary. Alberta championship schoolboy event. Information (403) 285-4644.

20—Trial, Calgary. Imperial Cup Trial, Alberta championship point event. Information (403) 285-4644.

20—Motocross, Austin, Man. National event for 250 cc and open classes. Information (416) 522-5705.

20—Trial, Port Colborne, Ont. Information (416) 522-5705.

20—Motocross, Aylmer, Ont. Junior and schoolboy classes with senior/expert invitational. Information (416) 522-5705.

20—Enduro, Cape Breton, N.S. Information, Henry Wilson (506) 532-4454 days or (506) 386-4368 evenings.

20—Dirt track, San Jose, Calif. AMA/Winston Pro Series mile event. Information (614) 891-2425.

20—Trial, Ricany, Czechoslovakia.

Eleventh of 12 events for the world championship.

25—Dirt Track, Calgary. Alberta championship short track event. Information (403) 285-4644.

26—Dirt Track, Gardena, Calif. AMA/Winston Pro Series half-mile event. Information (614) 891-2425.

27—Hillclimb, Medicine Hat, Alta. Information (403) 285-4644.

27—Motocross, Edmonton. National event for 250 cc and open classes. Information (403) 285-4644.

27—Road race, Edmonton: Alberta championship point event for 125cc class. Information (403) 285-4644.

27—Trial, Calgary. Scott Trial. Information (403) 285-4644.

27—Dirt track, Carman, Man. Information, Willi St. Goddard, 30 Oakleaf Dr., Winnipeg, Man., R2M 4G7.

27—Motocross, Williamsford, Ont. Junior and schoolboy classes with senior/exp-

Triumph twin little changed since 1937

DID YOU KNOW?

Speed Twin was the third try at a two-cylinder

Did you know that the design of the Triumph tested in this issue goes back to 1937, and that there were two Triumph vertical twins produced before that time?

The first Triumph-built twin appeared in 1913, although a French Berceley twin had been set in a Triumph frame as early as 1909.

The English-designed 600 cc side valve of 1913 featured a horizontally-split crankcase, a one-piece cylinder block with an integral head and out-of-step piston throws — unlike Triumph twins after it, and similar to Honda twins of a later era, the pistons rose and fell alternately rather than together.

The engine never reached production, ostensibly because World War I intervened. Some old-timers remember severe vibration and suspect that is the real reason.

In 1933 another twin appeared, the 650

cc Model 6/1. Designed by Val Page of Ariel fame, this engine was intended for use in the rigors of sidecar riding. It had double helical or herringbone gear primary drive and semi-unit construction. A single cam at the rear of the cylinder block operated pushrods which were inclined between the cylinders.

A four-speed gearbox bolted to the rear of the engine, and used a hand shift. Brakes foreshadowed the current Moto Guzzi and Yamaha systems by having both front and rear operated by the foot pedal, with a hand lever to separately control the front if necessary.

The engine proved reliable and strong, but unpopular with the public. It was an expensive engine to build — the bike cost just over £75 — and some of its features were outdated even in 1933. The original hand change for the gearbox, for example, was unpopular, and the fix turned out to

be untidy and difficult to work.

It was also a tall and bulky engine, with a seat higher than on most bikes of its time. The wet sump of the engine contributed to this, although part of the height was designed in to make the bike a more comfortable place to sit. It was also noisy, partly because of the long, whippy pushrods from the single cam.

In 1937 the Edward Turner-designed 500 cc Speed Twin made its appearance and the shape of Triumphs to this day was laid down. It was instantly more popular, as it corrected all the real and perceived faults of the earlier twin.

Except for the change to an integral gearbox, the replacement of the mag-dyno unit by an electric starter and the addition of a modern ignition unit to the exhaust cam drive the Triumph twin of 44 years ago didn't look much different from the way it does today. □

pert invitational. Information (416) 522-5705.

27—Enduro. Drayton, Ont. Information (416) 522-5705.

27—Motocross. Lunenburg, Ont. Information (416) 522-5705.

27—Hare and Hounds. Welland, Ont. Information (416) 522-5705.

27—Poker run. Niagara, Ont. Organized by Blue Knights. Touring bikes only. Information (416) 227-1292.

27—Enduro. Halifax. Event counts toward regional championship. Information, Henry Wilson (506) 532-4454 days or (506) 386-4368 evenings.

27—Trial. Gefrees, West Germany. Twelfth and final event of the world trial championship.

OCTOBER

3—Trial. Calgary. Mickey Mouse Trial. Information (403) 285-4644.

4—Motocross. Aldergrove, B.C. Open, 250 senior/expert and veteran final national. Information (604) 931-7811.

4—Road race. Westwood, B.C. Information (604) 931-7811.

4—Cross country. Kamloops, B.C. Kamloops Turkey Run. Information (604) 931-7811.

4—Hillclimb. Victoria. Information (604) 477-6387.

4—Motocross. Lethbridge, Alta. Information (403) 285-4644.

4—Motocross. Whitemouth, Man. Old timers' class. Information Willi St. Goddard, 30 Oak Leaf Dr., Winnipeg, Man., R2M 4G7.

4—Enduro. Orangeville, Ont. Terra Nova Enduro. Information (416) 522-5705.

4—Motocross. Varna, Ont. Junior/schoolboy, senior/expert invitational. Information (416) 522-5705.

4—Road ride. Location tba. Organized by York Wings Motorcycle Club. Information (416) 522-5705.

5-6—Enduro. Isle of Elba, Italy. International Six Days Enduro.

11—Motocross. Kamloops, B.C. Information (604) 931-7811.

11—Motocross. Austin, Man. One hour endurance. Information Willi St. Goddard, 30 Oakleaf Dr., Winnipeg, Man., R2M 4G7.

11—Motocross. Mount Forest, Ont. Information (416) 522-5705.

18—Motocross. Mission, B.C. Information (604) 931-7811.

18—Trial. Ioco, B.C. CPTA Castrol Trophy Trial. Information Don Clark (604) 936-7746 or Graham Jackson (604) 596-0757.

18—Hillclimb. Red Deer, Alta. Alberta championship points event. Information (403) 285-4644.

18—Trial. Sudbury, Ont. Second of three national championship events.

Information (416) 522-5705.

18—Enduro. Huntsville, Ont. Information (416) 522-5705.

18—Enduro. Riverview, N.B. Information Henry Wilson (506) 532-4454 days or (506) 386-4368.

25—Motocross. Gibsons Landing, B.C. Information (604) 931-7811.

25—Trial. Victoria. Victoria Motorcycle Club team trial. Information (604) 477-6387.

25—Trial. Waterdown, Ont. Third and final national championship event. Information (416) 522-5705.

25—Enduro. Bewdley, Ont. Information (416) 522-5705.

NOVEMBER

1—Motocross. Aldergrove, B.C. Information (604) 931-7811.

1—Enduro. Port Burwell, Ont. Information (416) 522-5705.

7—Banquet. Vancouver. Annual awards banquet for B.C. CMA region. Information (604) 931-7811.

7—Banquet. Red Deer, Alta. Annual awards banquet and general meeting for Alberta CMA region. Information (403) 285-4644.

8—Trial. Victoria. Fall trial. Information (604) 477-6387.

Unless otherwise specified, all Canadian motorcycle events are Canadian Motorcycle Association sanctioned.

FEEDBACK

CYCLE CANADA WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU

The readers of Cycle Canada can help the editors of Cycle Canada produce a better magazine by providing feedback on

what they liked and disliked in this issue. Please complete the form and mail to Editorial Director, Brave Beaver Press-

works Ltd., 290 Jarvis St., Toronto, Ont., M5B 2C5. Thank you.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS PLEASE

1. Which tests did you read?

- Honda CX500 Turbo
- Husqvarna 250 WR
- Kawasaki KZ305
- Triumph T140ES

2. Which features did you read?

- Kenny Roberts profile

3. What did you think of the cover featuring a person rather than a machine?

- Good idea
- Didn't notice it
- Poor idea

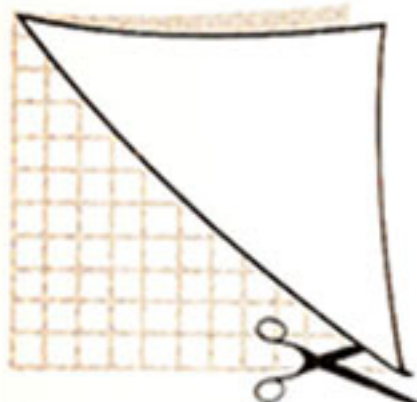
4. On what other motorcycle personalities would you like to see profiles?

On what motorcycle would you most like to see a test?

6. Which regular features in this issue did you read?

- | | |
|---|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsfront | <input type="checkbox"/> CMA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Editorial | <input type="checkbox"/> Calendar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Masthead | <input type="checkbox"/> Did You Know? |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> On The Road | <input type="checkbox"/> Product Tests |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cyclesport | <input type="checkbox"/> Showcase |
| <input type="checkbox"/> By Mike Duff | <input type="checkbox"/> Coming Soon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Motocross Canada | <input type="checkbox"/> Motomarket |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Ads in general |

5. What did you like most about this issue?



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or see your local dealer

Been beaten by any sleepers lately?

If you ever see it running you'll be a believer in old Honda power

Mike Crompton, a motorcycle engine builder and tuner from Toronto, often spends late winter working for American Honda. He is almost a regular fixture at the Speed Week races in Daytona Beach, Fla., tuning machines for the likes of Freddie Spencer, Mike Spencer and Roberto Pietri.

So he knows his stuff. It's no surprise then that his personal machine is a little on the hairy side. This single overhead camshaft model may be considered old hat by the ignorant but it has enough muscle to yank the headlights out of many bigger and more recent models.

Owned since new, this is not some kind of mantlepiece decoration. It has logged more than 60,000 kilometres despite the immaculate appearance.

The rolling chassis has been thoroughly reworked. The frame has been braced and plated and the swingarm replaced with a Bimota part. Lester wheels replaced the stock wire spoke units with WM3 on the front and WM4 on the rear. The extra width provides more support for the traditional Dunlop K81s. S&W Stroker

shocks control rear wheel movement.

Front suspension is from the factory Honda CR750 racers of the early 70s. Triple clamps pivot in tapered roller bearings on the steering head. A CR master cylinder is connected to the thinned dual discs with braided steel line. Honda European sport bars put the rider in the most comfortable position to enjoy the power.

The performance comes and comes from the engine which has received what amounts to full-race treatment. The displacement has been upped to 823 cc with the installation of Yoshimura pistons connected by Honda RSC rods to a lightened and balanced crankshaft.

The cylinder head is ported and fitted with 0.5 mm smaller exhaust valves and 2 mm larger intake valves. S&W valve springs keep valve float under control while the Yoshimura camshaft pushes down on the valves via stock rocker arms.

Cylinder studs are heavy-duty items as are the camchain and the oil pump. Power

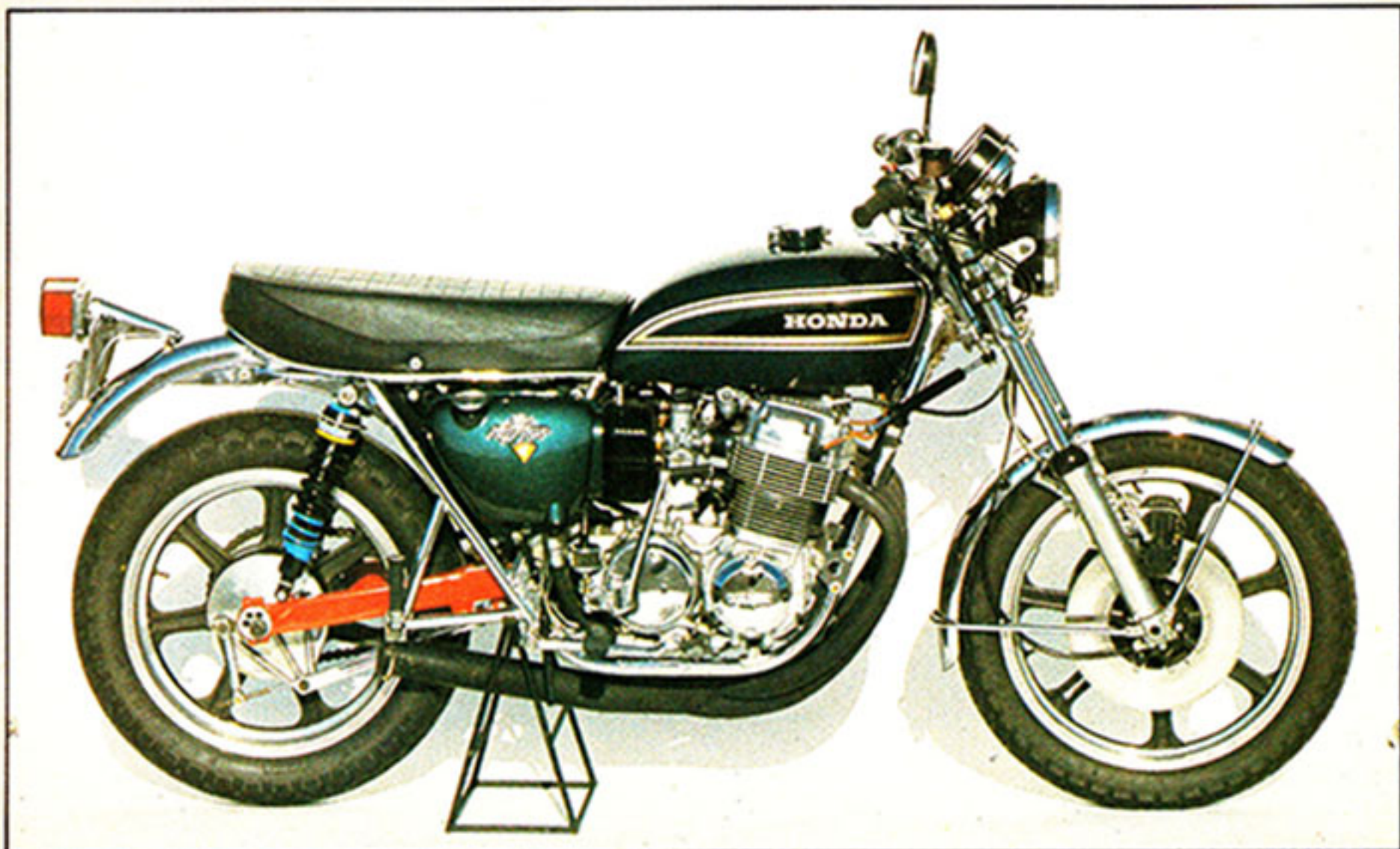
flows from the crankshaft through a CR750 primary chain to the heavy-duty clutch.

Air enters the carburetors through the stock air cleaner box and the mixture is ignited by Andrews coils triggered by a Martek ignition. Hot exhaust gas is spent with a raucous note through a hand-bent Yoshimura pipe.

Because the stock gas tank, seat, side-covers and fenders are retained on this bike, it gives the appearance of being just a slightly improved stocker. Nothing could be farther from the truth. If the list of parts is not impressive enough, then consider the knowledge behind the assembly.

This bike will run rings around most so-called street racers. If you should ever be tooling around town with your GS1000 or whatever, and come up against a humble looking CB750, look carefully at the bike before the light changes. You just could become another twinkle in Crompton's eye. □

Honda factory racing parts and Mike Crompton's assembly skill make this CB750 a sleeper. Racing against it isn't any fun at all, as some riders discovered.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL APPLEY

**Coming
soon
in**

CYCLE CANADA



Will this man unseat Ross Pederson from the motocross throne?

- **Motocross:** The top national riders hit the road for the Canadian championship series. It starts in Quebec and finishes 5,000 km and six weeks later in B.C. Competitors may have to kidnap Ross Pederson to keep him from repeating as open-class No. 1.

- **Honda CBX and Kawasaki KZ1100:** A four-wheeler with 10 cylinders, 32 valves, six camshafts and 200 hp would be quite an animal these days. Divide those figures between a pair of motorcycles and you have a formidable touring duo.

- **1982 Hondas:** You read about the first of them, the CX500 Turbo, in this issue. Honda says it's by no means their only newsmaker for 1982. We'll be picking their brains for information about the rest of the coming models from the big H

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDRÉ DOYON



THE IDEA FOR OUR SUSPENSION CAME OUT OF THE BLUE.

When the Yamaha engineers first set out to design the SR-V, they had their heads in the clouds.

Could the ultra sophisticated suspension that allows a ten-ton jet to slam to earth at 100 m.ph. be adapted to a snowmobile?

The answer is no flight of fancy: using similar nitrogen gas shocks, Yamaha's exclusive Telescopic Strut Suspension is the most advanced in the industry.

Matched up with our patented Mono-shock rear suspension it creates the ideal snowmobile suspension system. And a smooth, fluid ride that's unparalleled for comfort and ease of handling.

Power? A mighty 535 cc fan-

cooled engine lurks under that aerodynamic nose. And for 1982, a series of major modifications has cranked the horse-power output up even higher, while improving efficiency and durability.

What's more, we've re-vamped the clutch to deliver all that raw power more directly to the track. Press your thumb - you feel an instantaneous response.

The mean, wide-shouldered stance and the low threatening profile of the restyled SR-V says it all. Here is a machine that crosses a new threshold of snowmobile performance.

The Yamaha SR-V.
Book your test flight soon.



YAMAHA

THE WAY IT SHOULD BE.

ONE SIZE FITS ALL

Regardless of how big or small you are, the Kawasaki KZ440LTD is the right size for you. It's low-rider styling allows even short riders to feel comfortable and in control. But that's not all. The 440LTD will change your idea of what city riding is all about. It's light weight makes it manoeuvrable and easy to handle. And the gutsy 440 engine gives you all the power you'll need in city traffic, with enough left over for cruising on the open road. This trim twin has increased power, efficiency and reliability, without increased weight. It's simple. Nimble. And quick. Get on and give it a ride. You'll find it's a perfect fit for your size and your kind of riding. In or out of the city.

Kawasaki

Let the good times roll.

