

MINITEST:

Suzuki PE250X

*Deep in the forest
a legend stirred.*

• Suzuki's PE250 has become something of an enduro legend during its five short years in the woods. It gained instant recognition because back in 1977 it was the first serious enduro bike to come from Japan. And in a market dominated by low-volume European firms, the mass-produced PE took on an almost overwhelming presence. But the legend was firmly established when the PE started challenging the European kings for results as well as showroom sales.

Results show that the PE250 was an almost instant success. Utilizing one-year-old motocross technology was always good enough to keep the PE ahead of the tree-dodging crowd. Not wanting to fool with a sound idea, Suzuki has stuck to its original format, reshaping last year's motocross machine into this year's woods racer.

The X-model PE250 is no exception to the evolutionary rule. Indeed, for 1981 the PE250 has probably changed less than at any time in

than before but also restricts airflow. This accounts for a leaner mainjet and the loss of a little top-end performance.

The PE motor still feels more like the motocrosser from which it was developed rather than an enduro engine. It is a revver, with little bottom-end and, because of the new air-box cover, less high-rpm power than before. Combine an elevated powerband with a light flywheel and you get an explosive enduro motor that does not take kindly to slow riding in tight woods. The motor does not have the low-speed snap to get you out of trouble without resorting to the clutch. But as the results show, a lot of riders have learned to adapt to the widely spaced gears, a light clutch and a buzzy motor. It's not difficult to master the technique, but even when you are proficient, the PE still demands concentration.

Only on open trails and fire roads does the PE250 feel totally at home. Perhaps it is the motocross lineage showing through, but when the track ahead is fast the PE shifts into automatic. The motor accelerates hard out of

turns and the unaltered chassis keeps things controlled down the straights. Steering is a little on the slow side, but it works well enough between the trees. The suspension is compliant, absorbing everything from high-speed holes to deep-woods logs. You can outstretch the suspension if you try hard, but in almost every case the PE shocks and fork are well up to the task.

Indeed, the whole motorcycle is up to the enduro task, and the results prove it. The PE has been one of the most popular enduro bikes in history, and because it is little changed and still competitive for 1981 there is no reason why the PE250 will not continue as a deep-woods legend. —David Dewhurst

SUZUKI PE250X

Importer: US Suzuki Motor Corporation
3251 East Imperial Highway
Brea, California 92621

Category	enduro
Suggested retail price	\$1899
Engine type	two-stroke vertical single
Port arrangement	one reed-valve-controlled intake, one piston-controlled intake, six transfers, one exhaust
Bore and stroke	67.0mm x 70.0mm
Displacement	246.8cc
Compression ratio (corrected)	7.7:1
Carburetion	36mm Mikuni slide/needle
Gearbox	6-speed
Front fork/wheel travel	air-spring, 36mm stanchion tube diameter/9.3 in. (236mm)
Rear shocks/wheel travel	10.9 in. (277mm)
Wheelbase	56.3 to 57.0 in. (1430 to 1448mm)
Seat height	37.0 in. (940mm)
Weight	241 lbs. (109kg)
Warranty	none
Available color	yellow



its short history. But, as Suzuki well knows, when you have the right formula you don't mess around with it.

Suzuki engineers didn't fiddle with the PE's motor at all. It retains the 67mm x 70mm dimensions of last year, and while the new RM motocrosser has an all-reed induction, the PE retains Suzuki's patented Case Reed Induction. Only external changes differentiate the old and new PE250 motors. Last year's airbox now has a top cover from an RS model which makes the PE quieter



Suzuki's latest PE250 is still a serious bike for the deep-woods racer

It's so much fun to ride that it could never dampen your spirits.

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 DAVID DEWHURST

TESTS: Twin Swirl Turbocharged GS1100, Yamaha XV920, Suzuki RM250X, PE250X, Honda CB400T and Kawasaki KZ650CSR

OCTOBER 1981

\$1.50

UK 1.10p

47457



CYCLE GUIDE

175-MPH FLASH

TWIN-TURBO GS1100

*Because fast
is never
fast enough*

