# MONTESA 250 ENDURO

## Before you run right out and buy one, ask yourself if you're as serious as this bike is.

Among the vastly diversified gang of trail-enduro freaks (not to mention most varieties of motorcyclists) there traditionally have been two major divisions: there are those who are involved primarily for the enjoyment of being a participant, getting in on the fun; and there are those eccentrics with more powerful inner drive and achievement orientation who desire only the most intense and thorough experiences.

The first group have frequently been seen riding converted (or some semblance) Japanese street/trail bikes, older four-stroke twins or singles, or a plethora of bizarre and strange antiques which humor the riders to some extent and friends to a large extent. Some very famous machines such as the "Rotten Cotton" and "ISDT Ducati" have gained reknown from just this sort of rider.

Group two, the intense devotees, ride machines which usually cost quite a lot, require quite a lot of maintenance and break a little anyway, all much to the entertainment of the Japanese and grand old single riders. But those Bultacos, Huskys, Pentons,

OSSAs and Maicos go very fast when they have to, faster than the others could safely think about, and treat their passengers with comfort, safety and rapidly increasing skill.

And both groups have been happy taunting each other for some time.

As time passed, people who owned the hybrid enduro machines tended more and more to group, for both moral and technical support, and simply because they spent so much time being involved with the sport. In the last two years enduro and Two-Day Trial riding have changed in nature to suit this growingly powerful minority subculture. Most important has been the charisma that Two-Day Trials and the ISDT have given to being a gassit trail rider.

Today, the difference between the highly evolved European enduro equipment and the Japanese trail/enduro bikes has become even more significant than when the DT 1 first came out. Major difference is that Japanese bikes are dual purpose: street/trail; European enduros are dual purpose: enduro/motocross. Today the difference is represented by nearly 80 pounds, twice the horsepower, twice the suspension travel and the difference between yes and no in handling.

Because of their very nature, as influenced by the bikes they ride, the elitist eccentrics are going to make it harder for the good-timers. And because of that nature they tend to gain power. Some will unintentionally trail-race friends off an unknown cliff, and others will semi-unwittingly set enduro speed averages above the potential top speed of many bikes. Beware all you good-timers.

It's possible that the only reason you might need one of the blood-rush enduro machines is to keep up with Harry. Shouldn't be all that important. Besides, you might like it just a whole lot better than you would want to admit. Let's consider the alternatives:

There's probably not anything you can do to stop these maniacs, so the alternatives are to join or grin and bare it. We always welcome newcomers because it's comforting to have fellow addicts—makes us feel more normal. And once you've tried one of these new breed enduro bikes you're a goner for sure. You can't just dabble in this stuff; it's after your body and mind.

You could spend a bunch of money on your Japanese enduro to

**MONTESA 250 ENDURO**
**Montesa Motors**
**3657 Beverly Blvd.**
**Los Angeles, Calif. 90004**
**Suggested retail: $1560**

**SPECIFICATIONS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Engine | Piston port/two-stroke/single |
| Bore/stroke | 70mm/64mm |
| Displacement | 246.3cc |
| Compression ratio | 12:1 uncorrected |
| Claimed horsepower | NA |
| Claimed torque | NA |
| Carburetion | 32mm Amal 2900 series square body |
| Clutch | Multi-plate wet type |
| Primary drive | Gear, 2.65:1 |
| Gear ratios (:1) | 2.60; 1.615; 1.117; 0.833; 0.681 |
| Final drive | 11/48 (4.35454 . . . :1) |
| Lubrication | Premix 32:1 |
| Fuel | 90 plus octane |
| Oil | No recommendation |
| Jetting: | |
| Mainjet | 210 |
| Slow speed | 30 |
| Gas valve | 2928/060 (type 3.5) |
| Needle | 2-D-1 |
| Position | notch 3 |

**DIMENSIONS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Wheelbase | 56.0-58.0 inches |
| Ground clearance | 8.5 inches |
| Peg height | 12.5 inches |
| Seat height | 33.5 inches |
| Running weight | 248 pounds |
| Weight distribution | 45.3% front/54.7% rear |
| Fuel capacity | 3.0 gallons |
| Rear wheel travel | 6 inches |

**COMPONENTS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Forks | 7.5 inch Montesa/Betor |
| Shocks | 6.0 RWT Telesco w/130 pound springs |
| Frame | Cold drawn steel, single downtube cradle |
| Pegs | Folding steel, spring loaded |
| Hubs | Conical alloy |
| Brakes | SLS cable both wheels |
| Rims | Ridgeless Akront |
| Tires | Pirelli 3.00x21/4.50x18 |
| Chain | ⅝″ pitch Joresa |
| Ignition | Motoplat 3.0mm BTDC |
| Lighting | Head and taillight |
| Tools | Small assortment under airbox |
| Air filter | Foam in still box |
| Sparking plug | Bosch W 240/270 T2/T17 |
| Fenders | Unbreakable plastic |
| Number plates | 3 plastic |
| Kill switch | In housing on left bar |
| Rim locks | 1 front/2 rear |
| Throttle turn | 90 degrees |
| Muffler | Pleasant spark arrester/silencer |

**Conical alloy hubs look pretty lying side by side and functional once in place.**

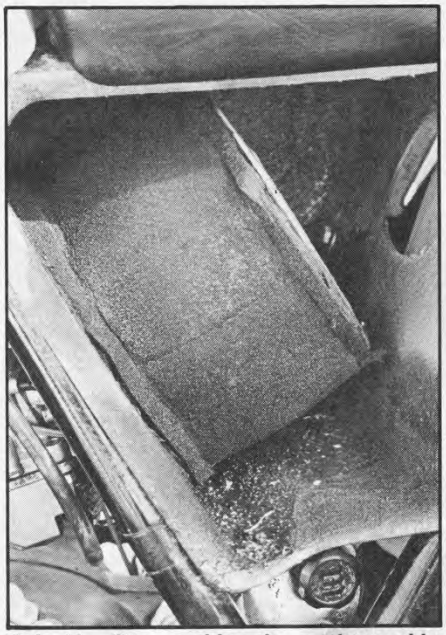
make it competitive with a new Montesa, Husky, Penton or Bultaco. Let's see, $200 for LTR and trick shocks; $140 for Ceriani, Betor, Marzocchi, or Boge forks; a frame cut here and there for $30-50 in welding and expertise; a big plastic tank for another $40; a new seat or at least new padding for $??; port work and a different pipe to get useful and sufficient power for $!! or more; miscellaneous doo-dads such as grips, tires, cables, pegs, fenders. If it doesn't end up costing more than the $1600 average for the Quick Four, it will be a surprise. If it is as quick, as well suspended, close to equivalent handling and half as reliable it will be a minor miracle. No, that isn't such a good idea.

The question isn't whether you should buy a ready racer or build one from humble stock. Question is, do you want to get into that whole thing anyway? Consider whether you might be happier putting within the limits of your basic trail/enduro bike. Putting cheaply (relatively) and reliably, instead of stretching your budget and your family relations. Buying, owning and riding one of the new "works" equipped Two-Day/Enduro bikes is a commitment. A commitment with significant but narrow rewards.

There was minimal doubt after the first few moments on the Montesa 250 Enduro that it belonged wholeheartedly in the division of Gassit Enduros. Actually, there was little doubt even before riding it. It is maybe slightly softer than the straight motocross-with-lights Penton, but still a converted V-75 motocrosser. The enduro 250 has a Cappra V-75 motor with a slightly different exhaust port, longer intake skirt on the piston, different gearbox ratios, a 32mm Square Amal, a magneto ignition and a pleasantly quiet 84db pipe. About 5-6hp are lost from the V-75's 30 rear wheel items. Gains are in tractability and longevity. Montesa chose to take no chances on the enduro's reliability in trade for horsepower. You can reinstall whatever amount you want by adding the V-75 pieces. Frame geometry, suspension (no Betor gas shocks on the enduro yet) and wheels are identical. The gas tank holds 3.25 gallons and the seat has classy stitching.

In keeping with its basic motocross temperament, the Enduro 250 prefers to be ridden hard. It has two basic speeds: slow and fast. The exceptionally accurate new Amal and Femsa magneto keep the Cappra ports tractable and clean-running for plonking, and in first and second there is sufficient slow speed torque to grunt uphill or over obstacles.

But there is barely enough midrange for that loping, casual style of riding. For easier enduro speeds, the gearbox has to be carefully used to keep the motor working just below heavy-duty power. Flywheel keeps the motor from stalling or becoming jumpy, but not much happens when you want it. Unlike the other frantic enduro machines, a quick burst of throttle won't break the rear wheel loose and get the motor onto the powerband.



**Twin-Air filter resides in a thoroughly waterproof airbox. Funny can below is a toolbox.**

For many people this will be the significant advantage of the Montesa. It is quite a lot easier to ride than the Penton or Husky, or at least easier to learn to get along with. Both the Montesa and the Bultaco are easier (not necessarily easy) to ride smoothly and casually.

Kick up the pace a couple of notches, and the Montesa will be much happier. Aggress at the terrain some; push it into corners; let the front wheel float over a set of bumps; snap the corners and use the throttle all the way, and everything falls into place. A rear brake that felt a little grabby going slower now feels just right, suddenly the power is all there and the engine actually feels torquey. Push harder and you shift less, letting the engine get its breath in each gear. For hard riding the gear ratios are nearly perfect, but at slower speeds they seem too wide.

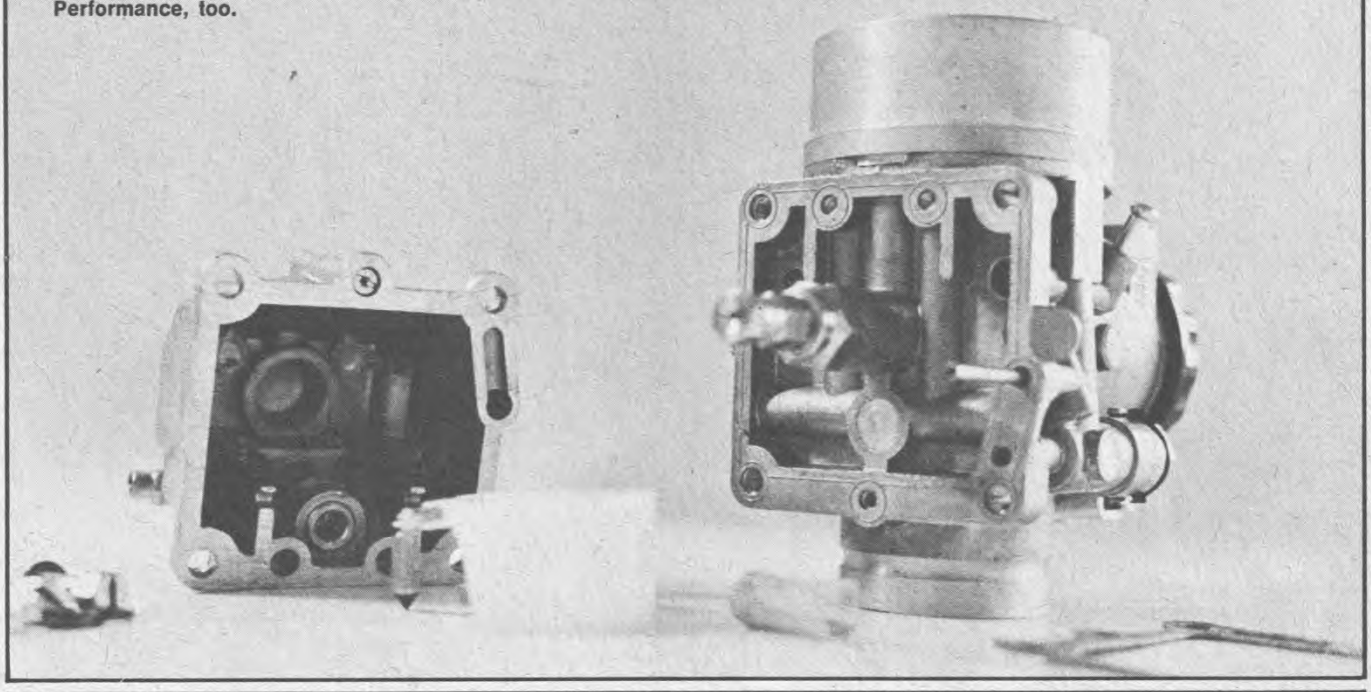
Going slower the suspension felt roly-poly, but now the wheels seem to float over the terrain. That age old LTR problem of teaching the eyes to ignore bumps becomes a concern. Seems as if the faster you go the better the suspension and geometry work. The chore of riding begins to flow. Shifting is something that happens naturally. Throttle on—brakes on. It's not brutal at all, just flowing surges from turn to turn. Never seem to get into corners to deep, because there's never a question of how hard to brake. It just happens. The Montesa is very rhythmic. It feels the pace and adopts its own smooth role. All of the systems; power, braking, suspension, handling work together and are at their optimum between a 24 and 30 mph average. Definitely the easiest of the Fleet Four enduros to get on and ride quickly.

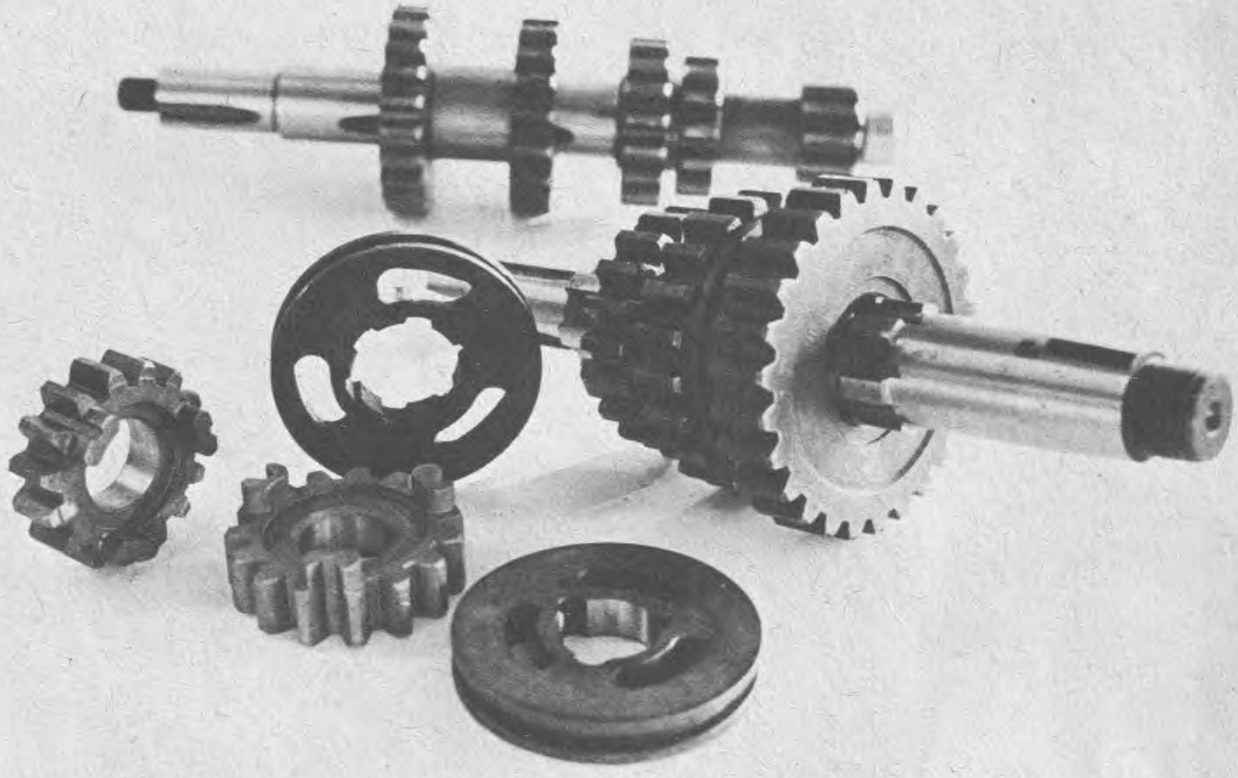
Enduros aren't ridden at 24 mph. They are commonly ridden at some combination of 3-8 mph and 30-50 mph. In every one of these go-fast enduro 250s is a compromise. They handle just wonderfully in the 30-50 mph bracket, but things aren't so wonderful at 3-8 mph. All the suspension travel does strange things to chassis geometry in slow tight corners. In order to keep the rake something like normal the bike has to be pushed hard enough to compress both ends of the suspension some significant portion of travel. The wonderful combination is a little hard to come by, but seems progressively proportional to speed and self-assurance. It is very easy to get very sloppy in deep sand or large rocks. The only out seems to be to gas it. An expert will have little trouble becoming accustomed, but a novice could have a very trying learning experience. If you aren't a better-than-average rider when you start out on one of these hyper-LTR bikes, you will either become one quickly or pursue a different sport such as pinball.

Our Montesa Enduro played in about 700 kilometers of various district and non-district So-Cal enduros, under the guiding gloves of a couple of different riders. Some of the things we found out about it in that time:

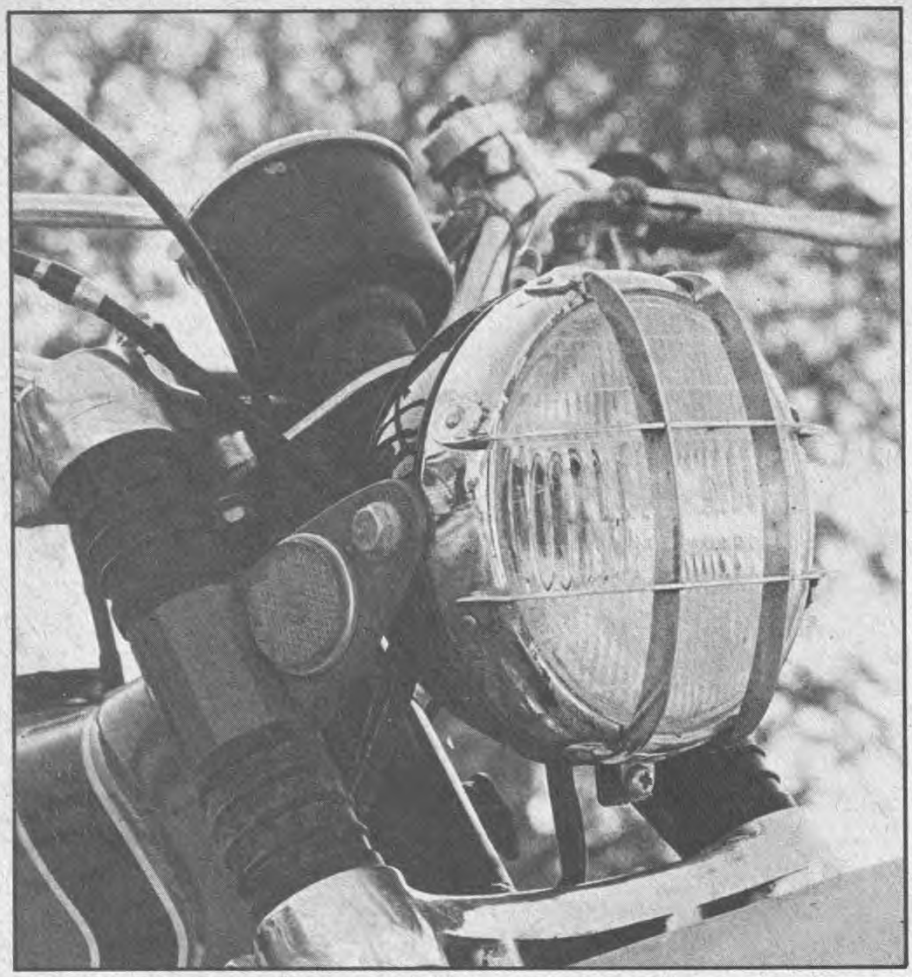
Engine proved to be completely reliable. Once it was running it kept running. But on two different below-freezing mornings it wasn't inclined to start of its own will. Towing it brought it to life in short order. It seems that the Amal choke lever may not provide quite enough enrichening. Without a tickler there is little personal control. During those kilometers it ran on the same plug and one cleaning of the Twin-Air filter. It never even loaded up when taken to 8,000 feet with stock jetting.

Innards of new square body Amal reveals self-proclaimed Mikuni-like appearance. Performance, too.





Montesa transmission is one of the simplest and most functional going. Five-speed wide ratio set here.



**Veglia-Brissel KPH speedo is being replaced by a VDO on all upcoming enduros. You can wrangle a trade.**

Every kilometer that went by found the transmission working better and better. It is one of the best European transmissions to date. The clutch took a fair amount of abuse hill climbing and never even required adjustment. It wouldn't have taken quite so much if the gearing had been one tooth lower on the countershaft. As geared, the engine wouldn't quite pull all of fifth on pavement. 120 kph showed one time on a dirt road. That's something like 75 mph and the engine wasn't strung out at all.

Derek at Montesa was clever enough to slip a set of Metzelers on the test bike. Stock tires are Pirelli which have no business on any enduro bike, except maybe in the 40 Days And 40 Nights Enduro. In the mud they work, but there just isn't enough sidewall strength for enduros.

The right fork seal wept almost constantly and occasional additions of fluid kept it working adequately, but the Allen screw on the left forkleg was stripped and leaked a significant amount of fluid out the bottom. Unfortunately, it didn't leak straight out, but traveled along the axle and flowed into the front hub. Brake loss signaled a loose screw. Those screws are a hassle.

Both Telesco shocks went bye-bye on the last enduro. It was a set of roller coasters at 24 mph that did it. Stock fluid in Telescos is notoriously gross and indications are that if you replace the stock fluid with 70cc of Bel-Ray LT100, then bleed off 5cc as you snug the cap, then add somewhere between 110 and 130-pound springs (make very sure the caps are screwed on the same number of turns) that the Telescos will prove to be adequate to as-good-as-you-can-get. We experienced monumental fade but neither shock leaked or discolored. Finally, in the last few moments of picture taking, the cap stripped out on the right shock, we suspicion because they were not put on the same number of turns causing the one shock to take all the rebound topping force.

Spokes and wheels stayed tight and true despite the shock absorber difficulties and a profusion of rocks in recent enduros. There was one small ding in the rear ridgeless

**Eye on right Telesco stripped out right at the end of our photo session. Fixed soon, according to Montesa.**


RUSS

**Young lady admires attractive Montesa and unscrupulous photo-journalist.**

Akront. When we could keep the oil out of the front hub, both brakes worked well. Both were subject to fade in water but came back within 100 yards if they were applied

**Compression release works fine and is actually handy at times, but not exactly necessary.**

lightly. There was no grabbiness in the interim. A wholly adequate performance.

Enduro equipment longevity: All the lights and bulbs lasted the test, but for the taillight lens vibrating off in the last 30 kilometers and the speedometer being smashed into oblivion in a rock strewn, dull-minded, fuzzily-remembered endo. Enough said about that, except that nothing else suffered more than a scratch in that thumper. The gas tank is plenty thick fiberglass, not easily broken and has a basically appealing shape. Problems: it proved to conform exactly to one tester's crotch and we suspicion that its shape contributes to putting a good deal of weight on the front wheel when full, confirmed in that it doesn't feel that way when you're almost out of gas.

It's remarkable that the seat isn't anywhere near as bad as everything says it should be. It feels hard, but in the long run continues to give good support. Maybe the shape is so good that the lack of padding goes unnoticed. But it does limit you to sitting in one place which also happens to be the right place. For long rides it would be nice to be able to move around a little to stretch.

Surprisingly, ground clearance is no significant problem: 8 inches underneath is bare minimum, but the strong, well-shaped fiberglass bashplate lets you cruise right over most anything. The pegs are set relatively high, but it's still good habit to keep your toes up and in. The pegs never bit anything during the test but a few Heckel boots did. Love those Heckels. Both shift and brake levers stayed damage-free in the rocks.

When you ride a Montesa Enduro, you'll come away thinking about the handling. All the other pieces of the bike are like compliments to the way it handles. The engine helps it turn quickly, and the throttle control lets it steer precisely. The suspension helps it turn quickly, and the throttle control lets it steer precisely. The suspension helps it be stable in very rough going, yet keeps the wheels on the ground so you can flick it back and forth between obstacles. Brakes let it get that quick turn started later.

That harmony of components lets the Montesa be equally competitive with bikes like the Husky, Penton and Bultaco which are probably a bit quicker, just because it leaves the rider more time for riding and spends less time making demands. •