

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP REPLICA

HUSQVARNA'S 250CR

Super suspension, improved handling and
competitive power . . . finally

by the Staff of DIRT BIKE



125 National Champion Broc Glover aboard our test unit.

In January of '77 we were fortunate enough to give you a test on a pre-production prototype of the 250 that Heikki Mikkola won his World Championship on the previous season. Basically, it was an excellent-handling motorcycle with incorrect rear dampening and non-competitive power. Surely not the same engine Heikki was using.

Today we have in our hands

basically the same machine, but with enough improvements to make it a serious contender for "Best in Class" honors.

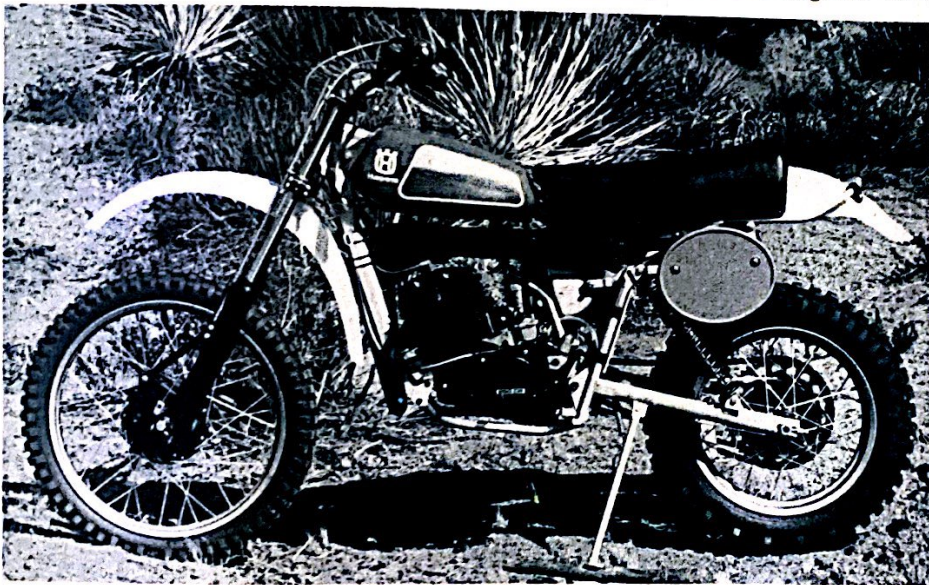
A package that was merely fundamentally correct in its pre-production stages over a year ago has matured into a force to be reckoned with in the quarter-liter class.

Our major complaint with the



model we tested earlier was that it lacked the punch to give it that necessary competitive edge. The low and mid-range were a perfect example of that classic "European-type" power. It was very smooth and predictable, but soon lost momentum and had virtually no top end. Husqvarna's latest CR250 is a whole new bag of beans.

Perched atop the new magnesium engine cases is an entirely new cylinder which the Swedes smirkingly refer to as the "B-52" design for its downward-angled cooling fins. For the first time Husqvarna has gone to a replaceable cylinder liner as opposed to the cast-in arrangement used up till now. The cost of replacing the liner after a few rebore is considerably easier to handle than replacing the entire cylinder.



Can we interest you in a new 250 motocrosser? You should seriously consider one of these Swedish units before you pawn your Smith and Wesson.

More significantly, the entire porting design is new and features a single exhaust port, unlike the bridged configuration of years previous. This was done to reduce the possibility of seizures because of the higher temperature involved when using a bridge. The transfer ports have been upped from two to four. The four intake ports of last year have been debridged and enlarged to form two larger ports. All of this was done in conjunction with raising the entire cylinder 5mm and utilizing the longer 390 rod to increase the intake timing, thereby improving the power.

A more obvious and externally

visible change is the cast-in reed box. Now there are fewer pieces, reducing the possibility of air leaks. As on our 390 Auto, the new 250 pulls its fuel/air mixture through a 38mm Mikuni.

The end result of the porting changes along with a higher compression (14.3:1) head is a very potent and competitive power output that is at the same time extremely usable and predictable.

Putting all those pent-up ponies to the rear wheel are the same six well-spaced gears we have come to appreciate. Shifting action is smooth and precise. If you miss a gear, it is due solely to your lazy foot.

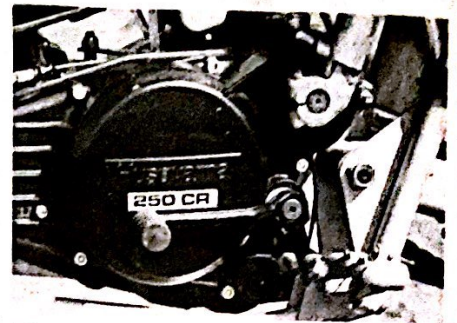
Starting is now easier than ever before because of the new starter pedal design. It allows your boot to swing past the footpeg to get maximum spin to the engine. This,

combined with the Motoplat electronic ignition, made first and second-kick starts the norm.

The cross-over and through-the-frame up-pipe appears to be identical to last year's, but is actually 15mm larger in diameter in the belly section with modified cones to aid the new respiratory system. The '78 CR is the quietest 250 motocrosser we've tested.

Several improvements have been made to the chassis and running gear to make the '78 Husqvarna an even more reliable and better handling racing machine.

You'll find that the engine is cradled in the same Swedish chrome moly steel chassis as before, but the swingarm is now considerably more rigid than last year's. The same two-millimeter wall thickness is used, but the diameter is increased



The new starting lever makes kicking much easier, but it occasionally gouges your leg. It's still not really right.

greatly. Yet, the swingarm is no heavier because gusseting is now unnecessary. Rear axle adjustments are now handled Maico-style and, as before, the arm pivots on needle bearings.

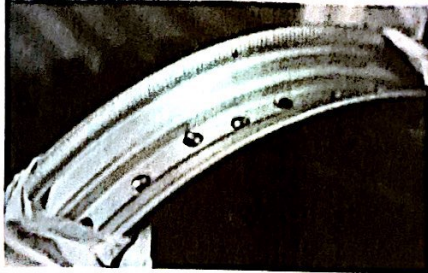
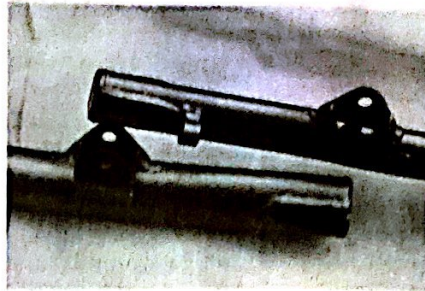
Tapered roller bearings are now used instead of balls in the steering head.



Marty Moates borrowed our test bike for the final Supercross at Anaheim and won the start in his qualifier.

Husqvarna has Girling build their gas shocks to their own specifications so that they are perfectly matched to the task at hand. Those found on our CR boast a 30-percent increase in oil capacity over previous Husky/Girling models and performed admirably throughout our testing.

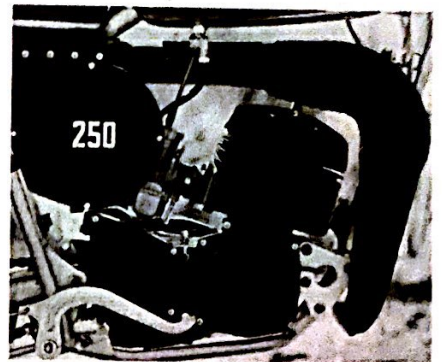
The more time we spend aboard the new Huskys, the more we come to appreciate what an outstanding



A closer look at the "B-52" cylinder with cast-in reed box. The new, larger-diameter swingarm compared to last year's. The wider '78 hub as opposed to the '77. The new deep-welled Husqvarna rim.

the full-floating variety for maximum smoothness and rear end control. The rear drum is now cast in rather than pressed in to a newly designed conical hub to prevent the possibility of the drum coming loose under excessive heat situations. The greater width of the hub between the bearings allows better absorption of wheel loads. In addition, the spoke flanges are also farther apart. This makes the wheel, as a whole, stronger and less susceptible to breakage. Huskys are not known to have this problem, but it is nice to know that someone is aware that with the advancements in suspension technology, you are bound to be hitting bumps both harder and faster.

Possibly the first things your eyes will be drawn to are the gold-anodized rims. They are manufac-



A major improvement in power stems from numerous changes within the new cylinder casting. A nice feature of the brake pedal is that you can slide your boot off rather than having to lift it. A heat shield is needed on the pipe for those tight left-handers.

set of forks they have. They possess absorption qualities over a range of bumps from minute to cavern-like. They work well everywhere. The only criticism we can offer is that the springs were a tad on the soft side. To correct this we added six to eight pounds of air pressure (depending on rider weight) through a set of Goki air caps. We then felt that their action was very well matched, as far as springing goes, to the rear end. This relationship and compatibility between the front and rear suspension is much more

critical than some can imagine when looking at overall handling performance. Luckily for you, the first batch of Huskys to come across should have their own air valves already installed in the forks so you can fine-tune for varying terrain conditions.

The brakes are right up to par with what we have come to expect from all the major components from Husky. They are smooth, strong and predictable. You always know what the wheels are doing. Neither brake is prone to fading. The rear is

tured by Husqvarna in Sweden. A unique feature is the extended "well" where the spokes attach. This well facilitates a much easier tire change. The deeper well allows the bead to fall into it while you work off the opposite side. At the same time, the spokes can be shorter and therefore stronger. Our test unit came with spikes in the rims to secure the tires from slipping, although holes for rimlocks are provided. We were told that the first batch will be coming with rimlocks installed. While spikes may be all well and fine for Six Days work, it's a real bummer to have your tire come off the rim with half a lap to go on a motocross course.

Something you may not have noticed right off is the 17-inch rear wheel. That's right, the first brand to give you over nine inches of

suspension travel last year (240mm, 9½ inches plus) is now the first to come with a 17-inch rear wheel as standard equipment. At this point, the 17 is still in its relatively early stages of development. Depending on who you talk to, this may or may not be the ultimate setup. Through the feedback we have collected in the amount of time we have spent experimenting with the 17, we feel that with the correct compounds, it is advantageous in a majority of situations on a 250, and especially on an open bike.

**THE MACHINE IS CAPABLE,
ARE YOU?**

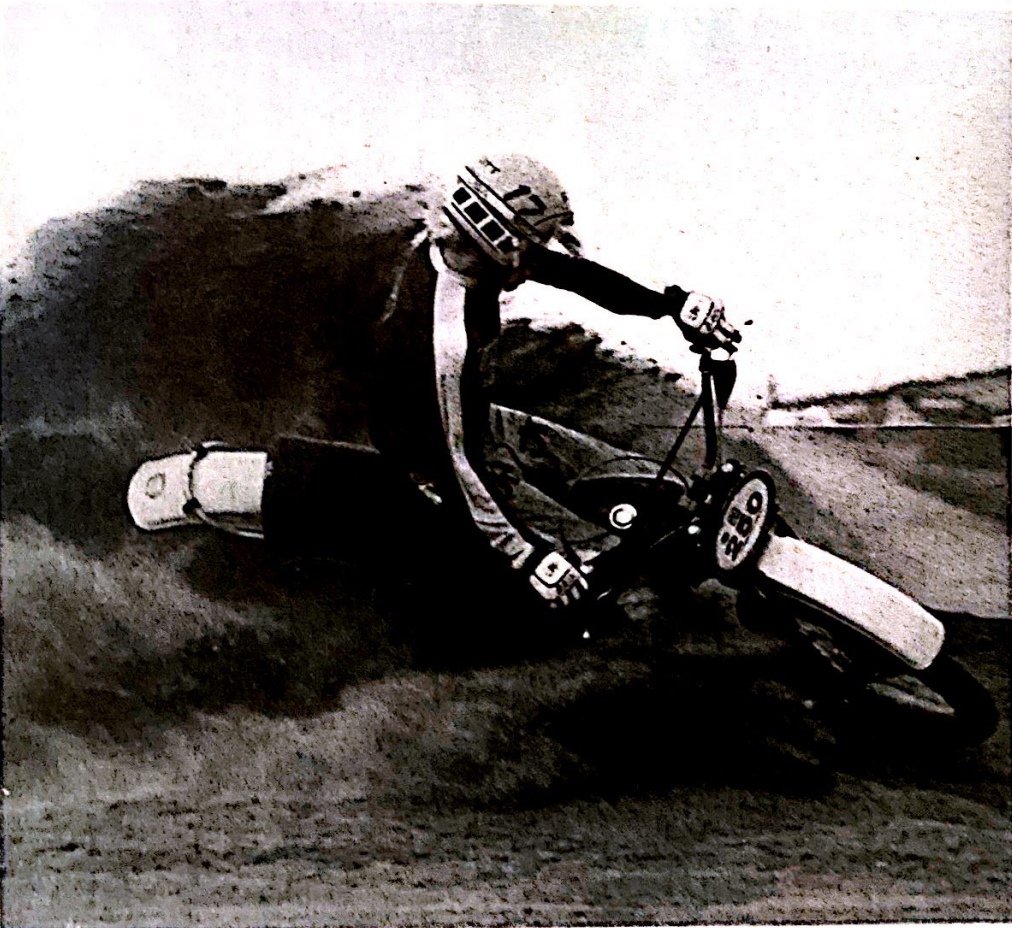
If you're much shorter than five foot eight, you may have trouble using the CR to its fully intended potential. The seat towers a full 94

kind of power that's predictable enough to make an Intermediate or Novice feel comfortable while providing enough punch to please a majority of professionals. You can slip her into a berm and dial on the beans, confident that there will be no sudden surges. The changes in porting make the new CR very tractor-like in its low end and mid-range. The healthy mid-range builds smoothly into its new top end performance, where the Husky just flat moves out. This type of power is especially appreciated in minimum traction situations such as burnt, dry adobe or mud, where the link between your throttle hand and the rear wheel is critical for consistently quick lap times.

When Husky went to the leading axle fork design, the steering



242mm of the finest travel and dampening available on any production motocrosser.



slide well, because they do. Like all long-travel suspension machines these days, it just takes some time to get used to because of the higher center of gravity. Sitting well forward is a must.

Straight line stability is excellent in the whoops or accelerating up a rutted hill. We never noticed any swingarm flex before, but the beefier unit must help you as much physically as it does mentally. The '78 CR makes one feel as confident as one can while flat-out in the whoops. There are no strange tendencies or bad habits to worry about.

Without a doubt, Husky's leading axle forks are the finest units to be found on any production dirt motorcycle to date. They absorb small ripples equally as well as huge, square-edged holes. We were equally as pleased with the rear suspension. The increase in oil capacity enables the Girlings to perform as well as many shocks with remote reservoirs. We had no problems with fading, and their springs are very well matched to the front end.

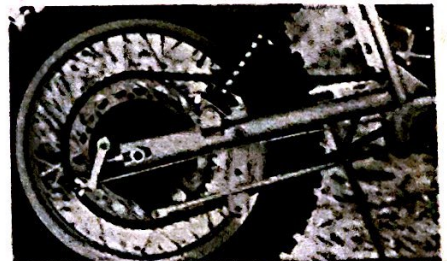
cm (over 36 inches) above the earth. Hopefully, for the sake of motocross, humans will evolve toward taller bodies with longer legs.

After a few casual laps you'll quickly build a "feel" for the bike. The harder you push it, the better it works.

With the amount of power on tap for '78, you'll waste no time getting from one corner to the next. It's the

underwent a noticeable improvement. The CR's steering ranks with the best. It is very precise. Swapping the Trelleborg up front for a Metzeler (because of the type of tracks we tested on) was enough to give our test riders total confidence in its turning abilities. Just pick your line and use it.

Huskys inherently prefer berms to full-lock slides. Not that they don't



Full-floating brake, two chain guides, and a 17-inch wheel.

The only real problem we experienced during the course of testing was with the front brake cable. It chose to bow out rather than follow the guides as the forks compressed. A clamp like the one found on the latest Kayaba forks is necessary to sufficiently secure and direct the cable.

AS A WHOLE

Everyone who rode the new CR250 liked it. Some more than others. The brand of bike they were more accustomed to riding affected their opinion. It takes some time to get to know the Husky. But, once you do, it'll make a better rider out of you. It offers superb suspension, excellent handling, great power, and no bad habits.

The Husky may cost a bit more

than some other bikes, but when you consider the quality of the components and the reliability record, we feel that it's well worth it.

Is it the bike for you? That is a question which is getting harder and harder to answer. As the machinery gets better and better, our job gets more and more difficult. Surely the best way to find out if the bike is right for you is to ride one. Unfortunately, this is usually difficult or impossible to arrange. Ultimately, we are putting the decision back into your hands. We are not going to decide for you. We will say that the new Husqvarna CR250 is one hell of a motocrosser. It's tied dead even with our last ultimate 250 motocrosser for first place.



Chuck Sun rode a virtually stock CR250 throughout the National series this past season. The only non-stock items were his personal preferences for tires and grips, a little clean-up work on the ports, some extra teeth on the pegs for extremely muddy conditions and a Gunnar Gasser throttle. During the Trans-AMA series he began swapping for '78 components like the new swingarm, steering head bearings and kickstarter as they arrived from Sweden. When Kent Howerton disappeared from the Husky pits, Chuck was able to use Kent's latest suspension systems. A set of lengthened dampener rods and fork tubes with longer springs gave him an extra inch of travel up front. In the rear, a set of 16-inch Ohlins with three separate springs offered nearly 3/4-inch more travel in the rear. The Husqvarna team riders and Bengt Aberg, who runs Ohlins on his four-stroke Yamaha, are very pleased with the performance of these remote reservoir units. They will be available soon through Husqvarna and Torsten Hallman dealers.

HUSQVARNA 250 CR

Price (approx. retail, West Coast): \$1815
 Engine Two-stroke, reed valve
 Displacement 245cc
 Bore & Stroke 69.5x64.5
 Compression Ratio 14.3:1
 Carburetion 38mm Mikuni
 Clutch Six-disc, magnesium
 Primary Drive: Straight cut gear, 2.413:1
 Transmission Ratios:

- 1) 2.06
- 2) 1.55
- 3) 1.23
- 4) 1.04
- 5) 0.88
- 6) 0.77

Final Drive: Reynold 520, 4.67 ratio
 12-tooth countershaft
 56-tooth rear sprocket

Electrics Motoplat CDI
 Lubrication Pre-mix, 32:1
 Recommended Oil: Castrol R, Pennzoil
 Fuel Tank Capacity: 7.8 liters (2.0 gallons)
 Frame Double cradle, chrome moly
 Suspension:

Front: Husqvarna forks with 242mm travel

Rear: Gas Girlings (Husqvarna spec.) offering 254mm axle travel

Starting Non-primary kick
 Wheels & Spokes:

Front: Husqvarna 21-inch rim with cross-3 spokes

Rear: Husqvarna 17-inch rim with cross-3 spokes

Tires:

Front: 3.00x21 Trelleborg 544 Motocross

Rear: 5.00x17 Trelleborg 544 Motocross

Dimensions:

Wheelbase 144.6cm (56.9 inches)

Swingarm length 47.0cm (18.5 inches)

Ground clearance: 32.4cm (12.75 inches)

Bars, height 117.5cm (46.25 inches)

width 86.3cm (34.0 inches)

Pegs, height 46.0cm (16.0 inches)

width 47.0cm (18.5 inches)

Seat height 94.0cm (37.0 inches)

Fork angle 29 degrees

Brakes:

Front: 160mm, cable-operated, conical

Rear: 160mm, rod-operated, full-floating, conical

Silencer Yes; quiet too

Spark Arrestor None

Warranty 60-day

Parts Prices:

Piston:

(with pin, ring and circlips) \$39.71

Rings \$ 6.11

Clutch cable \$ 5.64

Brake pedal \$ 9.19

HUSKY 250CR
 SUZUKI RM250C
 OSSA PHANTOM GP111

