

# DKW'S LATEST, AND BEST, MOTOCROSSER

By Douglas Jennings

One of the  
best lightweights  
you can buy

The DKW is an old winner with a new look. It is also one of the winningest 125cc machines around. "DK" has won its class in both the Baja 500 and 1000 off-road races, along with many other big ones.

We picked up our DKWs at Hercules Distributing in Chatsworth, California, which is somewhere close to the equator. Anyway, from there we headed east to Osteen's Motorcycle Park and a little cooler climate. Osteen's has some of the most uncomfortable looking downhills, which promise to try and destroy any machine. They also have a moto-cross course which tells just how good the suspension is, and how well the bike handles.

We unloaded our DKWs and gave them the once over. The DKW isn't really the best looking motorcycle, but it is definitely one of the better performing lightweights.

The long, deep seat is one of the first things you notice. It has deep padding and is much softer than the '71 model, supplying the cushioning needed for trips across the desert or on a moto-cross course. After riding it a while, though, we noticed a tendency for it to bottom out going over the rough stuff.

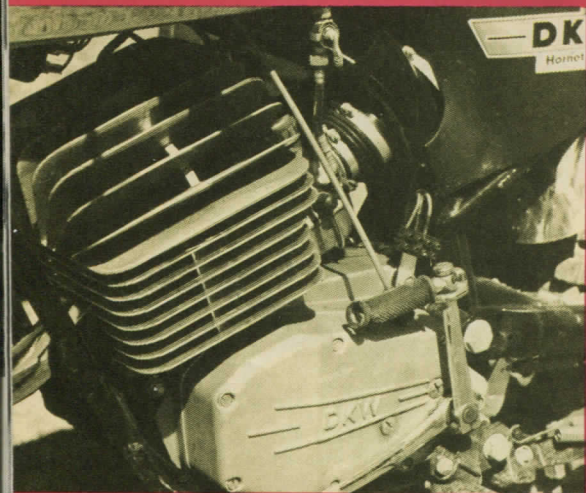
The seat must be removed to service the air cleaner. This is no major problem, since there are only a couple of bolts holding the seat on. The air cleaner element is of the paper family; when a change is necessary, it should be replaced with a polyurethane filter.

The re-designed tank is the next thing you notice, with its chrome sides and the leather-type knee inserts that were added to protect the finish, and allow the rider to lock his knees firmly against the tank. The wide, gold band across the top is accented with black pinstriping, and the '72 model still has the capacity of 2.9 gallons for those long hauls.

Another significant change is the Betor telescopic forks, with their 6.75 inches of travel that take the rough spots and smooth them out. Hold on . . . for those of you who like the leading link front suspension, it is still available. This suspension is equipped with Boge dampeners that attach near the top of the tubes to a welded bracket. The bottom of the dampeners connect at the axle mounting point. One other feature is the adjustable springs which help absorb the rough terrain. It should be pointed out that the Hornet and the Moto-Cross machines are exactly the same with the one exception of the front suspension. We also found that both handled about the same when tested.

Another change on this year's DKW is the adjustable rear shocks. They performed without failure or bottoming out, regardless of the terrain. With the suspension this good, it's understandable why many say it is the best handling 125cc on the market.

The frame is of the double loop cradle design constructed from tubular steel. Most of the strength of the unit is furnished by the large diameter backbone which connects the steering head with the nose of the subframe loop. A pair of smaller diameter downtubes descend from the steering head and pass under and



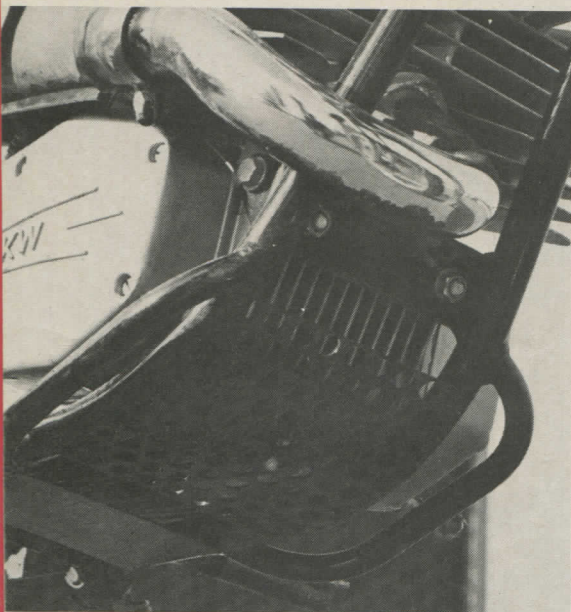
A sunburst head and wide finning on the cylinder makes engine seizures a thing of the past.







A husky bash plate and side rails to enclose the cases do their job to protect the engine.



## DKW'S LATEST

cradle the engine. A substantial bash plate which protects the underside from rocks and foreign debris is standard. It is aided by two additional small tubes that run parallel with the frame from the front to the back under the engine. These serve as a guard for the engine's side covers. The large diameter swinging arm pivots on needle bearings, and is a robust device constructed of medium grade steel. Gussets are used in areas where additional strength is required. The glossy black paint that covers the frame is well applied, and the welds are a fine example of German craftsmanship.

The engine is of the square variety with a bore and stroke of 54 x 54mm that adds up to 123cc. We found the engine supplied all the horsepower needed in just about any given situation, with the throttle response being smooth rather than pipey. Top horsepower is rated at 24, and it would seem it has a good portion of that. The engine this year is equipped with a new 27mm Bing center float carburetor, which connects to the large air filter.

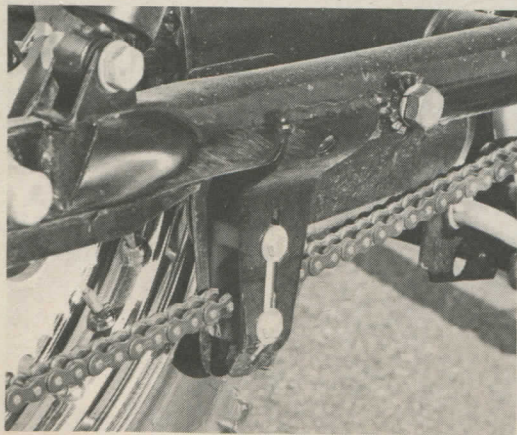
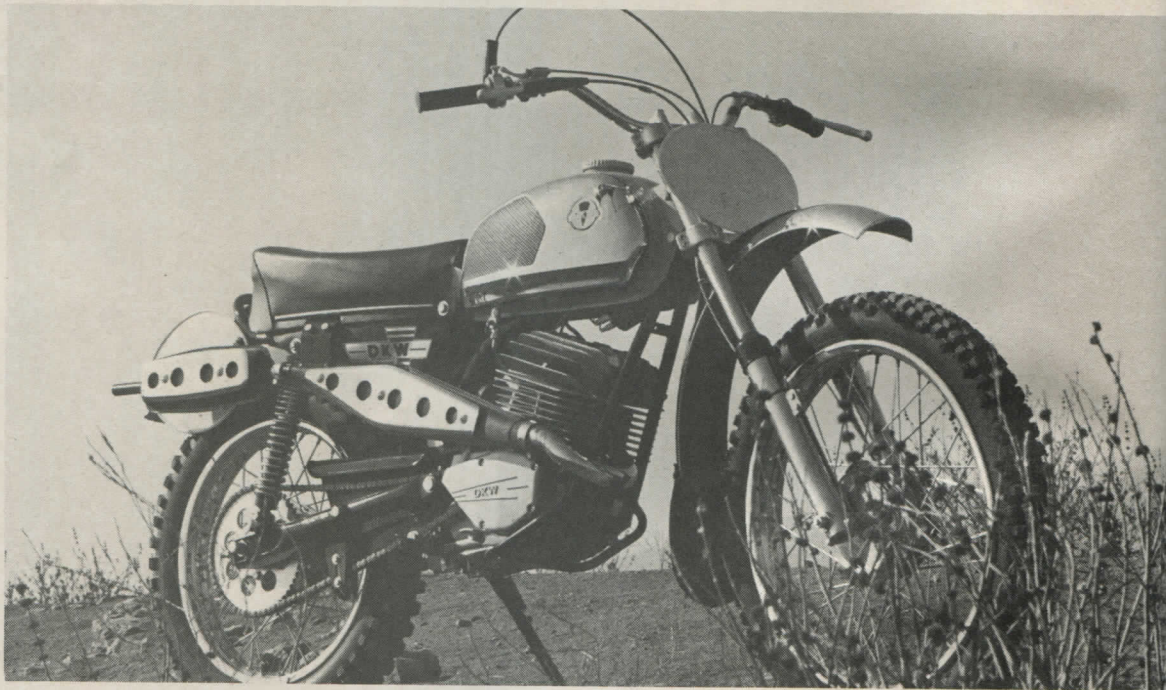
The sunburst head, which is believed by many to be a new item, has been standard equipment for quite sometime on the DKWs. The head, along with the large finned barrel, permits the engine to run cooler than most. This cooling definitely is a help in the horsepower output of the two-stroke.

The six-speed transmission is effective, with well-spaced gear ratios that provide just the right amount of gear reduction for coming out of the tight turns on a moto-cross course, or getting it on across the desert.

Magura controls are strictly first class, and they are standard equipment on DKWs. The throttle assembly contains a couple of neat features, such as a

The Moto-crosser comes with either a telescopic front end, shown here, or the more familiar leading link arrangement.

The nylon block in the chain guide can be adjusted for various size rear sprockets. However, the guide can get bent like the one shown here.



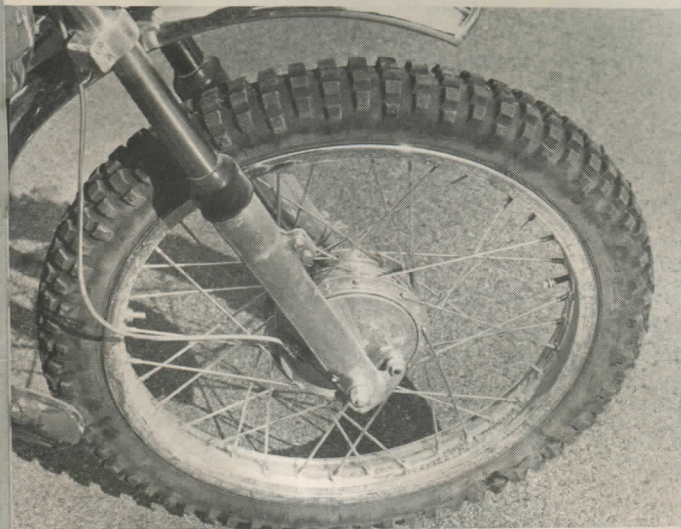


provision for an extra cable, and an adjusting screw on top, which allows the rider to set any amount of drag he so desires. The hand grips are oval shaped and provide a good hold for the rider. A choke lever is located just in front of the throttle where it can be operated with the thumb, although it was not needed, because the DKW fired on the first or second kick. The brake and clutch controls have vinyl covers to keep foreign matter from gumming up the levers. Another nice feature is the little "T-capped" fittings on each cable for lubrication.

The exhaust system leaves a little to be desired in the looks department. Essentially, the exhaust flows through a tuned expansion chamber, then to an added-on silencer. The exhaust note itself is pretty quiet, with the major portion of noise coming from the inside of the chamber. If you are like a lot of riders who take off through the forest, a spark arrestor should be added, since the silencer does not serve as one.

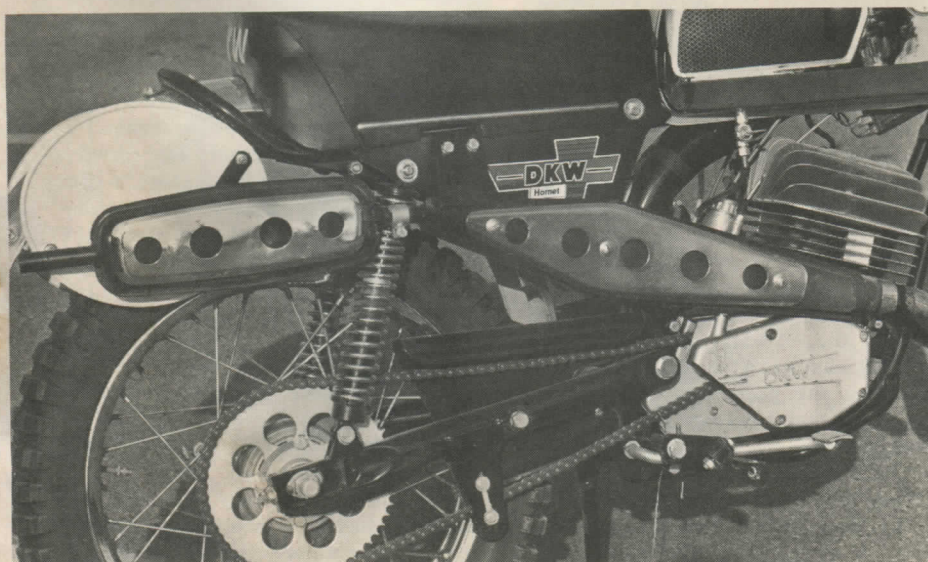
This type of machine is normally subjected to desert or moto-cross racing where terrain is the toughest a promoter can find for his event. Normally there'll be rocks, whoop-de-dos, and whatever else he can find. This plays havoc with any motorcycle, especially on the rims. DKW realized this, and came up with some pretty sturdy rims that should stand a lot of abuse. The knobby Metzeler tires are more than adequate for traction. The front is fitted with a 3.00 x 21, with the rear having a 3.50 x 18 Metzeler. These should be good for just about any type of riding.

To the guy who wants a machine for just about any purpose, including the all-important reliability factor, the DKW stands tall. It may cost a little more than others at \$829.00 for the leading link and \$859.50 for the DKW with Betor forks, but there is that much more motorcycle. **PC**



On the telescopic model of the Motocrosser Betor forks are used.

Unhappily the muffler, which is quite good, doesn't double as a spark arrestor. This is a must add-on if the bike is to be trail-ridden.



## DKW 125 MOTOCROSSER

### PRICE

#### SUGGESTED RETAIL

Leading link: \$829.00  
Telescopic: \$859.50

### ENGINE

#### ENGINE TYPE

port-timed, two-stroke, single cyl.

#### HORSEPOWER AT RPM

24 @ 7400

#### TORQUE

n.a.

#### BORE AND STROKE

54mm x 54mm

#### DISPLACEMENT

123cc

#### COMPRESSION RATIO

10.8:1

#### CARBURETION

27mm Bing concentric

#### IGNITION

Bosch electronic

### TRANSMISSION

#### SPEEDS

six

#### CLUTCH

wet, multi-plate

### CHASSIS

#### LENGTH OVERALL

81 in.

#### WHEELBASE

Leading link: 52 in.

Telescopic: 53 in.

#### GROUND CLEARANCE

11 in.

#### WEIGHT

217 lbs.

#### FRAME TYPE

double downtube

#### TIRE SIZE

front: 3.00 x 21

rear: 3.50 x 18

#### BRAKES

front: single-leading shoe

rear: single-leading shoe