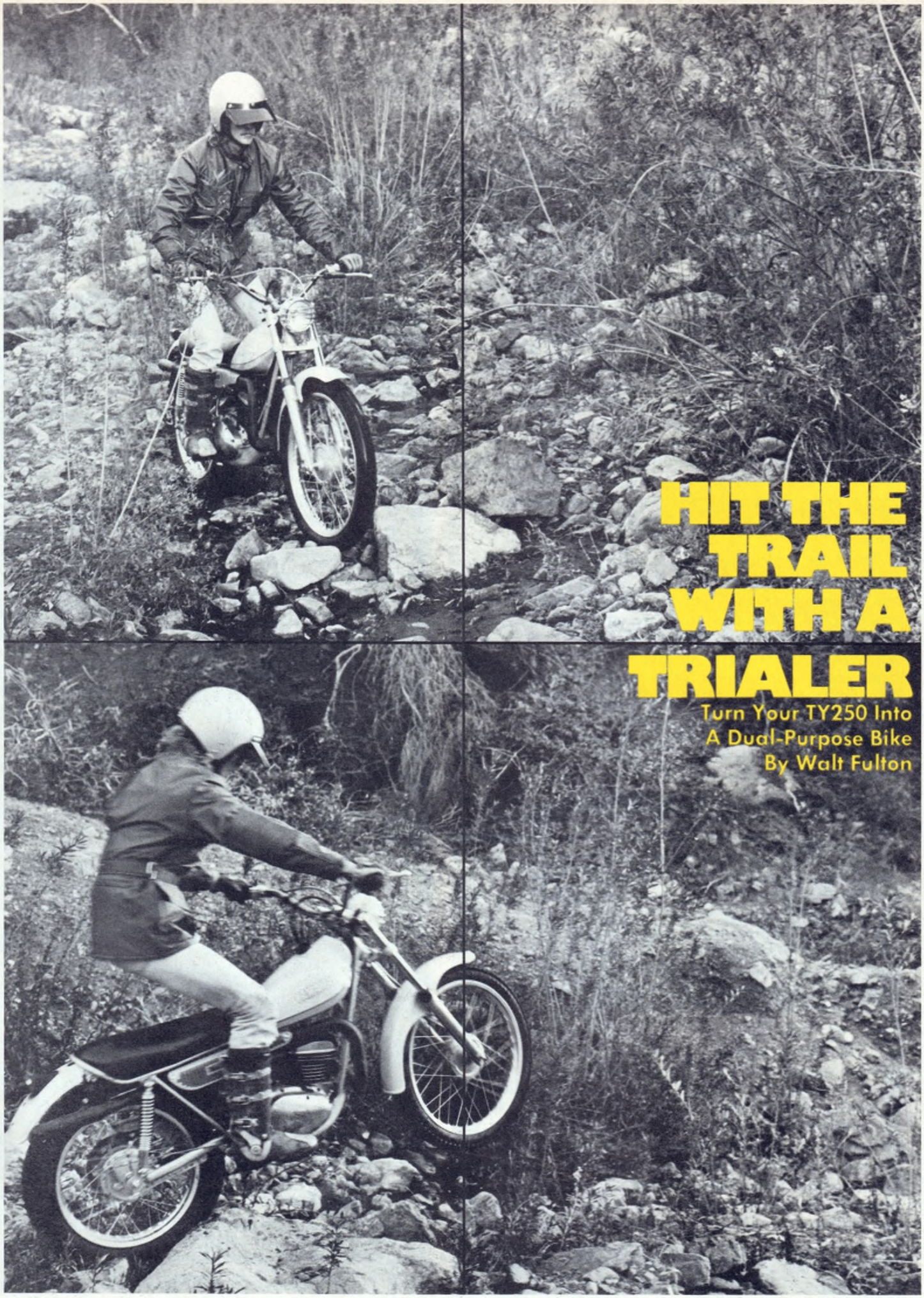


HIT THE TRAIL WITH A TRIALER

Turn Your TY250 Into A Dual-Purpose Bike

By Walt Fulton

Choose just about any aspect of motorcycle production that you like, and chances are one or another of the Big Four manufacturers has it all over the rest of the industry in that respect. This was the case with the Yamaha TY250, the first trials bike to come out of Japan. Among its firsts it also boasted a genuine spark arrester and primary kickstarting. Both of these features are important. . .particularly the spark arrester.

Engine-wise the TY is equipped with what is perhaps the smoothest trials power plant on the market. But this smoothness has its price, for it affects the ability of the engine to rev, which hinders its acceleration and top-end power. The importance of this may seem minimal to some, but that's far from the true story. Acceleration is most necessary in tight trials sections. The probable cause for this lack of performance can be traced to the reed-valve. At the low speeds at which the bike is run most of the time, the reed-valve pedals must be soft to allow the fresh charge of fuel into the lower end with minimum suction. At higher speeds these pedals have a tendency to float. This is one of those design compromises that everyone will have to live with, at least for the present.

The TY was designed by Mick Andrews, once the top rider for Ossa. With this in mind, it's no surprise that the TY handles and steers much like the Ossa Plonker. Next to the Plonker, in fact, the TY is the fastest handling trials bike around.

The suspension is better than some and worse than a few others. . .a fact that isn't too surprising. Actually, it is adequate and will do the required job. Brakes on the TY are some of the best fitted to a trials bike.

What all of this boils down to is a rather nice trials bike, but that isn't what this story is about. After a short recap of the TY, it should be obvious that it is a prime target for things other than trials. The Bultaco Alpina serves as a good illustration of the TY's potential. Basically, the Alpina is a Sherpa T (Bultaco's trials bike) with slightly different running gear fitted. This makes it possible to use the machine in events or conditions other than just trials.

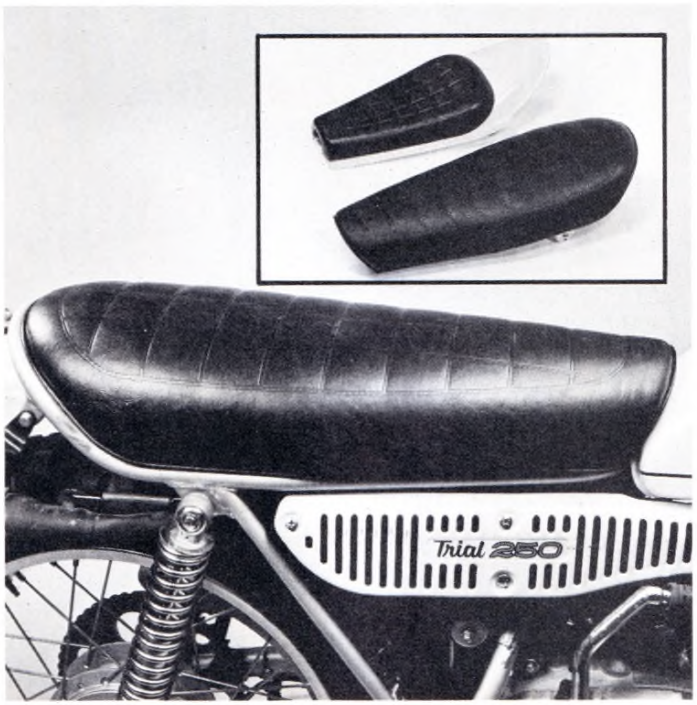
Because of some overzealous production on the part of Yamaha, they now have a warehouse and many dealerships full of these 250 trials bikes. Quite frankly they expected the trials field to come alive and create more interest than it has. Mind you, they sell more trialers than Montesa, Bultaco and Ossa together; but then they also produce many times more.

So this year there isn't a new TY, but there is a conversion kit that will transfer this trialer into a fun play bike suitable for enduros, trail rides or just afternoon outings.

Actually, the TY conversion does not come in kit form, but rather as separate pieces. The price story goes something like this: Seat—$36; peg conversion (including the swinging arm pivot shaft, long brake pedal, peg brackets and all the hardware to attach these parts)—$19.95. So, for $55.95 and about an hour's work, you've got yourself a pretty decent multi-purpose motorcycle.

And, by the way, to reduce the cost of the original fiberglass skid plate, Yamaha now has available a plastic replacement. It sells for $17.95, as opposed to approximately $40 for the original. This part works quite well with the "trials" set-up in place, but the skid plate must be cut away with the longer brake pedal.

Handlebar shape is a rider preference and varies from person to person, but we have found that replacing the trials bars with a pair that are a little higher and that sweep back somewhat offers more comfort and control.



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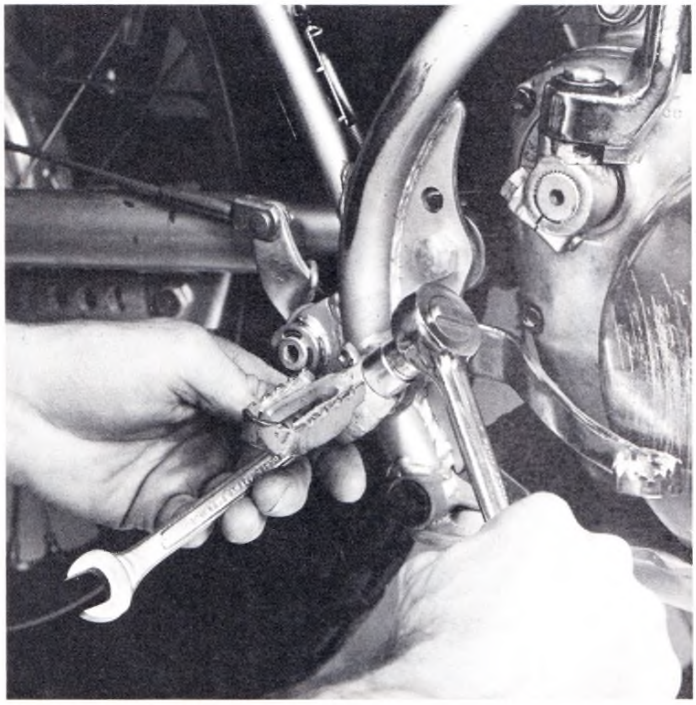
$35 for this plush saddle is money well spent. Not only is the extra room nice, but so is the extra comfort. To replace the original seat, two 6mm bolts must be removed. A 10mm box wrench is best for this. The two bolts that secure the seat to the upper frame rails are located just below the rear fender. Once the trials seat is removed, the new saddle can be set in place and tightened.



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Using a 13mm socket and wrench, both footpegs can be removed after the return springs have been released. Set the pegs, nuts, bolts and springs aside as they will be used when the new footpeg plates are fitted.

In the parts package for the peg conversion are two metal covers that are used to protect the rider's ankle from the exposed stub when the trials pegs are removed. These are held in place by 8mm bolts and self-locking nuts.

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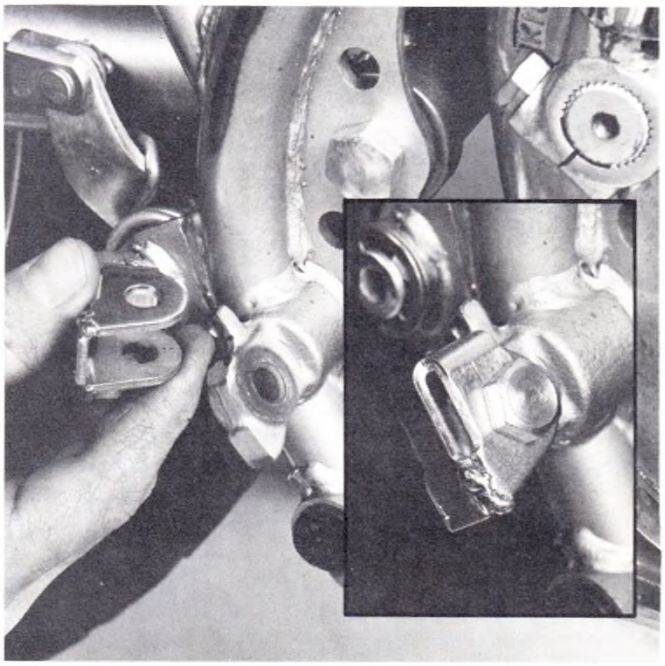

To remove the brake pedal from its spline requires a 10mm socket. Remove the locking bolt and pry the pedal off the spline with a screwdriver. Use a pair of pliers to hold the brakelight spring and at the same time rotate the pedal. Once this is disconnected, slide the pedal out. The new, longer pedal is installed just the opposite of removal.

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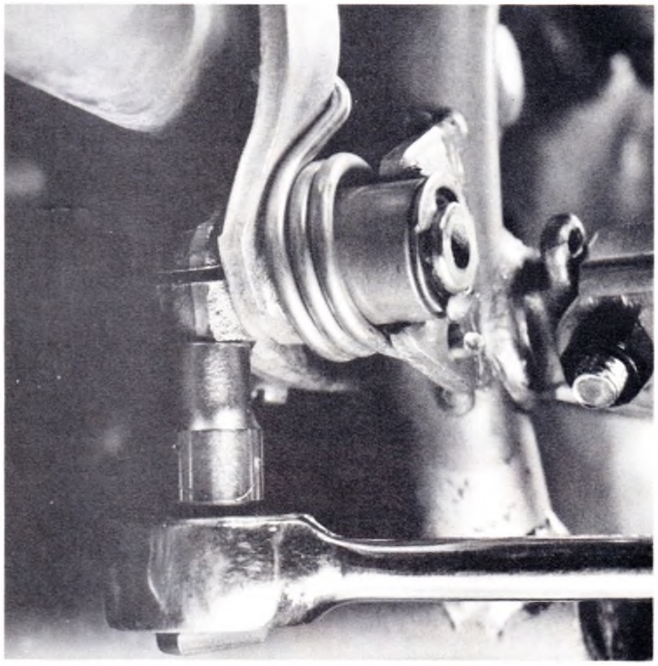

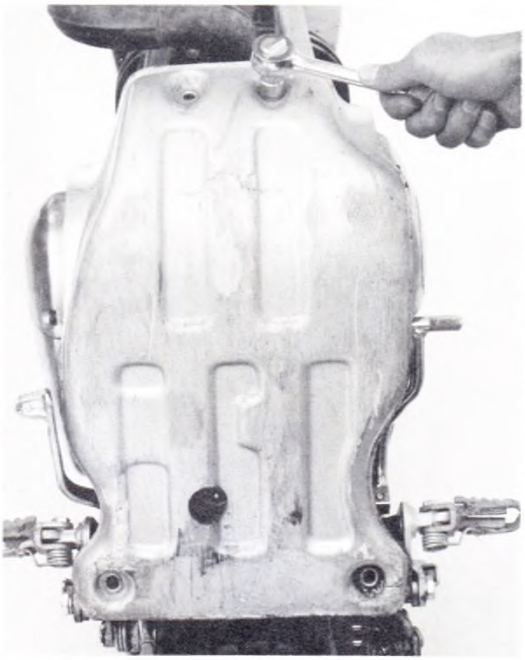

Photography: Fernando Belair, Brian Blades

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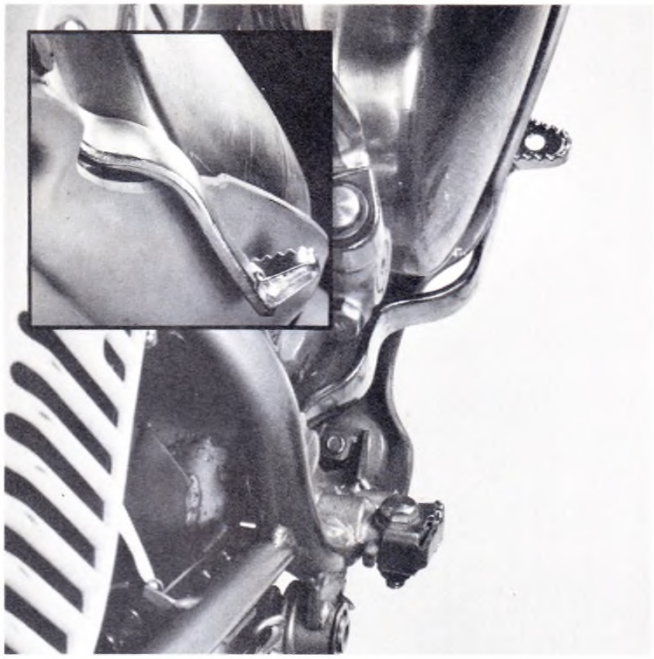
The skid plate will fall out of place by removing the four 8mm bolts that attach it to the frame. The plastic plate can then be installed using the same brackets and bolts.



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The conversion plate is made to work with the short trials brake pedal, but not with the long one. The pedal comes in contact with the plate, making it impossible to actuate the rear brake. Because of the skid plate shape, it is also difficult to get a foot on the pedal.

To modify the plate, hacksaw and file along the marked line. As long as the old skid plate is intact, there isn't any reason to replace it. And besides, the long pedal can be fitted without modification.

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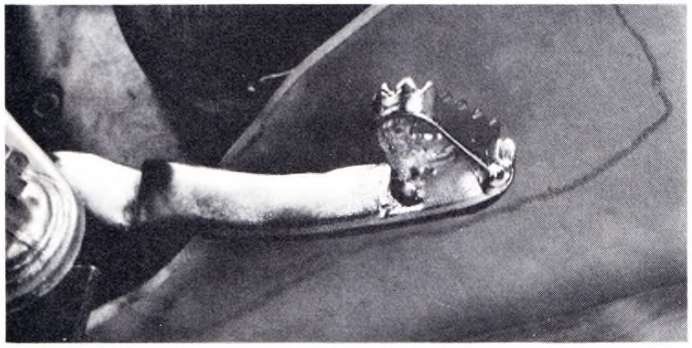

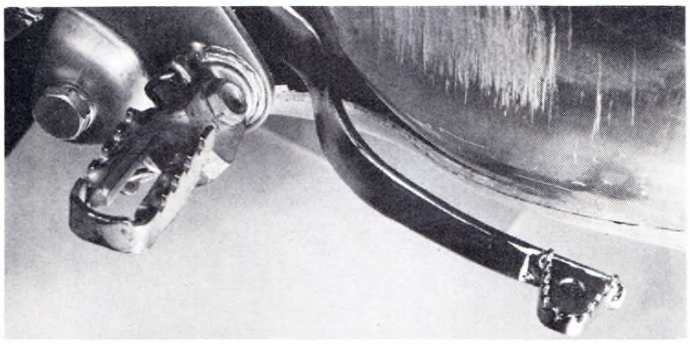

At the bottom rear of the frame there is a blank hole on either side; each is plugged by a plastic stopper. Use a screwdriver to pop these out. Discard them, as they will no longer be used. In the exposed holes, tap in the two large bushings that are threaded to 10mm.

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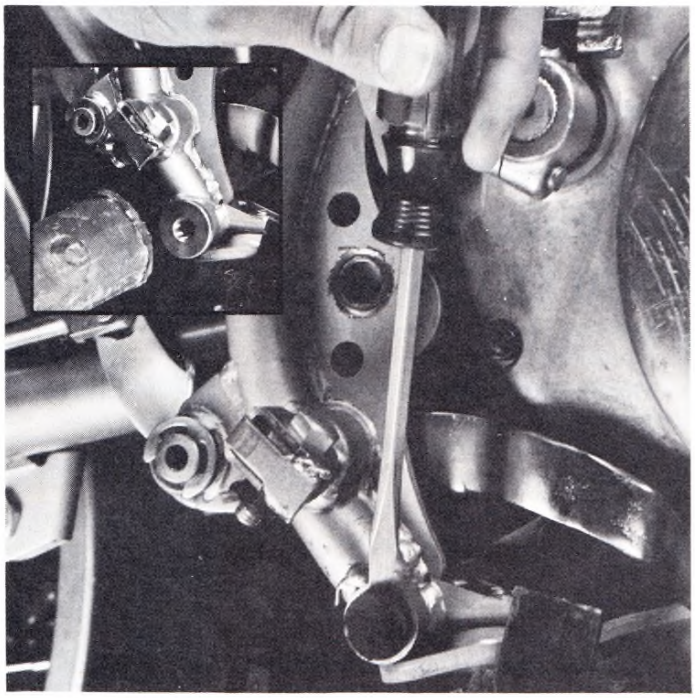

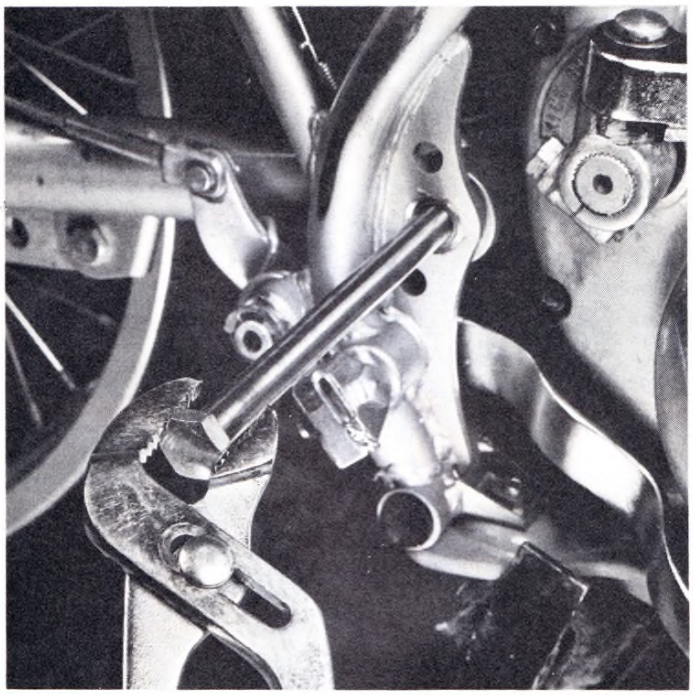

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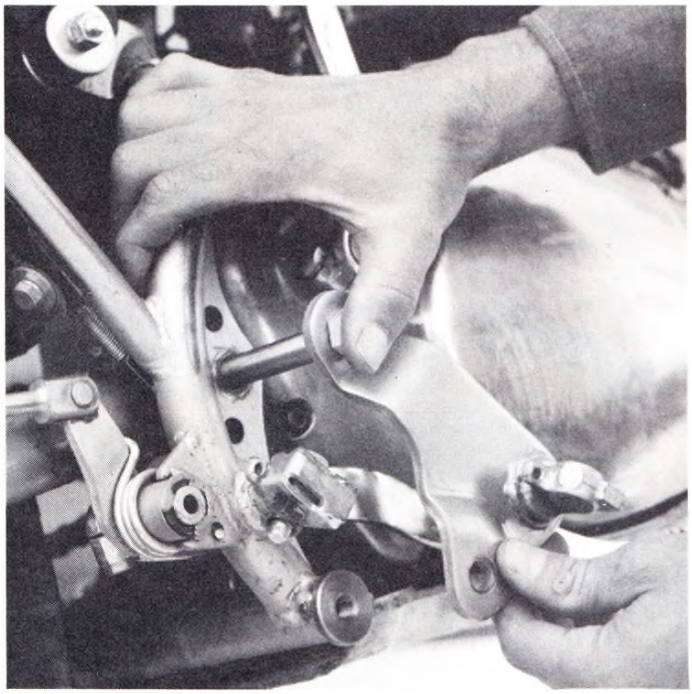
The footpeg plates attach to the swinging arm pivot shaft. The standard shaft isn't long enough because of the added thickness of these two plates. The shaft is replaced by one that is 25mm longer. Using a 19mm socket and 17mm wrench, remove the pivot shaft nut. With the aid of pliers, pull the shaft out.



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Slide the right footpeg plate over the pivot shaft and push the shaft through the swinging arm. Install the other plate and then screw the two 10mm bolts into the lower bushings. Tighten the swinging arm nut and then the lower mounting bolts. Attach the footpegs to the new plates and you are back in business again.