

CYCLE GUIDE

TEST
REPORT

AUSTRIAN SURPRISE PACKAGE



Can the new Puch MX match up to the American idea of a racing motorcycle?

Ever since we first saw the new Puch motocrossers at the Hopetown Grand Prix last year, we've been trying to get our hands on one for a test. At first we

were told that the only machines in this country were prototypes. Then the story was that the production models were being tested for any changes that might have to be made for the American market. About the last time we checked, they were in short supply. Needless to say, we had all but given up hope of late. And upon looking the machines over,

there wasn't much to get excited about anyhow.

The other day though, we received a phone call that one Puch 175cc motocrosser was available for us to use over the weekend. With some reservations we went over to pick up the machine as we always like to have a machine for testing for at least a couple of weeks,

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Overall exterior quality is good, though our test machine was a bit on the scroungy side. Comfort for most is good.

The pipe on the test machines was prototype and not standard. Power range is very broad. Frame protects shift arm.

not just a few days. Upon picking up the Puch (pronounced POOK), we had the story confirmed, this was the only machine available. Unfortunately it was rather grubby and prevented us from being able to make an accurate judgment on the finished quality of the motorcycle out of the crate.

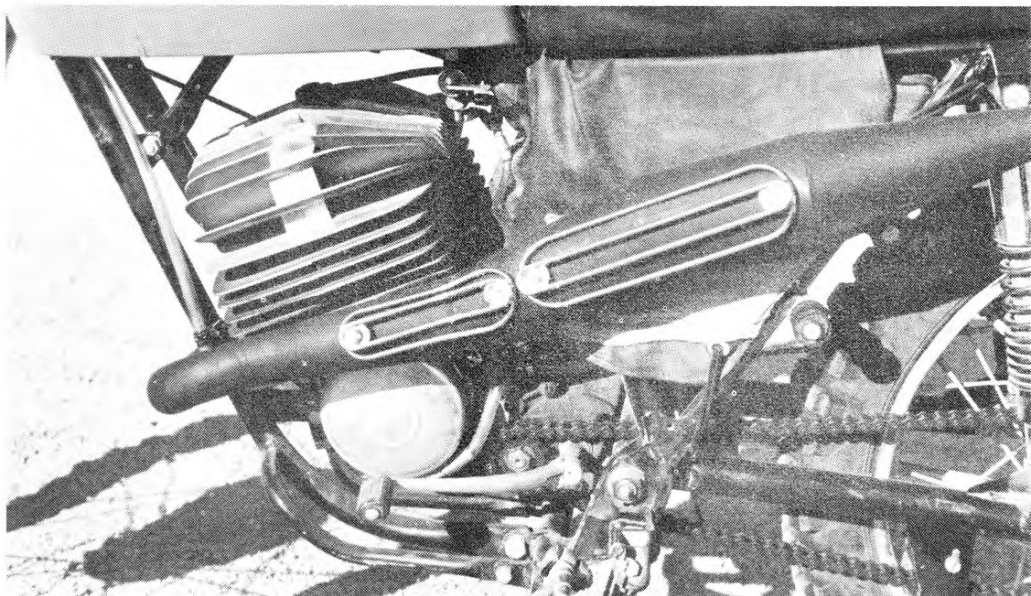
By peering through the layer of dust we could see that the Puch has been constructed with the utmost in simplicity. Possibly in an effort to keep down fabrication costs, we found that the entire chassis is a bolt together assembly. Instead of having a conventional all welded unit construction frame, the chassis is bolted together in no less than a half dozen places. We were admittedly a little skeptical of this idea, but time proved that this is as sturdy a chassis as any we've seen.

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build the biggest cylinder and head. Without any doubt the Puch is the biggest we've seen yet for an engine of its size. (Imagine what a Puch 400cc would look like!) The quality of the construction and components is quite good. The engine castings are absolutely flawless and smoothly finished.

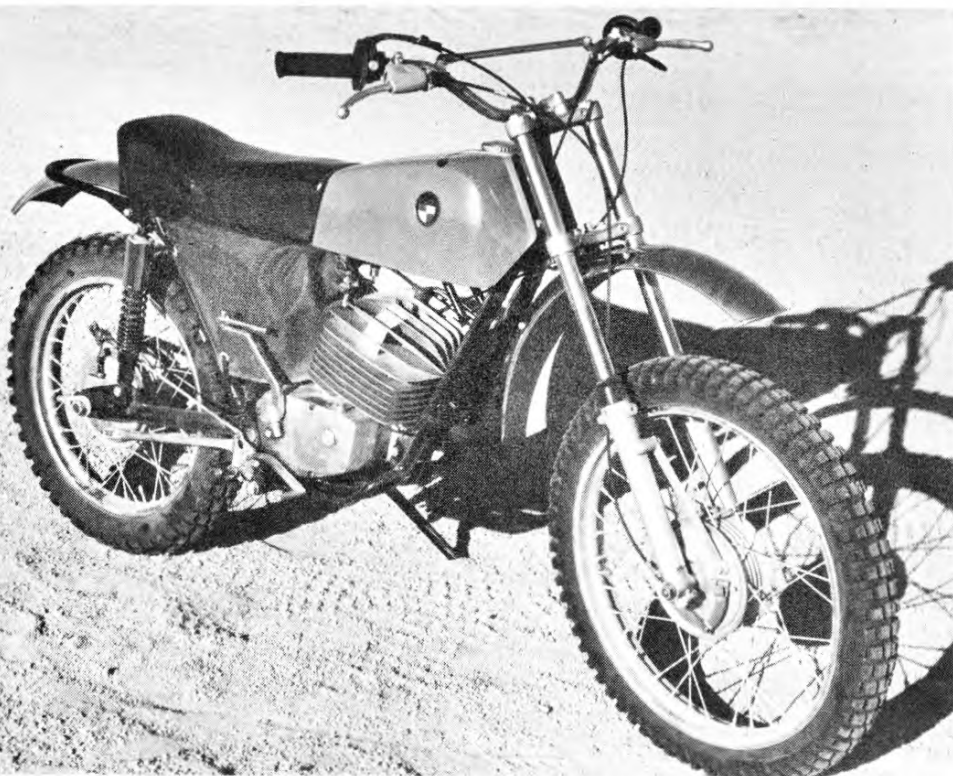
When we unloaded the Puch out at our test area we ran into the first (and only, fortunately) source of bother. In trying to start the engine we found that you have to be rather precise about placing your foot on the kick arm. If you put the arch of your foot square over the kick lever, you end up smashing your toes on the foot peg. We found that you have to place only the forward part of your foot on the lever to keep your toes clear of the foot peg to prevent sounding off with those audible four letter words as your toes crunch into the steel foot-rest. Fortunately the engine kicks through with relative ease so this adjustment comes easy. But it would have been just as easy to design the kick lever to permit your foot to clear as not. (Maybe all the Austrians have size two feet?) After solving this, we kicked and kicked. All to no avail. With the carburetor being covered by the vinyl mud tent it's impossible to see it and darn near as difficult to get to it. Finally we removed the left side of the tent in an attempt to find the choke or tickler. Well, there it was all right, but it takes a small hand to reach the tickler. Then the tent has to be buttoned up again.

After going through this exercise the



The appearance is neither overly appealing or objectionable. The fiberglass gas tank and seat sort of mold together in a block design. The rest of the machine is strictly functional. One category that the 175 Puch wins hands down is the cylinder size class. It seems that many of the European manufacturers are having a contest to see who can

engine fired on the very first kick. As we found out later the carburetor (Bing 27mm concentric) needs only to be tickled when the engine is stone cold. Once warmed, the engine would come to life each time on the first or second kick. The machine we had was equipped with a prototype expansion chamber, and not the one that comes standard



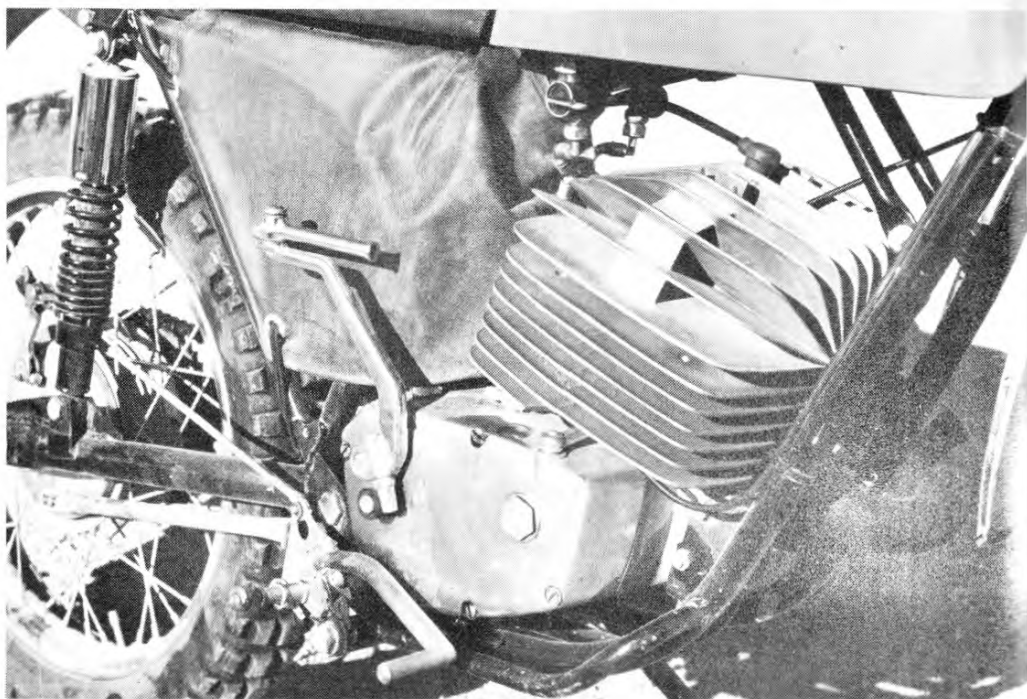
The Puch MX is made strictly for racing and has no frills or fads about it. Other than the frame, the gas tank is the only painted item.

The enormous cylinder and head keep the engine very cool. Kick arm permits rider's toes to hit peg when starting.

with the Puch. Therefore we have to evaluate its performance with this special pipe. From appearance, it is exceptionally larger in volume than the stock item.

As soon as the engine fired it was obvious from the super healthy sound alone that we were in for some surprises. From a short distance, it's impossible to tell that this is just a 175cc engine and not one of twice the displacement. It is doubtlessly the healthiest sounding (remember the special pipe) 175 we have ever heard. The throttle response (out of gear) was nothing to get overly excited about, but the engine would sit and idle indefinitely without loading up.

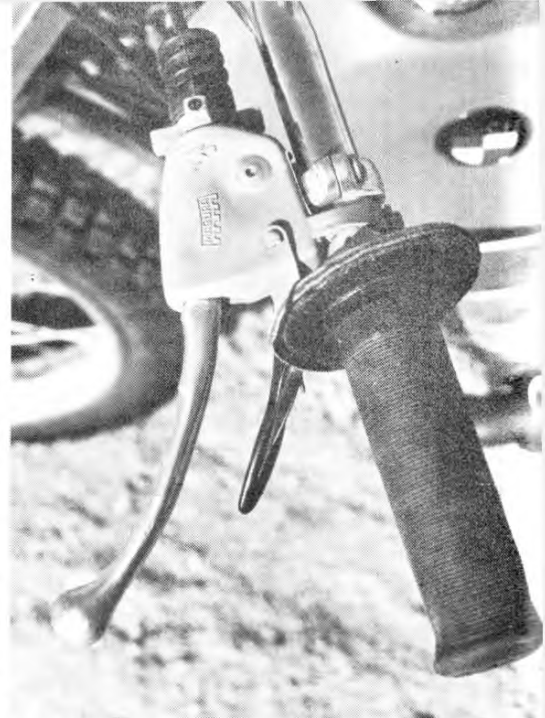
Once the engine was warm, we dropped the shift lever into low and proceeded onward. As with most of the under 250cc racing machines we were expecting the engine to be peaky. Much to our surprise the engine pulled smoothly from about two grand. Without sputtering or four stroking, it accelerates at a surprising speed, clear up through fourth gear. The clutch operates very well. This is typical of the oil bath clutch system. In fourth Puch seemed to have all the steam and speed necessary to keep up with any of its competitors.



We found this gear to be just right for zipping cross country, with the lower gears always there for any challenging situation.

For some reason we rode for some distance before we remembered that there were still two more gears left to use. In fourth gear, with the ratios being fairly well spaced, the top speed is about fifty which is more than sufficient for most riding conditions. In fifth, the available speed raises to about sixty plus and is great for the long straightaways. But, if that isn't sufficient there's still sixth to go to with a top of probably seventy or so (on a downhill with a tail wind).

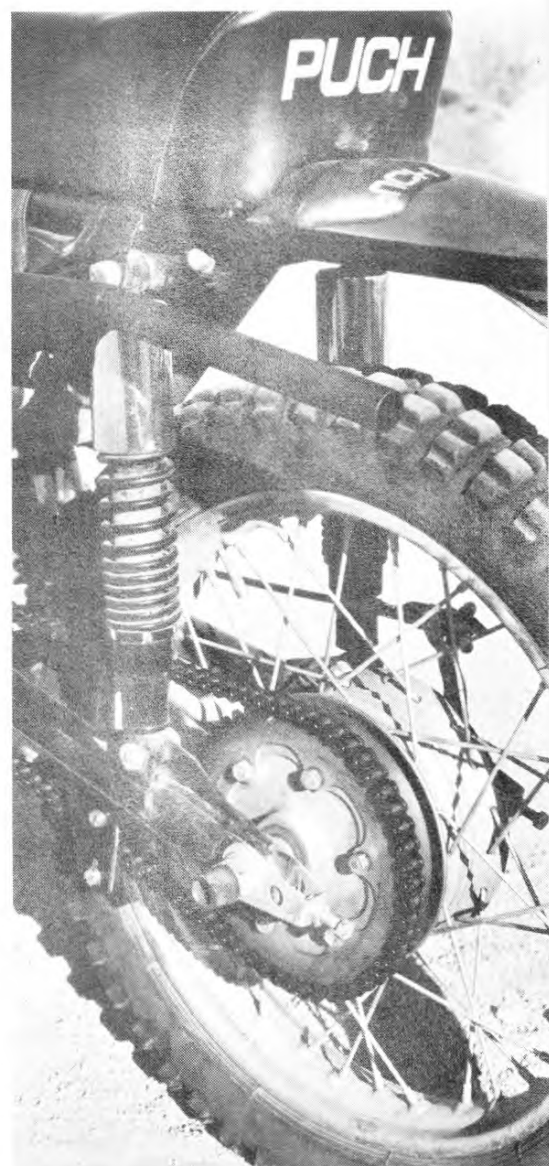
As with many of the manufacturers,



Fully enclosed and adjustable Magura levers are standard. Hand grips and compression release are accessory components.

Puch has decided to go to more gears rather than a lot of displacement. There's a lot of pro and con on this subject, but in the case of the 175 Puch it doubtlessly broadens its versatility range immensely. The first four gears are more than sufficient for moto-cross. With fifth available it makes the speed range desirable for those fast courses, but the sixth cog is nothing short of a fire road overdrive that the enduro and desert racers should love.

As mentioned before, the power range is relatively smooth. In slower areas the engine will lazily pull machine and rider around at literally a crawl without loading up or complaining. The



Rear suspension (Girlings), traction and stability are excellent. With six speeds, gearing is spread very wide.

Ceriani front forks perform very well in all types of terrain and at all speeds. Overall handling is great.

predictable power range makes choosing the right gear easy and gives the rider, neophyte or expert alike, the latitude of making up for any mistakes. In all the time we rode the machine we could at any time or in any condition, reach down and lay our bare hand on the cylinder or head without burning it. The huge cylinder and head simply refused to let the engine get hot. In fact the powerplant seemed (to the feel) to

run very cool at all times regardless of the demands on the engine.

The gearbox is one of the best shifting units (regardless of the number of gears) we have run across. It goes from one cog to the other best by using the clutch, but it is still easy to shift gears without it if need be. In having ridden some other machines with six speed transmissions we have found that most of them are fragile and temperamental

with regard to the shifting mechanisms. Not so with the Puch. It never once gave us the least bit of trouble, except when the rider goofed.

After riding the Puch for a day we had to completely erase any doubts in our mind regarding the durability of the chassis. Though a bolt together assembly, the Puch frame is just as solid and stout as any we have tested. The riding comfort, sitting or standing, is excellent.

The saddle is nicely padded for just about any build. The handlebars are comfortable for most types of riding, and the standard Magura levers will be appreciated by any off road racer. As a package, the machine is a very comfortable mount for just about any size or style of rider.

Having done an admirable job in the performance and comfort departments, Puch has kept pace with the competition by producing an exceptionally well mannered machine.

The front forks are Cerianis and the rear shocks are Girlings, so there's no question here about the performance of both of these proven suspension units. Both the front and rear units operate

perfectly in both damping and spring strength. The front wheel is the popular 3.00x21 and a 3.50x18 knobby is at the rear. Again both of these seemed to be just the right choice for the machine. In the handling department we found the Puch to be very positive and predictable.

Being strictly off road oriented, the Puch has come up with binders that work well in most conditions. (With the available top speed though, we would highly recommend that the rider look far ahead and plan on throwing out the anchor when in even the slightest doubt.) The fenders are both alloy and have a bright orange undercoat paint job added to the inside to reduce wear and

corrosion. The air cleaner tent is another nice feature (excepting the starting drill), and keep to a minimum the amount of mud and dirt that can get to the filter element.

With the great emphasis being placed on moto-cross and off road riding and racing we are seeing more machines like the Puch being presented to the American market. Puch has been making motorcycles for many, many years, and their experience has really paid off. The new 175cc six speed is a very versatile racing machine and extremely easy to ride. As is the case with many off road racing machines, the Puch will do exceptionally well at either competition or just plain trail riding. — *Dave Holeman*



PUCH 175 MOTO-CROSS

ENGINE

Type	single cylinder piston port, two stroke
Bore and stroke	62x56 mm
Displacement	170cc
Compression ratio	11:1
Max. horsepower	21.5
Ignition	Bosch transistorized magneto
Carburetion	27mm Bing concentric
Lubrication	pre-mix gas/oil

DIMENSIONS

Seat height	31 in.
Wheelbase	54 in.
Ground clearance	9.5

WHEELS AND BRAKES

Front tire size	3.00x21 in.
Front brake type	internal expanding
Rear tire size	3.50x18 in.
Rear brake type	internal expanding

TRANSMISSION

Type	constant mesh six speed
Clutch	wet, multi-plate
Overall gear ratios	1st 34.39:1, 2nd 22.71:1, 3rd 16.72:1, 4th 13.11:1, 5th 10.54:1, 6th 9.22:1

GENERAL

Air Filtration	dry paper
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CAPACITIES

Fuel tank	2.8 gal.
Fuel reserve	.5 gal.

FRAME AND SUSPENSION

Front suspension	telescopic double damping
Rear suspension	adjustable spring over shocks
Frame type	tubular double cradle

Colors: Red

PRICE AS TESTED —
\$835.00 F.O.B. Chatsworth

DISTRIBUTOR

Puch Motors Corp.
9825 Mason Ave.
Chatsworth, Calif. 91311