

LITTLE RED GETS BETTER

Longer legs and controllable power

The 1980 version of the CR80 had some teething problems. Violent horsepower and short suspension travel kept the Honda limited to only those who were very serious about racing. You couldn't take it on a trail ride—no way.

Honda didn't sit around idly twiddling their thumbs for 1981, however. The CR80R is more serious than ever, and with the help of some innovative changes, it's more a bike for the masses.

Good power

While the engine is still a six-speed, 80cc reed valve, it bristles with changes. Yes, good changes. The power delivery is very strong, though not nearly as vicious as the previous model. Where last year's bike had little on the bottom end and a wild, almost uncontrollable



surge from the midrange to peak revs, the '81 CR has focused more useable power down low, while still retaining an arm-jerking surge from the middle of the rpm range. Sure, a little was lost on the top end, but, it's now much easier to ride.

Lengthened legs and a stronger arm

One of the main drawbacks of the first 80 was the short suspenders. It had a measley 6.7 inches up front and 6.3 in the rear. This has been upped considerably. The front air forks measure out at 8.5 inches, with the back end now at 7.7 inches. This is right in the ballpark.

To help keep the frame from flexing under the increased load of the longer travel, the swingarm is a new box section number replacing the old, spindly tubular model. With the increase in rigidity is a longer wheelbase, making it more stable.

Bits and pieces

With the edition of more useable power, the CR80 also has a larger rear tire—small change, but one that's welcome. The 4.10x14 meat hooks up much better and helps keep the little rocket moving in a straight line.

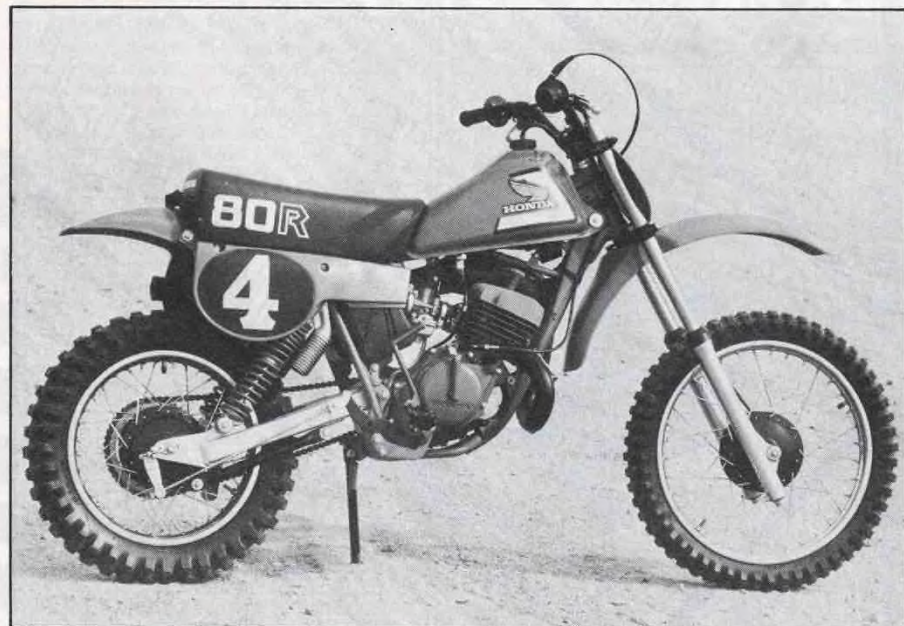
The seat height is now up to 30.7 inches, about a 2-inch increase. It's also a little heavier; it now tips the scales at 141.1 pounds, about 4 pounds over last year.

Shifting the CR was an effortless maneuver. Smooth, just plain smooth. The bike always started on or about the first kick, no problem.

The end result is...

The CR80R is now a much more suitable bike for the mini racers. With the low end now available, it becomes easier to ride and still won't be the dead fish in a pond in a drag race to the first turn.

Since it has more than adequate suspension travel, a motor that pulls instead of yanks, the CR80 can now be called a complete package. □



HONDA CR80

Engine type	Two-stroke	Weight, dry	141.1 pounds
Displacement	80cc	Intended use of bike	Off-road/racing
Carburetion	26mm Keihin, reed valve	Travel:	
Lubrication	Premix	Front	8.5 inches
Transmission	Six-speed	Rear	7.7 inches
Ignition	CDI	Price, retail, approximate	\$748