

Dual MX test

HUSKY 250CR AND 430CR

Handling is the name of the game

For Husqvarna, 1981 has been a dramatic turnaround year, in more ways than one. After a few years of dragging their feet, Husky has responded with a pair of "correct" racers that are opening eyes a bit wider.

Previous Huskys have always gone well in a straight line but have been less than happy in the corners. It was necessary to push the front wheel against some sort of lip or berm to get a clean directional change. Long-time Husky riders learned to get way up on the tank to reduce the front-end washout, but the average rider simply did not feel at home with a Husky. The tighter the track, the more this message got driven home.

But, the Husqvarnas still worked well in the desert and on cross-country events, even though they gave away considerable horsepower to the new generation of superbikes, spearheaded by the YZ465.

Sneaky changes

Now Husky wanted to make a bike that would work better on a motocross track, but they didn't want to give up any of their famed high-speed stability.

A very subtle change in the layout of the bike resulted in a major change in cornering traits. By shortening the tank and bringing the saddle forward, the rider was placed automatically in the proper position to make the bike turn. When seated on the Husky during a turn, the rider's weight is naturally in the "hot spot," with the outside leg pressed against the smooth tank and the edge of the saddle squarely

placed between the legs.

Aiding the layout change is a revised selection of spring rates, front and rear. Now when the throttle is chopped and the brakes are applied, the front end dives just the right amount to reduce rake and trail for sharp cornering.

The rider does not have to slide forward...he's there most of the time. This means that when the old-time Husky high-speed stability is needed, all the rider has to do is slide back on the saddle. When you consider that it's easier for a rider to get back on the bike for a high-speed charge than it is for him to slither forward constantly for turns, you can see the simple beauty of the Husky change.

When you're starting to work up to the top three gears, you'll have the time to move your body weight back. On a motocross track, when you have to set up immediately for a corner, forward is where your weight is placed most of the time.

If you don't think that merely changing the layout makes that big a difference, try this experiment. Ride an '81 Husky CR and make a note of how well it turns. Then, slip on a 1980 tank and saddle. Go out on the same track and try to stuff it through the turns. Surprise, surprise! You'll have to resort to totally different lines and your lap times will more than likely increase.

This means that you can alter your '79 or '80 Husky to feel more like an '81. It's that simple.

Suspension changes

Visually, the most obvious improve-

ment is in the forks. Those whimpy 35mm forks are now a thing of the past. In their place is a set of 40mm beauties that set new standards for plushness. Only the 43mm forks of the new YZs rival the Husky fork's feel.

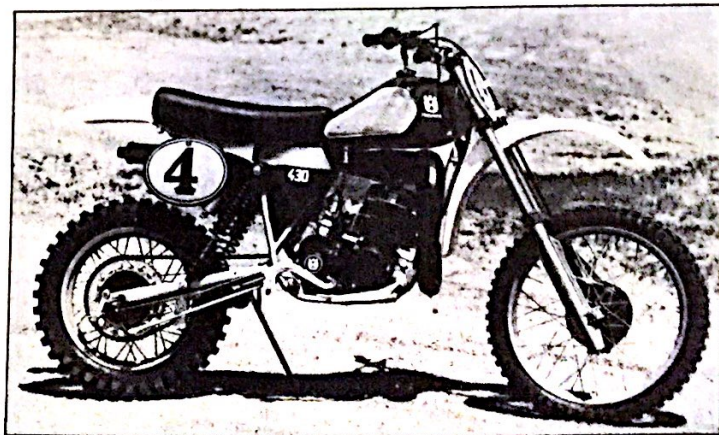
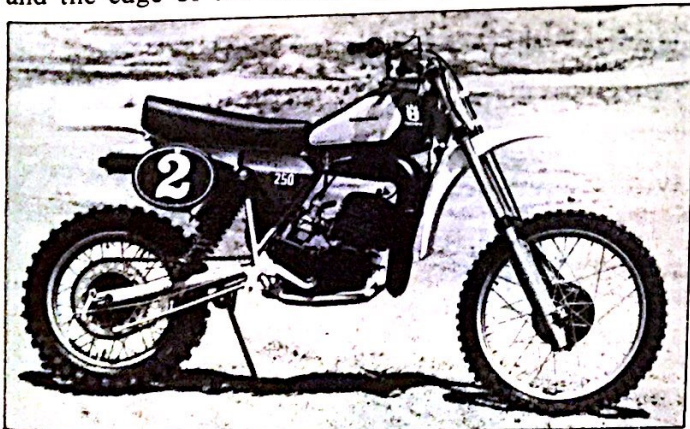
We still experienced the typical Husky fork-seal leakage on both bikes, but the 430 stopped leaking after about eight hours of riding. The 250 stayed a chronic leaker.

Piggyback Ohlins do the job at the rear end. These are made specifically for Husky to their own specs and offer a phenomenal ride. The shocks are canted in at the top to keep the mid-section of the bike narrow. Heim joints reduce the resulting side stress.

A chrome-moly steel swingarm is more than strong enough to do the job. It looks fragile compared to the beefy aluminum arms on most other bikes, but we've heard of no cracking or bending problems whatsoever.

While we were impressed with the forks as delivered, some fiddling got them to work even better. We used a 12½-weight oil (half Kal-Gard 10-weight and half 15-weight) six and one-half inches from the top of the fork tubes, with the forks compressed fully. Heavier riders liked 15-weight, seven inches from the top.

Of course, you might want to experiment in either direction of those figures, depending on your body weight and skill level. We never had to resort to using air in the forks and bled them from accumulated air after each moto or riding session.



Most of the chassis components are shared on the two bikes. Long legs for sure, 12.2 inches at the rear and 11.8 inches of the finest travel around up front. Our Husky 250CR came with an special saddle that lowered the seating position one inch. It made a big difference for riders under 5'9" tall.



Nifty air box shows enduro heritage. Flip open the side and the filter can be removed without tools.

HUSKYS

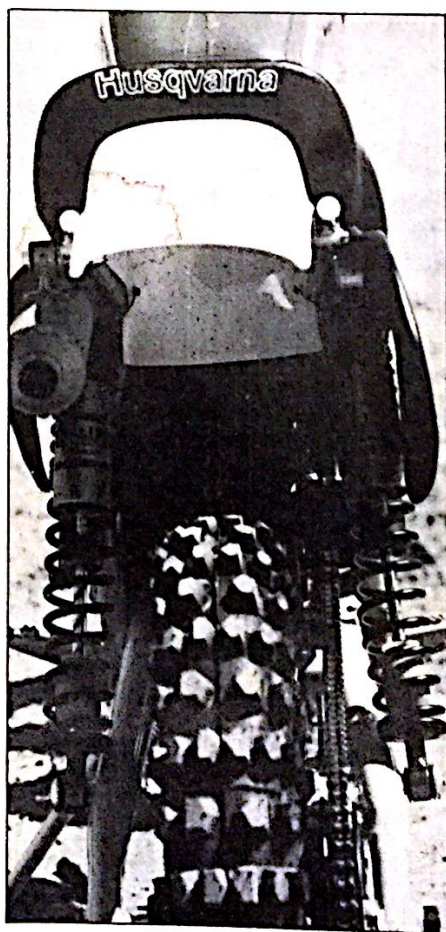
The ability of the Husky forks to keep the front wheel stuck to the ground under all conditions was marvelous. Even on ripple-bumped turns, the tire would not skitter out with the bike leaned over to the maximum.

Blood brothers

Both bikes share many parts. The frames are identical, as are the wheels, forks, tanks, saddles and controls. A massive air box with a flip-open door houses a huge foam filter. This in turn feeds the air to a 38mm Mikuni carb, which each bike has. Jetting, naturally, varied.

Weight of the 250 (bone dry) is right at 226 pounds, while the 430 proved to be five pounds heavier. Gas capacity is 2.7 gallons—perfect for the 250 and marginal for the 430.

In the Masterlinks Hare and Hound, the 250 easily went the two 45-mile loops with gas to spare. The 430 will only travel 45 miles in cross-country conditions with luck and a tail wind. The XC tank holds two tenths of a gallon more gas than the CR; the tanks can be interchanged. Serious desert and cross-country racers will put a larger Vesco tank on the 430.



Canted Ohlins shocks performed better than their advanced billing.



Front brake cable must still be taped to the fork leg. Your seals may leak.

Excellent Pirelli Pentacross tires are standard equipment. They worked well on hard-packed tracks and under marginal traction conditions but were not too happy in the sand. We ran 10 pounds front and rear on motocross tracks; 15-18 pounds in the desert.

Snivels, gripes and complaints

The carb/filter boot on both machines is poor. It's a double-lipped design that can easily slip off the air box and allow crud to go straight into the engine. Husky riders are in the habit of putting gobs of silicone seal around the outer lip to keep it in place, but that is a makeshift fix 'em up. Savvy riders fabricate a thin aluminum plate and pop-rievet it over the outer lip through the plastic of the air box. This really should be done at the factory.

Heat from the muffler constantly melted the left FIM side-plate mount. We tried several spacer combinations, but nothing seemed to work permanently.

Brakes on either bike are not happy when wet... they simply go away. Decent braking will not return until the wheels are taken apart and the shoes cleaned.

Keep an eye on the smallish bolts that hold the Ohlins shocks in place. The bottom bolts have a tendency to come loose, but don't overtighten them or they'll strip. Smart riders put a thick zip-tie around the lower shock eye to insure its perch.

Kicking over either bike is a pain, as the kickstarter is short, high and awkwardly placed. The 250 cannot be started in gear, while the 430 does offer primary kickstarting. Jetting is critical to decent starting. If either bike is spot-on, two to three kicks are normal. If the jetting is off even a small bit, hunt for a hill.

Racing and Improving the 430CR

By Tom Webb

As the resident Husky blow-hard, I waited in agony for the new CRs to come. Their arrival marked an almost totally new bike. A larger engine, forks, rear hub and comfort and design changes. The big question was: How would it stack up against the 490 Maico, YZ465 and the 495 KTM? Handling was top-notch, but is the CR430 competitive? Is it fast enough?

The Husky 430CR, without a doubt, has the sweetest, most controllable horsepower of any open class mount. Rolling the throttle on proved explosive, yet not overpowering; fast, though not berserk. It's a fun bike to ride and very forgiving, too. For the majority of riders, there's plenty of useable power that allows ease in navigation of the track. This applies to most riders. Top intermediates and experts *need* more juice to stay with the larger-CC'd Maicos and Yamahas. Where do you turn for the needed horses? The CR's reliable in-stock form, but what happens if you try to extract more muscle?

Pro-Circuit modifications

When it comes to weeding horses out of Huskys, one of the most knowledgeable firms around is Pro-Circuit Husky. They've been tinkering with the Swedish bikes for years and pride themselves on their fast, reliable bikes. The master scientist is Mitch Payton; his remedy for the needed horsepower can be done in stages, if money is a problem. Here's a rundown on the engine work they do:

Mossbarger reed cage Pro-Circuit boost bottle—This is a bolt-on modification that is an absolute must for increasing and improving the powerband throughout the range. The Mossbarger reed assembly looks almost twice the size of the stock unit. With the ability of flowing larger quantities of fuel, the CR showed a good, strong improvement in the powerband.

Add the Pro-Circuit boost bottle (yes, it's similar to the induction system on the Yamahas) and bottom-end throttle response is stronger. Another plus is its ability to clean up any jetting hitches found at the lower revs. Price: \$178.

Porting—Exactly what's done here, we're not sure. One thing for certain,

it helps...a lot. All the ports are cleaned and matched, then some serious grinding is done on the transfers. These porting changes get rid of the flattening-out tendencies of the powerband. It's now free to rev higher than before while still retaining a good hook at peak revs. Price: \$90.

Pro-Circuit Asche pipe—When combined with the porting, the Husky will pull stronger and even longer. All of the stock characteristics of a quick power dropoff at top rpm's disappear. It bolts right on, with no mods needed. Price: \$114.95.

That comes to just under \$400. Quite a chunk of change? You bet! But once you ride with the changes, you'll forget about any cash inconvenience.

The power is still controllable, but about 30 percent stronger. That figure is a guess, but whatever it is, it's nasty. Holeshoots anywhere against any bikes are simple. The Pro-Circuit CR is fierce, violent and very, very fast. What's good about the whole deal is

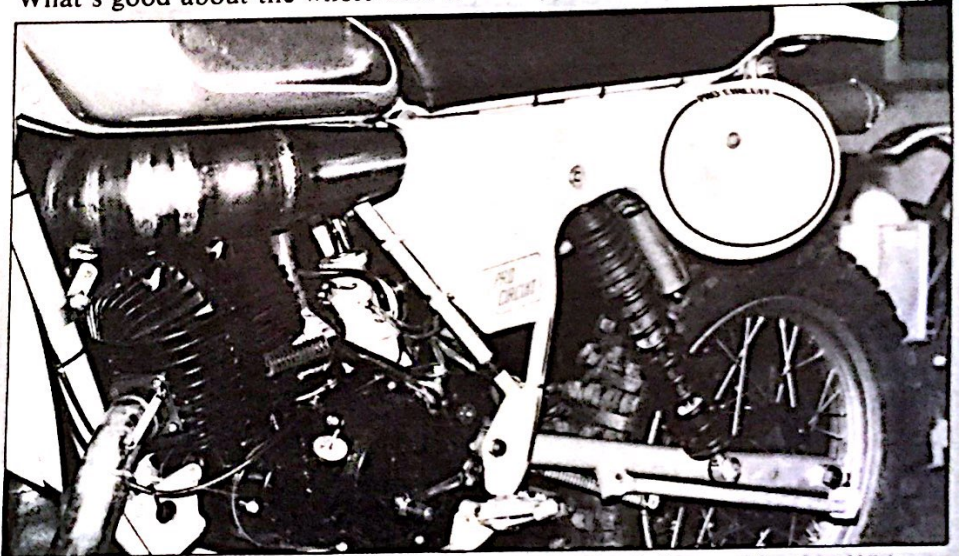
this: When combined with the sweet-handling chassis and suspension of the CR, it's still an easy-to-ride bike.

Cosmetically...

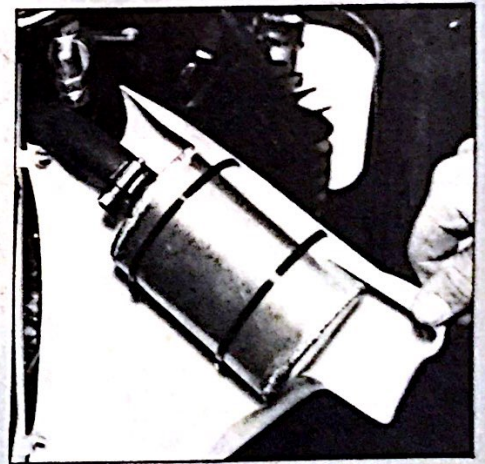
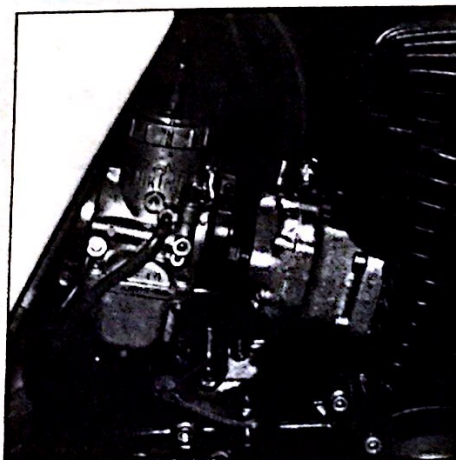
Now that you've blown your whole wad on go-fast goodies, check out Pro-Circuit's other trick stuff.

- If you want to get rid of that simple-minded, untrick-looking chain guide, here's the answer. An aluminum-crafted model that's stylish and functional. Price: \$35.
- White number plates and FIM side-panels add a classy look and are good stock replacements. Price: \$28.95.
- In order to protect those vulnerable front forks from rocks, there are form-fitted fork protectors. Price: \$12.95.

If it sounds like we just tooted Pro-Circuit's horn, we have. Everything they sell is top-notch and helps improve the Husky in either speed or looks. For more info: Pro-Circuit, 2860 East Lincoln Ave., Anaheim, California 92806; (714)630-6522. □



The Pro-Circuit motor is fast. Porting and the Asche pipe help considerably. White plastic side panels are good replacements and look trick, too.



Mossbarger reed cage with a Pro-Circuit boost bottle broaden the CR powerband. Both are important steps in obtaining competitive horsepower.

HUSKYS

At first, some of the test riders missed the shift from first to second on both bikes. But after getting used to the longish throw and compensating, missed shifts became a rarity.

You don't want to get in the habit of sloppy shifting. The dogs on the Husky gears tend to round off prematurely if more than a handful of grinding shifts are fed to the cogs. Use the clutch, both when up-shifting and down-shifting, and change the gearbox oil regularly and the life span of the gearbox will be greatly prolonged.

Grips were terrible. No one liked them. The razor blade struck early in the test.

It took a long time for the spokes to seat in. A careful eye will be required during break-in. We suffered no spoke breakage, though.

If you're 5'9" or less, a milk crate will be needed to start and get on either

bike. They *are* tall! We had an optional lower saddle for the 250 and it was worth its weight in gold.

Nice touches

You can add oil to the forks easily, because of the handy inner-removable screw/valve core piece.

Excellent controls and a Whirlpull throttle are standard. Gold anodized parts add to the looks of the bike. Nice guides keep the front brake cable working smoothly, even under full front-end compression. You still have to tape the brake cable to the fork leg, just like in the old days.

Those plated gas caps didn't leak a drop. Getting to the filter couldn't be easier. Both bikes are Motoplat-equipped, so no maintenance is needed electrically.

Getting to the carb for jetting and cleaning is easy. There's plenty of room to get at things.

The rear hub has been redesigned for 1981 and is stronger and lighter

than the older items.

Working on the engine is simple, with a top-end job taking no more than a half hour of work at a casual pace.

Both bikes are fairly quite for full-on racers, and the aluminum silencers are rebuildable. Keep an eye on the inner core to make sure that it stays true and doesn't slip out of position. If that happens, the bike will run like a dog.

Dual summation

Expensive, sophisticated, smooth and 95-percent right, the 1981 Huskys 250 and 430 are desirable bikes that are fun to ride. They'll help a rider out of nasty situations and will never surprise him into a bad one.

A very honest pair of motocrossers, both bikes have enough of the right kind of power to get the job done. On paper, there are better choices. On the track, when the flag drops, they make sense for most riders, most of the time. □

Racing the 250 Husky CR

By Rick Sieman

It's a normal practice to race test bikes here at *Dirt Bike*. When we received the pair of new Huskys, Webb snapped up the big bike right away and whined and wheeled his way into that one.

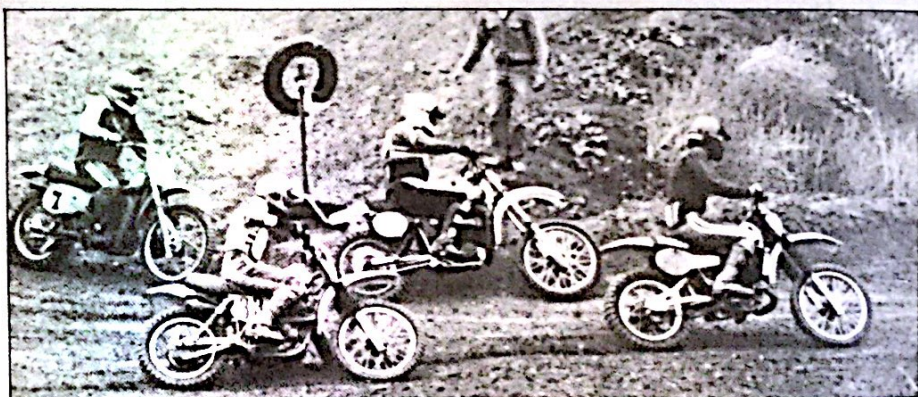
I got the 250. Normally I like 500 class bikes, but I decided to race the 250 Husky for a change. It was entered in six different motocross races and one real desert race.

Once the jetting was sorted out, the bike proved to be fast enough to turn very good lap times. The whole key to making it run clean and hard was swapping the stock 2.0 slide for a 2.5 slide. It cleaned up the bike amazingly well. We also dropped one on the pilot jet to finalize the carburetion.

One race was on a flat course with lots of medium speed sweepers. The stock gearing worked fine here. However, a race at Saddleback Park convinced us of the need for a gearing change. Two teeth more on the rear gave the bike a totally different personality. It also kept us from having to use low gear on tight corners, thus avoiding that longish first-to-second shift.

Some good finishes were recorded at the motocross races, along with the usual assortment of crashes and random stupidity on the part of the pilot.

One thing: the bike did turn superb-



ly. It could dive under just about anything else on the track, given the room. Straight-line stability was also good. In fact, there were no flaws in the handling, to speak of.

If there's one area where the Husky is giving something away to the competition, it's the fact that the rpm builds gradually, rather than exploding like so many of the Japanese motocross bikes do. Now on a smooth or undemanding track, this hurts the Husky; but on a genuinely rough and nasty track, the Husky will hook up where the jolting-powered bike will hop all over the place.

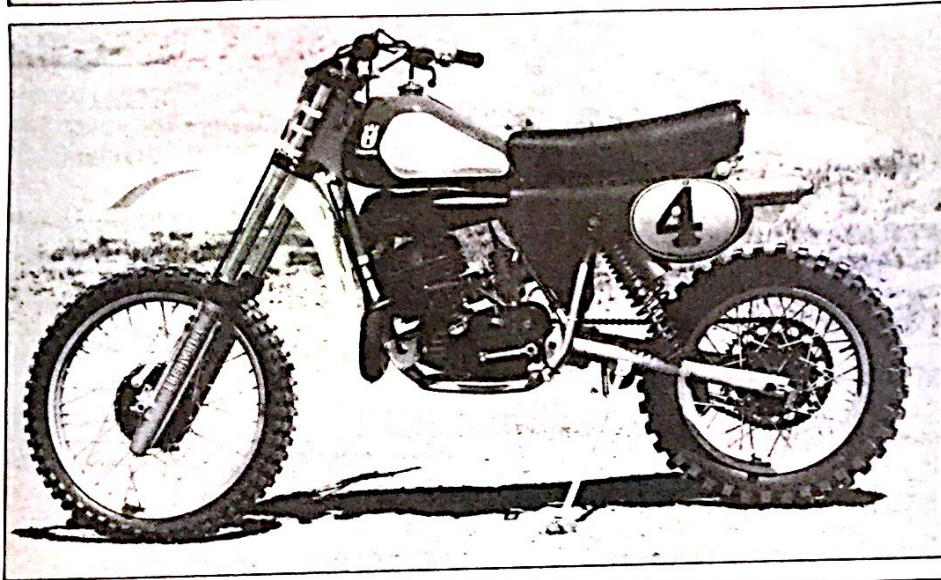
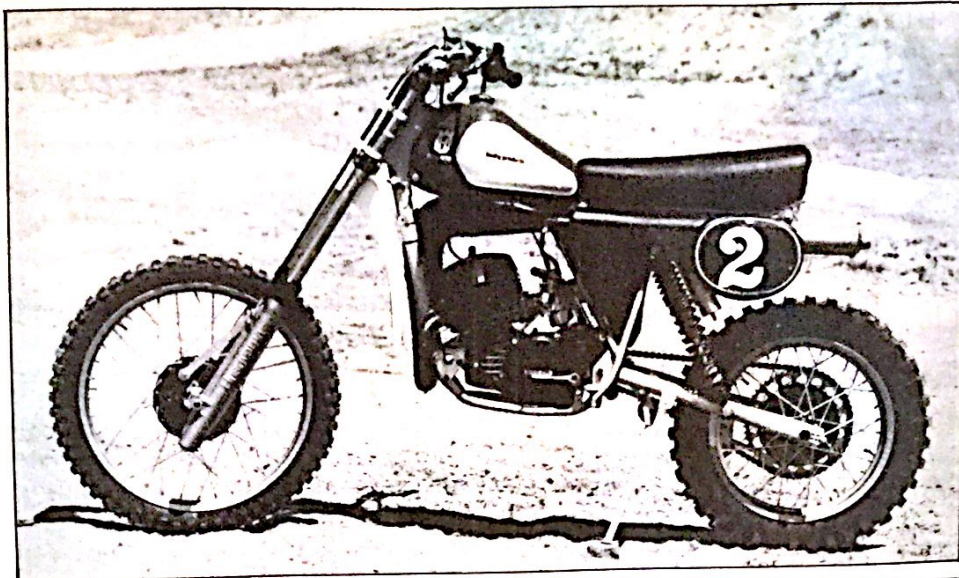
And, to back up that point, the Huskys always did better in the second moto of the day when the track was at its roughest. Fatigue was not a problem near the end of a long moto, as the suspension was so plush that very little impact was delivered to the rider.

The bike was entered in a 90-mile desert race that was put on by the Master Links M.C. Here, the bike was

a delight—except in two areas. With a dead-engine start, the Husky 250 cannot be started in gear. This will cost time and positions. I know this to be a fact.

Also, if you happen to fall down, stall the bike, or any combination of these things, you'll have to hunt around and find neutral before you can start the bike back up. This isn't too bad if you crash in first or second gear, but a fourth- or fifth-gear crash will leave you hunting like a tap dancer for neutral. It can turn a simple ten-second loss of time into 30 seconds down the tube. (Of course, you're not really supposed to crash five or six times in a race, like I did.)

Nonetheless, I had a glorious time in the desert and wasn't even all that tired when the 90 miles were up. I truly enjoyed the bike and learned to trust the high-speed stability that has earned Husky a legend. By the way, another Husky won the overall that particular day. A 430. □



HUSQVARNA 430CR AND 250CR

NAME AND MODEL	430CR/250CR
ENGINE TYPE	Single-cylinder, two-stroke
BORE AND STROKE	86mmx74mm
	69.5mmx64.5mm
DISPLACEMENT	430cc/245cc
HORSEPOWER (CLAIMED)	N/A
CARBURETION	38mm Mikuni
FACTORY RECOMMENDED JETTING:	
MAIN JET	450/430
NEEDLE JET	R4/R2
JET NEEDLE	4 from top
PILOT JET	40
SLIDE NUMBER	2.5
RECOMMENDED GASOLINE	Premium
FUEL TANK CAPACITY	2.7 gallons
FUEL TANK MATERIAL	Aluminum
LUBRICATION	Pre-mix
RECOMMENDED OIL	Any good grade
OIL CAPACITY	N/A
AIR FILTRATION	Foam
CLUTCH TYPE	Six-disc, wet
TRANSMISSION	Six-speed
GEARBOX RATIOS:	
1	18.05:1/20.77:1
2	13.08:1/15.65:1
3	9.94:1/12.44:1
4	7.95:1/10.43:1
5	6.75:1/8.83:1
6	5.96:1/7.38:1
GEARING, FRONT/REAR	12/53
IGNITION	Motoplat CDI
PRIMARY KICK SYSTEM?	Yes/no
RECOMMENDED SPARK PLUG	Champion N2
SILENCER/SPARK ARRESTOR/QUALITY	Good
EXHAUST SYSTEM	Through the frame
FRAME, TYPE	Tubular, chromemoly/heat-treated
WHEELBASE	1505mm (59.3 inches)
GROUND CLEARANCE	345mm (13.9 inches)

SEAT HEIGHT	970mm (38.2 inches)
STEERING HEAD ANGLE (RAKE)	30.5 degrees
TRAIL	152mm (6 inches)
WEIGHT WITH ONE GALLON GAS	105kg (230 pounds)/103kg (226 pounds)
RIM MATERIAL	Light alloy
TIRE SIZE AND TYPE:	
FRONT	3.00x21 Pirelli MT25 Pentacross
REAR	5.00x17 Pirelli MT25 Pentacross
SUSPENSION, TYPE AND TRAVEL:	
FRONT	3.00mm (11.8 inches)
REAR	3.10m 12.2 inches)
INTENDED USE	Motocross
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	Sweden
RETAIL PRICE, APPROX.	\$2699/\$2399
DISTRIBUTOR:	
Husqvarna	
4925 Mercury Street,	
San Diego, California 92111	
or	
2400 Marilyn Park Lane,	
Columbus, Ohio 43219	

PARTS PRICES, HIGH-WEAR ITEMS:

PISTON ASSEMBLY, COMPLETE	\$68.47/\$62.05
RINGS ONLY	10.66/9.96
CYLINDER	269.40/247.35
SHIFT LEVER	17.69
BRAKE PEDAL	9.36
FRONT SPROCKET	8.46
OVERALL RATING, 0 TO 100, VARIOUS CATEGORIES, KEEPING INTENDED USE OF MACHINE IN MIND:	
HANDLING	99
SUSPENSION	Front 97/rear 97
POWER	95/93
COST	85
ATTENTION TO DETAIL	89
EFFECTIVENESS, STONE STOCK	96

TONY'S TIRE TIPS



Tony Mills,
Motorcycle Tire
Development Engineer
Dunlop Tire Company

Tip
no.

9

MOTO-X TIRES FOR ENDURO?

Q.

I love off-road riding, especially Enduro. However can I use Motocross tires for Enduro runs?

A.

Sure. In fact, the tire requirements for the two are so similar, you'll have trouble finding a tire designed just for Enduro.

Like Motocross, you should find a set of tires specifically designed for the conditions you'll be riding on. Enduro riding usually offers a little bit of everything — from loose rocks and mud to dry flats. So a good, all-purpose set of tires like Dunlop's K190 IT rear and K290 front are ideal.

If you do most of your riding in the West, where conditions run consistently dry and hard, try the Dunlop K88 HT rear and K290 front combination. The K88 HT has the low profile and wide footprint you need. Plus, the soft compound tread gives you a sticky bite in the tightest leans.

In the East, conditions can get downright messy. Wet, oily conditions require tires with more surface area. Dunlop's K88 ST rear and K190 front are perfect solutions. Both feature a hard compound tread with tall knobs in an open pattern, allowing you to cut through the soft stuff without clogging your tread.

DUNLOP

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More cycles ride on Dunlop than any other tire in the world.