



on anything and you will get there first. As a matter of fact, it's going faster than you think. Launch off that little jump right before the corner like you always do, and on this — you'll land in the corner and have a moment of panic until you find out just how good the disc brakes are.

But the Rokon's legendary performance on hills is a matter of talent, not a matter of fact. It will climb, but it requires just as much pilot skill as any other bike. Only the exercise of the skill is different. Playing with the throttle to find traction and body English and even getting a good run are still important.

Because the Rokon does not achieve perfect traction, like the myths says it does. Perfect traction is

asking a little too much of a motorcycle and a lot of the rider. A certain percentage of wheelspin is built into the transmission; it makes the bike easier to ride and lets you perform ordinary maneuvers like sliding corners *et al.*

As a consequence, when you attack the slick red hills around Trask Mountain, you have to do it right or the Rokon, just like any other bike, will slip, stop, and start churning a hole in the hillside. Incidentally, don't let anyone from Oregon tell you that it doesn't rain there. We checked it out. It's always raining. The local residents have wrinkled skins and use mildew preventive as underarm spray.

One thing about the Rokon: it will not stall. That's handy. Because you



Changes made to the enduro model included PP grips, removing the headlight to make room for a PP Headlight/Number Plate (which he never got around to doing), installing a PP Integral Taillight Rear Fender, and using a PP Toolbox instead of the supplied leather bag. This year's bike will have a more conventional muffler/spark arrestor and a fancy paint job on the tank.

cannot bump start it. You can barely start it at all anyway. The enduro we tested was last year's; with these, the pull starter points up and the gas tank ends with an edge. Many bloody knuckles resulted. The two motocrossers we checked out have the cable starter exiting toward the front. You can step around to the front and yank. Or pull the cable out a little ways, and pull up. For those of us without 19-inch biceps, the process always required getting off and standing.

Another myth you hear about the Rokon is that if you get it wet, it won't run. Not true. If you submerge it, you can get the belt in the trans wet and then it slips. But closing the throttle right before entering the stream lets the pulleys slide together and seals everything. Then get it on



Downpipes are featured on the Cobra (left) and MX; vehicle in background is the Great Yellow DIRT BIKE Van (GYDBV), successor to the GYDBT.

ROKON RT340			
	MX	COBRA	ENDURO
PRICE: (retail, approx.)	\$1645	N/A	N/A
ENGINE TYPE:	Sachs, piston ported, single		
DISPLACEMENT:	335cc		
BORE & STROKE:	78mm x 70mm		
COMPRESSION RATIO:	13:1 (uncorrected)		
CARBURETION:	36mm	44mm	36mm Mikuni
HP RPM:	37 6000	N/A	37 6000 (claimed)
CLUTCH:	Nope		
PRIMARY DRIVE:	Automatic torque converter, 3.76:1 to 0.87:1		
SPEED REDUCER:	Triplex chain, 1:1.73		
TRANSMISSION RATIOS:	See above		
FINAL DRIVE:	3/8 x 5/8-inch chain, 4.15:1		
	13-tooth countershaft		
	54-tooth rear sprocket		
AIR FILTRATION:	Oiled foam		
ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:	Bosch mag	Bosch CDI	Bosch mag
LUBRICATION:	Pre-mix		
RECOMMENDED FUEL:	Premium		
RECOMMENDED OIL:	Golden Spectro synthetic, 35:1		
FUEL CAPACITY:	7.6 liters (2 gallons)	7.6 liters (2 gallons)	12.3 liters (3.25 gallons)
FRAME:	MIG-welded steel double loop		
SUSPENSION:	Koni shocks	Koni shocks	Betor shocks
	Betor forks		
WHEELS & SPOKES:	Steel (mag wheels available as option)		
TIRES:	3.25x19 knobby (front)		
	4.00x18 knobby (rear)		
DIMENSIONS:	Wheelbase: 144.9 cm (56.5 inches)		
	Handlebar width: 87.2 cm (34 inches)		
	Weight: 113.4 kg (250 pounds) dry, claimed		
BRAKES:	Hydraulic disc		
INSTRUMENTS:	None	None	VDO speedo, watch holder, horn with optional kit
LIGHTS:	None	None	Kit available
SILENCER:	Good (intake silencer also available)		
SPARK ARRESTOR:	Yes		
PRIMARY KICK:	No, primary pull		
WARRANTY:	90 days exchange or repair on defective parts		
PARTS PRICES	(all prices, suggested retail)		
	Piston Assembly:	\$39.43	
	Cylinder:	\$66.66	
	Brake lever:	\$3.95	
	Brake pucks:	\$4.95 a set	
	Starter cable:	\$2.36	



Even a torque converter wouldn't help you through the slippery spots without some English.



The left side of the handlebars vibrated insanely on two of the three bikes. One was cured by slipping the bars to the right. The other never was.

again. No problem.

And you probably heard that they were impossible to push when the engine isn't running. Again, this isn't true. One of the MXers got taken for a trail ride by Heyberger and it ate its ignition; a screw came out of the armature plate and got caught in the flywheel. This meant it had to be pushed back. Fortunately, three Canadians and two Californians



Front end plow was evident on both MX bikes. One of the alternatives was leaning it way over. This worked even better on the trail.

were enough. The group estimated the pushing weight of the Rokon to be approximately 400 pounds and insisted that statistics like this be included in the new spec sheet for all test bikes.

Back at the track, the Cobra was getting a workout. It's the hot version of the Rokon with a CDI ignition, a 44mm Mikuni, a different clutch and pipe, aluminum bars and

a black frame. Once the Cobra production run is finished, this is the MX version to have. It is significantly faster than the standard Rokon. Peakier too. Still the automatic transmission tempers the peakiness and there's no extreme blast of power. Just a steady and deceptive acceleration.

The major liability of the motorcycle — either MX or enduro, either standard or Cobra — is weight. At 250 dry, it's not exactly cause for concern at tech weigh-in.

The excess shows up in a few laps. The Betor or Koni shocks quit. You get tired fast. Landing hard makes it shake the front end. And you have to make some changes in your style. You hit the berms harder than you're used to, and dragging a toe doesn't work as well as you remember. It all makes you work harder.

On the trail, the weight isn't as much of a defect, but it's still there. You find it on slippery downhills where grabbing a good brake front only dumps you. The mass is enough to let it all lock up, break the knobby loose, and then everything slides out of control. If you're unfortunate

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ROKONS Continued from page 59

enough to blow it out there and get caught stopped on a hillside or in a mudhole, you'll also be reminded of the weight. The bike is heavy enough and high enough that when you stick out a foot to hold everything up until you get the situation sorted out, that leg will slowly collapse and your problem will become a trauma.

AUTOMATIC BITS AND CLUTCHLESS PIECES

The rounded gas tanks on this year's bikes will not destroy your knuckles when pulling the starter.

Despite being automatic otherwise, final drive is by conventional sprockets and chain. You can make all the gearing changes you want there.

Petcocks, air box and carburetion are flawless.

Each bike is individually prepped and tested before leaving the factory. Various tags on the bike attest to this. It even includes a dyno run on your own bike.

Mag wheels are optional now. It seems that spoked wheels absorb more impact and make for a better ride.

Rear brake play is adjustable, but positioning the pedal requires subtracting and adding metal to the pedal itself.

If you go riding in Oregon, take a good Wheels of Man or Belstaff suit.

Parts like throttle assembly, cables and enduro kit are all absolutely top of the line.

The spares and the manual that comes with the machine are excellent.

Konis came on the MX bikes. They didn't hack it. Neither did the Betor forks up front. This is good stuff and shouldn't be causing any grief. Unfortunately, we didn't have the bikes long enough to play with some oil and damping changes and get it all sorted out.

SUMMARY

Enduro, yes; motocross, no. Yes, because the bike looks indestructible and ISDT performances confirm that. No, because the MXer, even the Cobra, isn't competitive with the lightweights in its class. Snappy power, not linear acceleration, is how we ride motocross. Even if that's wrong, it's fun.

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300X21	26.85	44	27.29
METZELER / Pro's Choice			
400X18	33.71	1.38	35.09
450X18	37.96	1.48	39.44
300X21	31.15	1.05	32.20
GOODYEAR / Eagle MX			
450X18	36.21	.60	36.81
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AUTOIMPRESSION
**ROKON
X THREE**
by the Staff of DIRT BIKE



You've seen them — or at least, seen the ads — and there it was: big, yellow, mag wheels, funny lumps on the right side of the engine case, an enormous piece of blank metal on the left side, disc brakes, and a pull starter. Your fingers curled and your toes twitched because you wanted to ride it.

Of course, the left-hand curling and left-hand toe twitching was superfluous. It's automatic, remember? No clutch. No shift lever.

***Free rope starter
with every purchase***

The machine is made by Rokon, Incorporated, Engineers & Manufacturers. They don't make a lot of them, and they sell all they make. Test bikes are hard to come by, but we talked them into an impression of the MXers and backed that up by borrowing an enduro model from Preston Petty.

Theoretically, a 335cc Sachs

working through an automatic torque converter means that you have a strong engine operating at its best rpm all the time while the belts and pulleys and whatever adjust to what's happening in the real world. Imagine having a big Sachs that's always pumping max torque. Wow. Climb anything in the world. Go really fast. Blow everybody off.

It doesn't really happen that way. You still have to know what you're doing. It is fast. Drag race anybody