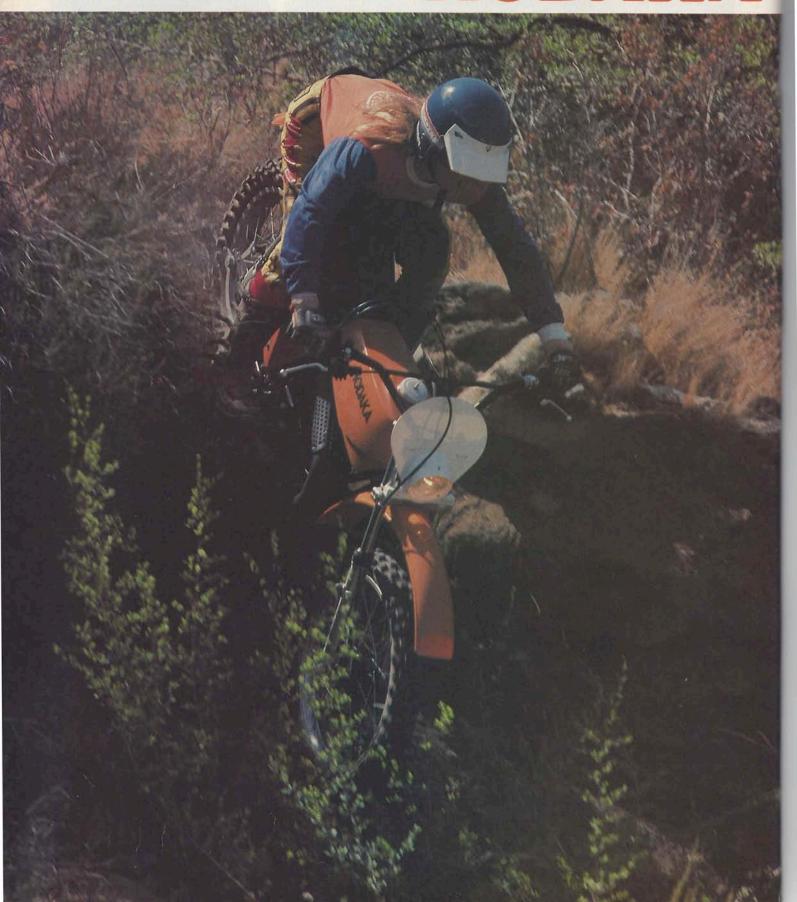
"THERE'S NO NEED TO FEAR, TH'UNDERDOG IS HERE."

# HODAKA



## We don't care what they call it in Oregon

# 250 ENDURO

It's a dog-eat-dog world in the motorcycle business today. Arf-ter all, the volume of competition alone is enough to give one paws. Consequently, despite the traditional Hodaka dogma of the smallbore engine, Pabatco higher-ups elected to lift a leg over the fleaing small-bore market and pursue the gravy train of the rabid 250 enduro enthusiast. Some may feel that Hodaka is barking up the wrong tree, since they stand little chance of actually collaring the giant 250 enduro market, but no one who has actually ridden the new 250 enduro can doubt this critter's ability to hound the competition.

Ahem, gaff, gaff. Be that as it may and other factors notwithstanding or in any event, Hodaka has taken a somewhat novel approach to the 250 enduro market. Some may view it as a DT-1 with all the trick parts; others may convince themselves that the 250 Enduro is the ultimate panacea. Nay. We say this: The Hodaka 250 Enduro is a 100-percent enduro bike for a large segment of the motoenduring populace. Who's that? Well, take Sidney for example:

#### Dear Dirt Bike,

You probably get a dozen letters just like mine every day of the week and twice on Saturday, but I really need help bad. I don't know what bike to buy and the more of them there are to choose from the less I can decide. Please help me!

First off, I'm no rocket rider. I never even have thought about going to a motocross - I'm just not into proving myself better than someone else. I'm more into the terrain. I ride enduros sometimes, though I'm not sure I'd call myself an enduro rider. That is, I'm starting to learn a little about keeping time but it doesn't much matter. Mostly I just do my best and see how late I am. What I do mostly is trail ride. There are lots of trails not far from where I live, but since I'm a carpenter I have a pickup anyway, so I usually ferry my bike to the trails. I don't use the bike for transportation either just because it's usually too cold up here.



**NOVEMBER 1976** 



My present machine is a 1972 Kawasaki F-7 175. It's been a good bike - suited my needs pretty well. I guess. But it's getting tired and I'm starting to get the lust. Know what I mean? A little more power. I'd like to try out some of this new long travel suspension, too. Besides, I've always been interested in machines and it would be nice to have one that's at least a little exotic. Of course, mechanically I'm a hammer and chisel above zero. The thought of a truly exotic enduro bike makes me quake in my Full Bores. I just know I could own one for a year and never be able to get it running.

Well, I won't take too much more of your time. You guys probably don't like telling people what bike to buy that much. If you goof the world hates you, if you get it right nobody cares. But I'd still like a suggestion. I'm certainly not dumb enough to run right out and buy what you tell me, but I could use an experienced opinion.

Thanks much, Sidney Rivers Minneapolis, Minnesota

Thank you, Sid, your inquiry is actually most opportune. See, we're supposed to be doing a test on Hodaka's 250 Enduro right now and your letter provides us with the possibility of avoiding the normal test drivel. You have no idea what it's like to write four or five or more years of the same test over and over again. Come to think of it, if you read them you might have an inkling.

Anyway, as to your question. What you seem to be in the market for is a true enduro bike. That is, since you don't intend to use your new bike for transport, you don't require turn signals or trials tires or massive instrumentation. That narrows the field considerably.

You do indicate that you are interested in performance to a certain extent, which leads you away from a pure bonk-around trailer like a Bultaco Alpina. You also would not likely find a trials bike suitable to your intentions, since it's our guess that you like to squirt a little dirt now and then. We have narrowed the field some more.

Basically, there are about ten bikes left for you to choose from. They fall into three classes: European, including Penton/KTM, Husqvarna, Bultaco, Montesa, and Ossa; American, including the Rokon; Japanese, including the Honda MR series, Yamaha's IT series, Suzuki's new PE (based on the RM) series and the Hodaka 250 Enduro.

If we take your estimation of your mechanical abilities as fact, along with your limited riding needs, you should probably eliminate the European enduros. They offer performance and handling beyond what you will likely need, and they require a deft mechanical hand to keep them running correctly. Rokon you might consider. It is a reliable enduro bike, a bit out of the ordinary in design and a respectable performer. Again, the question arises: Will you need or find useful the performance the Rokon has to offer? Maybe someday.

Which leaves you with the crop of Japanese enduros: all very reliable and simple to maintain, all somewhat more economical than the European models they imitate and none offering the exceptional quality, performance or handling of the European or American bikes.

Once we reach the level of Japanese enduro bikes, which is probably where you should be looking, we've reached the point of name-calling. The original intention of this abstruse testing method was to avoid name-calling and attendant alienation of owners, retailers and manufacturers. Honest, all those bikes — in fact, any bikes we can think of offhand — are real good. They're all wonderful. None is better than the other. But. We think you might like a Hodaka. Here's why:

If you are a carpenter you're probably not a youngster. Consequently, you don't care that much what your buddies have. In fact, you might even want to have something a little different than the standard Red, Yellow and Blue models. You probably don't care if Pierre Karsmakers or Roger De-Coster or Bob Hannah honestagawd claims he rode one just like it to victory. You probably do care how much it cost you in the first place and how much you're going to have to put in to make it personable.

Hodaka's 250 Enduro is easily the cheapest Japanese enduro at a suggested retail of \$1195. It is actually cheaper than most street/trail bikes. As an added attraction, once you buy it the parts also turn





Semi-full-width-conical rear hub is aligned by two snail cam adjusters.



out to be the cheapest. But here comes the bonus part:

Hodaka's 250 Enduro is not cheaply built. Resting upon one or another part of its countenance is everything you need to ride an enduro and even some things you don't know you need. Hodaka has taken an unprecedented approach to economy enduroing. When you buy the bike it already has a Preston Petty headlight/number plate, a

P.P. Integral Taillight rear fender, an unbreakable or dentable plastic gas tank, folding shift and brake levers, shock absorber mud covers, a chain tensioner, D.I.D rims and so on. There is nothing that the average rider needs to change to enter an enduro. Put gas in the gas tank, oil in the oil tank, lube the chain, check your tire pressure and gas it.

Unfortunately, editorial duties prohibited us from personally





entering the 250 Enduro in the Hart's Mountain enduro, a favorite of bovine and canine fanciers everywhere. But our somewhat less strenuous testing impressions produced primarily favorable opinions. Even though the Hodie breaks no records as a lightweight at 260 pounds wet, the weight does not make itself apparent in the handling characteristics of the bike. Steering is reasonably nimble and accurate.

Undoubtedly, once the limits of rider or suspension ability are reached the weight could become a significant factor in the maintenance of control.

It should be stressed that the Hodie handles well . . . to a point. Unlike many Japanese trail/enduro bikes, Hodaka does not choose geometry or engine placement in accordance to styling or expediency. Their trailbikes handle like trail-

#### HODAKA

Price (approx. retail, West Coast): \$1195 Engine . Two-stroke, piston-port, single Displacement	HUDAKA
Swingarm length	Engine . Two-stroke, piston-port, single Displacement
Seat Height	Rear: Bridgestone 4.50x18  Dimensions: Wheelbase 146cm + 3cm (58.5 inches) Swingarm length
Lights         Preston Petty           Silencer         Skyway           Spark Arrestor         U.S.F.Sapproved           Warranty         None           Parts Prices:         Piston         \$25.80 w/rings           Rings         \$9.14           Clutch cable         \$4.24	Weight
Rings	Lights Preston Petty Silencer Skyway Spark Arrestor U.S.F.Sapproved Warranty None Parts Prices:
	Rings

bikes. They turn well in the woods and handle slippery situations better than most. The point (of "to a point") is where the rider asks too much of the bike. Take the 250 Enduro through whoopdies too quickly and it wags its tail. Shock springing is appropriate for slow or moderate going, but for any normal-bodied person at speed, bottoming will occur. Damping is nothing to write home about but serves its intended purpose: woods riding.

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Zip

#### HODAKA Continued from page 64

On our first day of testing Daryl Meter of Tiger Distributing accompanied us to ensure our and the bike's well-being. We were interested to note that his personal 250 Enduro was stock other than a pair of Works Performance shocks. Daryl also taught us something we might not have learned otherwise. One intrepid staff tester forced Daryl into leading through a narrow, rocky canyon in order to avoid lurking personal embarrassment. Poor Darvl took the bait and rode/fell off a rock ledge. A portion of his clutch lever then parted company whilst intermingling with one of the aforementioned rocks. Keep the pinch bolt on your levers a little loose, all you folks out there, and avoid embarrassment and expense.

Hodaka did not produce the fastest 250 enduro on the market. Nor did they produce the fastest Japanese enduro on the market. They did, however, produce the Japanese enduro with the best powerband we've seen to date. A good powerband is complemented by a proper set of transmission ratios which allow the Hodaka to proceed forward in most any circumstance. It will grunt over logs or up slimy banks with ease. In short, Sidney, it will likely propel you through your enduro bogs as well as anything you could hope for.

On the other end of its power spectrum are numerous revs and moderate power. In the first three gears there's plenty to practice your powerslides, if you deem such things as necessary. And with the nature of the power and gears you will find it a quite suitable hillclimber, should there be any serious tectonic activity in Minnesota.

Without getting into out-and-out comparison, which is subjective at best, we would have to tell you that there are numerous reasons why we might consider the Hodaka a superior choice for a rider of your type. Perhaps the foremost of these is that Hodaka may be the last company producing a bike perfectly suited to the average rider. — Ed.



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