

Yamaha's Little Tiger

BY DAVE HOLEMAN ■

Yamaha means dirt riding more than any other name in the business. In 1967, they released the first mass production enduro machine, the one that set a pattern for all others to follow in the making of off-road machinery. Japanese engineers have since developed the line of enduro machines into a size for everyone. There are engine sizes ranging from a petite 60cc mini model to the booming 360cc for the serious dirt rider. In between is the best bike in the lineup, the 175cc CT3—their "little tiger," as the Motorcyclist staff came to call it.

The CT3 Enduro has no qualms about tackling the steepest hill you can find and walking right up the side like any one of its bigger displacement brothers. For even with its smaller size, efficiency of the 175cc engine is far greater and enables it to perform better on a per-inch basis. Many two stroke experts consider 175cc the perfect size for maximum efficiency and would find no arguments with our test riders. Packed inside the compact aluminum engine is the most advanced two stroke induction system in production. Following along the lines of go-carts and outboards, Yamaha is using reed valve induction to fur-

ther improve the efficiency and reliability of its engine. Working on the principle of flapper peddles, the reeds open and shut the intake tract to precisely meter the volume of fuel and air to the combustion chamber. The result is superb low speed power and torque, freedom from filling the crankcase with too much fuel, and a sharp increase in acceleration.

In more traditional Oriental fashion, the chassis and suspension are a compromise of production economics and cosmetics. Looking so much the part of a professional dirt bike, the short wheelbase and lofty stance tend to make high-speed charges across the rough wilderness a certain challenge for the likes of Malcolm Smith, let alone a weekend trail rider. The front forks are oil carrying, internal spring loaded units, but with only enough tension and damping to hold up a sub-140-pound rider. Accentuating the pitching and yawing of the soft front end are the spring cushioned pogo sticks on the rear. The shock springs are too stiff for a light rider and too soft for a heavyweight, and the damper units function only as decorative pieces. Kept within its limits of fire roads and smooth trails, moderate speeds can

be comfortably taken by most trail riders.

Starting, quiet running, economy, good legal electrics and ironclad reliability are the highlights of the CT3 Enduro. The 5-speed transmission and large clutch hidden inside the engine cases will surely outlast the owner and numerous sets of tires without complaint. Conveniences such as the washable air filter, good tool kit, oil injection, universal tires and speedo with an enduro trip-meter can easily overshadow the CT3's shortcomings.

A rider can squeeze 75 miles out of the 1.8-gallon tank while riding from his (or her) front door to the country and the boondocks, then back again, at an easy 55 mph. A moderate price of \$699 will be readily accepted by any one of Yamaha's 1000 dealers across the country. Included is a 6-month/4000-mile warranty and a guarantee of more fun per cc than available anywhere else in town. We find that a hard bargain to refuse. ☐

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Climbing ability of the mid-size Yamaha Enduro is uncanny. With reed valve induction, low-speed tractability is increased due to gain in torque below 3000 rpm. Riding fast in rough country is not the forte of the 175cc Enduro. Suspension is adequate for smooth trails, dirt roads—is marginal in rough. Cluster of instruments appeals to the eye; need for tach is questionable. Accurate speedo has enduro reset tripmeter. Access to ignition key is ideal. Bars are comfy. Professional appearance is in blood of Enduro line. Block pattern tires good on or off road. The 175cc, 5-speed power train is recognized as best all-around in enduro field.



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