

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE NEW REEDED 125

HODAKA SUPER COMBAT

by the Staff of DIRT BIKE



Competition Orange Toaster

What's faster out of the hole than an Elsinore? Pulls wheelies like a Sherpa T? And bounces like a jack-rabbit that's just chewed his way clear through two acres of illegal vegetation?

The Super Combat, that's what. *Faster than an Elsinore?* Aw,

come on, you guys.

It is. We tried it.

Put it on the line with the rest of the 125 class and as long as the S. Combat can keep its rear wheel on the ground, it will be there a couple of feet in front.

We ran it off across any 125s that

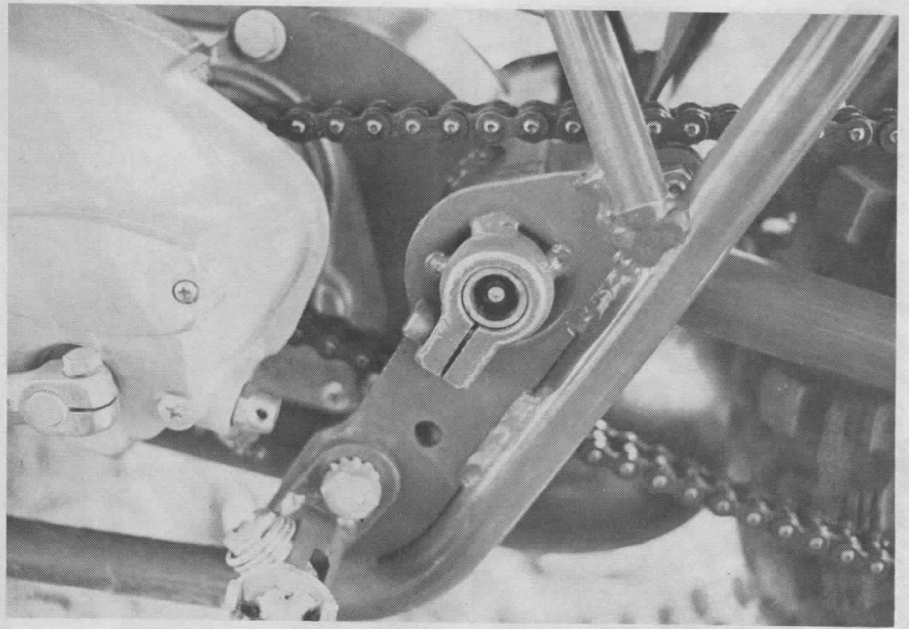
happened by, and our test rider got 15 feet in front every time. Of course, he's good. But then, so were some of the other guys.

That 15 feet at the end of the start chute is enough to make all the difference in the world during the first lap.









The ankle-buster.



There's generous gussetting on Bob Rutten's swingarm.

no damping down or up. Definitely springy.

Too bad, because otherwise the Hodaka does handle. In the characteristic short-wheelbased Hodaka style, of course, but on mini-straight, multi-turn tracks, that's hot. You just jump from corner to corner, letting the pedals flutter and the engine torque you out and away.

It'll slide, too. At least, a well set up one will. Our test machinery would, but it wasn't fun. The local tracks are a bit rough in spots here, and all the spots are in the corners. You got it hung out, and then you'd hit something and the rear would go away.

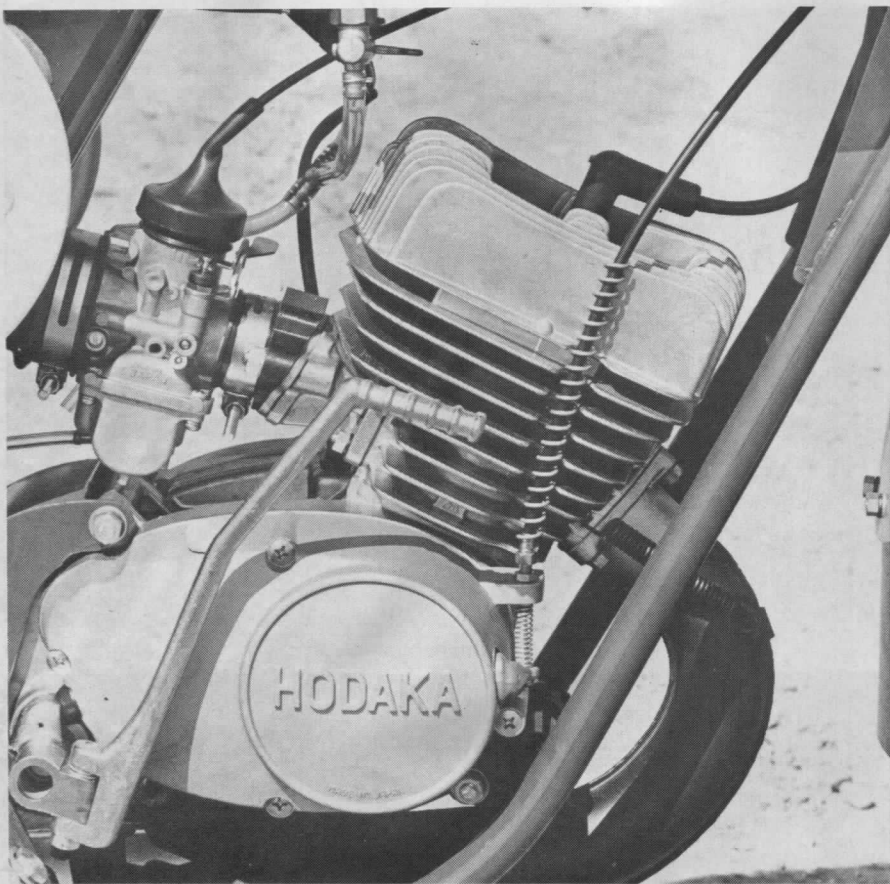
It gets back to the shock problem, because when there's no compression-damping, the spring rate becomes doubly important to

good handling. Of course, we strongly suspect that there are only a half-dozen bikes in the world that still have the stock shocks on them. Which would remove the source of all this sniveling.

On to the nit-picking:

BITS AND PIECES

Like one-way shock dampening, like the steel fork sliders, Hodaka is going their own way with the air box. While everyone else has gone to great lengths to seal their air boxes, the S. Combat only has two number plates bolted over the holes. It leaves plenty of space for air passage, and while we never got the chance to run through a deep waterhole during our two test sessions, nothing the water truck left behind got down in there.



Electric black box hidden away.

The fancy tank on the new model is the old chrome tank painted orange. Wear your cup.

Grease fittings stick out all over the bike. That's good thinking. If you own the bike, use them. That's also good thinking.

Footpegs sagged.

A fancy centerstand comes with the bike.

Remember the occasional problem of Hodakas starving for fuel?

No more. The petcocks for this one are bigger.

Control layout was good. No one complained about the pegs, bars, levers or pedals.

They did complain about the swingarm bolt on the model that came out of the second production run. Check out the detail photos for the ankle-bruise.

The S. Combat started easy. But folding the kickstarter back into its

PRICE: retail, approx. \$ 995
 ENGINE TYPE: Two-stroke single
 DISPLACEMENT: 123cc
 BORE & STROKE: 56mm x 50mm
 COMPRESSION RATIO: 8.6:1
 CARBURETION: 32mm Mikuni
 CLUTCH: Wet
 PRIMARY DRIVE: Gear (2.81:1)
 GEAR RATIOS:
 1) 2.90:1
 2) 2.00:1
 3) 1.50:1
 4) 1.29:1
 5) 1.17:1

FINAL DRIVE: No. 428 chain (H-D Daido)

14-tooth countershaft

64-tooth rear sprocket

AIR FILTRATION: Foam

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM: Kokusan Denki CDI

LUBRICATION: Pre-mix

RECOMMENDED FUEL: Premium

RECOMMENDED OIL: 20:1

FUEL CAPACITY: 2 gallons

FRAME: Steel, double loop

SUSPENSION:

(front) Telescopic oil dampened progressive springs

(rear) Oil dampened alloy body, progressive springs

WHEELS: Shoulderless alloy

TIRES:

(front) 3.00x21 Nitto MX

(rear) 3.50x18 Nitto MX

DIMENSIONS:

Wheelbase: 52.4 inches

Ground Clearance: 7.5 inches

Seat Height: 32.2 inches

Handlebar Width: 32.3 inches

Weight:

(claimed) 192 pounds dry

(on front wheel) 42.5%

(on rear wheel) 57.5%

BRAKES: Drum

INSTRUMENTS: None

LIGHTS: No

SILENCER: Yes, and noisy

SPARK ARRESTOR: No

PRIMARY KICK: No

PARTS PRICES (frequently replaced items)

Piston assembly: \$22.07 (w/pin)

Rings: \$2.90 (1)

Clutch cable: \$3.00

Cylinder: \$83.02

Shift lever: \$4.96

Brake pedal: \$9.38

Clutch lever: \$2.28

resting place always had to be done manually.

Preloading the shocks must be done with shims or spacers. And there are no accessory springs available right now. That's because the springs are of different diameters at either end.

Having an extra brake return spring is neat. Having the brake rod cross the swingarm pivot is

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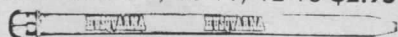
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neat. Having good brakes — and it
does — is even better.

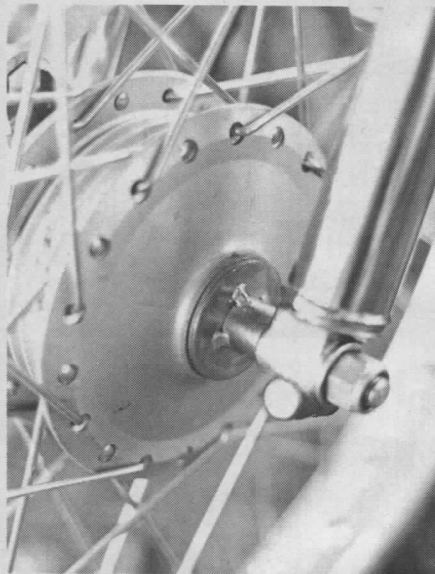
The tires were good when new.
We never got them worn enough to
see how they'd be later.

Two Super Combats were in-
volved in this test. One of them
had a loose swingarm and later had
the clutch come apart. When you
get yours, check the fasteners in
both cases.

Plastic rollers keep the chain
from going where chains shouldn't
go.

A Daido chain comes stock.
Nowadays people advertise any
D.I.D. equipment on their bikes.
All because of D.I.D. rims. Do not
be misled; it's not the best chain in
the world.

There's a decal right on top of
the tank that says "Super Combat."
In case you develop temporary
amnesia, you can take a quick peek
down there and find out what



Hubs look like the old kind, but they're
**stronger and are laced to nine-gauge
spokes on the S. Combat.**

you're riding.

SUMMARY

You should pop for a plastic tank
and some shocks when you pick up
the bike. Put them on. Go riding.

You'll never have a snivel.

Especially if you attend to our
hot setup supplement.

TRICKING OUT THE TOASTER

Actually there were three Super
Combats hanging about when we
were testing. One was Bob
Rutten's MXer. This Hodaka-
sponsored unit had another set of

Cont'd. on page 88



JIM POMOROY

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Name _____

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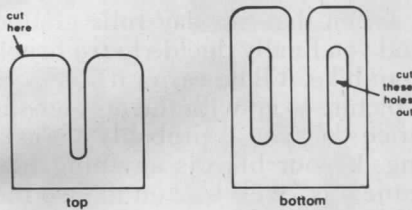
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HODAKA *Cont'd. from page 39*

pedals in the reed valve, a 36mm Mikuni, 5mm cut off the piston skirt, a plastic tank, a slightly modified pipe and a longer swingarm. Like anything Hodaka does to their racing bikes, all this info is available from them for free.

Here's how to do it.

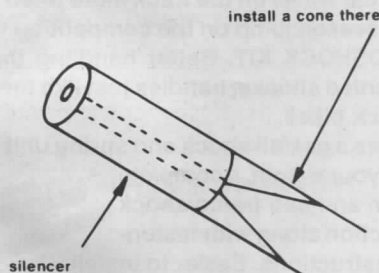
There are two kinds of pedals available from Hodaka; one is black and the other is green. Use the green kind in the bottom of the reed manifold. For the top, use two GEM pedals; they have to be 12—13 thousandths. Cut them like we've shown and install them in the top part of the valve.



What happens with this outfit is that there's more than enough low end. Now you add the big carb and raise the gearing to 15 on the front and 58 on the rear, and you don't give anything away on the straights anymore.

Taking a half-inch out of the headpipe helps too. No, the designers didn't make a mistake. The bike was done here completely, but somehow that half-inch got added to the specified dimensions when it came down to the production units.

And while you're cutting the pipe up, take a look at the last section where the pipe joins the silencer. That squared-off section shown in the drawing would be better with a cone. Do it if you can.



Swenco makes a bolt-on swingarm for the S. Combat that brings the wheelbase out to 54 inches and stabilizes you over the rough. Add that to your new shocks and you're set!

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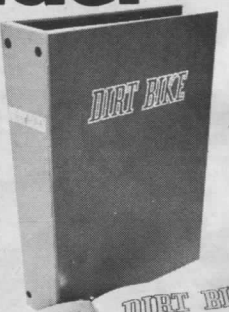
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