

# RODE A ROAD

A little  
bit goes  
a long  
way

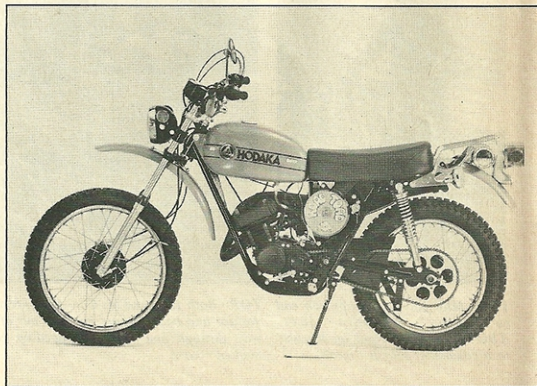


## by DAVE EKINS

About 100 years ago, when Japanese motorcycles had square headlights and pressed steel frames (actually less than 12 years ago), Hodaka offered a double-cradle steel tube-chassis motorcycle you could take anywhere for less than \$500. It was an instant success.

They geared it for the beginning off-road rider who still wanted to be able to ride city streets. The original was a very basic two-stroke, four-speed motorcycle with telescopic forks and swing arm rear suspension. Time of introduction was spot-on because the Japanese motorcycle industry had just begun its big push in the U.S.

Years later Hodaka fell out of step as the big four from Japan built motorcycles resembling Hodaka's two-purpose riding concept. Hodaka's other basic idea was continued improvement and





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spinning. There are no trick oiling passages as found in some Japanese bikes, so removing the oiler and running mix—old style—is still an option. Primary kick starting is also a new feature of the "C" engine.

26mm Mikunis are what you find on 125s; there's one on the Road Toad and it's only a 100. They need it to feed the reed valve inlet system which is boost-ported and all that fast-sounding stuff.

Cylinder is pretty trick; it's an off-shoot of Hodaka's 125 'crosser. Head and barrel are the same dimensions outside, shrunk on the inside. The cylinder is made by casting aluminum fins around an iron inner core (cylinder) with built-in ports. This is Hodaka's Alumiferic Fusion process and the results are improved cooling, lighter weight, and better performance because you can run it leaner. The Mehanite iron inner cylinder allows a rebore of up to .040.

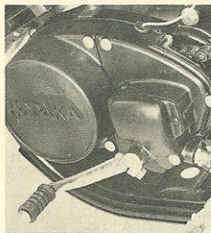
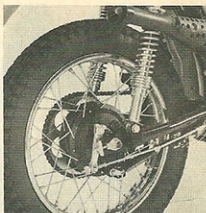
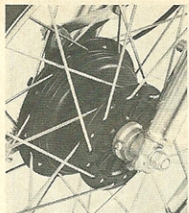
Sit on the bike and it feels like a big one because the seat, bar and footrest locations are close to those of full-size MXers. Handlebars are 34.5 inches from tip to tip. A narrow footrest width makes it feel like a trialer, and the seat lets you feel like King!

Road Toad's kick start lever is something else, like one we've never seen before. You get used to it, you have to. It does fold 'way out of the way and starts the bike too. What more can you ask of a kick starter? The engine starts easy, carburetes smoothly, and never misses. We found the reed-valved engine just great for pulling down at low speeds in tight places. Took it up a six-mile-long, twisting dirt road, held it wide open all the time, just shifted from second to fourth and back to second continuously, never missed a beat and never muffed a shift. The bike's not fast, but then it is only six cubic inches.

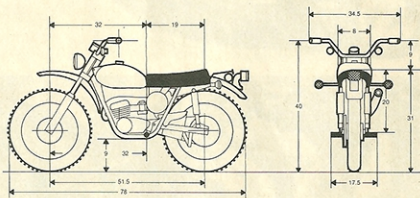
Gearbox ratios fit the engine well with all but the steepest hills climbable in second. The first four are spaced well for off-road and fifth's a long step out there for highway running. While road riding we found an annoying vibration from 35 through 55 mph in fifth. We could squeeze 60 out of it but this took a little wind cheating and a lot of road.

We found the Road Toad would get along on or off the road. The rear shocks aren't the best and the forks would begin topping after a few hundred yards of stiff uphill climbing. The engine never died and we could always find a gear that it could pull. It seemed more at home negotiating tight twisting trails than making supermarket runs.

Have we just tested a rebirth of Hodaka's great idea for introducing people to off-road riding? It certainly seems that way. After all, if you hear a Road Toad croak, hop to it! Ribbit!



TOP LEFT—Conical-shaped aluminum alloy front hub is from Combat Wombat. TOP CENTER—Idiot lights are courtesy of the Feds. Speedo is resettable. TOP RIGHT—Combat rear wheel has drive cushion in sprocket; note exhaust exit. FAR LEFT—Two covers have taken the place of one. Gear changer is new. LEFT—At home in the woods, Toad rode well in dense growth.



## ROAD TOAD

### TEST BIKE

Base price as tested..... N.A.  
 Factory warranty.....90 days or 1500 miles  
 Covers workmanship and/or materials

### ENGINE

Type.....Single-cylinder two-cycle  
 piston-port, reed valve induction  
 Displacement......98cc  
 Bore x stroke.....50x50mm  
 Compression ratio.....7.2:1 corrected  
 Lubrication system.....Oil injection  
 Carburetion.....26mm Mikuni  
 Air filter.....Oil-wetted foam  
 Ignition system.....Flywheel/magneto,  
 pointed-type  
 Electrical system.....Six-volt lighting coil  
 and battery  
 Starting.....Primary kick  
 Exhaust.....Upswept with spark  
 arrestor/muffler

### DRIVETRAIN

Primary ratio.....2.8:1 (20/56)  
 Clutch.....Three-plate wet type,  
 crankshaft-mounted  
 Gear ratios.....(Overall) 1st 38.5:1;  
 2nd 26.10:1; 3rd 18.70:1;  
 4th 14.45:1; 5th 11.20:1

Final drive/ratio  
 (sprocket teeth).....4:1 (14/56)

### CHASSIS AND SUSPENSION

Frame.....Duplex (twin-tube),  
 steel tube arc-welded  
 Suspension, front.....Telescopic-type,  
 spring- and oil-controlled  
 rear.....Swing arm  
 Brakes, front.....S.L.S. 5.2-inch-dia.  
 rear.....S.L.S. 5.2-inch-dia.  
 Tires, front.....2.75x19, trials pattern  
 rear.....3.50x17, trials pattern  
 Rim locks, front/rear.....1/1

### WEIGHTS AND CAPACITIES

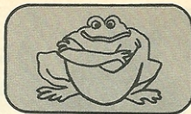
Weight, wet, unladen.....245 pounds  
 Fuel capacity.....2.8 U.S. gallons  
 Engine oil.....1.25 pints

### STANDARD EQUIPMENT

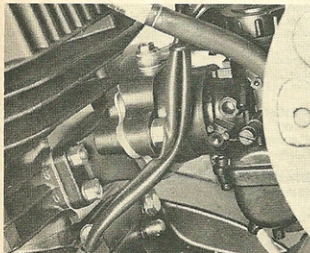
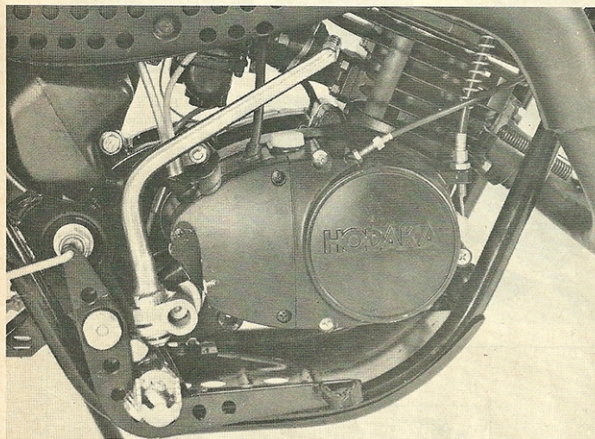
Speedometer.....10th-mile-resettable,  
 front-wheel-driven  
 Tools.....Yes  
 Stands.....Side  
 Passenger provisions.....No



# TOAD



## RIBBIT!



*TOP—Unconventional swing-around kick start lever tucks way out of the way; it works! ABOVE—Hodaka is designed and tested in the Bad Rock country—it's rockproofed. LEFT—100cc engine uses 26mm Mikuni. Reed valve in manifold allows use of oversize carb.*

parts interchangeability so you could update your older Hodak' just by purchasing newer pieces. This worked out for a while; the four-speed went to a five and displacement grew in steps from 80 to 125cc. But, like the old Beetle, the idea fell out of favor when rarer bikes offering more conveniences came down the trail.

Enter the Road Toad. All those things that made the original "Ace" a success have been retained on this new-generation, two-purpose motorcycle—the most comfortable seat in the world, a neat little chrome luggage rack that doesn't snag your boot every time you swing your leg over, toolkit-carrying steel cylinder, and that large-capacity 2.8-gallon gas tank (not the familiar chrome bubble; it's Toad Green now).

The whole bike's green except for the chrome and black parts most everyone else makes chrome and black, 'cept the handlebars. They're just painted black. So what's so neat about this Toad?

The 100cc bike's built on the motocrossin' Combat chassis. The double-loop, steel-tube frame is welded, not bolted together—longer and stronger than the original. A 19-inch front wheel balances to the 17-inch rear wheel much the same as a 21 front to a 19 rear. Heavy spokes are used, a conical hub on front and a full rear hub with cush drive at the other end.

The Road Toad's 45-watt lighting system includes turn indicators, DC emergency lighting (if the battery goes south), and an electronic voltage regulator to extend light bulb life. Also included along with street-legal, dual-purpose tires are a 10th-mile-resettable, front-wheel-driven speedometer, maleable control levers (they will bend a few times) with rubber mud covers, handlebar-mounted engine kill switch, plastic front fender, skidplate, and serrated, folding steel footpegs.

The rear shocks have progressive springs with tight winds at the top, three loading positions on the cam, and an optional upper/forward mounting position if you want to slant them for a softer ride. Now if they only had a better quality shock body to take advantage of these options, it would be slick.

Most advanced part of the new bike lies within the "C" engine. This is the first Hodaka with automatic oil injection. A plastic quart-plus-a-quarter oil tank lies under the seat and uses a dip stick to determine level. Mikuni makes the oil pump which is driven off the primary kick starting gears, always in motion as long as the crankshaft is