

HUSQVARNA 125 TEST



ify the new

219 pounds
 .44 percent
 .56 percent
 .56 1/2 in.
 .34 in.
 .9 1/2 in.
 .33 in.
 1.8 gallons

.8
 .9
 .7
 .9
 .9
 .8
 .9
 .9
 .9
 .9
 .86

it was two
 a bit more
 reliability
 power.

Still one you can win with. . .

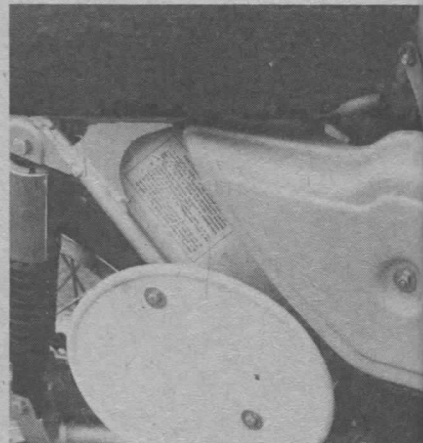
History has a way of repeating itself, they say, and Husqvarna's recent history proves the point. The Swedish factory meant motocross in the mid-sixties but they let their supremacy slip to the Japanese. Now Husqvarna is back, and with a vengeance. The 1974 production machines received a touch of today with plastic fenders and a water proof-able air cleaner and, most of all, more power and less weight. Their prototypes were good enough, too, to give Heikki Mikkola the 500cc World Motocross championship title. Dick Burleson won the 1974 AMA Enduro National Championship and he was the best-placed American in the 1974 International Six Days Trial. He rode a Husky, of course. The 125 production machine is a replica of the one that Nils Arne Nilsson rode to win the American round of the 125cc international series in 1974. When you build racers, as Husqvarna does, you need results to prove the product, and that proof is finally there.

The 1975 Husqvarna 125 is supposed to be available in a "GP" model with the long-travel type of rear suspension used on the 250 and 360 CR models. Most of the machines in the dealers' hands, though, are similar to our test mounts—1974 machines updated with a lower gear ratio and an Amal carburetor in place of last year's Bing. We understand that the long-travel model will cost almost as much more as the stock one as a long-travel conversion with gas-filled Girlings. You'll have to decide if the long-travel is worth waiting for (or paying for!); it's available on the new Pentons and the 1975 YZ 125 Monoshock Yamahas. Long-travel rear suspension, if properly set up, is a must on a 250 or 360, but rider opinion seems to be divided on its ultimate value on the much lighter 125cc machines. The 125 Husky offers a suspension system that is a bit better than that of a stock Elsinore.

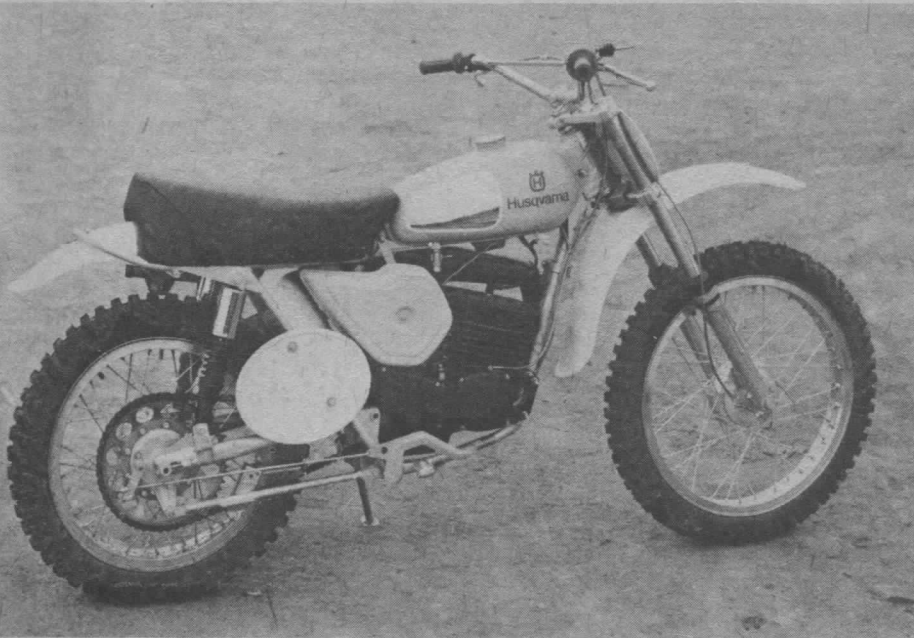
One ride on the 125 Husqvarna was enough to convince us that the machine was competitive enough to give most riders as good a chance at first as they

would have on an Elsinore, YZ or TM Sure, the Husky is quick and it handles but what made it feel like a winner was that it didn't fight the rider. The combination of gearing and, perhaps carburetor change has tamed the peakiness and lack of low end that characterized the 1974 models, without an apparent loss of top end. The 1974 model was designated as a 125CR; most of the 75s are 125SC models. The number change includes a wider-ratio gearbox that gives a more suitable low with a sixth gear that provides for a bit more top speed potential.

The 1975 powerplant has a far broader power spread than the 1974 version. We faced off with a series of Hondas



The plastic air cleaner draws air from a slot along the edge of the seat. A bead of Silastic is all that's needed to waterproof the system.



The Husky's footpeg and handlebar positions seem to be scaled for a smaller rider, but there's room on the seat for a six-footer.



YZ or TM. It handles, winner was rider. The, perhaps, the peaki- that charac- without any 1974 model most of the number to gearbox with a sixth more top

Yamahas and Suzukis, and found the SC to be even a bit quicker than last year's and every bit the equal of any stock machine in its class. A 125 motocross race is a series of shifts; the throttle stays more or less in one position, full-on. That type of riding is a must with most 125 motocrossers to keep the engine on its power band. There isn't enough power to compensate for a slightly-too-early shift, and there are times when you have to shift early to get around a turn. The Husky's greater power spread is enough to give you some latitude in when and where you shift. It's still no 250 but it does give the rider a chance to make a mistake or two, and that can mean the difference between winning and losing to most novices.

We wouldn't have even considered the 1974 Husqvarna 125 for trail riding; there just wasn't enough low-end power to handle the surprises and hills that are found out on the trails. The 125SC, though, can be considered a dual-purpose mount if you can afford to pay that price for a trailbike without lights. The full-floating rear brake makes it a bit easier to trail the Husky. The 125cc engine really doesn't offer all that much speedscrubbing ability, so the rear brake gets used. It takes a lead foot to get the Husky rear wheel to hop with that full-floating linkage. Both brakes are small but powerful enough for the 125's light weight. They will fade on a really long downhill but they recover quickly. One quick application was enough to dry the brakes after a mile-long run through the water.

The footpegs are too far forward for most riders. We found ourselves spending more than a normal amount of time hanging our tails off the back of the seat to lighten the front wheel for whoop-dee-dos and downhills. The peg position makes it easier, though, to load the front end for those quick square-off berm shots that Husqvarnas perform so easily. The plush seat makes you hunt for corners and smooth stretches so you can enjoy its comfort.

The wheelbase is on the short side. The steering and solid frame make the machine extremely self-correcting, but the rear wheel does bob back and forth a lot over any rough surfaces. It should be interesting to see how effective the long-travel GP rear suspension might be in calming the tail-wagging tendency. Most short-wheelbase machines with home-made LTR rear conversions are even more tail-happy than our test machine. The 125 didn't like to broadside corners unless it was leaned over far more than was comfortable or sensible; it was far better

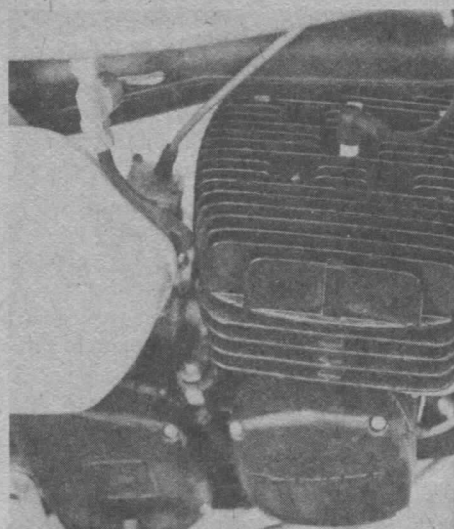
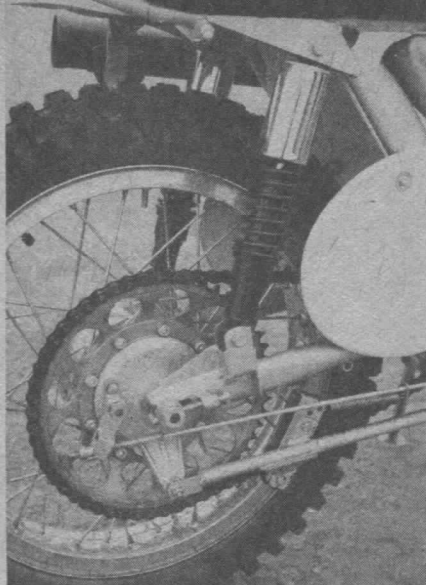


to brake late and square off the corner than to try to drift around it.

The 1975 Husqvarna is a far better machine than the older model. The newer machine seems to have all the power of the old one, but it is spread over a far broader range of engine speed. The engine can handle the wider-ratio gearbox, and the lower first gear is enough to get it off the line like a 250. A few beads of Silastic will seal the ignition and the air

With a wide-ratio gearbox and a greater spread, the 125 SC Husqvarna has all the response you need to maintain momentum on any part of a motocross course.

cleaner against water. You might want to change the handlebars to suit your riding style, but there's little else on this one that any rider would want to alter. Besides, it's a second cousin to Heikki's. ●



BASIC SPECIFICATIONS

Husqvarna 125

Price \$1195.00 f.o.b. West Coast

Engine

Type two-stroke, single
 Bore 55mm
 Stroke 52mm
 Cubic centimeters displacement 124
 Carburetor size & type 32mm Amal
 Ignition system type CDI solid-state
 Lighting system type NA
 Air filter size & type pleated paper

Gearbox

Overall ratio, first 34.6:1
 Overall ratio, second 23.6:1
 Overall ratio, third 18.1:1
 Overall ratio, fourth 15.3:1
 Overall ratio, fifth 12.8:1
 Overall ratio, sixth 10.9:1
 Shift pattern one-down, neutral, five-up
 Can be kick-started in any gear? yes

Dimensions

Wheelbase 53 inches
 Weight 203 pounds
 Front tire size & tread 300-21 knobby
 Rear tire size & tread 350-18 knobby
 Length 81¼ inches
 Handlebar width 33 inches
 Ground clearance 8½ inches
 Fuel capacity 1.85 gallons
 Engine oil capacity mixes with fuel

Details

Folding footpegs? yes
 Self-cleaning footpegs? no
 Tire-to-rim clamps? yes
 Alloy rims front ? rear? yes
 Handlebar-mounted kill button? yes
 Speedometer? no
 Odometer? no
 Odometer read in tenths? no
 Odometer ressetable backwards? no
 Tachometer? yes
 Muffler? yes
 U.S. Forest Service-approved spark arrestor? no
 Head & tail lights? no
 Brake light control-actuated switches? no
 Horn? no
 Fuel tank material? steel
 Front fender material? plastic
 Rear fender material? plastic
 Full-floating rear brake? yes

PERFORMANCE & HANDLING SPECIFICATIONS

Performance specifications

Weight with 165-lb. rider and full tanks 367 pounds
 Rated horsepower at rpm NA
 Pounds (with rider) per horsepower NA
 Pounds (with rider) per cubic centimeter 2.97
 Number of speeds in transmission 6

Handling Specifications

Weight distribution, front/ rear 44/ 56
 Center of gravity (approximate)
 Crankshaft center to ground 15½ inches
 Crankshaft center to rear axle 27½ inches
 Footpeg to rear axle 21 inches
 Footpeg to ground 10½ inches
 Front suspension
 Steering head angle (rake) NA
 Trail (axle setback from steering axis) NA
 Fork travel, compression 1¼ inches
 Fork travel, rebound 5 inches
 Rear suspension
 Swing arm length, pivot to axle 17½ inches
 Swing arm pivot to ground 14½ inches
 Swing arm pivot to crankshaft 9½ inches
 Rear chain run (countershaft sprocket to rear axle) 21 inches
 Shock travel, compression 1 inch
 Shock travel, rebound 3 inches
 Height of seat from ground 31½ inches
 Length of seat 20 inches

PERFORMANCE & HANDLING OPINION

(Rated 1 to 10 on a scale of 10)

Power (within displacement class) 9
 Ability to maintain rear wheel traction 8
 Vibration 7
 Ease of starting 7
 Ignition waterproofing 9
 Air intake & carburetor waterproofing 8
 Oil leakage 10
 Fuel leakage 8
 Front fork dampening 9
 Tendency of front tire to skid in turns 9
 Ease of lifting front wheel with handlebars 9
 Steering response to effort at handlebars 9
 Rear wheel tendency to lock up or hop when braking 9
 Rear shock absorber dampening 9
 Stability in deep sand or mud 9
 Seat padding and comfort 9
 Convenience and operation of controls 9

T
T

Observe
best tr