



2 YAMAHAS

175 cc CT-1B

90 cc HT-1

"The 175 Yamaha CT1-B is one of the most Japanese of the many fine motorcycles I've tested in connection with you."

Clyde Von Schnase/Afternoon in May, 1970

"What's it, a 90? . . . This thing - - - - ! . . . I think."

Same cat, same place

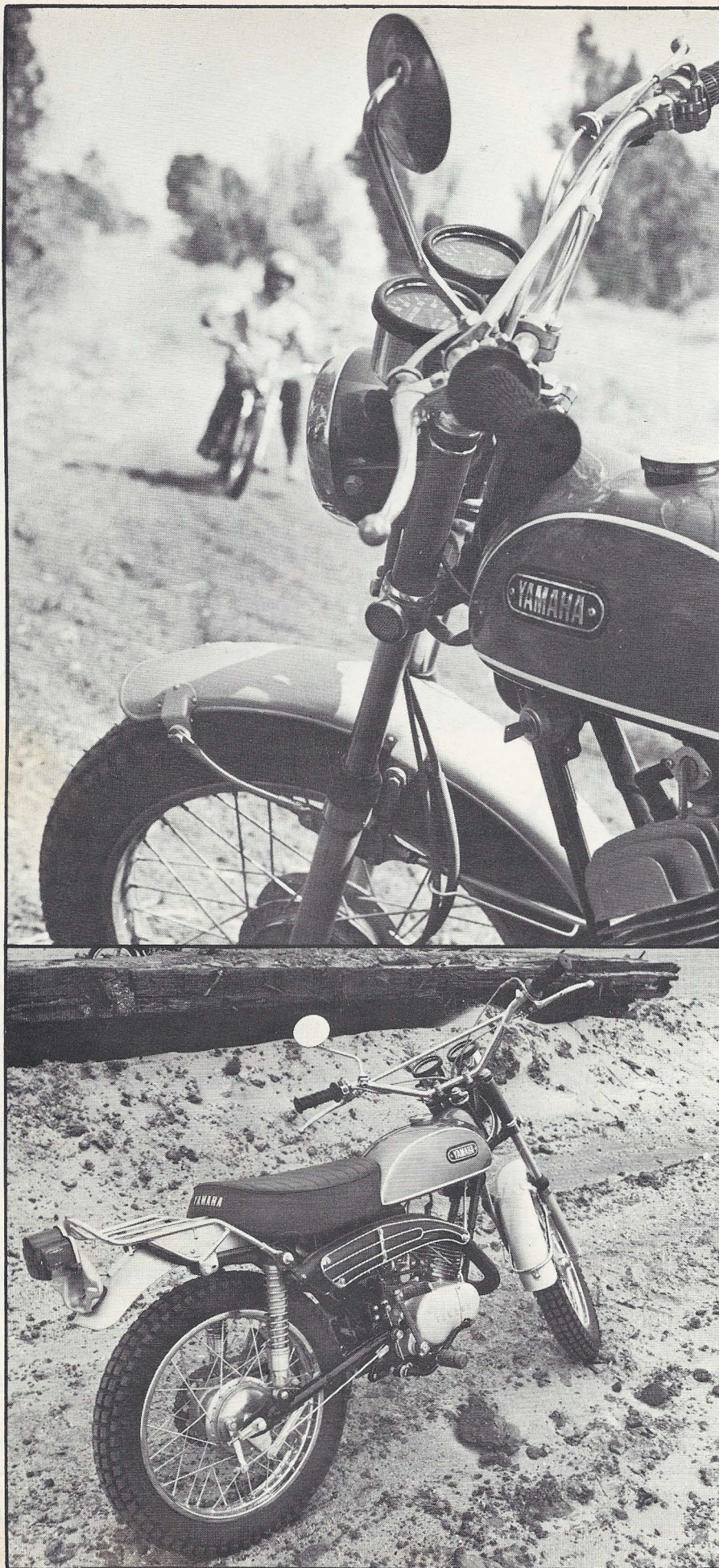


photos by Dave Gooley

■ Today's trend is toward smaller and smaller off-road machines. Theories abound as to why. One plausible attempt holds that simple economics dictate less expensive (read "smaller") motorcycles for our more

sophisticated woods rider of the seventies. The tremendous leisure-time increase/pressure has produced pearls of many uses to tempt the proletariat. Hence, where a rider was willing to shell out great gobs of cash for a

woods machine and accessories ten years ago, he'd now rather spend less for the bike and get a set of skis to use on winter weekends, or golf clubs, ATV's, snowmobiles or what-have-you. This mode of thought is what



gave rise to the original efficient and inexpensive Street/Scrambler theory which burgeoned into an unsatisfactory reality in the Sixties.

First far-eastern manufacturer to become cognizant of the new nature of U.S. enthusiasm was Yamaha. Their initial effort in the dual-purpose field was the somewhat less than unequivocally successful YDS-3C 250cc "Big Bear" Street/Scrambler. The Big Bear had the basic Yamaha twin-cylinder engine with an ultraheavy road frame, road-going shocks and forks, unsuitable (albeit braced) handlebars, full street lighting that wasn't easily detached and a clutch that wouldn't hold up to off-road riding demands.

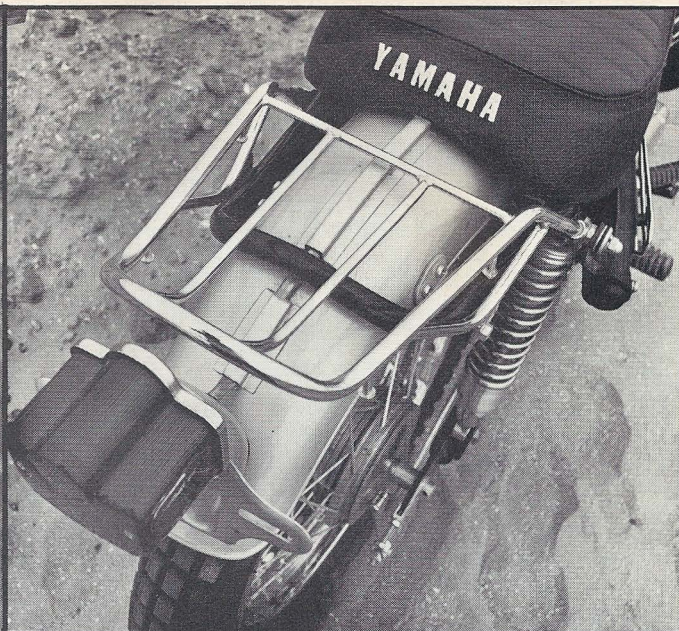
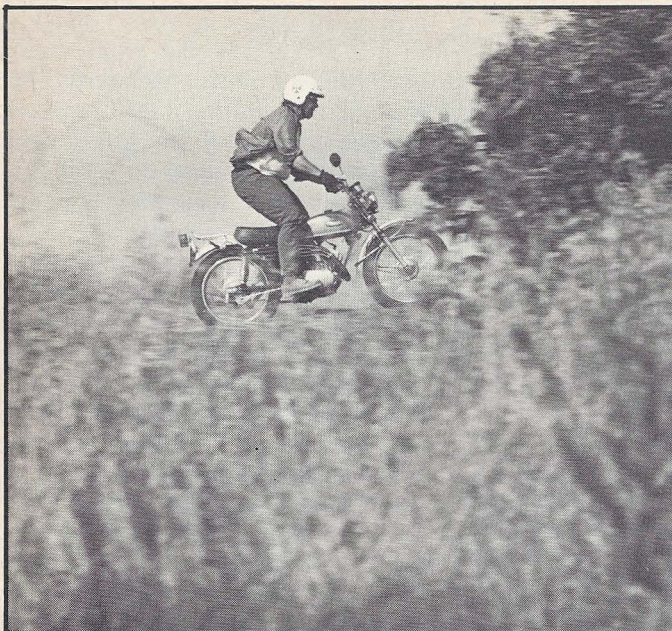
What the Big Bear also had, however, were high pipes, a shortened rear fender, semi-knobby tires and a bashplate. Amazingly enough, the YDS3C sold—well enough to start other manufacturers thinking along the same lines. To wit: if the machine *looks* like a dirt bike with panache, it'll sell better.

For the next 20 or 30 months it seemed that Japan would realize the goal World War II failed to reach—thinning the ranks of the 18 to 26-year-old U.S. male. Every weekend you'd see them, at Dominguez Hills or the Slough, Fishkill or the Strip mines, fuzzy-cheeked lean-shanked novices, their jawbones so tight they looked like they had "flared" faces, generally picking dirt, mud, grass or a combination of same out of a broken headlight. But then, no doubt, news of the end of WWII came via Telstar; hostilities ceased.

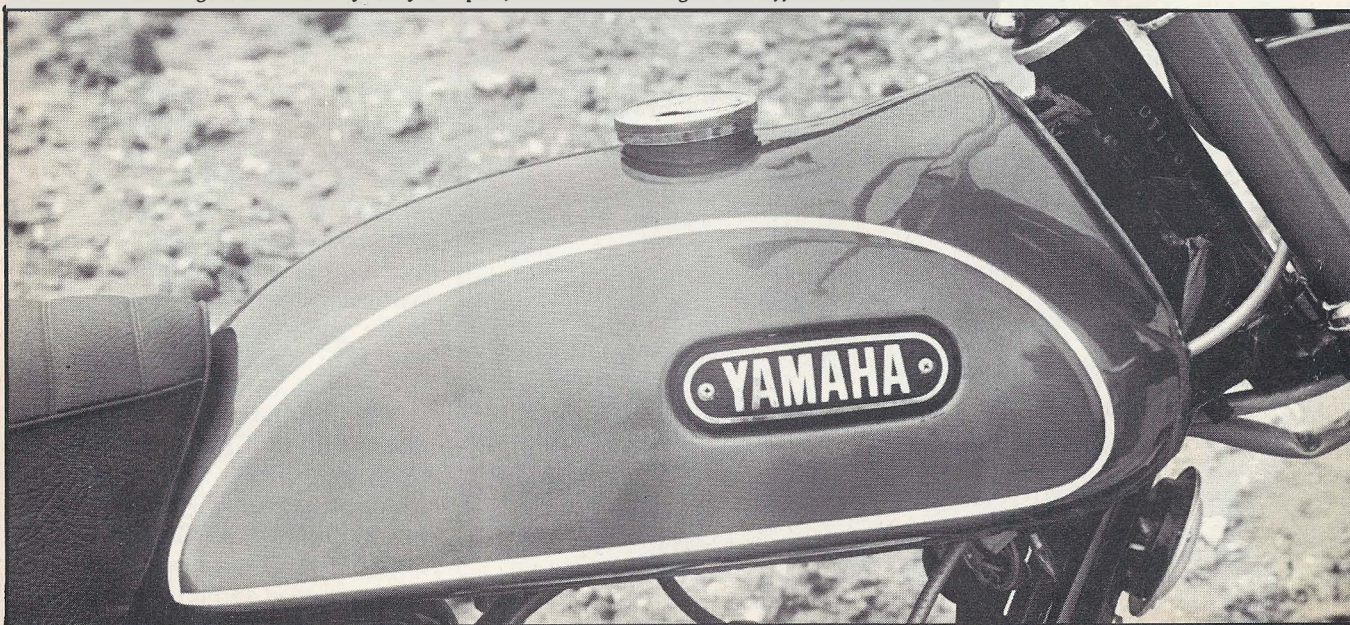
Again, Yamaha was the frontrunner. But this time, they had a viable solution (or at least a step in the right direction) to the dilemma: the single-cylinder 250cc DT1.

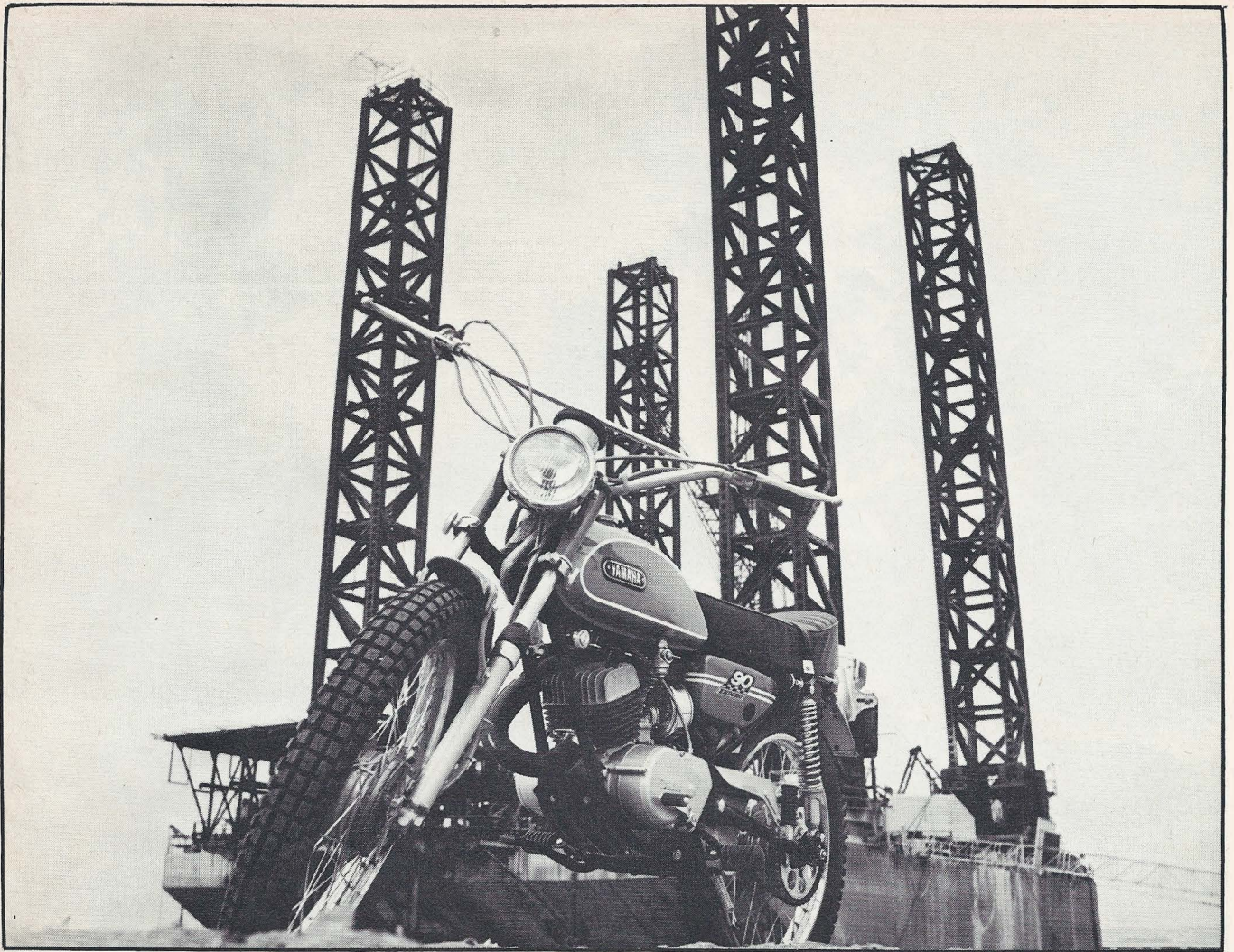
The DT1 had its problems, of

In the top left photo we see the HT1 being thrashed around the TT course in Malibu by Cyde. Photo also shows a glimpse of the CT-1 instruments and controls layout. Note the high quality finish and seemingly sturdy construction. A ten-month-old CT-1 was also being thrashed around that day and it looked very little like the newer model we were testing. Since care was taken with the private-owner machine's maintenance, it gave us a suspicion as to the machine's durability. In the lower shot we see another view of the CT-1 with the HT-1 hiding in the background. Both bikes are styled prettily.



The photo at the upper right shows the luggage rack that comes "stock" on the Yamaha dirt machines in this category. Upper left, the editor is out "woodsing it" on the small HT-1. Directly below, another member of the test staff, Eric Raits, is placed next to the 175 to show in proportion how slenderly functional both machines are. Next to that shot, we see Clyde aviating the front wheel of the CT-1. In the view at the bottom, we take a close look at the gas tank on the HT-1. Although both are stylishly shaped, there is a one-gallon difference between the two sizes.





Photographer Dave Gooley posed the HT-1 90cc Enduro in as naturally surreal a setting as we've ever seen, and in so doing he was successful in capturing the integrity of line and form that has made the Yamaha off-road line the leaders in the industry. While the suspension, frame and tires look quite businesslike however, the actual performance of our test Yamahas was more than a little lacking. Disturbing since the 5-speeders go so quickly.

we were joined by Clyde's buddy Tipper who, luckily enough, owns a 10-month-old CT1.

Tipper's machine should have been the clue, it was a real "jalopy" if we may use an automotive term. The bike shuddered and wobbled and the finish was nearly finished. But, the engine was good. As were the powerplants on both our test machines.

The HT1 is a 5-port single-cylinder machine that displaces 5.43 cubic inches or 89cc. Power comes in up high on the shortstroke single, with max. hp of 8.5 coming in at 7 grand and max. ft/lbs of 6.5 developed at 6500 r's. There is usable power down low, but not considerable enough to cause loud whoopees from the riders.

The CT1 follows the same basic design, simply larger and more powerful. The 171cc (10.43 cubic inch) two-stroke also utilizes 5-port design to churn out 15.6hp at 7,000-

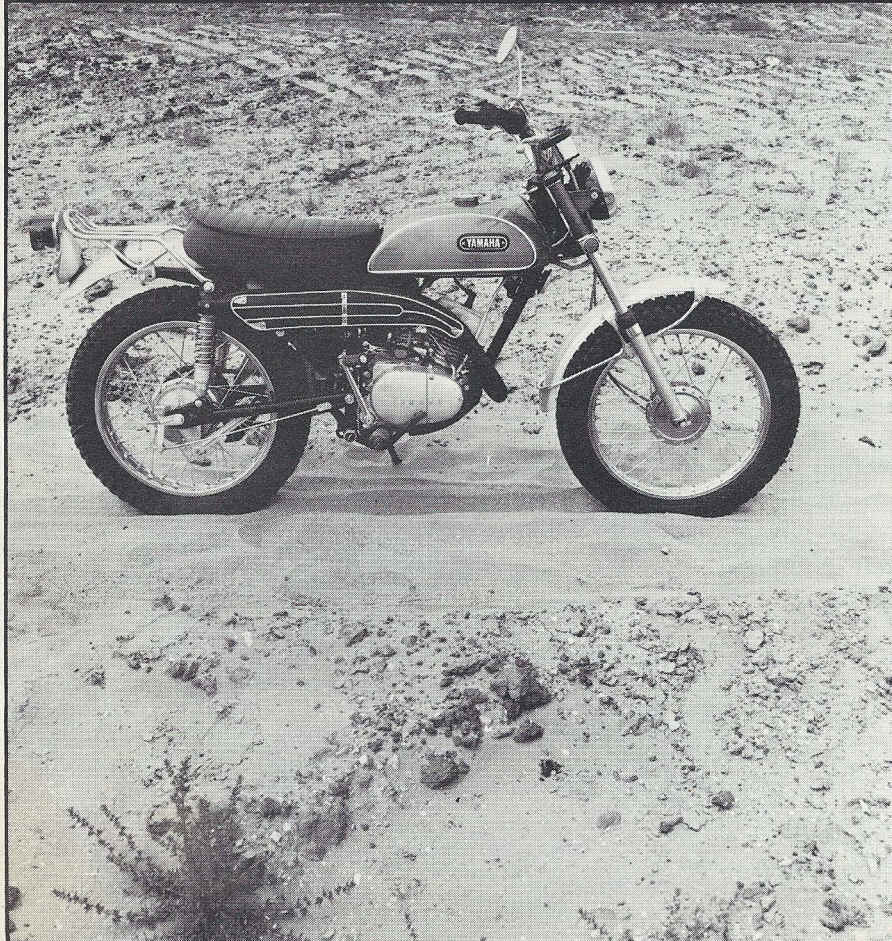
rpm, 11.9 ft/lbs of torque at a relatively low 5500.

It's simplest to discuss both machines at once and, more or less, analyze them that way. The 175 isn't overequipped with suspension and brakes, but it's a whole lot better than the 90. When the 230-pound editor hopped onto the HT1 (groan-n-n!) the forks were compressed almost two inches. "Getting it on" around an off-camber turn bottomed them fully. Braking for the dirt was very good on the HT1, too snatchy on the CT1. Street riding produced a top speed of 60mph for the 175, 56mph for the 90. We did feel that the 90 was running much more smo starting easier and giving superior gas mileage (about 37.5mpg vs. 30.4) and that a tune-up might have lifted the 175's performance 8-12mph not to mention its tractability.

But that is speculation. Facts were what we were after and it looked like

one fact remained, the Yamaha dirt singles were not yet equipped with suspensions to match their strong little 5-speed engine gearbox units. And the gearboxes were really good. One-down, four-up units that were positive and quick. The throw of the lever didn't suit all the riders but it was a reasonable compromise.

In fact, that's what we think the motorcycles we tested were, reasonable compromises. If only the Japanese and the Spanish were to unite in the manufacture of off-road enduro machines, wow! Imagine the YamOssa or KawaTaco . . . lighting, speedometer, oil injection, easy starting, great handling, suspension and style developed over years of Motocross experience. Till then what we have from Nippon is good; we'd be deluding ourselves if we didn't realize that sooner or later it'll be great. And when that first great dual-purpose machine arrives, five'll get you ten Yamaha will be the maker. ●



In the photo at the top we see the 90cc HT-1 Yamaha, while directly below it is contrasted by its larger stablemate the 175cc CT-B.

course, but with a GYT-kit and some fork modification it wasn't shocking to see a Yamaha out front at lots of *Scrambles* races. Motocross then was still a bit far for a DT1 to reach, but *Scrambles* or desert events could most definitely be won on a Yamaha. And sales were something else; talk about your epic victories . . .

The fact that Yamaha and (soon thereafter) the other Japanese manufacturers were still not as advanced off the road as the Spanish had already been for five years didn't matter. What did matter was the civilizing touches the Japanese machines added as stock features: oil injection, speedometers and lighting that worked dependably, ease of starting and (no small thing) readily accessible sales *and service*. Clearly the eastern stargazers had hit upon a new wagon-puller, and it was paying off and proliferating like crazy.

Two offshoots of the original DT1 concept of a good cowtrailer out-of-the-box and a successful Scrambler when GYT-kitted are our off-road impressions machinery this month. The 90cc HT1 and the 175cc CT1 rated respectively at 8.5bhp (for the HT1) and 15.6bhp (for the CT-1).

Both machines have been around with the 175 the senior market-entry. First thing we noticed about the two machines was the enthusiasm that the staff of Yamaha International in Los Angeles had for the 90. The 175 seemed to be the forgotten sibling in this family. We were told to observe the super-power, super-handling of the little HT1 and prepare to be "surprised."

After breaking both machines in around Long Beach, Palmdale, Hawthorne and environs we took the 175 out to some dirt-riding hill area to thrash it around. Overall reactions to the 175: "So-so, except it doesn't start too readily and the kickstart lever is really poor — almost no 'throw' at all." We really weren't sure about the 90; usually when our attention is specifically directed at a particular bike we assume that it is really going to show us something. The HT1 hadn't shown us anything to date.

We subsequently tucked both machines up to Clyde Von Schnase's place in the hills above Malibu. He has a shorttrack TT course laid out on the side of a hill and is amply equipped to test out machinery there. We proceeded to put some very hard mileage on the machines and then