

CYCLE WORLD IMPRESSION

YAMAHA MINI ENDURO

A Sub-Compact, Cow-Trailing TT Special
For Big 'Uns And Little 'Uns Alike

MORE THAN A MINIBIKE, the Yamaha Mini Enduro is a motorcycle in miniature that a micro-bopper can manhandle.

Even a full sized person can take it boondocking, and there are probably some kids that could finish some of the shorter enduros on it, although they might fall a bit behind schedule.

The JTI reveals its Japanese heritage the moment it is started. Riders need only pull up on a choke knob, which passes through a rubber carburetor cover on top of the right engine case, give the engine one kick, and it springs into life—even without use of the throttle.

Although it is not intended for street use, the Mini Enduro is quiet, thus precluding unsettling encounters with people shouting and throwing things when it is ridden around campgrounds or on trails. And the exhaust system, which is tucked in well out of the rider's way, is equipped with a Krizman U.S.

forestry-approved spark arrester.

The engine displaces 58.2cc. Both bore and stroke are 42mm. A compression ratio of 7.1:1 gives 4.5 bhp at 7500 rpm. Little 'uns will appreciate the broad powerband. Just let out the clutch and it goes.

Power is transmitted through a four-speed constant mesh transmission, with neutral located at the top of the shift pattern.

The frame is tiny, but can take a lot of abuse. At first glance, it appears to be a single-backbone, double-cradle tube unit with a skidpan welded in place beneath the engine. But the front downtubes are bolted, rather than welded, to a point just below the engine, and to the steering head.

Like all Yamaha Enduro models, the Mini is equipped with Autolube. When the oil level becomes visible in the inspection window located on the side of the oil tank, the seat must be removed by pulling a knob just behind

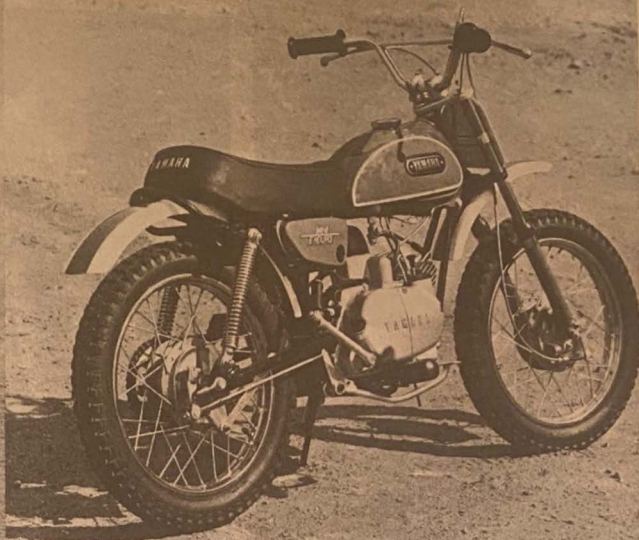
the right rear shock to add oil.

A toolkit is also located under the seat and is held in place by a rubber strap.

Controls are one of the little bike's strongpoints, because they resemble those on full sized motorcycles. The clutch, throttle, and front break are hand operated. The clutch is on the left. The twist grip throttle, which also houses a kill button, and front break are on the right. Shifting is done with the left foot and braking with the right, as is standard Japanese practice.

And because these controls resemble larger machines in their layout, they provide excellent training for youngsters who will someday be riding bigger, more powerful bikes.

Selling for \$299, it must lack some of the things found on an impeccably prepared, full-sized dirt machine. The front forks, which have 2.75 in. of travel, and the rear shocks offer less than perfect dampening. Although the



front forks contain oil, the only access plug for drainage purposes is on top of the fork tubes. And the ball-ended hand levers tend to break off rather than bend. But for a youngster, these are minor shortcomings.

Handling is excellent, and the Mini Enduro will undoubtedly excel in minibike TT racing. With 15-in. wheels sporting 2.50-15 Nitto trials pattern tires, responsive brakes, 6.75 in. of ground clearance, and a curb weight of 125 lb., it will outhandle any small-wheeled minibike—although it has less power than some of them.

Interestingly, the Mini Enduro can negotiate tight turns just as fast or faster than full-sized 100-cc machines, because the balance and geometry allows the rider to point it hard into a turn without washing out the front wheel.

Armed with this information, one of our staffers decided to enter the machine in the 100-cc expert class at the Huntington Beach Cycle Park. Of

course, excessive rider overweight and an aerodynamic disadvantage (our six-foot, 160 lb. competitor literally dwarfed the tiny machine) somewhat

limited his success. But at least one rider will remember the Mini when he was outcornered and forced from the groove. 