



# NEW HUSKY FOUR-STROKES GO FOR THE GOLD

Heavyweight shootout: Lightning strikes twice!

By the Staff of *Dirt Bike*



The TT600 was the lowest of the four bikes, and shorter riders felt at home on it. The Yammie was slightly faster than the Honda, but not as fast as either Husky.



Larry Roeseler on the ultra-light six-speeder.



Tom Webb on the Honda XR500. The Honda felt much quicker than it actually was. It revved hard and quick but didn't pull over as broad a range as the Husky.

Just when we thought we had this whole four-stroke pecking order settled, along came a new bike (make that *three* new bikes) that put everything right up in the air again. The long-awaited Husky four-strokes popped up earlier than expected and the DB test crew jumped on the new machines for testing. To see exactly how good (or bad) they were, we took along two of the most popular four-strokes for comparison: the Yamaha TT600 and the Honda XR500.

Surprisingly, Husqvarna showed up with two bikes for the testing, and they have a third bike waiting in the wings. We tested the 500TC and the 510TX. The 510TE, an enduroized version of the 510TX, was not tested, but some information is available elsewhere in these pages.

Before we get into an actual comparison, here's what we're dealing with, in alphabetical order:

## HONDA XR500R

The 1983 Honda 500 is their first new engine in three years. It's a radial-valved unit that weighs less than the old powerplants. Naturally, more horsepower is available and the XR hits harder and revs quicker.

Suspension is the usual Pro-Link that's found on the MXers, with a bit less travel to meet (supposedly) the desire for shorter travel. This, of course, is debatable. A tape measure shows 11 inches at both ends.

Up front, there are beefy Showa forks. A Showa shock also does the work at the rear; it's adjustable on both parts of the stroke.

Lots of refinement and new goodies can be found on the Honda this year. Twin Keihin carbs are there to improve breathing and eliminate any hitch in response. A nifty disc brake rides up front. A bit of weight was shed over last year's scale-bender.

Power is still delivered through a five-speed gearbox, but the advertising claims include a strengthened clutch and gearbox. An all-blue saddle accents the bright red plastic of the XR, and fresh plastic all around has a space-age look. Additionally, the frame is new and the steering has been sharpened for tight trail conditions.

## HUSQVARNA 500TC

This is the pure racing version of the Husky four-stroke line. It's a four-speeder that's slightly under 500cc's, so it's legal to race in the Open class. The bore and

stroke are 90.0 by 76.4, giving a tad over 490cc's.

The engine is Husky's own design and has a unique oiling system that uses the cam chain to transfer oil through the engine. The powerplant itself is a good 15 pounds lighter than any other full-sized four-stroke made.

Everything wrapped around the engine is pure Husky, from the familiar 40mm fork tubes to the ITC Ohlins shocks at the rear. The frame is typical Husky, with the exception of burlier top frame rails and slight changes to allow the twin pipes clearance.

The MX version comes with twin aluminum mufflers (no spark arrester), and the noise level is remarkably low and pleasant. A first on any Husky is a 2.7-gallon plastic gas tank made by Acerbis that's really narrow where it meets the saddle.

Carburetion is by a 36mm Dell'orto with an accelerator pump. Ignition is a new SEM design that can easily handle Bajateype lighting requirements. There are no lights on the TC or TX, as delivered.

With its yellow saddle and all-white frame and forks, the TC is a handsome

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package and one distinctly Husky from the ground up.

Other details include ball bearings on the cams, two compression releases (one automatic) and primary kick starting.

### HUSQVARNA 510TX

The 510TX is the four-stroke equivalent of the Husky XC line; it, too, is a six-speeder. Actual displacement is 503cc's via a 91.5 by 76.4 bore and stroke. This means that if you start with a 500TC, you can use up all the overbores available and then convert it into a 510.

All suspension, chassis and detail components are the same as on the MX version. It weighs a few pounds more than the TC, mostly because of the extra gears. Unlike the TC, the TX has a pair of forest-legal spark arresters. They're not aluminum, but they are very light. They have the typical Husky screen in the end of the muffler, but did not clog up like the typical Husky two-stroke.

There's no headlight or taillight on the TX, but it will accept the parts from the enduro model with no modifications.

The same long travel of the TC is found on the TX: 11.8 inches up front and 13.6 inches at the rear. Twin-leading shoe brakes are on both the TC and the TX. Gas tanks have the same capacity. Saddle height is 39.2 inches on both models, but the suspension is soft on the initial part of the travel, and a five-foot nine-inch rider can touch both feet to the ground when sitting on the bike.

### YAMAHA TT600K

This is the first fresh big four-stroke out of Yamaha since the mid-'70s. The engine is based on the powerful XT550 but is considerably lighter and puts out a lot more steam. Twin carbs give the TT600 a very clean response right at the bottom of the rpm range, and the engine revs out quick and far.

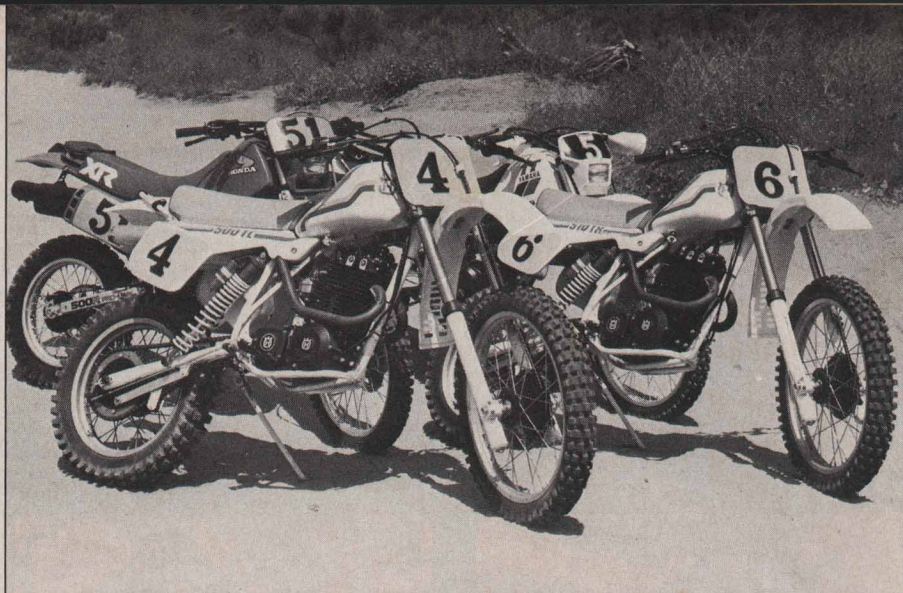
A real Monocross suspension is at the rear and it gives nearly 12 inches of movement. About 11 inches do the job with the 43mm KYB forks. Saddle height is extremely low for so much travel, and the safety saddle blends smoothly into the tank.

Double-leading shoe brakes are up front. A speedo, headlight and taillight make the TT600 enduro-ready. There's even a tool bag behind the saddle. Small but effective hand protectors give fingers a fighting chance in brush or trees. Bash bars can be found under the engine and off to the side, offering reasonable protection to side cases.

The TT is a clean white machine with touches of red and black. It's a new design and will readily accept most of the suspension goodies from the current YZ line.

### COMPARING THE BEASTS

How does the new Husky approach stack up to the best efforts from Japan? After all, Honda went absolutely nuts with tech-



*A comparison with a twist: The two Husky four-strokes meet the best of the Big Four—the TT600 and the Honda XR500.*



*Slippin' and a slidin' with factory Baja star Larry Roeseler.*

nology on the XR. And the Yamaha is a full 600cc's. Let's take it one step at a time. Whenever there are worthwhile differences between the four-speed and six-speed Huskys, we'll note them.

### POWER

This turned into a no-contest situation real quick. We first drag raced the XR and the TT. In each and every condition, the Yamaha pulled the Honda, usually by a length or two through the gears. We then took out the four-speed Husky and proceeded to utterly destroy the Yamaha in a drag race.

When both bikes were started in second gear, they'd be even for a while; then, as soon as the Husky started winding third gear out, it was all over. At the end of a long and lonely strip of pavement, the Husky four-speeder pulled the TT600 by a good 20 feet.

When we tried low-gear starts, it was even more of a one-sided contest, as the Husky would literally bolt out of the hole and grab an immediate two-length lead. Even when the Yamaha rider got the jump on a rolling start, the Husky would catch it and ease ahead.

Oddly enough, the six-speed Husky that we tested was faster through the gears than the four-speeder. Mark Blackwell, the Husky rep, told us that our four-speeder was an early prototype and was pretty much clapped out compared with the six-speeder, which was substantially fresher.

Rate the bikes in sheer acceleration as follows: 1. Husky 510TX; 2. Husky 500TC; 3. Yamaha TT600; 4. Honda XR500. It's also possible that the few extra cubic centimeters give the TX more muscle, but it's hard to believe that 13cc's would be noticeable. Still...



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## FORKS

It's difficult to find fault with the 40mm Husky forks. They give a zoot-capri smooth action and absorb the ripple bumps as well as the big swallows. If anything, they're more supple than the same forks on the two-stroke Huskys.

We'd have to call the Yamaha forks better than the Honda units, even though the XR forks are more supple over smaller bumps at trailriding speeds. When the Honda is pushed, the front end bottoms too easily. Under the same circumstances, the TT600 will handle the hits. If you gave a rating system, call the Husky forks a ten, the Yamaha forks a 7.5 and the Honda forks a 6.5. Clear enough?

## REAR SUSPENSION

Offering over 13 inches of plush travel, the Husky proves that you don't have to have a single-shock setup to be in the ball-park. The ride must be considered deluxe. It'll take everything from small stutter bumps to real whoops, with no protest. The only fault we could detect was a tendency to return too quickly over rolling bumps. To dial in more rebound damping, the Ohlins would have to be disassembled and revalved.

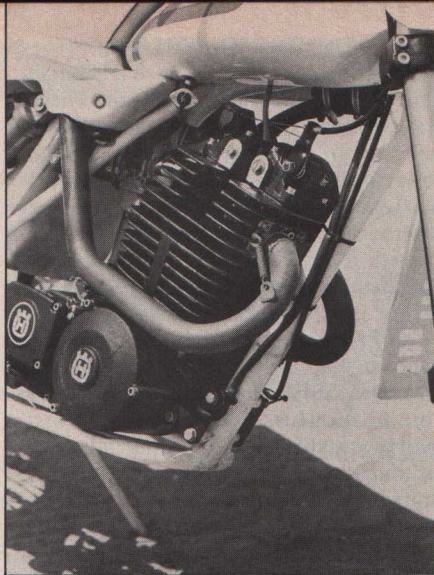
One nice thing, there's no need to go through a big service hassle with the Husky ITC twin shocks as with *any* single-shock system. For MX work, we felt that the Husky rear end was too plush on the first half of the stroke and let the rear end settle too much for careening off berms. However, the rear end never bottomed.

Call the Honda next best. It's supple and responsive, more so than the Yamaha Monocross. The Honda Pro-Link is very adjustable, but the shock will experience fade far too quickly. Give it 25 minutes of hard riding, and the rebound starts to deteriorate.

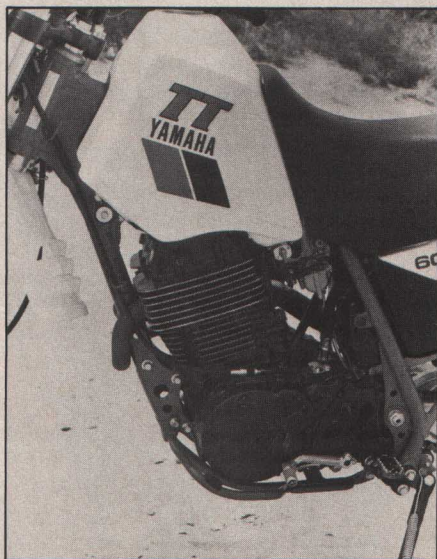
The Yamaha holds up better and does resist fade better than the XR, but it has an overall harsh feel to it that we couldn't get rid of. At least the Yamaha shock is easy to work on, as the preload ring is easily reached under the rear fender, as is the rebound clicker. Any number of the YZ springs are available, so the TT rear can most assuredly be improved.

## BRAKES

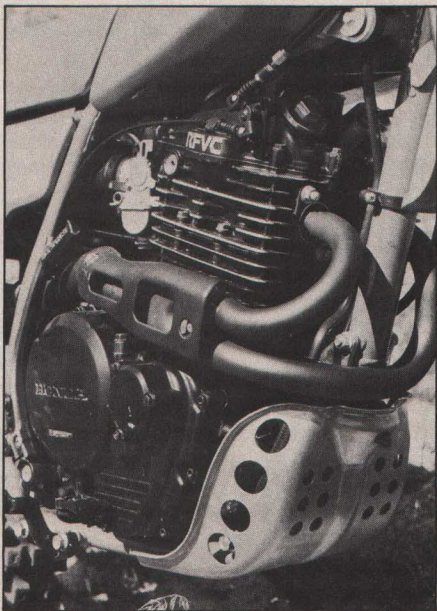
Give the Honda applause for a superb disc brake up front and good brakes at the rear. A close second is the twin-shoe front on the TT600. While the Husky also has twin-leading shoes, they are simply not as strong as either the Honda's or the Yamaha's. Also, we felt that the rear brake pedal on the Husky was poorly designed. The rear brakes are very susceptible to water. Also, the pedal is way too close to the footpeg and will hit the peg base when the shoes settle in. Plan on snagging your boot on the forward part of the brake rod on the Husky, too. Some rework is desperately needed here.



Left-side view of the Husky powerplant shows unmistakable looks from the two-stroke barrels.



Based on the XT550 engine, the TT600 is a good, strong powerplant from idle to peak revs.



An all-new engine, the Honda has a unique radial-valve layout and weighs less than last year's engine.



Good power and a balanced chassis make for a light feel; power wheelies were no problem.

## COMFORT AND LAYOUT

All three of the bikes are comfortable, but the Honda is the slimmest in the mid-section. The Husky is a bit wider, because of the mounting location of the top of the twin shocks. A fraction thicker at the seat/tank junction, the Yamaha is the lowest of the three bikes and will no doubt appeal to shorter riders. Call it a tie between the Honda and the Husky for comfort and layout, with the Yamaha not far behind.

## COST

While we don't have the actual retail cost of the Huskys yet, company officials stated that the TC and TX models will come in under \$3000. This is a pleasant surprise, as dealers had been expecting something in the \$3400 range.

Honda	.....\$2298
Yamaha	.....\$2299
Husky TC and TX	.... Under \$3000
Husky TE	
(Enduro)	... Approximately \$3050

## HEAVY VERSUS LIGHT: HITTING THE SCALES

Big surprise here. The Husky four-speeder is a good 20 pounds lighter than anything in its class. Most of the weight savings seems to be in the tightly designed engine, as the wheels, forks, etc., don't ap-



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pear to be much lighter than the Honda and Yamaha hardware.

As usual, we weighed the machines with dry gas tanks, but with all other essential fluids (fork oil, gear oil, etc.) present. Here's how they stacked up:

Husky 500TC	254.75 lbs.
Husky 510TX	260.5 lbs.
Honda XR500	275.5 lbs.
Yamaha TT600	280.0 lbs.

It's apparent that the Husky has just set the new standard for the '80s in the weight department. And you can *feel* the difference when you ride the bikes. Oddly enough, the Husky is actually lighter than the 1982 Honda XR250.

## TURNING/HANDLING

All of the bikes have sharp steering manners, but the nod has to go to the Husky because it can be tossed around with half the effort of the other two bikes. Even at slower trail speeds, the lack of weight of the Husky is a big asset. We found a great difference in the way the Huskys performed. The TC was set with the forks stretched out about 10mm more than the TX and it felt sluggish in the corners. With the forks raised, it was a whole bunch more responsive.

In straight-line charging, nothing came close to the Husky. Here, the Baja-bred chassis was able to hit anything in its path without problems. Your top speed is limited only by the countershaft sprocket selection.

Give the Yamaha second here, mostly for its razor-sharp steering and its love of slid-

ing like a TT bike. The Honda was a nice handler until the rider started pushing the outer edges; then the Honda would spook the rider with twitches and shudders.

## EASE OF RIDING

All things considered, the Yamaha gets the edge at low to medium riding speeds, while the Husky shines from medium speeds on up. Most of this is due to the Yamaha's low saddle height and ultra-clean pulling power at low revs. The Husky is more race oriented in the way it delivers its power. At casual speeds, the Honda is pleasant, but a certain top heaviness is obvious when the rider tries to catch his buddies.

## FLAWS

All things considered, the Yamaha is a polished package. It starts easier than the other bikes and everything works as it  
*(continued on page 73)*

	HONDA XR500	HUSKY 500TC	HUSKY 510TX	YAMAHA TT600
Engine type	4-stroke, air-cooled, 4-valve, single	4-stroke, air-cooled, 4-valve, single	4-stroke, air-cooled, 4-valve, single	4-stroke, air-cooled, SOHC single
Bore and stroke	92.0mm x 75.0mm	90.0mm x 76.4mm	91.5mm x 76.4mm	95.0mm x 84.0mm
Displacement	498cc	490cc	503cc	595cc
Horsepower (claimed)	N/A	42 hp at rear wheel	42 hp at rear wheel	N/A
Carburetion	(2) 28mm Keihin's	36mm Dell'orto pumper	36mm Dell'orto pumper	TK twin carbs
Factory recommended jetting:				
Main jet	Pri., 135; Sec., 108	150	150	Pri., 135; Sec., 135
Needle jet	N/A	AB265	AB265	Pri., 2.60; Sec., 2.60
Jet needle	N/A	N/A	N/A	Pri., 5C37; Sec., 4A70-3
Pilot jet	Pri., 55	52	52	Pri., 48
Slide number	N/A	50/3	50/3	Pri., 4.5
Recommended gasoline	92+ octane	96+ minimum, leaded	96+ minimum, leaded	Regular
Fuel tank capacity	12 L (3.2 gals.)	10 L (2.7 gals.)	10 L (2.7 gals.)	11 L (2.9 gals.)
Fuel tank material	Plastic	Plastic	Plastic	Plastic
Lubrication	Dry sump	Husky Ral dry sump	Husky Ral dry sump	Dry sump
Recommended oil	Hondaline 4-stroke	Bel-Ray 4-stroke MC5	Bel-Ray 4-stroke MC5	Yamalube 4-stroke, 20-40 or 10-30
Oil capacity	2.5 L (2.6 qts.)	2 L (1.9 qts.)	2 L (1.9 qts.)	2.4 L (2.3 qts.)
Air filtration	Oiled foam	Oiled foam in still airbox	Oiled foam in still airbox	Oiled foam
Clutch type	Wet, multi-plate	Wet, multi-plate	Wet, multi-plate	Wet, multi-plate
Transmission	5-speed	4-speed	6-speed	5-speed
Gearbox ratios:				
1	2.462:1	29/17—1.7:1	34/13—2.6:1	2.367:1
2	1.647:1	26/20—1.3:1	29/16—1.8:1	1.588:1
3	1.250:1	24/23—1.04:1	26/19—1.3:1	1.200:1
4	1.000:1	22/25—0.88:1	24/23—1.04:1	0.954:1
5	0.840:1	N/A	22/25—0.88:1	0.777:1
6	N/A	N/A	20/27—0.74:1	N/A
Gearing, front/rear	14/48	14/48	14/48	15/48
Ignition	CDI	SEM	SEM	ND CDI
Primary kick system?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Recommended spark plug	NGK BPR8EA-9	NGK D8EA	NGK D8EA	NGK D7EA
Silencer/spark arrester/quality	Yes/yes/excellent	Yes/no/quiet	Yes/yes/very quiet	Yes/yes/excellent
Exhaust system	High-pipe	Twin pipe, twin mufflers	Twin pipes, twin mufflers	High-pipe
Frame, type	Single downtube, semi-double cradle	Chromoly, single downtube, split cradle	Chromoly, single downtube, split cradle	Single downtube, split cradle
Wheelbase	1425.0mm (56.1 in.)	1498.0mm (58.9 in.)	1498.0mm (58.9 in.)	1513.0mm (58.5 in.)
Ground clearance	338.0mm (13.3 in.)	385.0mm (15.2 in.)	385.0mm (15.2 in.)	299.7mm (11.8 in.)
Seat height	950.0mm (37.4 in.)	997.0mm (39.2 in.)	997.0mm (39.2 in.)	934.72mm (36.8 in.)
Steering head angle (rake)	26.5°	28.5°	28.5°	N/A
Trail	114.0mm (4.5 in.)	131.0mm (5.1 in.)	131.0mm (5.1 in.)	N/A
Weight with no gas	275.5 lbs.	256.75 lbs.	260.5 lbs.	280.0 lbs.
Rim material	Aluminum alloy	Aluminum alloy	Aluminum alloy	Aluminum alloy
Tire size and type:				
Front	3.00 x 21 6-ply IRC	Trelleborg 3.00 x 21 Deep Grip	Trelleborg 3.00 x 21 Deep Grip	3.00 x 21 (100-80/21)
Rear	5.10 x 17 6-ply IRC	Trelleborg 5.10 x 18 Ten Master	Trelleborg 5.10 x 18 Ten Master	4.50 x 18 (150-80/18)
Suspension, type and travel:				
Front	43mm Showa telescopic, air/oil, 280mm (11.0 in.)	40mm Husky telescopic, 300mm (11.8 in.)	40mm Husky telescopic, 300mm (11.8 in.)	43mm KYB telescopic, air/oil, 269.24mm (10.6 in.)
Rear	Pro-Link single shock, adj. comp./reb. damping, 280mm (11.0 in.)	Twin Ohlins ITC shocks, 345mm (13.6 in.)	Twin Ohlins ITC shocks, 345mm (13.6 in.)	Monocross single KYB shock, adj. comp./reb. damping, 299.72mm (11.8 in.)
Intended use	Off-road, enduro	MX, off-road racing	Off-road, cross-country racing	Off-road/enduro
Country of origin	Japan	Sweden	Sweden	Japan
Retail price, approx.	\$2298	Under \$3000	Under \$3000	\$2299
Distributor/manufacturer:	American Honda Motor Corp. 100 Alondra Blvd. Gardena, CA 90247	Husqvarna Motorcycle Co., 4925 Mercury St. San Diego, CA 92111 619-565-1414	Husqvarna Motorcycle Co., 4925 Mercury St. San Diego, CA 92111 619-565-1414	Yamaha Motor Corp. 6555 Katella Ave. Cypress, CA 90630
Overall rating, 0 to 100, various categories, keeping intended use of machine in mind:				
Handling	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Good
Suspension	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Good
Power	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Very good
Cost	Very good	Good	Good	Excellent
Attention to detail	Good	Good	Good	Excellent
Effectiveness, stone stock	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Very good

# HUSQVARNA 510TE ENDURO

• We did not have the 510TE enduro bike to test, as one was not available at press time. However, some details are available to pass on to you.

Basically, the TE shares the same engine and gearbox (six speeds) of the TX. A slightly lower suspension at both ends will no doubt please many woods riders. Fork travel is 10.6 inches and rear wheel travel is 11.8 inches. The TE weighs in at a bit more than the TC and the TX—about seven pounds more, according to the specification sheets.

Naturally, an enduro-type headlight and taillight are standard, as well as the typical Husky VDO speed/odometer unit. Gas tank capacity is the same 2.7 gallons,

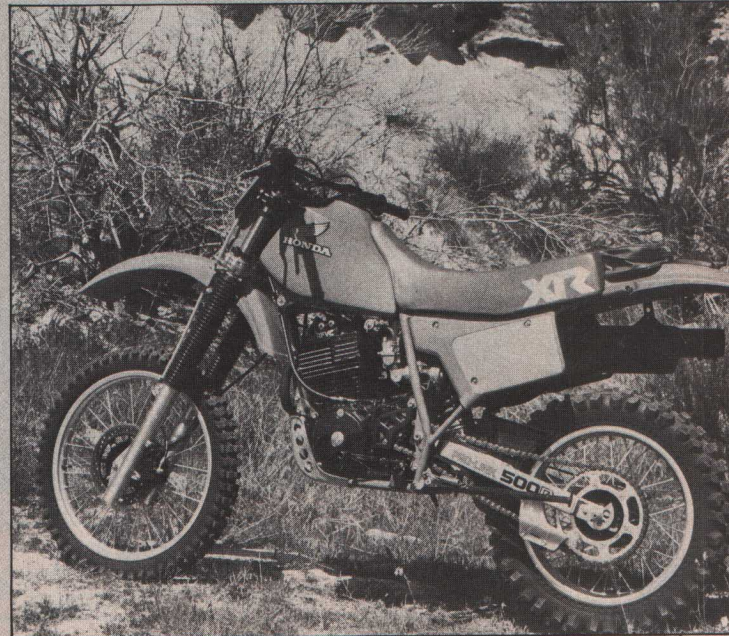
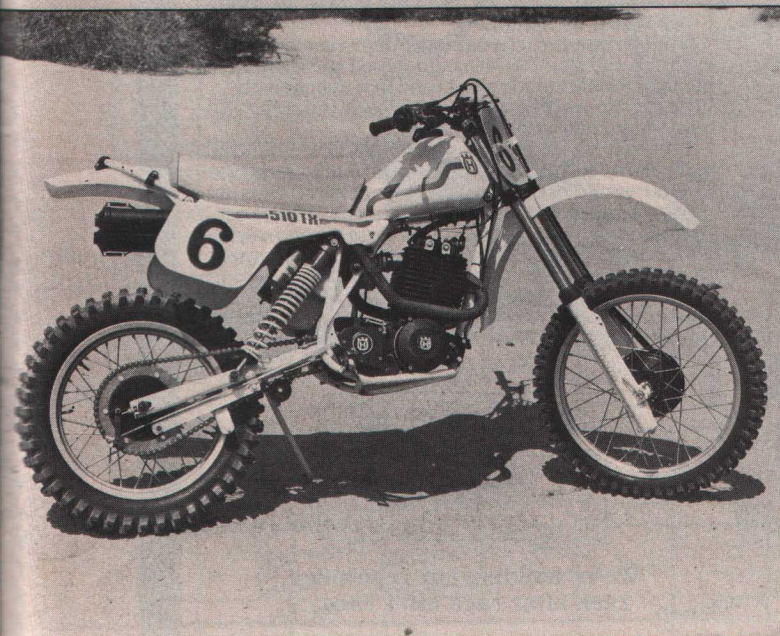
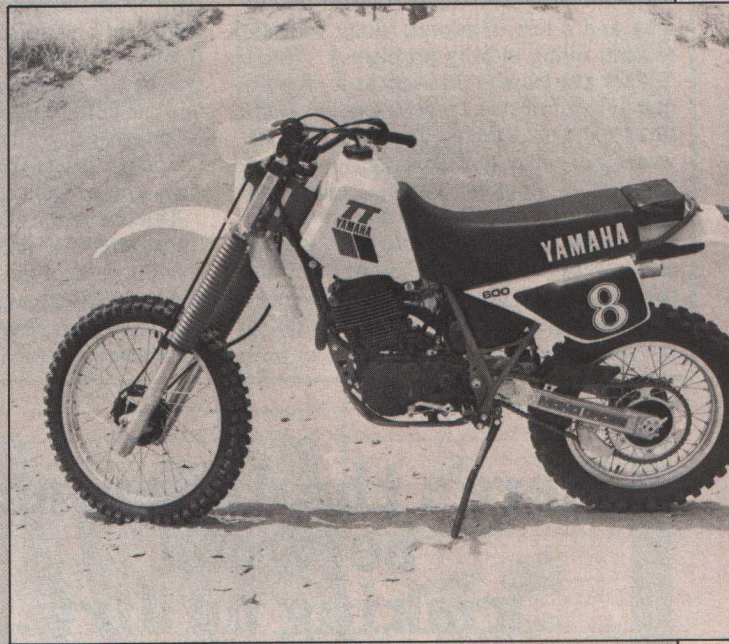
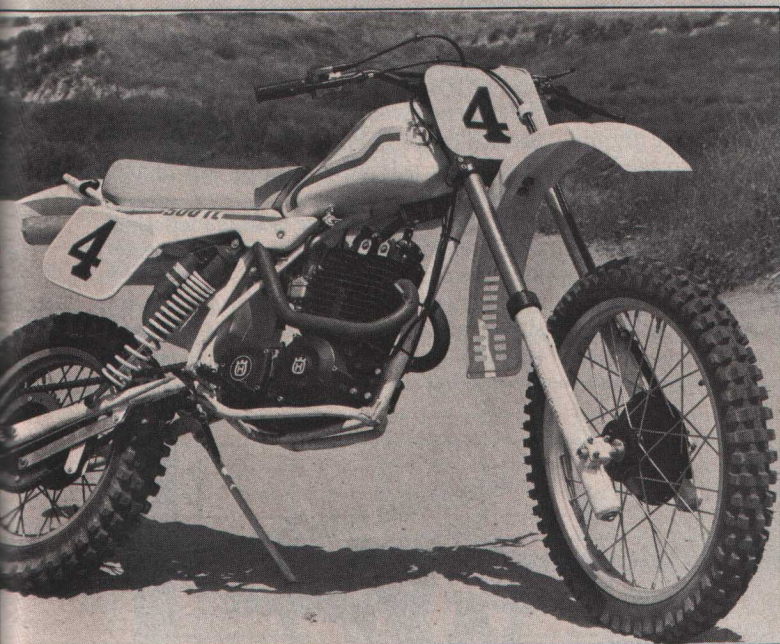


which is more than enough with the stingy four-stroke engine. In Baja, Husky testers got over 100 miles out of a tank at moderate speeds. Seventy-plus miles should be no problem, even under real enduro or

hare scrambles conditions. Like the other engines, a bit less than two quarts of Bel-Ray does the lubricating and cooling.

The TE will cost about \$100 more than the other two bikes. Look for a full test on this unit as soon as it's available in the States. •

*FLASH! Just as we were wrapping up this issue, we received news that Terry Cunningham had taken a new 510TE Husky to the overall win at a District 11 enduro held in the tight woods of southern Ohio. En route to his victory, Terry bested some of the top riders in the U.S. on the new four-stroke Husky. Could this be the start of a new era?*



# INSIDE THE NEW HUSKY ENGINE

• Reed-Activated Lubrication? Sounds odd, but it's really a simple, clever way to control the oil flow in the new four-stroke engine without an oil pump. More than the oiling concept is worth noting in this new engine. Let's take a closer look at what the Husky four-stroke has to offer.

Initial goals were to have an engine with cases no wider than their conventional two-stroke bottom ends. A slight increase in weight over a comparable two-stroke was expected, but the goal was to minimize this difference as much as possible.

Husky engineers noted that much of the pork in any four-stroke engine was traceable to the oiling system and the oil pump. The engineers also wanted a dry sump engine; that is, one with a dry crank area. They felt that the oil present in a conventional system created a great deal of drag and a loss of power, along with attendant oiling blowby problems.

They also learned that very little oil is required to lubricate a crank assembly; as little as 100:1 has been used without extreme wear. To make sure that the lower end would hold up under a mist of oil, it was built extra tough. There's a silver-plated cage on the big end roller bearings and the crank webs are nitrited. Special holes are machined into the crank to allow centrifugal force to pump and retain oil in critical areas.

Still, you have to move the oil from one place to another to get the lubricating and cooling accomplished. Husky uses the camshaft chain to transport the oil. The bulk of the oil is stored in the left-side case, where it keeps the clutch and drive gears lubricated.

As the cam chain rotates off the primary gear, the oil is lifted up to the top end. Here, the oil lubricates the cam and the rockers. Then the oil is trapped into small pockets and gets fed back down toward the bottom end. Halfway down, it's forced to go through a filter, where it gets cleaned.

The oil is then routed directly into the bottom end of the engine, where the splashing mist lubes and cools the crank and lower end bearings. This happens only when the piston is near the top of the stroke. As the piston is forced down, the lower end pressurizes, causing a reed valve to open. This small valve is located on the side of the engine between the lower end and the left-side case area. When the reed is forced open by the pressure of the piston dropping, it lets the oil back into the left side, where it can start the process all over.

The use of the camshaft chain as an oil transporter is unique. In fact, other rotating parts of the engine assist the movement of oil. The camshaft sprocket and the cam itself also fling oil onto the exhaust valve area.

When asked about an oil cooler, the Husky reps noted that the entire engine actually acts as an oil cooler. They also said that the temperature of the oil does not hurt lubricative qualities, especially with some of the new-generation oils.

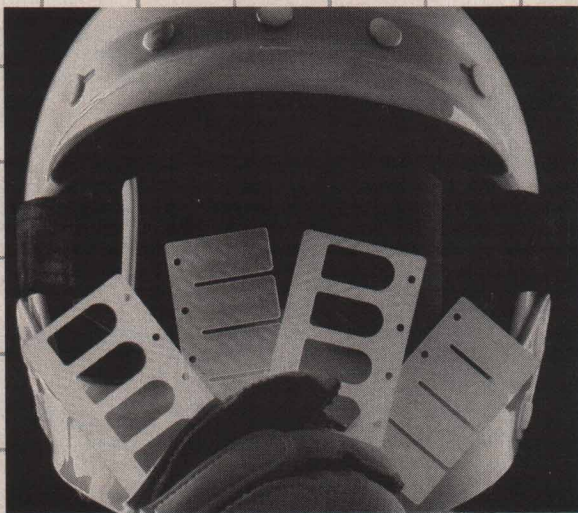
Still, the oil is subjected to quite a lot of shear, and frequent oil changes will be necessary to assure long life. Husky also recommends a special Bel-Ray oil for use in its new engine. It's Bel-Ray SAE 40 4-Cycle Racing oil with Molbuamin MC-5. This oil is claimed to have an exceptionally high film strength and has actually exceeded 2750 pounds on a Falex Lubricant Tester, which is a superior performance.

A magnetic drain plug is also part of the package. This helps collect metal particles, which result from normal wear. While no set oil change intervals have been given to us yet, Husky noted that every 20 hours or so under normal use will probably be indicated in the owner's manual. For racing, the intervals will probably be half of that. Serious racers might want to drain the oil after every ride while it's still hot in the engine.

By the way, the filter is in the left side of the engine and can be removed easily and cleaned in minutes.

A very simple manual cam chain tensioner is part of the package and it's easy to get to. Both rocker covers can be removed.

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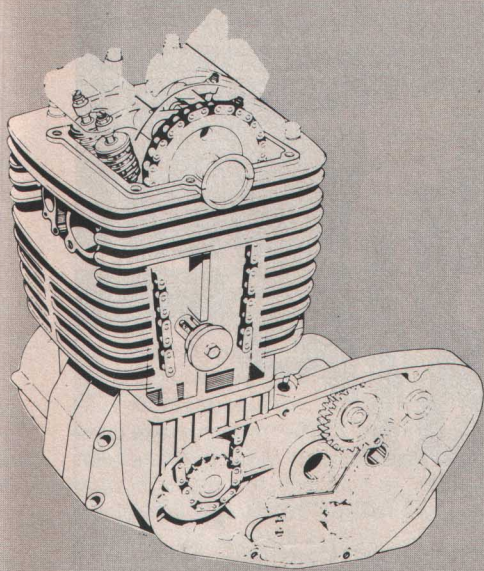
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\*Send for detailed explanation.

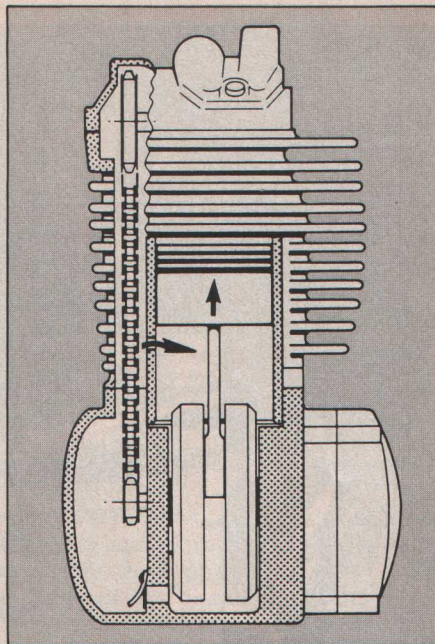


We're building our reputation,  
race after race after race...



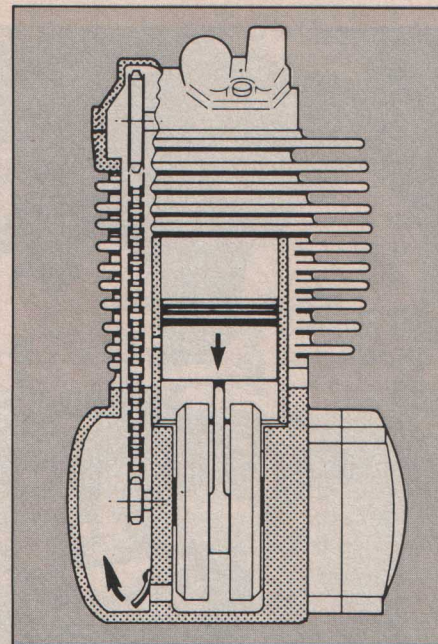
Exposed line drawing shows the basic mechanical layout of the new Husky powerplant, as well as the unique oiling system. As you can see, the oil is held in the left-side case and is transported to the top end via the action of the camshaft chain.

ed without taking the tank off for normal valve adjustment. Twin exhaust ports exit the front of the engine via two exhaust



Here's the path the oil takes as it cools, cleans and lubricates. When the piston creates a vacuum, the oil transfers from the left-side galley to the crank area. An oil mist then lubricates the crank pin, bearings and wrist pin.

valves. The compact four-valve head is very short, simple and rugged looking. We revved the engine out mercilessly a few times



As the piston descends, the lower end becomes pressurized, forcing a small reed valve open. This forces the oil back into the left-side case, where it can start its path back up the cam chain once again. Simple, yet effective.

with no sign of valve float. Tolerances are so critical on the new four-stroke that no head or valve cover gaskets are used. •

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DB9-3

## GIVE ENDUROS A TRY (continued from page 69)

were full of mud and grit, and it was getting colder and colder.

Rick already had his bike gassed up and was eating a sandwich. I wanted to call it quits, but Rick said there was nothing else they could throw at me, so I ought to finish. While I sat down to think it over, he gassed up my bike and gave me clean goggles and a pair of dry gloves. Then, he started up my PE for me and said, "Let's go!" What could I do? We headed off for the second loop. And the snow started falling.

### WHATTAYA MEAN, I CAN'T QUIT?

After a few more miles of sloppy trail and snow, we broke out of the high country and into some nice sandy desert. It was great! After all of the misery, it was a joy to ride over normal rocks and bumps. This was the desert I knew, and for 20 miles or so it was actually fun. I dropped quite a few points at all of the checks, as Webb and Rick were long gone. I realized that I hadn't looked at my Countdown clock or my route sheet for a long time.

Then we started back up into the hills where the snow and mud were heavy, and it started raining. Some fun! I was getting very tired at this point, and I was depressed at dropping so many points at each check, but my pride wouldn't let me quit. After all, I'd come *this* far.

After another half hour of riding in the snow and mud, I began to think my pride was not all that important after all. I was well beaten up, cold, wet, miserable and out of energy. A certain numbness set in, and I just concentrated on sloggling forward. I had no idea of where I was.

Dropping down out of the hills, I saw yet another check and stumbled in. They took my card and stuffed something in my glove. I didn't know what they were doing. I thought something was wrong!

At last it sank in. This was the last check, and that thing in my glove was a finisher pin. I couldn't believe it was actually over!

A smooth fire road took me back into the pits. I had finished my first real enduro.

Tom Webb had won the overall, dropping only 12 points. Clipper had lost his ignition. I had dropped 91 points. Rick didn't have any trouble but was disqualified later for going around a mountain and missing a check on the other side.

On the way home I thought a whole lot about it. This had been an experience. It takes a certain kind of rider to do this, because when you finish, you're the only one who knows just what you went through. It's a very personal thing. It doesn't matter whether anybody else knows or not.

I still ride mostly motocross, but from now on, I plan to ride several enduros each year. I may not be a great enduro rider, but it makes me feel very proud to know that I can finish a real enduro. All you MXers out there ought to give it a try. You'll have enough bench-racing stories to last you for a year.

## FOUR-STROKES (continued from page 45)

should. Sure, the rear end is a bit harsh, but shifting, controls, carburetion and a host of minor things done right make the Yamaha an easy bike to live with. Also, it's by far the easiest-starting bike of the group.

We talked about the rear brake lever of the Husky; the brake shoes are also poor and appear to be the same as the self-destructos on the two-strokes. While not an easy starter, at least the Husky was a *consistent* starter. Heat from the pipes melted the side panels in a few spots, and Husky is obviously new at trying to make stickers stay on plastic gas tanks. They're instant sagers. Shifting is a bit notchy, but at least you will not miss shifts. Getting to the choke is awkward, but nowhere near as bad as the Can-Am Sonic, which is as close to buried as you can get. The saddle on the Husky is a bit wide at the back half, and the bike is noticeably wider in the midsection than the Yamaha or the Honda. If you liked the kickstarter that came on all other Huskys, you'll be delighted here, as it's the same basic design. Only a steady Husky rider can tolerate the kickstarter design.

Even though it's a new design, the Honda is riddled with bugs. Abuse the clutch a bit and it'll slip. Add some more horsepower to the engine and you can kiss the clutch basket goodbye. Shifting on the Honda is easily the worst of the four-strokes and the gearbox will not take sloppy shifting. One top-end rebuild on the Honda will convince you that the nuts and bolts are made of particle board.

The Honda usually starts easily, but will often get obstinate and refuse to start without 15 or 20 kicks. Even experienced four-stroke riders admit that the Honda has a mind of its own.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

It should be clear that the Husky is the best bike of this group. It should also be clear that the Yamaha deserves runner-up credentials and that the Honda still needs more work to correct some glitches.

But more than winning a shootout, the Husky is a startlingly clear signal to the marketplace. Husky dealers have ordered more bikes than will be delivered, which shows that four-stroke enthusiasts will pay a premium price for what they want.

And guess where these buyers will come from? You got it... the same riders who were thinking about an XR or a TT will now take a long, hard look at the Husky. Many of these will be riders who have never considered a Husky before.

In one smooth move, Husqvarna has opened up a market for its dealers that never existed before. And they've rewritten the rule book in the process.

Honda and Yamaha will have to take their fresh, one-year-old designs and toss them into the trash cans. At under \$3000, the Husky is the four-stroke bargain of the decade. Congratulations, Husqvarna, for building the first *real* four-stroke of the '80s.

