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SHOOTOUT! YELLOW FEVER: YZ 490 vs. RM 500

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HUSKY 430 WR: THE GREAT WHITE HOPE

YAMAHA IT250: THE BLUE YZ

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HUSQVARNA 430WR

PASTEURIZED PLEASURE

It may look like a milk truck, but it'll cream anything through the woods

By the Staff of *Dirt Bike*

When we finish testing a good bike, we always hope that the manufacturer will change the parts we didn't like and leave the rest alone when the new-model year comes up. Most of the time, we wind up slightly disappointed when we find that the new bike is brimming with trick features and the sore spots we had found earlier are still there, although now glossed over by the spiffy changes. Occasionally, the grips are completely cured, and another major part of the machine—a part that was fine the year before—has been modified, and ruined in the process. This is why, at the beginning of the year, you may be able to walk through the parking area of Indian Dunes and see thick tufts of hair lying in little clumps on the ground.

Well, we are happy to report no hair pulling with the new Husky 430. Last year we raved about the sweet engine, and this year it remains the same. We had very few complaints about the rest of the bike, but we are now greeted with a brand-new chassis and suspension system, as well as a host of detail refinements.

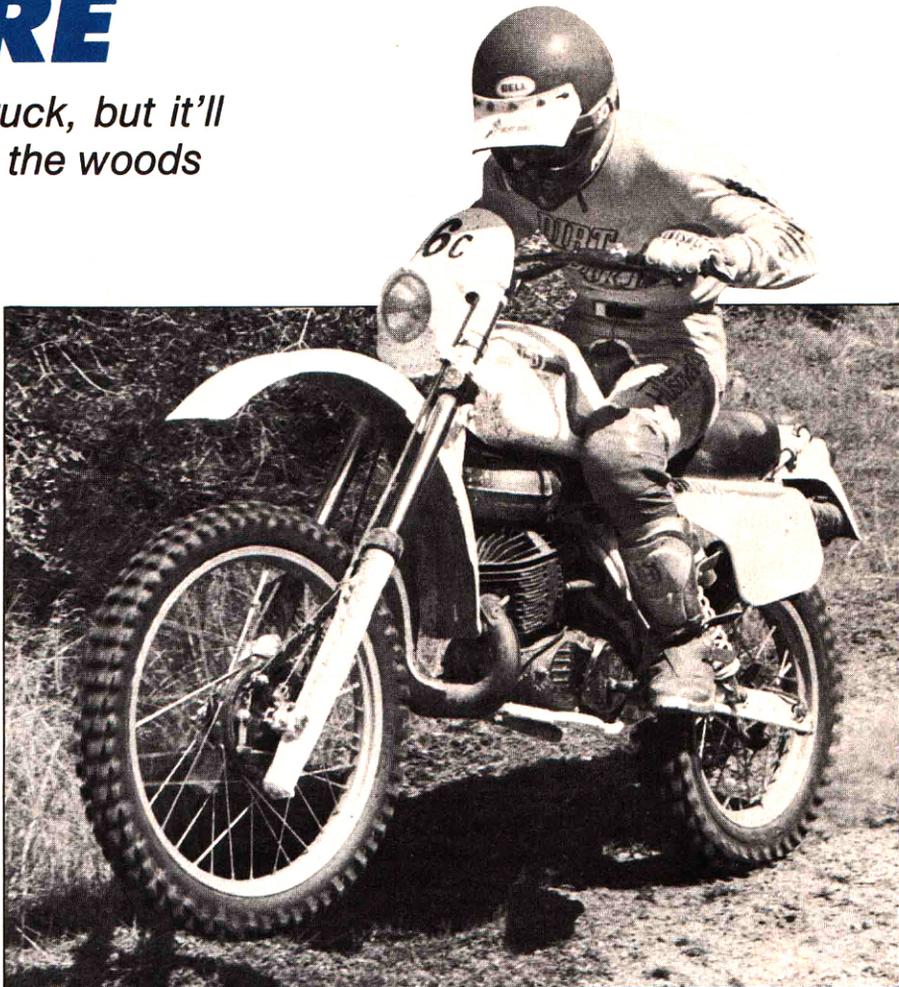
The question is, does form follow function? Were all the changes worth the effort?

RING IN THE NEW

By now, the new white color is old news. All Huskys share the same color scheme, and you either like it or you don't. The forks have been changed with a new seal system that cures the leaking problem forever. The white-sprung shocks at the rear end are Ohlins ITC models, and they are a definite improvement over what were already good shocks last year.

The front hub is new and bigger and features a double-leading shoe brake. The rear hub remains the same, with a new 18-inch rim; and both ends are wrapped with Trelleborg tires—a definite improvement over the old Barums.

Although the engine remains virtually identical to the '82 WR powerplant, it now breathes through a much more waterproof airbox containing a giant foam filter. The fuel tank is bigger—up three tenths of a gallon over last year, and bars are lower. The expansion chamber is essentially the same, although the shape has been altered to fit the new frame.



Mild mannered as the 430 is, all it takes is a quick tug on the clutch lever to get it spinning.



It's not the lightest bike made, but the sturdy 430 will hold up for a good many seasons of enduro abuse.

RAPID, YET SMOOTH

To put it quite simply, this engine is all any enduro rider ever needs. The porting layout is designed to produce a maximum of torque and a minimum of freaky, peaky explosive power. The ignition system continues the theme with a heavy flywheel that keeps the rear wheel biting at the ground. This doesn't mean that the bike isn't fast—you can wind it up slow and mellow if you like; but if you need a quick burst, all you have to do is fan the clutch one time. Under this type of input, the 430 practically leaps off the ground when the clutch plates reconnect. If you aren't paying attention, you may be watching the Husky finish the loop while you warm the trail with your buns.

Said clutch is deceptively light for an Open bike. Once you perform the classic Husky modifications—bending the actuating arm up to give the cable a straighter shot into the housing, and lubricating the cable with silicone spray—the left-hand lever feels as if it's connected to a well-set-up 250.

HUSQVARNA 430

The six-speed gearbox has a cog for every situation. With the stock gearing, you can go from just above a crawl to an honest 95 mph, which is just a little too much for the average rider. We switched the stock 12-tooth countershaft sprocket for an 11 and were much more comfortable on the bike.

With the 11-tooth sprocket installed, the 430 accelerates much harder in the mid-range and will chug along at just above idle, which is just the right range for the tight woods it's made to be ridden in. We had to clean up the jetting a little for the higher altitudes we tend to ride, and dropping the jet needle two notches was all we needed to be satisfied. This engine makes very good power—a real lazy-man's bike.

And now for a word on reliability. Last year's transmissions had a problem with some third-gear sets. If you had a bad one, it was likely to break; if you had a good one, you never had a problem. This was traced to a heat-treating fault on selected batches, and we are told that the situation has been completely cured.

We had a good one last year. Our test bike went 2000 miles in enduro competition with no gearbox problems at all. It also went the whole distance on the original top end. Keep the air filter clean and change the gearbox oil often, and you should expect the same kind of service.

WHITE LEGS AND DUAL SHOCKS

The new forks are excellent, right out of the box. The most significant improvement is the use of three single-lip seals in the tubes, rather than the two double-lip seals of the past. This change reduces seal stiction and finally cured the oil weeping that has plagued Husky forks for years. For the best action, we would recommend 12½-weight fork oil (a 50/50 mix of 10- and 15-weight), filled to within 6½ inches of the top of the tube with the forks compressed and the springs removed. Reinstall the springs, button them back up and run zero air pressure.

The dual-shock setup may look archaic compared with the latest single-shock wonders, but they work well and are very easy to work on. These new ITC Ohlins use a bottoming cone at the end of the piston, just like a set of forks, and they will soak up a crusher bump in a surprisingly plush manner. The spring rate and damping have been set to deliver a very smooth ride over choppy ground, although for very high-speed whooped work we would ask for a lot more rebound damping. You should only encounter this problem if you ride regularly in deserts or high-speed hare scrambles. If you do, anyone who can rebuild a set of Ohlins can bump up the rebound for a moderate price.

Many riders swear by the Husky progressive springs on the rear end, although in our opinion it is mostly a matter of rider choice. We have used the yellow progressives and noticed an increase in suppleness on the small bumps, with slightly more impact re-



When the trees clear out, the 430 will do an honest 80 mph if you can hold onto the throttle.



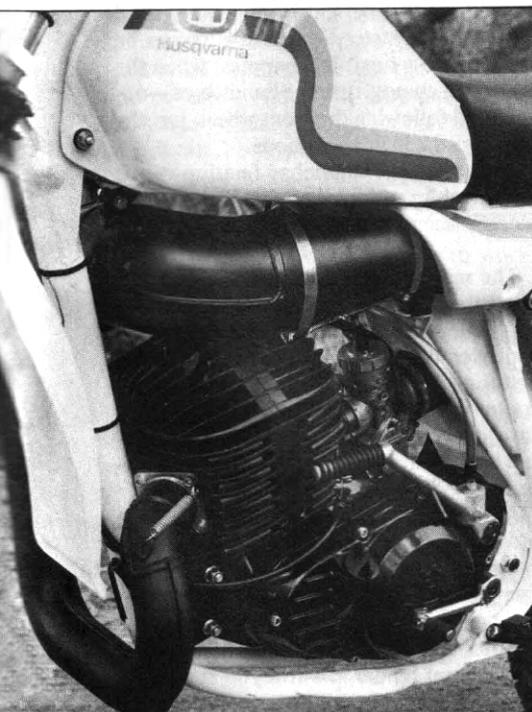
HUSQVARNA 430WR

ENGINE TYPE	2-stroke, reed valve
BORE AND STROKE	86mm x 74mm
DISPLACEMENT	435cc
CARBURETION	38mm Mikuni
FACTORY RECOMMENDED JETTING:	
MAIN JET	430
NEEDLE JET	Q-8
JET NEEDLE	6DH3-4
PILOT JET	45
SLIDE NUMBER	2.0
RECOMMENDED GASOLINE	Premium
FUEL TANK CAPACITY	3.2 gals.
FUEL TANK MATERIAL	Aluminum
LUBRICATION	Pre-mix
RECOMMENDED OIL	Bel-Ray MC-1 +
OIL CAPACITY, GEARBOX	1600cc
AIR FILTRATION	Oiled foam
CLUTCH TYPE	Wet, multi-plate
TRANSMISSION	6-speed
GEARBOX RATIOS:	
1.	20.03:1
2.	13.84:1
3.	10.48:1
4.	7.95:1
5.	6.73:1
6.	5.66:1
GEARING, FRONT/REAR	12/53
IGNITION	SEM/CDI
PRIMARY KICK SYSTEM?	Yes
RECOMMENDED SPARK PLUG	Bosch W4C

SILENCER/SPARK ARRESTER	Yes/yes
EXHAUST SYSTEM	Through-frame
FRAME, TYPE	Single downtube, chromoly
WHEELBASE	1470mm (57.8 in.)
GROUND CLEARANCE	300mm (11.8 in.)
SEAT HEIGHT	940mm (37.0 in.)
STEERING HEAD ANGLE (RAKE)	30°
TRAIL	152mm (5.9 in.)
WET WEIGHT, NO FUEL	244.5 lbs.
RIM MATERIAL	Aluminum alloy
TIRE SIZE AND TYPE:	
FRONT	3.00 x 21 Trelleborg
REAR	5.50 x 18 Trelleborg
SUSPENSION, TYPE AND TRAVEL:	
FRONT	Husqvarna air/spring, 270mm (10.6 in.)
REAR	Ohlins ITC dual shocks, 285mm (11.2 in.)
INTENDED USE	Off-road, enduro
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	Sweden
RETAIL PRICE, APPROX.	\$2940
DISTRIBUTOR	
Husqvarna Motorcycle Co., Inc.	
4925 Mercury St.	
San Diego, CA 92111	
PARTS PRICES, HIGH-WEAR ITEMS:	
PISTON ASSEMBLY, COMPLETE	\$94.87
RING ONLY	14.74
CYLINDER SLEEVE	106.04
SHIFT LEVER	24.50
BRAKE PEDAL	12.83
FRONT SPROCKET	12.60



This is truly the age of miracles—these forks don't leak. New double-leading shoe front brake works well.



One of the torquiest engines ever made, the 430 is a lazy-man's delight. Hose clamps on the pipe hold silencing plates.

The 430WR is easy to steer around tricky courses. Short suspension and good geometry make for precise direction changes. >



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sistance. Husky is also working on a set of white progressive springs that will be firmer than the yellow ones.

There are few bikes in this world that can smooth out braking bumps and washboard as well as the new Huskys. You must feel the suspension action to believe it. Choppy bumps entering a turn simply aren't there, and only the deepest holes will bounce either end. The worst bumps will bottom the forks or shocks, but said bottoming is very smooth and painless. This is a good suspension.

EARTH CONTROL

In the old days, we declared that a short bike was a good-handling bike, and the same is still true. The shorter-travel WR is easier to turn than the XC, and it's made that way for a purpose. The WR is a woods bike, pure and simple. If Eastern woods and tight enduros are your main modes of exercise, the 430WR will make you happy indeed. The front end tracks perfectly in rough ground or smooth, and there is not even a hint of vagueness to force you to pay undue attention to the front wheel. The rear end snakes along as happily as the front, and will slide or track like a freight train, depending on the input you give it.

The 430's only handling drawbacks are the wide tank and the relatively high weight factor. We weighed it in at 244.5 with a dry tank, and that is slightly portly in this day of ultra-light motocrossers. Combined with the wide tank, the 430 is not what you'd call a berm blaster. It doesn't like to be thrown into a turn. It's happiest when the turn input comes from the handlebars—upright and following the front wheel, just the way you do it in the woods.

The seat/peg/handlebar relationship is comfortable, and it takes very little time to become accustomed to the bike.

BITS AND PIECES

The rear brake is good—not great, but it gets the job done with little fuss. The new double-leading shoe front stopper is a real improvement over the old system. For the first time in what seems like centuries, the brakes do not disappear completely after a water crossing. They fade just like normal brakes and then come back after a little bit of dragging.

A lid fits over the top of the new airbox and nearly transforms the bike into a submarine. Removing the lid for a dry run may give you a slight increase in performance, but we have noticed very little change whether the lid was on or off.

The front fender is a little too narrow to get the job done in muddy conditions. The mud flies out the sides and over the front when the wheel is turned, and it really should be replaced with something better, such as a Gold Belt DeFender.

Save yourself a lot of trouble if you have to change the rear wheel on your Husky. Lay the bike on its side as they do with Six Days bikes. This is the way it was designed

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Good tires, lousy spark arrester, decent chain, and brakes that will work even after a dunking. The ITC shocks are excellent in the stutter bumps, but have too little rebound for crushers.

to be done, and once you try it, you'll never do it on a crate again.

We've-said-it-before department: The stock spark arrester is a pain in the butt. You have to clean the inner screens often or they will rob a ton of power when they clog. A straight-through design, like Answer or Richter mufflers, will work much better.

We have heard of some problems with the SEM ignitions. Occasionally, a bad one will just up and quit, and there is no way to restore the spark without changing the ignition. The Motoplats on the XC bikes do not seem to have this problem. All we can suggest is that you ride the bike as often as you can the first month you own it, and if you have a problem, you can get it straightened out during the 30-day warranty period.

The Husky is a very easy bike to work on, and the further you get into the bike, the easier it becomes. We've even split the cases on the later-model Huskys without a service manual nearby and never got into trouble. This is good. The easier the work is, the more you're apt to do, and good maintenance will keep it around for many seasons.

Nagging complaints: The kickstarter is mounted a little high, and with the Open class engine you have to give it a good boot to get things lit. Uncomfortable. The spark plug cap is pure junk. Replace it with a good accessory item.

THE FINAL WORD

Considering the competition, we have to say that the WR430 is the best Open class woods bike you can buy. There are other bikes that are faster, and there are still others that have longer-travel suspension. But remember, this bike is built for one purpose—taming tight, nasty terrain and zeroing checks while causing the rider the least possible pain. It fills that bill perfectly. One winning milk truck, that's for sure. □

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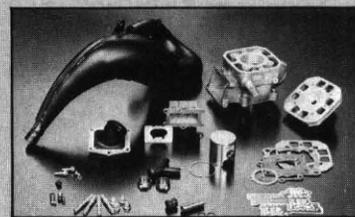
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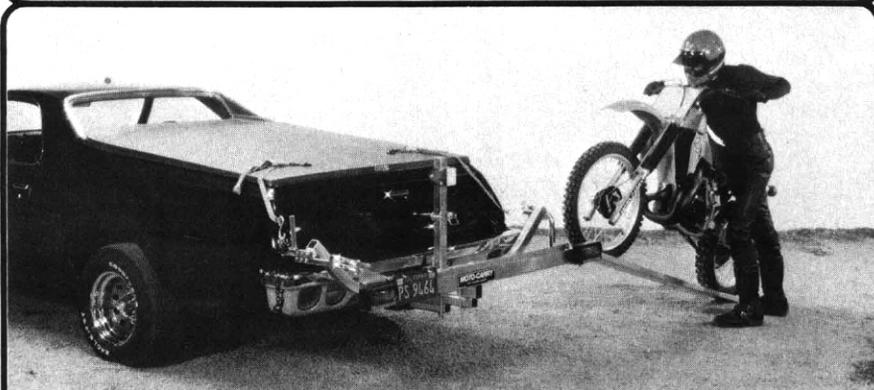
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