



**Y**AMAHA'S TRAILMASTER 100, when introduced in 1967, was one of the first trail bikes from Japan's "Eig Three" to truly measure up to the rigors of back-country riding. The new model, designated the L5-T, is similar to the first one, but adds an innovation that more specifically adapts it to its intended task.

The most important change is in the gearbox. Instead of four wide-ratio gears, there are now two sets of three gears. These sets are selected when the machine is at rest by turning a lever on the gearbox case behind the electric starter. The lower set gives three closely spaced gear ratios for slow going, with third gear yielding about 35 mph at peak revs. When the rider hits smooth going, he may switch to the "high" set. Then third gear is good for about 60 mph. The new arrangement greatly increases the flexibility of the Trailmaster.

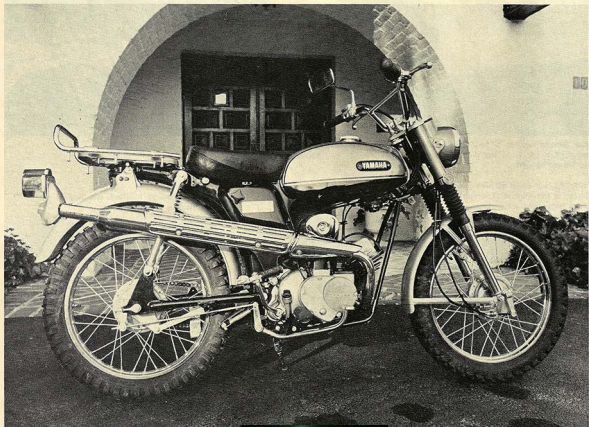
Yamaha seems to have retrogressed on one feature of the machine. The original 100 had big 18-in. wheels, which made the machine an excellent handler, as well as giving it 8.5 in. of ground clearance. Wheel size has been reduced to 17 in. on the L5-T, so that ground clearance at the kickstand is only 6.5 in. The new machine also seems less comfortable for a large rider than the old one. The positive aspect, though, is that the machine is slightly more compact, and young riders may find the bike easier to mount.

Further, the first Trailmaster was somewhat of a compromise between the sporting and utilitarian sides of trail riding. Now that Yamaha has introduced its tube-frame 125-cc Enduro and

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## YAMAHA 100 L5-T TRAILMASTER

A Near-Perfect Lightweight For The Non-Racing Trail Rider



racing Singles for the sport-minded rider, the Trailmaster may be forgiven for dropping its "purist" pretensions in favor of a more utilitarian role.

Construction of the L5-T is sturdy. The peppy 97-cc rotary valve two-stroke one-cylinder engine is slung under a pressed steel backbone frame. A bolt-on double cradle, with hash plate, strengthens the chassis and protects the engine from damage. The firmly mounted pack rack will stand great abuse. Six studs project down from the rack's outer railing rack to serve as handy tie-downs.

On the trail, the L5-T handles nimbly but steering is not overly quick. Wheel base, at 46.5 in., is short (a serious 100-cc enduro bike would more likely have a 48- to 50-in. wheelbase). The 4-in. travel front fork and the 2.5-in.

travel rear shock absorbers are more than up to casual negotiation of the trails.

There are only two minor points of criticism about the L5-T. The front brake and the clutch may not be adjusted at the handlebars; the lack of such a feature may be motivated by a desire to reduce production costs. While the solo seat is well-padded and comfortable, it is bolted to the frame—and covers up the filler cap to the reservoir of the automatic oil mixing system. Fortunately, this Autolube tank may be pulled away from its mounting by loosening a hand-screw. The filler cap is thus exposed, but pouring must be done carefully to avoid getting oil on the seat.

More careful thought has gone into other features. The L5-T comes well

equipped for legal street operation, with horn, lights, mirror and side reflectors, and meets all federal safety standards. The electric starter works perfectly, and is amazingly silent. Kick starting is also a snap. In addition to the usual chain guard (which will not have to be changed to accommodate a larger rear wheel sprocket), a rubber box guard keeps the final drive chain from rattling against the engine cases, as well as blocking the entry of branches or large blobs of mud, which could pack up on the countershaft sprocket. A set of tools is reached by opening the battery/tool box cover on the left.

The L5-T has a clean look to it, and the finish is excellent. For the non-racing type of trail rider, it would be an ideal choice. □

