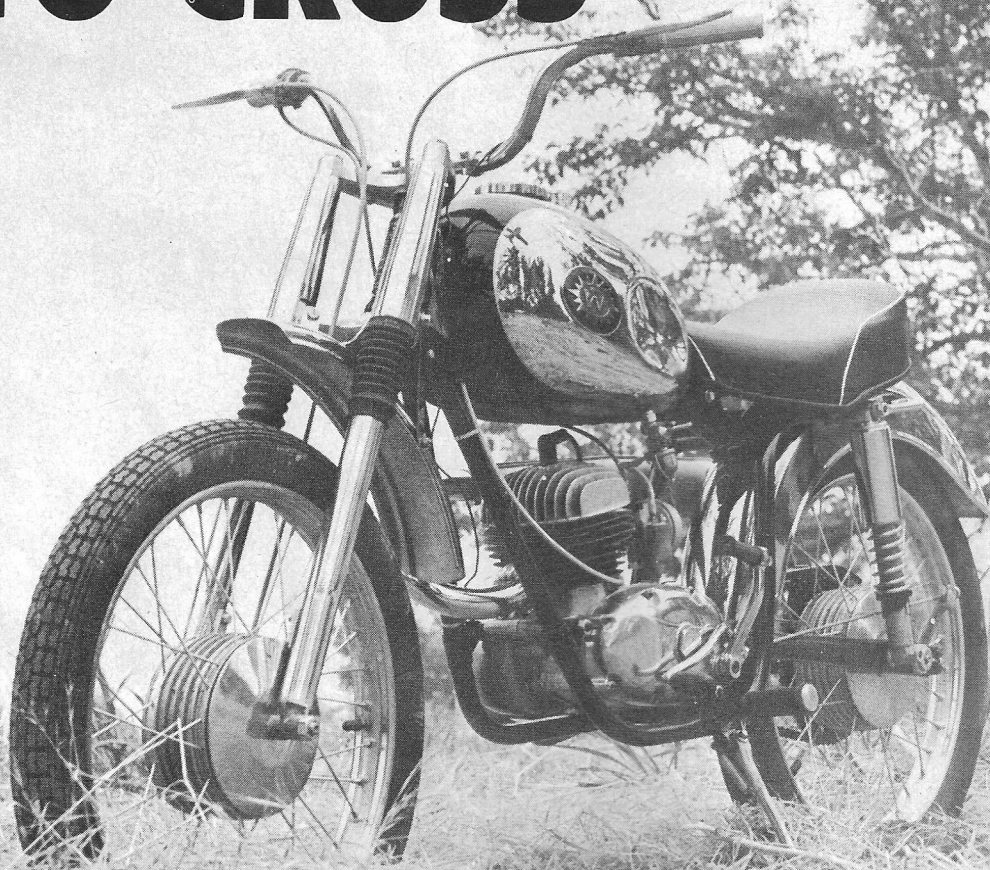


# WHITE 125cc MOTO CROSS



*Select good components, put 'em together carefully and . . .*

**B**UILD A BETTER mousetrap and the world is supposed to beat a path to your door. This same philosophy should also hold true for motorcycles. In the case of Brothers Rickman, Senor Bulto and Mr. Greeves; the phrase has proved correct beyond a shadow of a doubt. Enter, John and Forrest White.

There's no mistaking the intent of the White 125 Moto-Cross. It looks for all the world like a better mousetrap. Precious few bikes of this type display such beautiful lines and can boast of the quality of paint and chrome this machine offers. However, beauty is only skin deep. A motocross machine must earn its laurels with good performance, fine handling and a measure of endurance. With this in mind, let's review the White.

The Austrian made engine is a mod-

ern square (54×54mm) designed 123cc two-stroke, single cylinder with loop-scavenging system. The crank runs in ball-bearings (ditto: the transmission shafts) and the connecting rod is supported by a double row roller-bearing. These should combine to keep the engine around for a long time. Output is rated by White International at 12 horsepower.

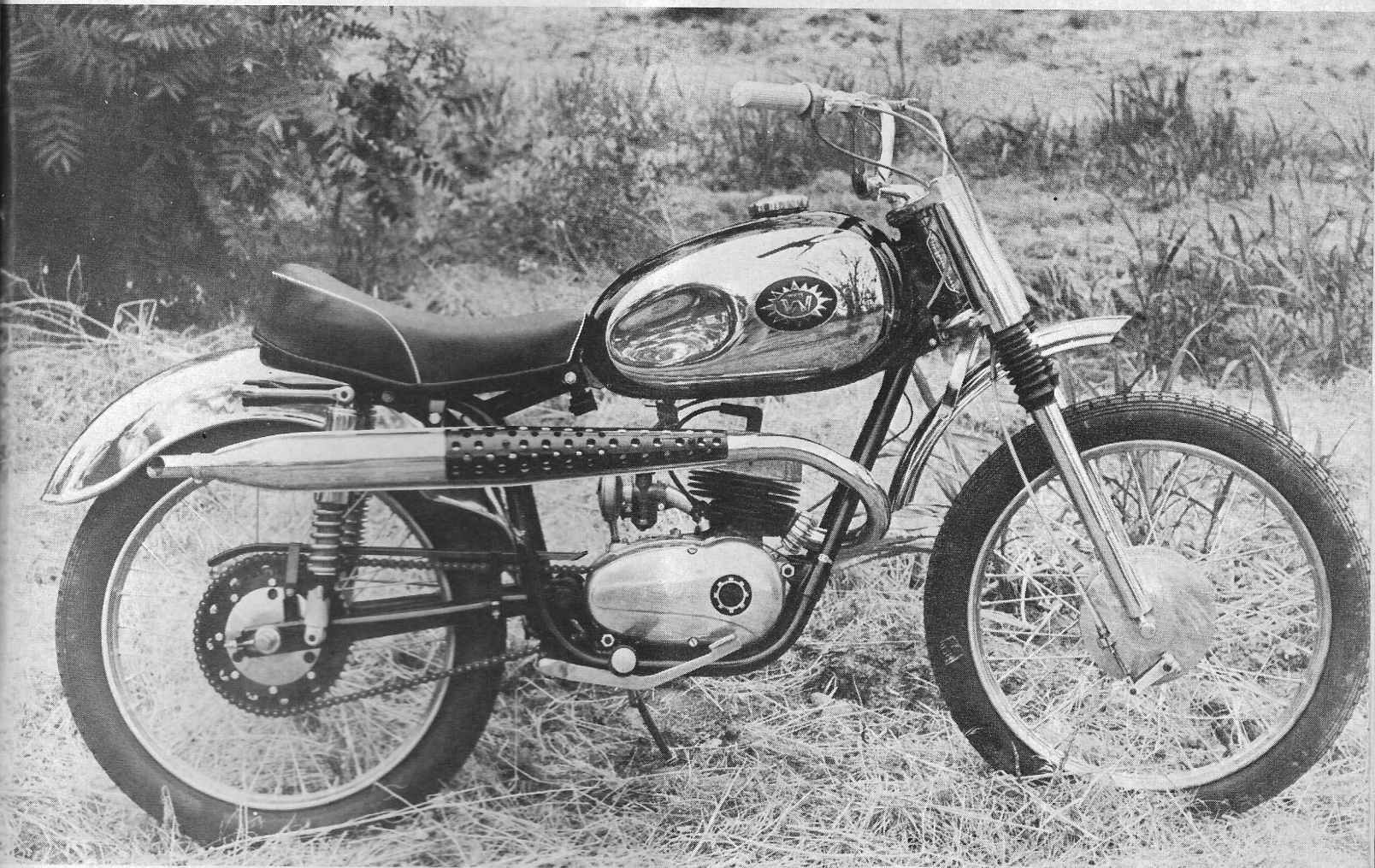
Engine and gearbox are in unit. The clutch is a multi-disc item running in an oil bath. Engine response is handled by a three-speed transmission with the foot operated shift lever located on the left side.

The engine/transmission unit is cradled in a double loop, stainless-steel tubular frame. The front end has a rather ordinary looking set of telescopic forks that terminate in a very exceptional front brake and a not too

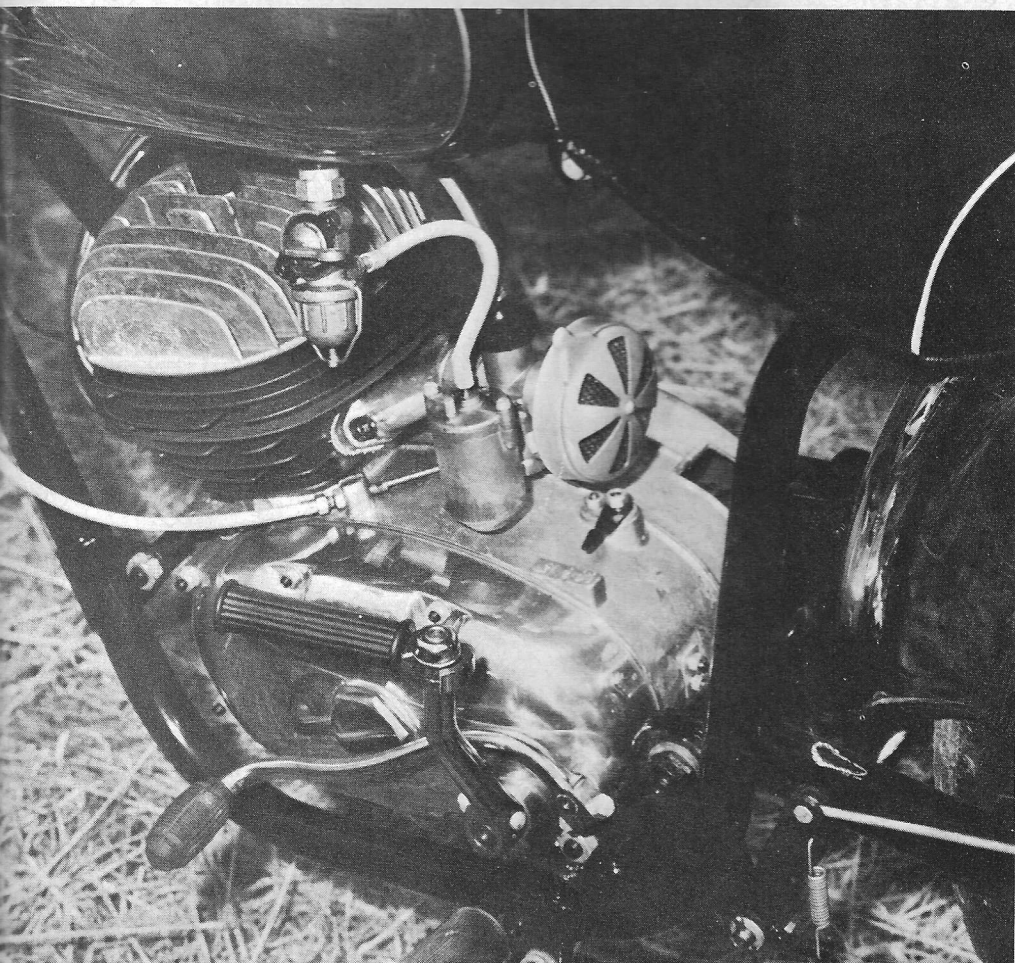
purposeful 3.00×19 tire. The swing arm rear end is dampened by adjustable hydraulic shocks. The interchangeable wheels add a nice touch. The spindle carrying the sprocket can be placed on either wheel assembly. Wheelbase is 50 inches and there's 10 inches of ground clearance.

All in all, these are pretty good credentials, howsoever, the proof of the bike is in the riding.

The first time we fired up the White it was a pleasant surprise to hear it start on the first kick, then settle down to a smooth idle. After the proper warm-up period, a staffer clicked it into first and started down the street. He returned and another staffer jumped on and sped off. When the last rider had returned, we sat down for a quick critique. Everyone felt that the performance was stifled by the



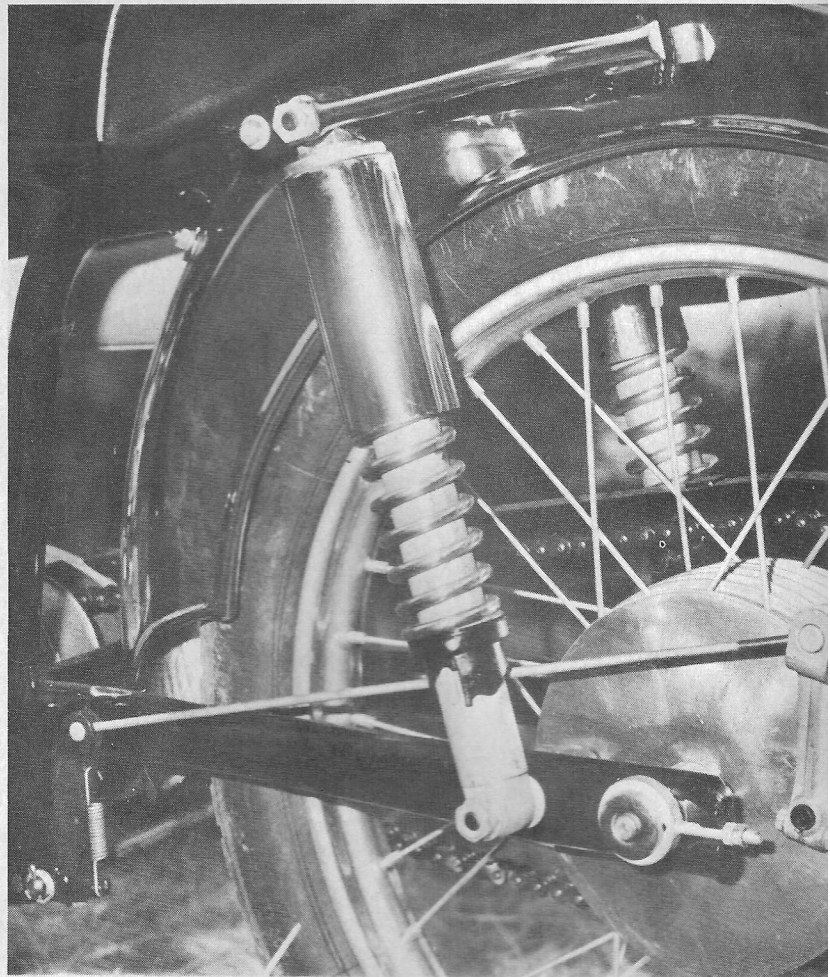
*The appearance of the White Moto-125 Cross leaves little to be desired, but beauty is only skin deep.*



*Enclosed in the crankcases is the obsolete three speed transmission. Too much movement is needed on the shift lever to engage another gear.*

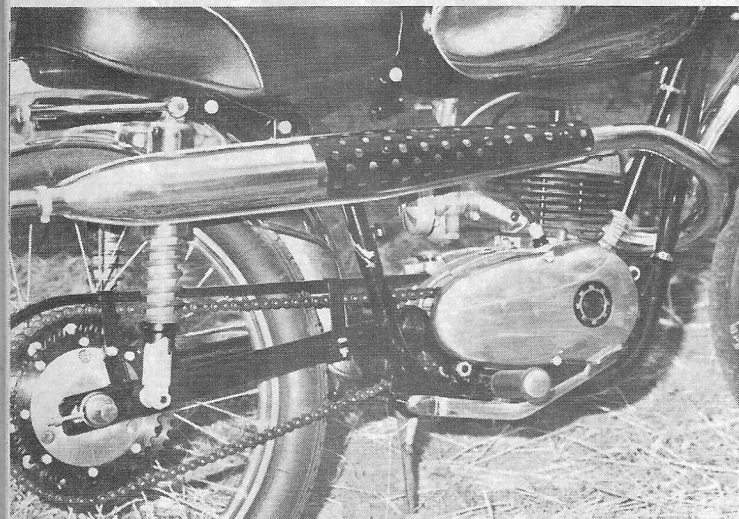


*The chrome forks are set off by rubber dust covers but do not have enough travel for the rider who is serious about fast motoring.*



*The smart looking heat shield stops little of the heat reflected by the pipe, which in itself does a poor job of slowing down the exhaust note.*

*Shocks are three way adjustable and do a fine job of damping the rear end. Brakes, both front and rear, handle the stopping chores in fine fashion.*



three-speed gearbox. All agreed that the claim of 12 hp at 6800 rpm was really gilding the lily. At best, the bike pulled like a good, healthy 50cc, but certainly not like a 125. Another objection concerned the kick starter's interference with the rider's leg when shifting and with the latter's unusually long throw. Handlebars are a matter of taste, but no one found these to their liking even though our heights range from 5'7" to 6'2" with a variety of builds. Anyhow, this was sufficient to acquaint us with the nature of the beast. The real trial began the following day and ranged from high desert to wooded trail . . . the type of terrain for which the bike was designed.

We were frankly disappointed in the handling of the White (Mk-III)

Moto-Cross. The frame felt very disjointed and exhibited a good deal of flex when the bike was pushed hard. The front forks also proved inadequate, due to the short travel and in combination with the frame, made it a handful. As expected, the performance left much to be desired even though our test bike was fitted with a 60-tooth rear sprocket. The crippling factor was the three-speed gearbox. Also as expected, the brakes proved to be excellent and are probably the finest binders to grace a small bike; amount of control was infinite. In all fairness, the aforementioned problems disappeared when the bike was ridden at slower speeds. However, a moto-cross is a speed contest.

The exhaust pipe is upswept and

has a shield to keep a rider's leg off the hot pipe. However, one of the testers received a dandy burn when the footpegs folded (the wrong way) and deposited him on the pipe. A better (larger) heat guard is in order . . . along with sturdier footpegs. In summation, we can only say that the White 125 Moto-Cross is a beautiful mousetrap, but this alone cannot guarantee it will catch mice. As a glimmer of hope to John and Forrest White, we offer our ending to E. L. Thayer's famous poem:

*Somewhere in this promised land  
the sun is shining bright  
and somewhere there is someone  
who'd be happy with a White. ■*