Cyber Yamaha!
A linked network of websites expanding around the world offers up-to-date information and a new picture of a global corporate group geared up for the new Millennium.
a 125 cc motorcycle that looks just right for a long ride, with plenty of comfort. The 220mm front disc and rear single disc brakes for extra reliability. Going back to the previous short section, we see a bicycle photo. We’re told the “PAS” next to the picture looks just like an ordinary bike, that is fitted with a “discrete battery-power-izes a combination of electric power.” We can imagine extra power assist from the PAS kicks in to make the bike easier to ride into wind or carrying more weight. The woman in the ad also says she feels safe by sitting on her bicycle in a hard hat near her home. More Yamas than ever imagined!

I know Yamaha is a motorcycle manufacturer and they make scooters, ATVs and outboard motors as well. But, does Yamaha make drums, too? Let’s check out Yamaha’s website: http://www.yamaha-motor.co.jp.

First of all, I visit their site and check the company profile section. Here I learn that Yamaha was founded 44 years ago, in 1957, and is produced that same year with the first electrically controlled motorcycle. Today, Yamaha is a global company with over 15,000 employees in 130 countries worldwide.

Checking out what’s hot, what’s new!

First, I click on the waving checkered flag, where I can find race results for the World GP’s, Superbike/Supersports, World Motocross and lots more of Yamaha’s latest racing news. This year, the man I’m watching is Italian Max Biaggi, the four-time WGP world champ at 250 cc who switched to Yamaha for his second season in the GP 500 this year. I also heard this racing site will be completely renewed and opened as a new site: yamaha-racing.com from the start of the GP season.

As with most of the corporate websites that offer one, I can’t resist dropping in on their Hot News section, wondering what’s hot with Yamaha now. "’99 Aerox R scooter," "Quads: all new models"… "Bingo!" “The R6 virtual showroom” is one of their hot items. I can see the R6’s three color variations with full-size photos and brief info, write-ups about its engine and chassis, along with visuals of the naked machine, engine and frame. What’s really exciting is the R6 video clip that gives you a virtual test ride experience with authentic engine and exhaust sound. After downloading some additional machine information and specifications for the R6 from the motorcycle products page, I drop by the "125 cc" page, where I find the Majesty info for my wife, who now is looking for a comfortable and reliable 125 cc scooter for her second vehicle to the car. "Click!'" In Germany, the change in legislation in 1996 allows a person who has a car license to ride up to
a 125 cc motorcycle. The Majesty 125 looks just right for my wife's needs with features like a long 1480mm wheelbase for plenty of comfort, a large diameter 220mm front disc and 130mm rear drum brakes for extra reliability.

Going back to the Products top page I see a bicycle photo. Well, does Yamaha now make bicycles, too? I click on the word "Bicycle" next to the photo. "A PAS bicycle looks just like an ordinary bike, except that it is fitted with a very compact and discrete battery-powered motor...it utilizes a combination of both human and electric power." Wow! That means the extra power assist from the electric motor kicks in to make those uphill, cycling into wind or carrying heavy loads a lot easier. That sounds great for my mother. She always says she hesitates to go shopping on her bicycle because of that long, hard hill near her house.

More Yamahas than I ever imagined

I know Yamaha is not only a motorcycle manufacturer and that they make snowmobiles, ATVs and marine products like outboard motors and Water Vehicles. But, does Yamaha Motor make pianos and drums, too? Let's check with Yamaha Japan's website: http://www.yamahamotor.co.jp.

First of all, I visit their "Corporate Guide" page and check the company's outline and history. Here I learn that Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd, was founded 44 years ago, soon after they separated from Yamaha Gas Company, the famous piano maker. Their first motorcycle produced that same year was the YA-1.

From that first 125 cc motorcycle, YMC has expanded its product range now to things like Gas Heat-Pump air conditioners, industrial-use remote control helicopters and even swimming pools! With my personal interest as an electronics engineer, YMC's surface mounters in their IM Operation's website (http://www.yamaha-motor.co.jp/SMT) naturally draw my attention, especially their Y2K preparedness. They sell a wide variety of mounters in Europe on an OEM supply basis for the Philips brand. And it's not only their product range that is so broad-reaching but also the network Yamaha boasts the world over. When you look for some product info in YMC's widely varied Products pages, you are taken to different regional websites to get more specific information suitable to your market, be it the U.S.A., Canada, Australia, Colombia or others.

For example, through their Snowmobile Product page, I can also check out the 2000 models in the website of Yamaha Motor Corp., U.S.A. by means of the handy Direct Index. The new top performance SRX700 looks awesome! When you come to the U.S. site (http://www.yamahamotor.com), you shouldn't forget to check out Jeremy McGrath's great performances in this year's AMA Supercross series, which started in January. YMUS has completely updated race results and other info here. Jeremy is riding the Yamaha YZ250 in a bid to win his second consecutive title this season.

Whoops, I've really gotten into the surfing and completely forgotten about the time! I'd better log off the big Yamaha wave for now. But I'll be back.

The 2nd Worldwide Webmaster Meeting

On March 15 and 16, six webmasters from Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Taiwan, the U.S.A. and Japan, gathered at YMC's Communication Plaza for the second Yamaha Worldwide Webmaster Meeting.

As Internet demands are growing rapidly the world over as a new type of information source, this meeting provided an opportunity for Yamaha group webmasters from around the world to get together to share ideas and cooperate on developing common policy and strategy as a global network for Yamaha.

The 2-day meeting consisted of a full agenda including not only site introductions from each country's webmasters but also discussion of important issues such as interactive communication, special concerns for VI use, PL Law, Security and Infrastructure, and even future use of E-commerce.

YMENVY's webmaster, Mr. Marc Maisonneuve, who will organize a European webmasters meeting this Spring, commented: "I think I learned very much from this presentation. I feel confident now about organizing a meeting of my own. I hope to be able to report to all the webmasters in Europe and give them good guidelines from here." Mr. Peter Smallman-Tew from YMCA, Canada said, "I particularly found the points made about E-commerce fascinating. I think everybody is beginning to play up ideas now on how to adopt this in their own site."

All the attendees, including Mr. Dave Byer from YMUS and Mr. Steven Cotterell from YMA, Mr. Hidekoshi Amabuki from YMT and all the staff from YMC's Information System Support Division, Liaison Group and PK Division, agreed about the necessity of holding of these webmaster meetings on a continuing basis, in order to keep up on arising new issues and bring better unity and cooperation worldwide.
The Competition Never Ends

Yamaha Motor France S.A. 9 Saint-Ouen L'Aumône, France

Spirit of a Challenger

When Yamaha Motor France President Jean-Claude Olivier speaks about his business philosophy, you can hear the competitive spirit ring through: “In the motorcycle market, like in any other market, there is never an end to competition. Your competitors become your rivals, and after you have gone up against the challenges of the marketplace every competitor has to step back and reevaluate themselves.”

At YMF we achieved our corporate goal in 1998 by leading the French motorcycle industry for the third year in a row with a 27.36% market share. What’s more, we recorded a 55% market share and 38.6% sales growth for 1998 in the largely utility-use ATV market, and also led the French outboard motor industry with a 27% share. We attribute successes like these to quality products and aggressive promotional activities based on the “spirit of Kando,” which means to us communicating the excitement and deep satisfaction that can come from using Yamaha products.

Products the Users Want

From the summer of 1998, YMF began charting a course that will take us into the year 2000 as market leaders. Despite the unfavorable economic conditions in France and other European countries, our company enjoyed a 16.53% growth in sales in 1998, thanks largely to the extremely strong performance of a number of category-leading models like the 125 Virago, number-one seller in the 125cc class that has been booming ever since the change in licensing laws in 1996, growing 18.8% last year alone. In this important category Yamaha placed four models among the top six best-sellers. Another category leader is the amazing supersport model YZF-R1, which is now being joined by the R6 and R7. Other strong competitors include the Fazer, third best selling model in France in ’98 and No.1 for the first two months of ‘99, the Diversion 600 and TDM850. In the marine market as well, the timely launch of the new 4-stroke outboards has helped YMF stay on top of market trends. Complementing the 2-stroke models manufactured at Yamaha’s St. Quentin factory in northern France, these much-in-demand 4-strokes like the new F100A that we introduced at the Paris Boat Show late last year are contributing greatly to the Yamaha brand image and YMF’s total outboard sales.

Building Legends Through PR

Besides our comprehensive program of TV, radio and magazine advertising campaigns, we engage in wide-ranging PR activities aimed at involving the users and creating the kind of enthusiasm that make them want our product.

For example, what about the awesome performance of the YZF-R1 in the Le Mans circuit? That was a three weekends YMF party, where YZF-R1 owners and professional super bikers from around the country gathered with overwhelming responses and even with guest appearances by Dominique and Christian Fauré. We also organize a...
and creating the kinds of legends that make them want to own a certain product.

For example, what better way to experience the awesome supersport performance of the YZF-R1 than on a real race circuit? That was the idea behind the three-weekend YMF organized last year where YZF-R1 owners could ride with professional supervision on circuits around the country. Thanks to the overwhelming response, this program has been expanded to 12 weekends for '99 with guest appearances by riding greats Dominique and Christian Sarron.

We also organize our user-oriented Promosport R1 & R6 Challenge and Enduro and Motocross challenges for our YZ and WR owners. And, we set up welcome centers to provide track-side services like parking and helmet check-in for customers who come to other major races.

The Races Go On

Race activities are one of the best ways we have found to build legends. Every year we support riders and teams in France's big race events like the Le Mans and Bol d'Or endurance races, where two R7 machines will be entered this year by YMF. Sand racing is another big sport in France. Already this year Jean-Claude Mousse has led a 123 sweep for Team Yamaha Motor France Mobil 1 in the big '99 Touquet Enduro, which drew about 1000 participants from across Europe. Other competitions where YMF supports competitors include the 250cc class of the World GP of road racing, the French Enduro Championship, the French Supersport Championship, where YMF's Eric Mahé has already won round 1 and the French Superbike Championship where Jean-Marc Deletang rides for YMF. In 250cc motocross, winner of the pre-season international Beaupre race, David Vialle will compete in the World Championship for YMF.

In Water Vehicle (marine jet) competition, as well, YMF supports four pilots competing in the different international and domestic championships. Another big event to begin this April is the FUN JET INDOOR event that will be organized at Paris Bercy, and YMF's best pilots are scheduled to take part.

Our market surveys know that the French people are rediscovering the value of motorcycles. The fact that one in five respondents to our survey of 125cc bike owners said they plan to go on to get a license to ride larger-displacement motorcycles, means they are interested in more than just a convenient way to commute. Our job is to build on their aspirations with the right products at the right time and the right price. That's what we did with the 125cc class. But, today's successes may not mean much tomorrow if we don't continue to tackle the constantly changing needs of today's markets with the spirit of a challenger.

Jean-Claude Mousse of Team Yamaha Motor France Mobil 1 rides to victory at the 24th Enduro Touquet '99.


**Continuing good service**

Europe’s Service Managers made the trip to Canada to the ’98 European Service Managers’ Meeting held at Yamaha Motor Canada Ltd. (YMCA) from December 1 to 3 last year. The meeting occasioned the announcement from YMENV of service activity results for 1998 and service policy for 1999. European factories including Belgarda (Italy), MBK (France) and Yamaha Motor España (Spain) shared their measures for quality improvement, and YMCA’s Service Information Division presented its plans to prepare and issue service data. YMCA’s Overseas Service Division released its policy plans and product information. YMCA contributed a market overview and a report on service activity, and Yamaha Motor Corp., U.S.A. joined them in the role of adviser.

A certain energy accompanied the increased sales in Europe of recent years, and there was active discussion of service strategies among the participants. Exciting new planning ideas and business development methods were formulated through information exchange. The European dealers are confident that they delivered in 1998 a comprehensive curriculum including service seminars, the Yamaha Euro Technician GP and CS training. The continuation of good service from them this year can be expected as they aim to realize their 1999 policies.

From Yuji Izuka of YMC, Japan

**More interactive success**

Dick van Beek and Herman van Eldemark (Creative Action B.V.), with their latest award, have made an annual event of winning awards for the Yamaha CD-i program.

Yamaha Motor Europe N.V.’s CD-i (Compact Disc interface) program has won the 1998 CD-i Icon Award. YMENV’s CD-i software features the complete ’99 Yamaha motorcycle range in full color with accessories and technical information supported with video clips.

CD-i is an innovative Point of Sale Information system using the latest compact disc technology developed by YMENV and Creative Action S.A. The compact disc used in the CD-i is the same size as a regular music CD, and the player is incorporated in a purpose-built kiosk style unit. The CD-i system uses video clips, still pictures, computer graphics, text and digital quality sound effects to give customers immediate access to Yamaha product and brand information in an entertaining multimedia presentation. By pushing buttons on the screen, customers can enter the exciting interactive world of Yamaha. YMENV, in cooperation with Creative Action Holland B.V., has been making CD-i programs since 1993, and their first interactive Yamaha Motor title in 1993 won the Silver Award in the Interactive Compact Disc Association’s Best Industrial Presentation/Marketing Program category. Since then, they have won awards every year from the Association, including Silver in 1994 and 1995, Bronze in 1996, and Gold in 1997, even over multinational companies such as Chrysler, Toyota and BMW. In 1997, they also won the Golden Business Communication Awards by A.V. Magazine in the United Kingdom. As well as the Icon Award in 1998, they also won the International Digital Media Association’s Bronze Award. Interactive CD-i Kiosks can be found in Yamaha dealer showrooms across Europe, including France, Belgium, the UK, the Netherlands, Germany and Italy.

From Jim Gilroy of YMENV, The Netherlands

**Dreaming of Olympia**

As the world gears up for the next Olympic Games, in Sydney, Australia next year, Briel Motorsport is getting into the sporting spirit. The Yamaha motorcycle dealer in Mulheim-Ruhr, Germany, is sponsoring an ambitious handball team of young women who are members of the Eintracht Speldorf sports club. After winning the City Championship last year on their first try, they still have their sights set high. They were obliged to move up to the higher grade this season, and are fighting hard against athletes who are on average two years older. Of course, the spirit of Yamaha helps get them through with the performance needed to win next season, and they are all unanimous in their goal to win.

Mostly, the team plays in their black, white and red Yamaha uniforms, but their second blue and white Yamaha tricots also look pretty good. Briel Motorsport also helps them out with a Yamaha van to take them to games away from home.

From Volker Briel of Briel Motorsports GmbH, Germany

**Vino and Drag Fire**

Yamaha Motor Taiwan Corporation launched the Taiwanese version of the Drag Fire Dragster at the Motorcycle Trade Show held in Taipei. The new scooter, which has been hugely popular in Taiwan as a motorcycle specialty modification, was introduced to the public for the first time at the show.

The PR brief went out to the local press, saying that the Vino was here in Taiwan on a limited basis. The Vino that went to Taiwan was the Vino 125 introduced to the market in 2003 will be released in Taiwan in a Vino 125 version of a cataphoresis paint from Korean group HG. The Vino 125 and the TVS 125 have been riding side by side in Taiwan, now the Vino 125 can ride alone in Taiwan. As Taiwan buzzes with the news of the Vino 125 version of a cataphoresis paint from Korean group HG, the Vino 125 has helped the Vino 125 to remain as the number one scooter in Taiwan.

The press were very excited when they saw the Vino 125 version of a cataphoresis paint from Korean group HG, the Vino 125 has helped the Vino 125 to remain as the number one scooter in Taiwan.
In December last year, as summer took hold in the Southern Hemisphere, an EMY (Escuela de Manejo Yamaha) Riding School was held over three days for general users and police officers in San Miguel de Tucuman, Argentina. In Argentina, most riders don’t wear a helmet or gloves and the attitude toward motorcycle safety is still carefree, special instructor from YMC’s Motorsports Promotion Division, Mr. Toh was invited to encourage proper riding and to share the joys of motorcycle riding with others.

From Koichiro Ito of YMARG

Vino and Drag Fire excite market

Yamaha Motor Taiwan (YMT) has two exciting new motorcycles, with which to dazzle their market - the Vino and the Drag Fire.

YMT held a grand press release event on January 25 for the Taiwanese version of the Vino, with about 200 representatives from the TV and print media gathering at the Taipei Regent Hotel. The new scooter’s reputation preceded itself, as it has been hugely popular in Japan since its release there, and the motorcycle specialty magazines in Taiwan had already been introduced to it at a product seminar on January 6.

The PR brief went out with Hong Kong’s singing star Karen Mok, popular also in Taiwan among young people, announcing that the Vino was her new pet. Karen features in a TV commercial for the Vino that went air on February 5. The commercial uses a Mandarin version of a catchy song, called Love Show, which was borrowed from Korean group HOT, and her song will also run on MTV. Her popularity has helped the Vino become the talk of Taiwan.

As Taiwan buzzes with the release of Vino, the Drag Fire (SRA150) was released at a resort in southern Taiwan on February 5 and 6. The SRA150, heralded as Taiwan’s new American flagship, was introduced at a product seminar to the press, and the Yamaha Motor engineering staff from YMC, Japan, were also invited.

The press were very positive about the Drag Fire, and gave it the thumbs up: “The handling and balance are good, and with plenty of metal used in the exterior, it has a feeling of high quality.”

Under current Taiwanese legislation, only motorcycles 150cc and under are permitted. This doesn’t stop the people’s interest in bigger bikes though, and according to a newspaper last year, around 32% of the Taiwanese population have an interest in bigger bikes, with that rate going up to 47% among students. This basic model works on the concept of bike-riding for leisure use, with the expectation that the removal of displacement limits and import bars will create a broader base market.

From Shinsuchi Takeuchi of YMTT, Taiwan
event, and also provided Yamarube oil for all the power boating competitors.

From Joanne Matthews of Yamaha
Distributors, South Africa

U.S.A.

**F100 best in '99**

The Yamaha F100, the latest offering from Yamaha's 26-strong lineup of four-stroke outboard motors, has been named winner of *Motor Boating & Sailing* magazine's 1999 Innovation Award. The magazine presents the Innovation Award annually to companies and individuals for creating the most advanced and interesting boating products, and the F100 was recognized in the December issue of the magazine.

Yamaha Marine Group Company, U.S.A.'s President Phil Dyskow accepted the crystal award at the Miami International Boat Show on February 11. He said it was an honor that will mean a lot to the people who developed the engine, and it confirms Yamaha's commitment to improved engines for boaters.

The award was presented by *Motor Boating & Sailing*'s Publisher and Editor-in-Chief Peter Janssen, who said, "The winners choose the leaders and effective applicators of technology in the marine industry. We looked for imaginative and innovative products that will assist our readers in their boating needs well into the 21st Century."

"Motor Boating & Sailing," published since 1907, is the oldest publication serving the US boating community.

Winner of more than 50 awards itself, more than all US boating magazines combined, *Motor Boating & Sailing* continues to be recognized for its design and editorial excellence.

From Carolyn LePiétre of Yamaha Marine Group Company, U.S.A.

U.S.A.

**Teamwork creates winner**

Yamaha WaveRunner SUV1200, the model named the '98 Water Vehicle of the Year

In February this year, the Yamaha WaveRunner SUV1200 was voted Water Vehicle of the Year by Watercraft World magazine in the United States. The WaveRunner is the first model produced by Tennessee Watercraft Inc. (TWI), Yamaha's new U.S. Water Vehicle manufacturing subsidiary. It came off the line in January, and a tape cutting ceremony was attended by Mr. Sano, General Manager of YMC's Water Vehicle Operations, and Mr. Mabuchi, President of Yamaha Motor Corp., U.S.A.

The award-winning model was created from a completely new concept. It was developed and designed at YMC in cooperation with YMUS and TWI, and is as good as it is thanks to the solid teamwork of the 3 companies.

One reason the machine stands out is that it has succeeded in distinguishing itself from other companies' products, as well giving customers what they want from a Water Vehicle. At 3.85m long and 1.51m wide, it is the largest personal watercraft in the world, providing a comfortable ride over long distances, allowing popular wakeboarding and water skiing while still offering the fun aspects of the small-sized watercraft.

Yamaha machines have won five of the seven Water Vehicle of the Year awards since their inception in 1993. Previous winners are the Yamaha WaveBlaster, the Yamaha WaveBlaster II, the WaveRunner X1200 and the WaveRunner X12000.

From Tsutomu Hatano

**Snowmobile Canada**

A trek across Canada on the VX700SX snowmobile was completed last month beginning in Victoria, British Columbia. The adventurous team of Mark and Arlene Smith, Darcy and Alana Leong, and Satoru Shinokawa, who left the trip in January, managed to do the trip in 1999, forcing them to postpone it for a year.

On January 28, the team from eastern Quebec to make a total of 1.5 km, they returned to Quebec for a few days and then headed west to Thunder Bay, Ontario. Saskatchewan, Alberta before arriving in George in the Rocky Mountains. On February 8, having traveled over 7,500 km, West Virginia, and a lack of fuel caused the team to end their journey.

The team's modified VX700SX snowmobile was loaded with an extra 20 liters of fuel, 45 liters of water, and between 250 and 500 kg of equipment. "All the riders made great. From part way across Canada we were picked up by lots of people and lots of people can stop their efforts last year."

A Japanese party of snowmobile enthusiasts, who crossed Canada this year, stopped their efforts last year.

President of Yamaha Marine Phil Dyskow accepts the 1999 Motor Boating and Sailing Innovation Award for the new F100 Yamaha outboard from Editor-in-Chief Peter Janssen (left)
V1200, the model named the Year

In the year of 1998, the Yamaha WaveRunner V1200 was voted the Year by WaterSports magazine in the United States. The WaveRunner is the first and only Tennessee Watercraft in Yamaha's new U.S. States production line. The launching ceremony was attended by Mark Robinson, General Manager of WaterSports Operations, and Shigefumi Koizumi, President of Yamaha Motor Co. Ltd.

The new model was created as a result of a new concept. It was designed at YMC in 1996. The model was assembled at YMC and TWI, and released in 1997 thanks to the solid support of the companies.

The machine stands out is its capability of distinguishing the companies' products, choosing the customers what they need. The WaveRunner is a Vehicle. At 3.85m (12.6 feet), it is the largest WaveRunner in the world. It can provide a ride over long distances, and popular wakeboarding is possible while still offering the flexibility of small-sized watercraft.

The WaveRunner has won five of the Year awards since the first time in 1993. The Yamahas WaveBlaster, WaveRaider, WaveBlaster II, and the Yamaha WaveRunner X1200, From Tsutomu Hattori of YMC, Japan

POWER PRODUCTS

CANADA

Snowmobiles trek Canada

A trek across Canada on VT700 and VX700SX snowmobiles by five Japanese riders was completed in about a month beginning in late January this year. The adventurous team, headed by Satoru Shiokawa, which completed a 1300 km run from Khobarovsk to Sakhalin in Russia in 1997, had planned to do the trip in 1998, but bad weather forced them to postpone the challenge a year.

On January 28, the party started out from eastern Quebec province, and after making a round of the island of Newfoundland, Canada's easternmost point, they returned to Quebec to begin their continental crossing. The party first headed west to Thunder Bay then on to Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Edmonton in Alberta before arriving safely in Prince George in the Rocky Mountains on February 28, having completed a total of 7,500 km. West from there, spring weather and a lack of snow forced the team to end their journey at this point.

The team's modified VT700 and VX700SX snowmobiles carried an extra 20 liters of fuel besides the standard 45 liter tank, enabling them to run between 250 and 500 km a day.

"All the riders made it safely, which is great. From part way through the trip, we were picked up by the local news and lots of people came out to cheer us on. Yamaha Motor Canada really supported us with service and parts, which was encouraging," said Shiokawa.

From Tetsu Nagai of YMC, Japan

Turkey

Ski Show '99

Burla A.S., distributor for Yamaha marine products and snowmobiles in Turkey, co-sponsored Ski Show '99 from January 8 to 10 at Turkey's most famous ski center in Uludag, Bursa.

The show was organized by Turkish Ski Magazine, the only magazine for the ski sector in Turkey.

The goal of Burla in co-sponsoring the event along with four other companies was to promote snowmobiles, reach end users more effectively by providing free rides and giving shows. The organizers of the event involved the press, media, Turkey's top models and the President of the Turkish Ski Federation, and the event was welcomed by those in the ski industry.

The show featured the 1995 World Snowboard Champion, Alexis Parneux, who attended the help of Yamaha snowmobiles due to the foggy weather on the mountain. During the day, the event featured a fun snowmobile race between the models, and the highlight of the evening was the colored smoke flares show which the press loved and which was covered by the media over a couple of days.

Burla believes that Ski Show enhanced snowmobile sales, and they received many messages of thanks from participants.

From Orhan Senturk of Burla, Turkey

A Japanese party of snowmobilers successfully crossed Canada this year, after bad weather stopped their efforts last year.

We are always looking for interesting stories. Write to Chief Editor T. Omura of the PR Division, Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd. 2500 Shingai, Iwata, Shizuoka 438-8501 Japan. oomura_toshih@ccgw.yamaha-motor.co.jp

Yamaha Custom Club

The 550-strong Yamaha Custom Club (YCC) in Sweden brings together people of all ages with an interest in riding the Yamaha Custom bikes.

The club first emerged as Virago Club Sweden in 1988 with an impressive 300 members in the first year. After Yamaha stopped producing the Virago 1100, the top selling bike in Sweden for many years, the club changed its name to Yamaha Custom Club (YCC) later that year. The change was also an opportunity for the club to include the new Star models.

YCC holds its own rallies, and visits other Virago and Yamaha Custom clubs in Europe, as a group. It also has its own publication, YCC, that comes out six times a year, and is active on the Internet with its own site (http://www.yamaha-custem-club.com) full of information about the club, rallies and, of course, Yamaha bikes.

From Michael Hackman of Yamaha Custom Club, Sweden

A Japanese party of snowmobilers successfully crossed Canada this year, after bad weather stopped their efforts last year.
Wheelchair Power-Assist Units OEM to Europe

Yamaha Motor first entered the health-welfare industry in 1996 with the release of a revolutionary type of electric power unit for wheelchairs, adopting the power-assist technology of Yamaha’s PAS electro-hybrid bicycles to supplement the manual effort of the wheelchair user with power from an electric motor. Now contracts have been signed with three European companies to begin overseas OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturing) supply of this power-assist unit model “JW-II” as of May 1999. The companies to which the JW-II will be supplied are Germany’s Wilhelm Meyer GmbH & Co. KG (Meyra) and Otto Paal Reha GmbH and the Swedish company Mobility Reastolen SA, all of which are well-known makers of wheelchairs.

The JW-II units to be supplied consist of two wheel-drive assemblies containing all the drive mechanisms, attachment brackets, a battery and a special battery charger and include some special modifications to fit European safety regulations and conditions of use. The battery provided is a newly developed Nickel-hydrogen type.

Hamakita Site Wins ISO14001 Certification

On February 12, 1999, a ceremony was held at Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd.'s Hamakita Factory at the Hamakita Site complex, in commemoration of the Site’s recent certification under the ISO14001 environmental management standard of the International Organization for Standardization. The ISO’s 14001 environmental management systems standard is aimed at reducing the environmental impact of a company’s business and manufacturing operations. At Hamakita Site, full-fledged preparations for ISO certification began in 1998 largely by Hamakita Factory, which engages primarily in the manufacture of parts for Yamaha motorcycles, snowmobiles and ATVs, and Mint Co., Ltd., which manufactures special-purpose machines and automation equipment. After a series of inspections conducted by an independent non-profit certification authority beginning in January, final ISO14001 certification was granted on February 8, 1999.

As the other eight YMC factories work toward certification, the Hamakita Site will serve as a strong precedent.

One hit & 25 cents donation campaign

The Overseas Market Development Operations (OMDO) of Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd. has been carrying out a "One hit & 25 cents donation campaign" since OMD0’s Internet home page was launched in November 1997. All of the money collected by this campaign since has been donated to the Japan committee for UNICEF. Most of OMD0’s customers are from developing countries around the globe. OMD0 has been cooperating in and supporting the activities of the United Nations and non-government organizations by providing products and holding events at schools in these countries. In their business travels, OMD0 staff have seen many less fortunate children and wanted to do their part to help them. The idea behind the “One hit & 25 cents donation campaign” is that OMD0 saves 25 cents each time someone accesses its home page, and those savings will be donated to international charity organizations. One year has passed since the campaign started, and the number of access “hits” has totaled 5,230, which means savings of US$1307.50 (Japanese yen 149,708).

This money has now been donated to the Japan committee for UNICEF through the UNICEF office for Japan in Tokyo. From now on OMD0 will continue this campaign and its donations.

Mr. Shibata, Senior General Manager of OMD0 (right) hands over the donation to Mr. Manzour Ahmed, Director of the UNICEF office in Tokyo

YZF-R6 debuts big at Daytona!

As the ’99 motor sports season kicks off, the eyes of fans everywhere are on the new Yamaha YZF-R6, and early results show it is living up to expectations.

One of the USA’s biggest motorcycle race events, the Daytona 200 at the famed Daytona International Speedway in Florida, was the site of the new YZF-R6’s international race debut. There, in the AMA 600 Supersport class, it made a truly impressive showing of its performance potential. In the preliminaries, Yamaha U.S.A.’s Richard Oliver ran a course-record 1:54.660 lap to win the pole position. Although Oliver ran off the track during the March 5 final, his teammate, Jaime Hacking, came up from his 4th place start to lead at one point in the race before finishing 3rd, giving Yamaha a place on the winners’ podium. Oliver came back to run the race’s fastest lap and finish 7th.

In the same Daytona Week’s Supercross competition, Jeremy McGrath won his 2nd straight Daytona on his Yamaha YZ250 to widen his series lead to 32 points, and he looks to be well on his way to a 2nd national title.

Riding the YZF-R6, Oliver set a Daytona course record of 1:54.660 to win pole position.

To meet the needs of a world possible by 4-wheeled vehicles such as cars and motorcycles, local government authorities are actively pursuing development of motorcycles. As a motorcycle makes itself to the development of “motorcycles” ranging from simple, equipped with features and special carrying capacity up to Japan’s fire departments’ “Quick Attacker” and a shiny example of Yamaha’s “Quick Attacker” used in Tokyo since late 1997 for a portable “immediate action at the scene” has added to the number of other equipped with quick-dispatch emergency vehicles.
Offroad Mobility That Can Save Lives

Many tragic but important lessons were learned from the devastating earthquake that struck one of Japan’s major cities, Kobe, in 1995, claiming more than 6,000 lives. Collapsed buildings and sections of elevated expressways, as well as abandoned cars of fleeing citizens, clogged roads in ways that effectively cut off access to large sections of the city where many more lives might have been saved by quicker arrival of firefighting and rescue teams.

Since well before the Kobe earthquake, however, there has been strong awareness of the need for vehicles that can get to places that fire trucks and ambulances can’t, such as crash and fire sites on crowded expressways or fires and rescue sites in wooded hill areas or high-density residential areas where houses are packed close together away from the main thoroughfares. To these, the Kobe experience also added awareness of the need for mobile units for communications and information gathering during a large-scale urban catastrophe.

To meet the needs of special emergency cases in places inaccessible by 4-wheeled vehicles, fire departments around Japan like the Tokyo Fire Department have relied for some time on specially equipped motorcycles they call their “Quick Attackers.” Meanwhile, local governments and private sector corporations are also actively pursuing deployment of emergency-use motorcycles.

As a motorcycle manufacturer, Yamaha Motor has devoted itself to the development and supply of these so-called “red motorcycles” ranging in displacement from 50cc to 250cc and equipped with features like electric sirens, red flasher beacons and special carrying platforms to assist in the needs of the country’s fire departments and rescue organizations.

A shining example of these development efforts are the specially modified Yamaha Serow 225 bikes that have been serving in “Quick Attacker” units at five local fire departments around Tokyo since late 1996. Two bikes, one mounted with a carrier for a portable “impulse spray gun” fire extinguisher and the other equipped with a carrier for a basic rescue kit, form one quick-dispatch emergency unit at each of the five departments.
Yamaha tailors marine lifestyle to Japanese market

38th Tokyo International Boat Show

The 38th Tokyo International Boat Show welcomed over 150,000 marine enthusiasts over the five days from February 10 to 14 to see exhibits by some 152 companies at the Tokyo Big Sight exhibition center.

Once again this year, the booth prepared under the theme "Life with the Sea — Yamaha, Navigator to Your Heart" boasted the largest total area of any participating manufacturer. Showing the full diversity of Yamaha's marine leisure world, the booth was divided into seven zones where visitors could see a range of 17 powerboats, including two YAM inflatables, two Jet Boats, seven personal watercraft models, 20 outboard motor models and one marine diesel engine. Six Yamaha sailboats were also on display in the separate joint sailboat zone for all participating manufacturers.

One of the booth's big attention getters was a special exhibition model of the soon to be released "HPDI-200," a new 200 hp 2-stroke outboard featuring the most advanced high-pressure direct fuel injection system ever on an outboard motor.

Also, an Information Counter introduced Yamaha's boat license program, the Yamaha SRV Rental Club and other software aspects of Yamaha's "total marine world," including numerous other school and event programs.

In his speech at the press briefing that officially opened the Yamaha booth, Mr. Takehiko Hasegawa, President of YMC stressed three main objectives that the company's Marine Operations will pursue in the future. First is to foster and promote Japan's unique marine culture in ways that make marine leisure accessible to more people, citing the SRV Rental Club as one example. The second goal he mentioned was promoting marine activities in a socially responsible and environment-friendly way. The final goal is to have Yamaha take an active role in promoting the kind of good seamanship, good manners and compliance with boating rules that are so essential for sound and enjoyable marine leisure as the country's seas and waterways become increasingly popular sites for recreation.

Marine Engine Zone features the F100A - Yamaha's largest 4-stroke - with 5 other 4-strokes and eleven 2-stroke outboard models including the HPDI-200 (center)