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Making of a Classic

Innovation and cutting edge technologies are hallmarks of the Yamaha brand. But, we also know the art of not changing a good thing when our customers love it. As owners of the classic SR400 and 500 gathered to celebrate the models' 25th birthday recently, we talked to the engineers who designed them to find out what makes a good thing last.

Two Stories About Two Classics

This year is the 25th anniversary of the birth of the Yamaha SR400, a milestone which has been commemorated with the release of a special 25th anniversary special edition of this long-selling model. In this issue of Yamaha News we will recount the story of the XT500 that was the predecessor to the SR400. The other story we have comes from a participant in the world-class SSDT trial competition in Scotland in May, where much attention focused on the Yamaha 125cc 4-stroke powered model called the Scorpa TYS125F. Both of these models have roots that go back about 30 years.



The XT500 was Yamaha's first big single and it was developed with American Enduro racing in mind

The XT500, a child of the desert And then the evolution to the SR400 and 500

The 1974 development of a Yamaha "Big Single"

It was three decades ago in the autumn of 1974 that Yamaha engineers undertook the development of the XT500. The project leader at the time recalls that the image they started with was one of the Enduro races that were being held at the time in the wide-open spaces of America. Two machines were developed simultaneously, the TT500 (code named the 043) conceived as an Enduro model, and the XT500 (code 043A). What the project team sought to do was basically to bring the exciting world of off-road potential that the 2-stroke DT-1 had opened up into the 4-stroke category. The Enduro races that were being run in the wilderness and desert areas of the U.S. demanded machines with strong engine torque. That is what made the big single format an obvious choice. And, to make sure that the machines they were developing truly met the needs of Enduro riding at a very high level, Yamaha's development team sent their prototypes to the

U.S. for testing in the actual race environment, which was in itself a new challenge for Yamaha. And indeed, the test data gained there was invaluable in fine-tuning the machine's performance. The threshold for endurance testing was also upped 2.5 times the normal level. Those tough tests at first resulted in broken pistons and conrods, but the final product that emerged had a previously unprecedented level of durability that would make the XT500 stand out from the rest.

This is the XT500 that would be unveiled at the 1975 Tokyo Motor Show the following year. Also appearing at the Yamaha booth that year were a group of new machines like the DOHC 3-cylinder GX750, the DOHC 4-valve 2-cylinder GX500 and the 2-stroke RD series models, all of which signaled the arrival of a new age of multi-cylinder motorcycles. But this fact also served to focus even more attention on the XT500 as a deliberate pursuit of single-cylinder engine potential that ran against the trends of the day.

Yamaha 4-stroke Single-cylinder Machines



The final German-market model of the SR500

When the XT500 went on sale the following year, 1976, it quickly won high acclaim in markets everywhere. In Colombia, in South America, it was hailed as the “Rolls Royce of motorcycles.” And, what people inevitably praised was its smooth and linear power development characteristics and unique riding potential different from the multi-cylinder models. This XT500 also proved to be a winner in rally competitions. It soon became the machine of choice for French and Italian riders competing in beach rallies and the North African desert rallies that were becoming popular. When the Paris-Senegal rally was held in 1979, Frenchman Cyril Neveu would win on an XT500. This would prove to be the inaugural competition of the now-

famous Paris-Dakar rallies that are known today as the world’s toughest rally. (As we introduced in our #5 issue of *Yamaha News* in 2002, teams led by Yamaha Motor France’s President J-C Olivier would come to dominate this rally in later years.)

This is the XT500 that would eventually evolve into today’s XT600E, a model that continues to be loved for its durability and glorious history of performance. Even today it remains the most popular model in the larger displacement class in places like southern Europe.

The SR and 25 years of answering user needs

Soon after the emergence of the XT500 in 1976, Yamaha began hearing calls for an on-road model mounting the same big-single engine. This call led to the birth of the SR400 and 500 in 1978. Taking the XT500 as their base, the SR models appeared with modifications in the

intake and exhaust systems, the crank mass and the chassis components to meet the needs of on-road riding. With the natural handling feeling deriving from the slender chassis design and the unique appeal of the distinctive engine pulse that only a big-single can provide, the SR models soon won high praise in countries around the world. The renowned German motorcycle magazine *Motorrad* confirmed this popularity by naming the SR its “Motorcycle of the Year.”

Although these models stopped being supplied to Europe around 1995 after nearly a quarter century of continued sales, their popularity remains high, as evidenced by the SR clubs still active in places like Germany. And sales continue of the Japanese market models today. The unchanging SR look and the special flavor of the pulse that only a single-cylinder engine can offer are among the reasons for these models’ undying popularity.

Still, there were times during those 25 years when the proposal came up to stop production. But, in the end the ongoing SR popularity prevented it from happening. Even as the times brought high-performance developments to the motorcycle industry, the SR has kept a place of its own with its simple single-cylinder engine and classic good looks. This is what won the users, hearts and what made true fans who wouldn’t let the SR die for all those years. As the engineers who actually worked on the development of the SR remind us, a big part of a maker’s responsibility is to constantly develop and introduce products with innovative new technologies, but another part is to protect models like the SR that have won a devoted following among the users. They believed that the individuality of the SR is one more asset of the Yamaha brand, and an asset worth preserving. In today’s world where innovations in mechanisms and technologies often



Many of the SR users today are younger than the model itself

change the face of products completely, the history of the SR is an example of the art of not changing a good thing. But, that doesn't mean that the SR has not continued to mature in important ways. Yamaha engineers have taken all the necessary steps to keep the SR in pace with the demands of new noise and emissions regulations, while also improving reliability in significant ways. Still, these improvements have never been allowed to change that unique but unassuming SR look and its distinct flavor. That is why most people never even notice the SR's ongoing maturation.

SR Birthday Celebrations

Considering how devoted SR fans are, it is no wonder that owners turned out from all over the country in unprecedented numbers when events were held in Japan in May and June of this year to celebrate the models' 25th birthday. More than 3,000 people showed up with 1,250 SR machines for the birthday meetings that were held in three locations around Japan, namely Yokohama, Kobe and Fukuoka. This represented an unprecedented attendance for a meeting of this kind for owners of a single model. Like other events of this type, the owners spent much of their time admiring each other's machines and building new friendships. But there were also scenes that spoke of the unique love owners have for the SR, like when owners at the Yokohama event got together to present the representatives of the original SR development team with flowers as a token of their appreciation.

Slimness and compactness are ideals that Yamaha engineers have pursued endlessly in their product development over the years, and perhaps few models reflect this ideal better than the 30-year history that started with the XT500 and matured through the SR400 and 500.

Two Stories About Two Classics

Challenge Spirit and the 2003 SSdT in Scotland

The 4-stroke makes its sound heard at the world's top trial competition

Our second story comes from Scotland, where a Yamaha 125cc engine became the focus of attention. The Scottish six days trial (SSdT) event is one of the world's leading trial competitions with a 100-year history at the small town of Fort William on the west coast of Scotland about 500 kilometers north of London. Traveling over a total of about 150 km, the competitors must clear 30 sections of natural rock formations in a day. The paths they must travel between these sections are also tough and the competition goes on for six days. The 2003 holding of the six days trial gathered 280 top competitors from countries around the world in May, and one of the things that drew atten-

tion was a machine with an engine sound no one was used to hearing at trials events. This was the first event that saw a 4-stroke machine competing side-by-side with the conventional 2-stroke trial machines. The machine was the Scorpa TYS125F prototype and as it passed the gallery, it frequently drew appreciative comments from the spectators with its pleasing 4-stroke exhaust sound. In fact, the engine on this model is basically the same SOHC 125cc Yamaha engine that first appeared on the TTR125 in 2000. It may also be familiar to many of our readers as the engine that now powers the YBR125 being produced and sold in Brazil by Yamaha Motor Do Brasil Ltda. (YMDB) and in China by Jiangsu Nanfang Yamaha Motor Co. Ltd. (YMJ), and also the "LIBERO" manufactured by Yamaha Motor India Private Ltd. (YMI). As a matter of fact, it is the engine that powers more Yamaha motorcycles, with the exception of scooters, than any other.

The Scorpa prototype at the SSdT was ridden by Takumi Narita (Japan) and Martin Crosswaite (UK), and they were joined by Haruo Kimura of the Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd. (YMC) support staff from Japan. All three riders finished the demanding six days of competition, with Martin placing an impressive 20th overall, the highest finish by anyone in the under 200cc class. (The three competition classes are under 200cc, 200cc~250cc and over 250cc.)

Besides these results, however, what attracted the attention to this machine was its 4-stroke sound. At one of the tougher sections, when Kimura was about to skip part of it to make sure he could finish the day, he was greeted by an excited fan who said, "I've been waiting here all day just to hear the great sound of your 4-stroke." Encouraged by this, Kimura made another valiant attack on the section once again to the cheers of the fans in the gallery. In a competition where the 2-stroke sound has long been the norm, the fans had clearly found a new reason to cheer.

Kimura's idea and the Scorpa company



Mr. Kimura and TYS125F prototype

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Yamaha 4-stroke Single-cylinder Machines

There is an interesting story behind the birth of this TYS125F prototype. It originated with an idea of Kimura's. "About three years ago, I had mounted the engine from the TTR125 on a prototype machine and tested it out in a trial competition in Japan. At that time, I was surprised at how well the torque-y, tough performance of the 4-stroke engine suited trial competition. It had also aroused a lot of fan attention as a machine that looked light and torque-full and one that almost anyone could feel comfortable with for casual enjoyment of trial riding. I was hearing numerous people say that Yamaha should make it into a production model," Kimura recalls. That was enough to make him determined to bring the great features of this engine to trial competition. But there were some issues that had to be dealt with in the development process. What engine specs would be best? What factory could it be manufactured at? Could the same settings be used?

At that time, Yamaha was already supplying the chassis constructor Scorpa with its 250cc 2-stroke trial-

Scorpa to ride our 4-stroke prototype and experience it for themselves. I took it to a Japanese trial event the year before last and had them test ride it. The president of Scorpa tried it and loved it. He took off on a ride and didn't come back for the longest time," laughs Kimura. That was the turning point, and soon the project got underway.

It was eventually decided to have the engine for the TYS125F produced at the YMDB factory in Brazil and a system was worked out to have the engines shipped to Minarelli in Italy and then to Scorpa in France for assembly of the finished machines. They say the orders are pouring in for this new production model that goes on sale this summer, and it will be interesting to see if there are any differences with the engine performance compared to the TTR125 or YBR125.

Reliability tested and proven in regions all over the world

"The carburetor retains the same settings as the base engine. The only major difference is the gear ratios which have been set with consideration for the demands of touring trial type competition to have a closer ratio between 1st and 2nd gears and a higher 5th gear.

Over the six days of the recent SSDT competition it has proven itself to be a machine that can take everything from wet rock sections to high-speed transition legs with no problems. And, I think a lot of the credit goes to



The SSDT competition in Scotland, birthplace of trial competition

the fact that it is powered by an engine that has been matured and proven in tough use conditions in all parts of the world. I was convinced once again what a well-built and well-tuned power unit this is," comments Kimura.

Looking back, Yamaha introduced its first trial model, the TY250J, in 1973. It won the SSDT competition two consecutive years in 1974 and '75 ridden by Britain's Mick "The Magician" Andrews. After that, Yamaha continued to expand the market with the introduction of the TY250R, TY250Z and the TY250 Scottish. But, due to a number of factors, Yamaha is not building any production trial bikes at this time. Still, the fact that Scorpa is now producing bikes with Yamaha engines is certainly an extension of the Yamaha trial challenge that began 30 years ago.



All the sections on the tough SSDT course are rock formations. Also, the transition legs that must be covered between sections are long and high-speed

bike engines. Kimura got the idea to propose a 125cc 4-stroke model based on this working relationship with Scorpa. "The first thing I knew I should do was to get the people at



Mr. Kimura and team staff

The achievements and challenges of a

**Industria Colombiana De
Motocicletas Yamaha S.A.
(Incolmos Yamaha S.A.)**

**Location: La Estrella, Antioquia,
Colombia**

**President: José Luis Arango
Employees: 429**



Headquarters and assembly plant in "La Estrella," near to Medellín



Our reporter, Ms. Claudia Ruiz of Communication Department, Incolmos-Yamaha

What *Kando* means in the Colombian market

The motorcycle market in Colombia is dominated by the work and transportation use categories, which make up roughly 95% of the total demand, while only 5% of the bikes sold here are for leisure or recreational use. This means that what the large majority of customers are looking for above all else are quality products and services they can rely on. The key to Yamaha's leadership in the Colombian market has been our absolute commitment

to quality, beginning with the types of products we choose to market and extending to our close work with YMC in the selection of national and international suppliers for components for the CKD (Complete Knock-Down) Yamaha products we assemble here in Colombia, and our ongoing pursuit of excellence in the assembly processes, sales and post-sale service. As a result of these efforts, the Yamaha motorcycles we assemble here in Colombia have



The board of Directors during the visit of Mr. Hajime Yamaji from YMC

won a reputation for durability and performance on par with the product assembled in Japan. This is an important reason why Colombian customers choose Yamaha over the competitor brands. It also contributes to the high resale price Yamaha motorcycles command here, which is another fundamental element our customers are looking

for, because more often than not their motorcycle is an important economic investment and an integral part of their life and livelihood. In the Colombian market, where 80% of the customers have an income under US\$220 per month, motorcycles are the vehicles of choice thanks to their outstanding economy. This is also the reason why the *Kando* we aim to bring our customers

may have a slightly different meaning from some other markets. To customers like these, for whom price is a fundamental factor, *Kando* means knowing that you are getting real Yamaha quality at an affordable price. This knowledge has also been a factor in preventing a greater penetration of the cheaper import models from makers in countries like China.

Market strength built on "3S"

Besides the fundamental points of quality and price, customers choose our Yamaha motorcycles because they know that we have the most extensive distribution network, the fullest services and a ready sup-

ply of spare parts. In other words, the Yamaha "3S" program has been another important factor in our growth. Thanks to our pursuit of the "3S" program with its emphasis on a fully integrated foundation of Sales Service and Spare Parts, the Yamaha brand is recognized as No. 1 in technical service here in Colombia, and Incolmos-Yamaha has also been recognized as one of the ten best within the worldwide Yamaha Group. We have made Colombia a center for the Yamaha Technical Academy (YTA) training program for mechanics in Latin America, and we were the first company in the region to participate successfully in the Technician Grand Prix.

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Motorcycles mean opportunity and security

In Colombia, the excellent performance of Yamaha motorcycles as transport vehicles often expands people's work possibilities, both on a personal or commercial basis. For example, in the cities of the coastal region many people have found a viable work opportunity as motorcycle-taxi drivers, offering passengers a very economical public transportation alternative to buses and taxis. In Montería, a city of



Police authorities often choose to carry out their duties on Yamaha motorcycles



Colombia is the center of training for the YTA Program

leader brand

390,000 inhabitants, there are now some 2,500 motorcycle-taxis in operation.

Also, the police authorities, who are responsible for the security of the country and the protection of the citizens, often choose to carry out their duties on Yamaha motorcycles. Two years ago, Incolmos-Yamaha established an office especially to serve this important customer segment. Our staff from this office travel all over the country to submit their bids and win commissions for the supply of police bikes. Yamaha motorcycles find different but also important uses in rural towns and villages, where they may be used by ranchers for herding cattle or carrying fresh milk containers to the milk-processing factories.

But, no matter whether the user is a big business, a government agency or a private user, anyone who purchases a Yamaha motorcycle, in any part of the country, has the assurance of knowing there is an authorized Yamaha distributor nearby. These distributors offer genuine spare parts and the qualified, professional technical service of Incolmos-Yamaha. And they also know that they have gotten "the best vehicle, at the best price."

Yamaha, the Winning Brand

When we talk about extreme sport in Colombia, motocross is a popular example, and the Yamaha-Pirelli team is Colombia's best, boasting as its top rider Juan David Posada, seven-time national champion in the 250cc category. Four more promising riders are also on the team.



Incolmos Yamaha sponsors Colombia's six-time motocross champ, Juan David Posada

The following for this sport has been growing. In fact, an event held at the Incolmos-Yamaha tract in Girardota, Antioquia, attracted more than 5,000 fans who discovered the passion and emotion of the motorcycling. Many of these were children and teenagers, who are the seeds for the development and growth of the sport of motocross nationwide and therefore the growth of this segment of motorcycles in Colombia.

In Colombia we also have scooter races in which the top places are usually won by Yamaha JOG and BW'S riders. Because of the strong following of the sport, Colombia has created a new category, RX-115. This competition fills the streets in the cities and even small towns with emotion and excitement.

Cultural Contributions

In support of cultural and musical development in Colombia, Incolmos-Yamaha with the cooperation and guidance of Yamaha Corporation and Yamaha Music Foundation of Japan, started marketing musical instruments and offering musical education through the Yamaha Schools of Music in 1990. Today we have six stores that sell directly to the public in the main cities, 55 distributors throughout the country and schools of musical education in Medellin, Bogota and Cali. Furthermore, we offer technical assistance in authorized customer service centers that cover the entire Colombian territory.

Incolmos-Yamaha is deeply involved in the cultural development of Colombia, offering instruments for peace with the strong belief that "a child that embraces a musical instrument will never hold a gun."

Brand Strategy to meet the challenges of a new environment



Stigmatization of motorcycle users negatively affect sales in the local market

Maintaining market leadership today is a great challenge. As a motorcycle marketer we have to face with creativity and enthusiasm the challenges of assertive competitors and the America's Free Trade Agreement (ALCA). For Incolmos-Yamaha, ALCA means we will have to compete directly in our local market with, for example, motorcycles assembled in Brazil, where larger production volumes could create an advantage in pricing strategies. There is also stigmatization of motorcycle users in the local market and, as a result, the authorities have often reacted by implementing legal procedures and actions, in many cases arbitrary, that negatively affect the motorcycle market. These actions have made it more difficult for people to take advantage of the benefits a motorcycle can offer and have also had a negative effect on the sales of motorcycles. Our competitors are increasingly more aggressive in their pricing strategies, discounts, and financing alternatives, which have permitted them to expand their margin in the market for economic motorcycle models for transportation and work

use, where the majority of the motorcycle sales concentrate. In order to maintain our leadership, we are building a new brand strategy to consolidate our market positioning and allow us to grow as a business. It is a strategy that incorporates the central values of YMC, while adapting them to the conditions of the Colombian market.

Today Incolmos is the sales leader, but we know that difficult times lie ahead. To face them, Incolmos-Yamaha relies on the Spirit of Challenge that Yamaha is famous for and our experience of 25 years in the market. To this we add a new company vision and a business strategy that addresses the new business environment. With these we are confident that we can continue expanding the horizons of the Yamaha brand and our customers in the region.



Incolmos-Yamaha is deeply involved in the cultural development of the country

This Is My Country



COLOMBIA

Name of the country: Republic of Colombia
Capital city: Bogotá
Area: 1,141,748 Km²
Population: 43 million
GDP: US\$225 billion (2001 est.)
Currency: Colombian peso

Colombia lies between the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. In spite of its conflicts, it is a magical country of marvelous landscapes with abundance of flora and fauna, diversity of climates and very warm, supportive, and kind people who enchant its visitors.

A Country of great growing development

Colombia has had important industrial development and its economy, contrary to some other countries in South America, now shows constant growth in the industrial sector, not only in the domestic market, but also in exports. Within this industrial sector the following industries can be highlighted: food processing, the textile industry, tobacco products, iron, steel and trans-



Colombia is a country of contrasts, charms and enchantments

Colombian exports in the economic sector 2002

	millions of dollars	%
Total exports	11,900.47	100
Traditional exports	5,309.83	44.62
Petroleum and its products	3,275.01	27.52
Coffee	772.20	6.49
Coal	990.16	8.32
Ferro-nickel	272.46	2.29
Non-traditional exports	6,590.63	55.38
Agriculture, livestock, forestry, hunting and fishing	1,193.41	10.03
Mining	10.79	0.09
Industry	5,348.14	44.94
Foods, beverages and tobacco	936.23	7.87
Textile and clothes	872.39	7.33
Timbers	68.47	0.58
Paper manufacturing	369.05	3.10
Chemical products	1,478.95	12.43
Non-metallic minerals	287.99	2.42
Basic metals	245.26	2.06
Machinery and equipment	911.10	7.66
Other industries	178.70	1.50
Diverse and non-classified	0.02	0.00
Other sectors	38.27	0.32

Source: DANE (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística)

portation equipment, chemical products and basic metals, as well as machinery and equipment, utilities, telecommunications and others. The export market is an important factor in our manufacturing growth. The main trade associate is the United States, followed by the countries of the Andean Group, the European Community, and of course, countries such as Japan, Argentina and Brazil among others. Regarding the export sector, raw materials and capital goods can be mentioned as important elements. The dynamic export market is a favorable fact when considering the future with ALCA, taking into account that many Colombian enterprises are adopting important strategies to face the open global market.

Shades, colors and charms of a magic land

Colombia is the country with the greatest biodiversity in fauna and flora due to its varied topography. During the year, periods of three months of rain and three months of summer alternate. Along the coast of the Caribbean Sea grow mangroves and coconut palms; while forests with commercially valuable trees cover the intermediate elevations. As for Colombia's wild animals, some of the largest mammals of the Americas are found in the southern parts of the country. These include jaguar, puma, tapir, peccary and several species of monkeys and deer. Among the birds can be found the condor, vulture, toucan, parrot, cockatoo, crane, stork and hummingbirds.

Cultural wealth and people of kind and happy spirit

To speak of Colombia is to speak of cultural regions, in which the Native, Black and European (especially Spaniard) influences are diverse. The official language is Spanish, although several native dialects are also spoken.

Colombia's ethnic mosaic is of course reflected in its culture and folklore. The different African, Spanish, and Indigenous roots have produced interesting fusions in all the forms of artistic expression in the country. Colombia has given birth to many great writers and thinkers, among them Gabriel Garcia Marquez, novelist and Nobel laureate in literature. It is also home of renowned painters and sculptors like



Cartagena, a city on the Caribbean coast of Colombia and an important maritime port

Fernando Botero; important people in the field of medical research like Manuel Elkin Patarroyo; and world-famous sportsmen like Formula-One driver Juan Pablo Montoya and the cyclist Santiago Botero. The music really lives in Colombia; and is an essential part of the people's daily life. Our music incorporates African and Caribbean rhythms along with Andean rhythms also influenced by Spain. The typical music varies with the regions of Colombia. Notable among them are the 'pasillo', the 'bambuco', the 'vallenato' and the 'mapalé' styles. Today, Colombian music is recognized worldwide thanks to young artists like Shakira, Carlos Vives and Juanes.

A cuisine of diverse aromas and flavors

The ethnic diversity is also present in the Colombian cuisine; the Spanish and Indigenous ingredients get mixed with Spanish, Arabian, and African forms of preparing different dishes.

The main ingredients in Colombian cuisine are pork, potatoes, red beans, corn, chicken and rice. Some of the typical dishes are: 'Ajiaco', a soup prepared with chicken and potatoes, the 'Bandeja Paisa', a mixture of red beans, fried egg, ground meat, rice, fried plantain and 'chicharrón' (bacon).

Colombia is a country of contrasts, charms and enchantments; it is a country where people do not lose their hope to achieve peace, in order to enjoy its beauty and diversity reflected in the thousand and one shapes, smells, and colors of its geography, of its culture and mainly of its people.

From Ms. Claudia Ruiz of Communication Dept., Incolmos Yamaha S. A.

Traffic laws		General image of Yamaha products
Minimum age for driver's license	16 years old	
Minimum age for motorcycle license	16 years old	
Minimum age for boat license	16 years old	
Cost of living		With what products is Yamaha associated
Regular Lunch	US\$1.05	
Cup of coffee	US\$0.17	High quality and technology, excellent post-sale service and high trade-in price.
Bus ticket	US\$0.30	
Gasoline (1gallon)	US\$1.50	
		Yamaha Motorcycles, musical instruments, audio equipment, music schools, and onboard motors.

The YZR500, a 30-Year Challenge to the Top

WGP500
最高峰への挑戦
YZR500 30年の進化



Fans filled the display galleries on the days they were open to the public



The prototype (OWE2) with semi-shared pivot axis that never saw actual GP action



The first 2-stroke V-4 engine for GP500 (OW61)

In late June, an exhibition event titled “A Challenge to the Top of WGP Racing – The 30-year History of the YZR500” opened at the Communication Plaza at the Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd. headquarters. On display are a dozen YZR500 machines from over those three decades, including ones that won World GP championship

class, which has long been the pinnacle of international motorcycle racing, has in reality been reborn as a competition of 4-stroke machines. Taking this occasion, the present exhibition has been put together to celebrate the three glorious decades of Yamaha’s WGP challenge with the 2-stroke YZR500 that began with its first appearance in 1973, and the spirit of the Yamaha people who made history on that great stage.

change in 500cc WGP racing from a largely 4-stroke competition to one dominated completely by 2-stroke machines. Over the ensuing three decades some 20 riders would pilot the

YZR500 to victory in a total of 115 WGP races while claiming 11 rider championship titles and nine manufacturers titles. And many of the technologies born of this ongoing challenge would eventually be fed back to Yamaha’s production motorcycles and other products.



The OW23 was the first YZR with an engine designed specifically for the 500cc class

titles and some prototypes like one adopting a “semi-shared-axis pivot” that never saw actual use in a GP race and are on public display for the first time ever. Also part of the exhibition are videos and panels introducing many of the technologies born of the WGP racing and the memorable moments in Yamaha’s WGP racing history that have drawn many enthusiastic racing fans to the exhibition on days it is open to the public. As of the 2003 season, the WGP 500cc

Looking back over the history of the World GP that began with the Isle of Man Tourist Trophy race in Britain in 1949, the early years were dominated by British single-cylinder 4-stroke machines by makers like AJS and Norton. The mid-1950s saw the emergence of multi-cylinder machines by Italian makers like MV Agusta and Gilera. Beginning in 1956, MV Agusta would rule in the WGP for more than 15 years.

It wasn’t until the 1960s that the four Japanese makers began to take up the WGP challenge, only to withdraw again in 1968. The first of the Japanese factories to return to WGP racing would be Yamaha in 1973, entering the 500cc class for the first time with a 2-stroke machine, the YZR500. This bold move would mark the start of a big

In the exhibition visitors can see a rich array of YZR500 machines ranging from the very first model right up to the final 2002 model. Among these, one model that particularly stands out is the machine that Eddie Lawson rode to the World title in 1986, code named the OW81. The reason is that the V-4 twin crank engine on this model would be the first to adopt a system where the two cranks revolved in opposite directions. This revolutionary design would later mature into the standard format for all YZR500 machines that would follow. This was just one example of a three-decade challenge during which Yamaha engineers threw out conventional ideas time and again to come up with revolutionary new technologies that redefined state-of-the-art.

WORLD TOPICS

We always welcome your contributions.
Write to Chief Editor Shigeharu Maruhashi of the PR Division,
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India

Unveiling the New LIBERO

Yamaha proudly unveiled the "New International Look LIBERO" on May 21, 2003, in Delhi, India. The ceremony took place in the New International Look Showroom, inaugurated on the same day, making the event even more special.

The LIBERO is the object of much attention from dealers, with orders pouring in ever since the first units began rolling off the lines at Yamaha Motor India Private Ltd. (YMI) in October, 2002. The

LIBERO is a potent package of fuel economy, performance and versatility, and is also designed to easily handle urban speed bumps and perform well in tandem riding, which is important for Indian riders. With the new LIBERO, Yamaha's already excellent brand recognition can only be strengthened.

The famous film actress and former Miss India, Ms. Neha Dhupia, who endorses the LIBERO in YMI's advertising campaign, added glamour to the event. The inauguration and unveiling ceremony was performed by YMI's CEO Mr. Shibuya and Ms. Neha. Mr. Y. Konishi (COO) and Mr. Taneja (Executive Director) were also present to grace the occasion.



Film star Neha Dhupia will bring promotional glamour to Yamaha's new 2-wheeled star, LIBERO

USA

Another Road Star Sensation!

Regardless of the recent economic slowdown, the U.S. market for large-displacement cruiser type motorcycles has remained strong. And now Yamaha has a strong new entry to keep sales rolling. From May 3 to 12 Yamaha Motor Corp., USA. (YMUS) hosted a press test-ride event for the new Road Star XV1700 cruiser at the scenic resort area of Morro Bay on the California coast between Los Angeles and San Francisco. The event drew some 45 motor journalists from the U.S. and around the world anxious to try out the re-designed Road Star. Taking the existing XV1600 as its base the new Road Star XV1700 mounts an even more powerful 1700cc engine while at the same time brushing up the exterior specs considerably. The journalists were given free rein to put the new Road Star through its paces over a 250 km course that included both bayside



The New XV1700 Road Star drew consistently high praise from journalists

Japan

High-tech Yamaha surface mounters center of expo attention



The latest model YG200 drawing lots of attention

The Electronic Manufacturing Process Technology Exhibition (Protec Japan) is an event that showcases the latest state-of-the-art technology in the field of electronic circuit-board mounting equipment, the sophisticated industrial robots that drive the increasingly high-tech consumer electronics industry. Yamaha's IM Company is an industry leader in the field of mid-size surface mounters and visitors to the Yamaha booth at this year's expo grew by 25% despite an overall 15% drop in expo attendance on the whole. The highlights at the booth were the brand new YG200 and the industry standard Xg series models. The YG200 is the top-of-the-line model of Yamaha's series of mid-size module type high-speed surface mounters that with rapid technological advances in recent years have achieved productivity comparable to large-size high-speed models at a much lower price. With models like this, Yamaha is leading a shift in the industry away from large-size mounters to more versatile mid-size module-type models better equipped to handle today's rapidly diversifying production schedules.

cruising and hilly winding roads inland from the coast. Journalist Kevin Ash from the UK was impressed to find the new model had even stronger-pulsing engine performance and a sportier ride than its predecessor. American journalists echoed with equally high praise.

USA US Technician Scores Perfect 100



Todd Rutledge (right) receives his "Top Technician" certificate from YMUS

While many fine technicians have become certified in the Yamaha Technical Academy (YTA) program, only one has done so with a perfect 100% score in all available YTA categories.

Yamaha is proud to recognize Todd Rutledge of

Easy Living Yamaha in Rome, Georgia, for his exceptional performance as the "Top Technician for 2003." YMUS established the YTA program as part of an ongoing commitment to the highest customer satisfaction. This series of technical training courses is open to technicians at Yamaha motorsports dealers nationwide. "By successfully passing each level of YTA," said Bill Kubes, National Training Manager for YMUS, "the technicians become certified, earning themselves and their Yamaha dealership greater prestige, as well as helping to ensure customers enjoy the very best service possible."

Rutledge, who is from Resaca, Georgia, is a 1996 graduate of Motorcycle Mechanics Institute (MMI) in Orlando, Florida. He has been at Easy Living Yamaha for about two and a half years. Dealership owner John Cummings demonstrated his support for service excellence by paying all expenses for Rutledge's YTA training.

In addition to earning his YTA Silver certification, Rutledge won a Yamaha Factory 40" Toolbox made by Snap-on[®], and was also given passes to the AMA road races at Road Atlanta.

From Bill Kubes, National Training Manager, YMUS

Thailand

24th Bangkok Motor Show among Asia's biggest

In its 24th edition this year, the Bangkok Motor Show has become one of the biggest and liveliest in Asia. And this time, when the show opened from March 27 to April 6, the booth of Thai Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd. (TYM) was one of the big attention getters with its theme of "New Generation Technology." On center stage at the Yamaha booth, the spotlight was on the new model NOUVO. Combining the best qualities of a scooter and the mopeds that are so popular here in Thailand, the NOUVO is the first moped-type model in the ASEAN market to feature an automatic transmission. Adding to its appeal is the way it fits into the present boom in bike customizing, and the many of the visitors just couldn't take their eyes off the smartly customized versions of the NOUVO that TYM prepared for this show. It was clear that the NOUVO is fast winning the hearts and minds of Thai users. How about the outlook for sales? TYM is confident the NOUVO will be a big success, and advance sales at the booth reinforced that feeling, as a record 115 customers placed their orders on the spot.

From Hirokazu Yoshimitsu, Sales Development Div., TYM, Thailand



An appealing variety of models were displayed at the Thai Yamaha Motor booth

The Netherlands

Europe's best set sights on World Technician GP

For the third time, Yamaha Motor Europe N. V. (YMENV) organized the Euro Technician GP, the European regional championship contest in Yamaha's worldwide technician GP program. The contest was held from April 14 to 16 at the YMENV service workshop and was supported by Snap-on, the tool manufacturer, and it was attended by the winners of national Technician GP contests held in eight countries, all vying for the title of the best motorcycle technician in Europe.

The competition was close in the practical troubleshooting part of the contest using YZF-R6s and TDM900s, so it was the written test, with its focus on things like basic electronics and Customer Satisfaction items, that decided the winners. Mr. Tony Vromant of D'leteren Sport of Belgium took first prize, with Mr. Tom Lischitzki of Yamaha Motor Deutschland GmbH and Mr. Jean Claude Durand of Yamaha Motor France S. A. placing 2nd and 3rd respectively. At a party after the contest, the three were presented their awards by YMENV's President Inumaru, along with an official invitation to the 2nd World Technician Grand Prix to be held at Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd. (YMC) in Japan—a trip that will also include a VIP invitation to the Motegi round of the MotoGP, tours of the Yamaha factories and a good taste of Japanese culture. Since the 1st World Technician GP was won by Switzerland's Beat Burkhalter, this year's three European reps will be looking to bring another title back to Europe.

From Raymond Coolen, PTW Service & Testing Dept., YMENV



Contestants troubleshoot on the TDM900



President Inumaru, and the three winners: Tom Lischitzki, Tony Vromant and Jean Claude Durand

India

YMI launches support program for motocross racing

In recent years there has been a growing interest in motor sports among people in India, especially in the country's southern region. The attention of young fans is focusing especially on motocross competition. On April 18, YMI showed that it is behind the sport all the way by holding a press launch event to introduce the riders and machines (YZ250F) of "Team Yamaha India" that the company will be giving its full support to.



At the start of a practice run

In his address to the gathering of about 30 journalists, YMI's Director Sakurai said that, "We want to share with everyone the kind of excitement and dreams that only motor sports can provide. And we want to do this with our 4-stroke technology and our support of this team." The next day, Yamaha riders on the YZ 4-stroke and 2-stroke machines shut out the other makers' machines and swept all the podium positions in the 1st round of the "Gulf Dirt Track Challenge" held in Mumbai.

From Minoru Ito, Marketing, YMI, India

Russia

Where there is snow, Yamaha sleds will go

More and more people are discovering that the famous Russian winter isn't as imposing as it once was if you have a snowmobile. And YMC's Overseas Market Development Operations (OMDO) is out to make sure that people in the rapidly growing Russian snowmobile market get to know the outstanding product value and unsurpassed technologies of Yamaha snowmobiles.



Many press and industry representatives got a chance to appreciate the product quality of the Yamaha snowmobiles

From February 14 to 17, OMDO organized a full-scale press event to introduce the 2004 Yamaha sleds at a Bolen Resort ski area outside of Moscow. Divided into a Press Day, a Distributor Day and a Dealer Day, the event gave press and industry representatives a chance to really get to know the Yamaha sleds and their performance through a full agenda of product explanations and test rides. The models introduced and made available for test rides included the utility models VK540III and BR250T and the sports models RX1ER and RXWarrior. From the satisfied smiles of the journalists and dealers coming off the rides, it was clear that they had gotten a true appreciation of the performance and comfort of the Yamaha sleds. Expectations are higher now than ever for significant growth in sales here in the Russian snow belt.

From Kanichi Tsunamoto, Russia Div., OMDO, YMC

Australia

YMA Introduces Anti-Theft Initiative

All new motorcycles, outboard motors, ATVs and WaveRunners sold by Yamaha Motor Australia Pty Ltd. (YMA) are now protected by DataDot anti-theft technology. Yamaha is the first motorcycle/marine company in the Australian market to adopt the DataDot technology, a revolutionary spray identification system that applies thousands of tiny DataDots, each containing a motorcycle's unique Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) or personal watercraft's Hull Identification Number (HIN), to all the key components. Officials in Australia and around the world have hailed the DataDot system as a huge step forward in combating professional vehicle theft.

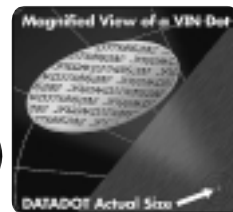
YMA held a successful media launch to announce the new system in Sydney Harbour, which featured all Yamaha DataDotted products in an action display. The theme was James Bond to reflect the microdot spy technology roots of the DataDot system. A water ski display was followed by stunt riding and freestyle motocross jumps to show off the Yamaha products.

Ian Allen, Executive Chairman of DataDot Technology Ltd. says:

"Yamaha is to be congratulated. This is a tremendous step forward on behalf of bike and boat owners across the country to apply DataDots across their entire range. This partnership shows confidence in the effectiveness of DataDots, and a real commitment by Yamaha to protecting their customers."

The DataDot system utilises existing government registration databases, not secondary private ones. This means DataDot is the only system to meet the very strict requirements of Australia's National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC). The Council, backed by the Federal Government, all State Governments and the Insurance industry, is tasked with leading the battle against vehicle theft. Analysis by the Council of theft rates of cars fitted with DataDots has found that DataDots are an effective deterrent to professional car thieves. YMA believes that the peace of mind Yamaha customers will have knowing their vehicles are protected is well worth the effort.

From Sean Hawker, Advertising and PR Co-ordinator, YMA, Australia



It is virtually impossible to remove all the thousands of dots bearing the vehicle serial number. The sticker lets thieves know the vehicle is protected by DataDot technology



Riders celebrating their Masterbike results

R6 first in world's largest comparison test

Fifteen top motorcycle magazines from Europe, the USA, South America, Australia and Japan, sent their best riders to Jerez in April for the Yearly Masterbike event organized by Motociclismo Spain.

During this "test of all tests" sixteen bikes in four categories battled for the title "Masterbike of the year 2003." Winning this title, it all comes down to lap times: which is the fastest bike on the track?

The magazines did not send their regular journalists but instead asked recently retired or still active racers to attend the Masterbike on their behalf. And that's how men like four-time Spanish Super-Sport champion Orilo Fernandez, three time German Superbike Champion Christer Lindholm, Dutch Super-Sport Champion Barry Veneman and the Japanese rider Kei Nashimoto, many times in the top 10 at the Suzuka 8 Hours, rode the test bikes on the Jerez circuit.

In the 600cc Super-Sport class, the Yamaha YZF-R6 claimed first place. In the battle for title of "Masterbike of the year 2003" (the overall fastest bike on the track) the YZF-R1 finished 3rd.

This year's victory brings the Yamaha YZF-R6 wins in the Masterbike to a total of four, and the 600cc Super-Sport title means a tremendous boost for the image of the R6. YMENV and the European distributors are very happy with this victory and will do their utmost to promote it on a pan-European basis.

From Bas Hawinkels, PTW Communications & PR Manager, YMENV

Ocean Rafting's triple power comes from Yamaha

Ocean Rafting's latest high speed adventure ride is powered by three powerful Yamaha outboards. With 600 reliable horsepower available at the stern, Ocean Rafting's newest ride is a spectacular success in every sense.

The "raft" is a Protector 12m RIB specially modified as a high speed adventure



Fast, exhilarating and fun ocean rafting attracts not only Kiwis but also tourists

ride, and powered by three 200hp Saltwater Series Yamaha 2-stroke outboards. Every day up to 28 people are aboard for excursions such as the "The Harbour Highlights" and "Grand Slam" that depart daily from the Viaduct Basin and cruise Auckland waters in the Hauraki Gulf.

Mark Cleave, Ocean Rafting's CEO, says he chose Yamaha engines because they have proven to be the best and most popular engines around.

"The engines we use in the adventure business have to be in pristine condition for daily commercial operations. Reliability is critical and we've found the Saltwater Series to be simple, reliable and powerful. The raft offers daily fast-boat adventures so they need to be ready to rock and roll every day," he says.

Mark Cleave adds that using just one type of motor from one agent also simplifies maintenance.

"We've had no problems so far and Yamaha's after-sales support has been reliable, consistent and all-round superb," he says.

From Greg Fenwick, Marine Sales Manager, YMNZ, New Zealand

Voice from Sweden

A Yamaha snowmobile customer in Sweden reports that this female fox comes visiting every time he goes fishing at his cabin on his Yamaha 20 CMS Outboarder snowmobile. It seems that the appeal of Yamaha products is no longer limited to humans.

From Ewald Tkofilusson, Sweden



Stars come out for U.S. business meeting

On June 4th, some 3,000 Yamaha dealership representatives and their families from across the country attended the 2004 U.S. Dealers' business meeting at the Mandalay Bay Resort in Las Vegas, Nevada. Dealership personnel were there to learn all about most of the new 2004 model motorcycles and ATVs and prepare their business plans for the year ahead. Included in the introductions, was an all-new category of ATV that Yamaha is pioneering, spearheaded by the all-new "Rhino 660 four wheel drive."

The meeting opened with speeches by YMC President Toru (Tim) Hasegawa, YMUS President Steve Kato and YMUS Motorsports President Jim Gentz. In their addresses the speakers detailed plans for streamlined distribution, dealership profitability and building the strongest brand image for Yamaha in the U.S.A. Mr. Gentz himself introduced the new "Rhino 660," with ATV product manager Mike Martinez in the passenger seat. Meanwhile the revolutionary new sports ATV "YFZ450" powered



The 4-wheel drive Rhino pioneers a whole new category of ATVs

by an engine based on Yamaha's YZ450F motocrosser was ridden on stage by AMA motocross legend Doug Henry. Other Team Yamaha racing stars like World Supercross champ Chad Reed were also on hand to introduce the 2004 machines and meet the dealers in the large display hall adjacent to the meeting hall.

From: Terry Beal, Public Relations, YMUS, USA



Sri Lanka

Yamaha provides support for a flood relief



Associated Motorways Ltd. Chairman Ajita (on left) donation ceremony at the presidential residence

In southern Sri Lanka, extended rains have caused the worst flooding in 50 years, which has been a responsible for a reported 300 deaths and destroyed more than 200,000 residences. In order to assist with rescue efforts in this natural disaster, YMC has donated 10 EK15N outboard motors (15 horsepower kerosene engines) to

the Sri Lankan government.

Yamaha made the donation through the local importer as quickly as possible in order to get the engines in operation quickly and save as many lives as possible.

The donation ceremony was held on May 21 at the presidential residence and attending from Associated Motorways Ltd. Group, the local Yamaha importer, were chairman, Mr. Ajita de Zoysa, vice-chairman, Mr. Tilak de Zoysa and director, marketing, Deshabandu Patrick Peiris. Also in attendance were executives from Associated Motor (Lanka) Company Ltd. This simple ceremony was very effective in further strengthening relations with the government and creating even more trust for Yamaha in the local area. These engines will be utilized in the areas hit hardest by the floods and will play a vital role in alleviating some of the damage caused by this tragedy of historic proportions.

From: *Yoshiyuki Ito, Overseas Project Div., OMDO, Japan*



Spain

Yamaha Fights the Black Tide

The wreck of the petroleum tanker *Prestige* last December turned out to be one of the worst manmade ecological disasters in history, as thousands of tons of oil spilled into the sea off the coast of Galicia in

northwest Spain. No sooner had news of the spill reached towns along the coast than volunteers began gathering to fight the black tide of crude oil approaching the shore. One of the leaders in what would turn out to be an amazing turnout of volunteer fighters was Mr. Enrique Lago, the owner of the local Yamaha marine dealership Nautica de Galicia S.A. (NAGASA) in Pontevedra. The job of scooping the terrible lumps of crude out of the water was tough for the fleet of small fishing craft that had mobilized for the task, putting special strain on their outboard motors. Mr. Lago immediately put his whole staff to work servicing the boats whenever needed all up and down the coast. Later, Mr. Lago's prompt and valiant efforts were highly praised by President Jorge Lasheras of Yamaha Motor España S.A. (YMES), who offered any necessary economic assistance and technical support to keep the NAGASA team in action.



Taking a break after the hard job of scooping the terrible lumps

From: *Jordi Bracons, Communication & PR Manager, YMES, Spain*

Algeria

Yamaha Air-lifts in Earthquake Aid Package



On June 6, OMDO's senior general manager, Mr. Shibata, presented a list of the relief items sent to Ambassador Bendjama at the Embassy of Algeria in Tokyo

On the night of May 21, 2003, northern Algeria and the capital city of Algiers were struck by a devastating earthquake that measured a magnitude of 6.7. More than 10,000 people were injured or killed and countless homes destroyed in the wake of the tremor. YMC's OMDO responded to the disaster by sending 30 sets of Yamaha ETC650 electric generators and 50-meter extension cords by air freight to help bring emergency power to the stricken areas until public electricity can be restored. The aid package arrived in Algiers on June 5 and was immediately handed over to Algerian Red Crescent, the local branch of the International Red Cross. Everyone at YMC prays for the souls of the victims and for a rapid recovery for the people of Algeria from the devastation wrought by the quake.

From: *Michiru Wajima, Area Marketing Div., OMDO, YMC*

New Zealand

Yamaha PWC Evaluated for Rescue

Lifesavers in Auckland are looking to the latest technology in their quest for greater rescue capability – by evaluating a Yamaha WaveRunner personal watercraft.

PWC's are a key component of rescue operations in many countries – clubs throughout Australia are being equipped with Yamaha XL700 watercraft – but they have not yet become a feature of New Zealand lifesaving. That may be about to change.

Yamaha Motor New Zealand Limited (YMNZ) recently provided a WaveRunner XL700 three-seater watercraft for evaluation by Surf Life Saving North Region. The XL700 was slightly modified with a plastic skid down

the keel, hooks to attach a rescue sled and grab handles fitted along the sides.

Trials have been undertaken by representatives of the 16 Northern Region surf clubs. After a familiarisation session at the Auckland Marine Rescue Centre, the craft was trialed in the more strenuous conditions of Bethells Beach on the west coast.

Among the evaluation criteria were ease of getting to and from the water, low speed maneuverability and stability, turning at high and low speeds, responsiveness, handling in waves and on the face of waves, cavitation, white water handling, the kill switch cord, functional layout of controls and overall impression.

Matt Yallop, Lifesaving Manager for Surf Life Saving North Region, says they will evaluate whether the PWC can perform rescues that no other craft is able to do, like a rapid long range rescue.

He says the evaluation will be exhaustive and may lead to a PWC being purchased for further trials and learning.

From: *Greg Fenwick, Marine Sales Manager, YMNZ, New Zealand*



Surf Life Saving representatives evaluating the Yamaha XL WaveRunner 700 at Bethells Beach on Auckland's West Coast

MotoGP enters European Rounds as the YZR-M1 moves up



Nakano ran in second for a good part of the race at Mugello

The 2003 MotoGP series that began on April 6 with the Japan GP has now entered the European rounds as of May 11, with the third round held at Spain's Jerez circuit. This marks the start of what has long been called the "Continental Circus" in which the GP riders and teams travel from one city to another across the European continent in their mobile homes and trailer trucks like circus performers have long done.

From round three, two leading Yamaha YZR-M1 riders, Alex Barros of the Gauloises Yamaha Team and Marco Melandri of Fortuna Yamaha Team have recovered from early season injuries and were back in form. This meant that all five Yamaha M1 riders from three teams were participating in top condition. And their results improved gradually, with Barros battling Honda's Japanese riders Tohru Ukawa and Makoto Tamada to finish 5th here in round three and d'Antin Yamaha team's Shinya Nakano finishing 8th.

Round four of the series was the French GP at Le Mans. Here, Barros continued his



Barros mounted the winners podium with his 3rd-place finish

hot streak by mounting the winners podium for the first time this season with a 3rd place finish while moving up to 4th in the series ranking. He was followed in 4th place at Le Mans by his teammate Olivier Jacque, offering solid proof not only of the competitive spirit of the Gauloises Yamaha Team but also that the M1 is becoming a more competi-

tive machine as the season progresses. Entering June, the Italian GP (round 5) and the Catalonia GP (round 6) were held on successive weekends on the 8th and 15th respectively, and it was Nakano who was hot among the Yamaha riders for these two races. In the Italian GP at Mugello he qualified for a front-row position on the starting grip and ran as high as 2nd position as he battled the three Italian stars, V. Rossi, L. Capriossi and M. Biaggi on their own turf. Returning to Spain for the Catalonia GP Nakano was again in contention for a podium spot right down to the final lap before finishing 5th as he did in Italy, his highest finishes this season. In round six it was fellow Yamaha rider Carlos Checa of the Fortuna team who came past Nakano to take

4th place by just 0.068 seconds at the finish. This was good news for the Fortuna team, which had not been getting the performances it was capable of in the early stage of the season, and it means that now all three Yamaha teams are within reach of podium finishes. The second half of the season is sure to get even more exciting for Yamaha fans.

Meanwhile, in the GP class of the World Motocross Championships, Stefan Everts of the L&M Motocross Team has been

burning up the track on his Yamaha YZ450FM machine. In round four of the series he put an end to the winning streak of M. Pichon (Suzuki) and then jumped into the 125cc class on a Yamaha YZ250F to win the first 2-class victory ever in the history of the competition. Everts came back to win again in round five, the Bulgarian GP, and moved into 3rd position in the season ranking, just 11 series points behind the leader, Pichon.



Former World Champ Everts won both the 125cc and 250cc classes at the Italian GP (Motocross)

The secret behind the "YFZ450," Yamaha's first liquid-cooled DOHC 5-valve ATV



With their characteristic low-pressure balloon tires, powerful engines and tough suspensions, ATVs are go-anywhere machines that people use for work and play on any kind of off-road terrain, from grasslands to rocky hills, from sand dunes to snowfields. About three million of these vehicles are used and loved by people around the world today, and Yamaha offers these users a lineup ranging from 50cc to 660cc.

Now Yamaha has unveiled its latest addition to this lineup, the sports model "YFZ450," which is the first Yamaha ATV to mount a liquid-cooled DOHC 5-valve 4-stroke engine. This model has been designed primarily to answer the needs of the North American and European markets, where environmental concerns have led to growing calls for 4-stroke ATVs. The first thing that strikes the viewer about this new model

is its distinctive styling. The sharp front cowl, sports type seat and low profile give the YFZ450 a look suggestive of a sleek animal coiled and ready to spring into action. Then, when you look inside, you'll find a state-of-the-art engine featuring Yamaha's latest technologies that couple performance with great fuel economy and low emissions. In other words, this is another model that fulfills Yamaha's goal of providing both excitement and environmental friendliness.

This power unit is characterized by its titanium valves, FCR carburetor, plated cylinders, its close-ratio 5-speed transmission, and more. Both the front and rear suspensions feature separate preload adjustment for damping force on the compression and rebound strokes to let the rider set the damping characteris-

tics to suit the terrain or personal preference. And, to ensure stable performance the shocks feature piggy-back type aluminum sub-tanks front and rear.

And there are other important features of the new YFZ450 that you won't notice unless you take a very close look, like the high-spec front disc brakes with twin-pot calipers. Another is the advanced-design sub-frame made possible by Yamaha's break-through CF (Controlled Filling) aluminum die-casting technology with its capability to produce larger aluminum parts with thinner sections and more intricate forms. This combines with the aluminum swingarm, A-arms and wheels to help make this probably the lightest, sharpest cornering ATV in its class. Cornering capability is also boosted by new-style radial rear tires and the lowest center of gravity in its class. In fact, you could say that the YFZ450 creates a whole new class of its own. Call it the "pure performance sport" category.