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Yamaha News

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BIMONTHLY

Europe's new class act

Designed and built in Europe to lead the growing 125cc market is the all new 4-stroke scooter YP125 "Majesty"



European “unification” model - Majesty 125

The first Yamaha 125cc scooter ever to be manufactured in Europe, the Majesty 125, was unveiled for the press at an introduction and test ride event in Seville, Spain from April 16 to 24. This 125cc version of the popular Yamaha Majesty 250 that brings together the three features of prestige, versatility and enjoyment is already catching the spotlight as Yamaha’s new luxury scooter.

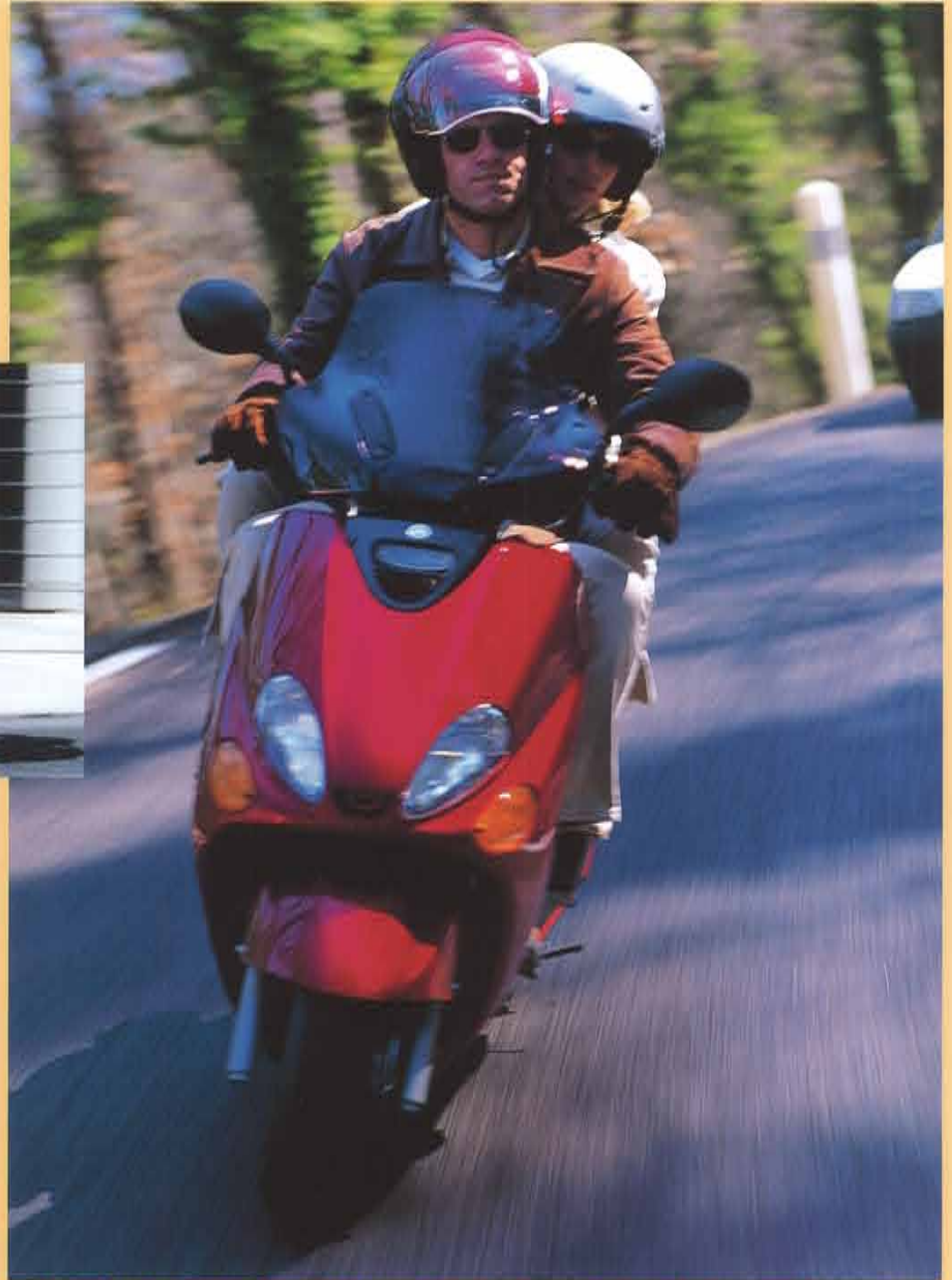


With full-sized body and long 1480mm wheelbase, Majesty 125 offers luxury and riding comfort for both the rider and passenger

Traffic jams, poor public transportation, never a parking place to be found when you need one ... These are both the frustrating realities and serious problems shared by all of Europe’s major cities today. They are also the reasons that the popularity of space-saving, practical and affordably priced motorcycles is rapidly on the rise now throughout Europe.

Among the various types and sizes of two-wheelers there has been particularly strong growth in the 125cc class, thanks to new licensing legislation that allows holders of common automobile licenses to ride motorcycles up to 125cc.

In fact, over the two-year period from the end of 1995 to the end of 1997, demand in this category roughly tripled. Beginning in Germany and France, the new licensing standard has spread to Italy and Spain, and by the year 2000 it is estimated that it will help expand the overall 125cc market to an annual demand in the vicinity of 400,000 units.



The tasteful and sophisticated design of the new Majesty was inspired originally by convertible (cabriolet) cars. And new touches like dual headlights accent its sporty image, making leisure cruising even more fun

Luxury scooter for the times

In answer to this growing demand in the 125cc class, Yamaha set about the task of developing the YP125, as a luxury scooter that would be the perfect companion for commuting, taking a spin into town

for shopping or taking off on some leisure cruising.

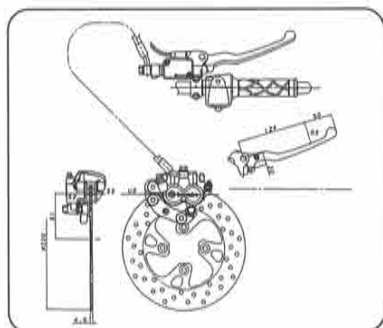
To keep the same sporty performance that has helped make the Majesty 250 such a big seller since its debut in 1996, the 125 features a new chassis design that ensures agile handling performance



A large capacity 10 liter fuel tank gives this model a generous 250 kilometer range and the car-type external fuel cap is easy to use



A spacious 32 liter under-seat storage compartment is designed to hold one full-face and one jet helmet when the bike is parked



The first-class braking system features a large diameter 220mm front disc slowed by a powerful twin pot calliper

mounted with a powerful liquid-cooled 4-stroke engine. And, the fully-automatic transmission makes it a breeze to maneuver through busy city traffic.

Combining the comfort of an automobile with the convenience and agility of a moped, this model is just the answer for the growing number of customers who are thinking about buying a practical but fashionable scooter instead of a second or third car.

First 125cc 4-stroke made in Europe

The new Yamaha Majesty 125 (Skyliner under the MBK brand) is truly pan-European in origin. While the final assembly into finished scooters is handled by Yamaha Motor España (YMES), the engines are built by the Yamaha affiliate Motori Minarelli of Italy, the mufflers and crank shafts produced by Yamaha's French manufacturing base MBK, and the supply of various other parts has been carried out with coordinating efforts by Yamaha's purchasing office, Yamaha Motor Components Europe, in Italy.

Recalling the early stages of the project, Yamaha Motor Europe NV's man in charge of factory operations, Mr. Akira Nishiyama says, "This was to be the

engine supplier Motori Minarelli's first 4-stroke engine and, since a 4-stroke requires a higher level of precision in the processing operations, we were concerned about how to ensure a high standard of quality control in the manufacturing."

Eventually, with an injection of specialized know-how in the areas of 4-stroke engine processing and assembly from YMC's home factory and the other overseas Yamaha factory with experience in 4-stroke manufacturing, Yamaha Motor Taiwan, the first Minarelli-made 4-stroke entered smoothly into the production stage. Not only did this represent Motori Minarelli's first 125cc engine, for Yamaha the Majesty 125 became its first 125cc class scooter to be manufactured in Europe.

Yamaha's global network of production bases in more than 40 countries is the result of a long-standing dedication to a policy of promoting local manufacture of products, but Yamaha is equally dedicated to the localization of product development as well.

The YP125 is a good case in point. The initial 3-dimensional modeling and blueprints were the work of an Italian design company, while the endurance testing of the prototype machines was done at the MBK facilities in France.

In every stage of the development there was input not only

The Majesty was developed in answer to greater demand in the 125cc two-wheeler market in Europe

from the various European distributors but also directly from the consumers.

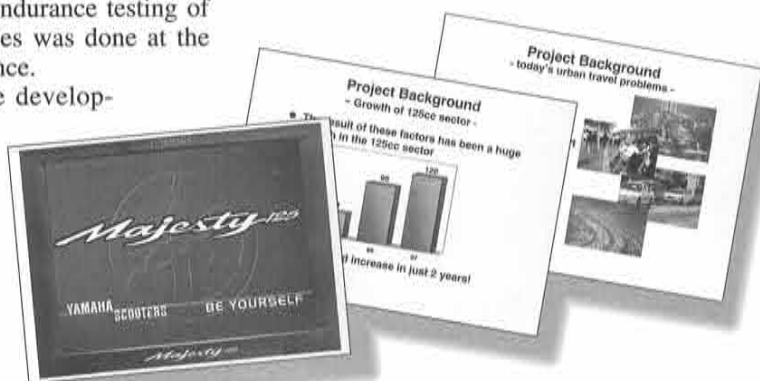
Obviously, this model enjoys all the benefits of being made in Europe. From the standpoint of cost, it was possible from the very earliest stages of the development to incorporate the most economical specifications for the locally supplied components that would eventually make up 80% of the base cost. The result was a much more competitively priced product for the European market. Furthermore, because it is being produced right in the market where it is to be sold, response to changes in the needs of the local consumers can be made with greater speed and flexibility, not to mention the fact that lead time for supply to the market is also dramatically reduced.

The potential of the Majesty 125

Though Yamaha 50cc scooters have long been manufactured in Europe, the YP125 Majesty represents the first European-made Yamaha in the true 125cc class.

"I hope that the YP125 will be the pioneer model of a growing line of Yamahas in the 125cc category here in Europe," says Mr. Nishiyama. "I believe that the 4-stroke engine we developed for this model with its high performance and fuel efficiency truly fits the needs of today's European market and I'm sure that it is going to play an important role in our production in Europe from now on."

In 1990, when Yamaha introduced the BW's 50, it was a scooter conceived around an entirely new concept that caught the imagination of the European consumers and stimulated a boom in the 50cc scooter market. In the same way, the newly launched Majesty 125 has the look of a market leader that will break ground in a new era of exciting growth in the 125 cc class.



The engines that power Europe

■ **Motori Minarelli S.p.A.** ■ **Bologna, Italy** ■ **Founded: 1951** ■ **Employees: 460**

Since its founding nearly five decades ago, Motori Minarelli has continued to supply quality small-displacement 2-stroke engines to the European motorcycle and scooter industries. Though many makers folded in the tough decade of the '80s, Motori Minarelli emerged in a vital new partnership with Yamaha Motor, manufacturing under license Yamaha engines like the popular 50 cc scooter engines which it supplies to makers throughout Europe. Today these engines power an amazing 49% of all European-made scooters.

The origin of Motori Minarelli dates back to 1951, when Vittorio Minarelli, father of the present president Giorgio, founded a company named Fabbrica Bolognese Motori (F.B.M.).

The company's first products were completed motorcycles, among which was the original Gabbiano (125 cc) with a 2-stroke horizontal single-cylinder engine. They were produced in those days at a rate of two units a day. From 1954 the company began to produce 48 cc moped engines in addition to its motorcycles. This turned out to be a good move, for by 1956 F.B.M. was able to abandon its motorcycle production and focus full-time on the growing demand for 2-stroke moped engines.

The company continued to grow and by 1967 it had changed its name to Motori

Minarelli S.p.A. and opened a new plant, its present facility in Lippo Calderara di Reno. By the 1970s the company's rapidly growing production had reached 250,000 engines annually. It was also in the '70s that Motori Minarelli machines began to win a long string of titles in motorcycle racing, including four manufacturer's titles and two riders titles in 125 cc world championship racing. Among the titles from this period are some world speed records that still remain unbeaten.

Then the 80s brought a deep and inexplicable slump to the European motorcycle industry and many companies were forced to close down. Motori Minarelli, although having to face hard drops in production, was able to ride out the recession thanks to its production flexibility and the high quality of its products, which enabled it to maintain good business relations with its customers abroad.

Motori Minarelli's relationship with Yamaha began in the mid-80s. At that time the company's president Giorgio Minarelli, recognizing the superiority of Japanese technology in the field, was looking to form some sort of collaborative venture with a Japanese maker. As it happened Yamaha was also looking for a partner to help it enter the Italian two-wheeler

market in the under-125 cc sector. In those days Italian law prohibited the import of completed motorcycles or scooters with a displacement of under 125 cc. Only their parts could be imported. The two companies seized the opportunity by entering an agreement in which Motori Minarelli would produce a 125 cc Yamaha engine under license. The relationship between the two companies grew stronger and by 1990 Motori Minarelli began licensed production of a 50 cc Yamaha engine for scooters in addition to the existing 50 cc and 125 cc motorcycle engines. The success of this venture soon pushed Motori Minarelli's production levels past the record levels of the boom years in the '70s. In 1995, production reached 410,000 units per year and the company then employed 330 people. A period of growth and big new investment spread to all areas of the company's operations. The Research and Development department was equipped with a highly sophisticated new roller test bench with emission gas analyzer, one of the few facilities in all of Europe that enables the complete testing of all aspects of a vehicle including emissions analysis. Meanwhile, the manufacturing division acquired state-of-the-art digital-control equipment for gear and cylinder machining and, also, advanced new machines were installed for processing aluminum components like crankcases and covers. And,



Motori Minarelli's head office



In 1979 and 1981 Motori Minarelli won two rider titles in the 125 cc World Championship thanks to Angel Nieto (in photo)



The R&D department's chassis dynamo (test bench)

One of six assembly lines with a high level of automation



Minarelli's best seller, the 50 cc scooter engine comes in several versions. This is the MY 50 cc horizontal air-cooled engine

Multi-speed engines like this 50 cc AM 6 are selling mainly to OEM customers



a third semi-automatic assembly line was added to the two existing ones. To help rationalize our manufacturing operations in the face of growing production, a new 8,000 sq.m factory facility was also acquired in Bentivoglio, Bologna.

Thanks to the improved production capacity and the high reputation of our engines, annual production reached another high of 560,000 units in 1997. The product that continues to be our best seller is the 50 cc scooter engine, of which over 2 million units have been manufactured since 1991. Different specifications of this engine have been developed for models with air or liquid cooling, vertical or horizontal cylinder layout and with or without disk brakes. With these varieties we have succeeded in winning supply agreements not only with MBK and Yamaha Motor España but also with OEM customers including Aprilia, Malaguti, Benelli, Betamotor, Rieju and more. In fact, 49% of the scooters manufactured in Europe today mount engines originating from the Minarelli-Yamaha collaboration.

Besides these 50 cc scooter engines, Motori Minarelli continues to produce

multi-speed engines such as our 50 cc and 125 cc models which are sold with success mainly to OEM customers. And furthermore, as of this year Motori Minarelli has gained license for the production of another Yamaha engine, a 125 cc 4-stroke. This represents a big challenge for us, since Motori Minarelli has never committed itself to the manufacture of 4-stroke engines before, and also a big opportunity for the future.

The Motori Minarelli of today employs a staff of 460 at four factories with a combined floor space of 32,000 sq.m. The in-house manufacturing activities include engine assembly, gear machining and aluminum and cylinder machining. Our assembly factory now has six assembly lines in operation, which are characterized by a high level of automation, including 50 automated or robot work stations. Some 250 people work in this department in two shifts a day that bring our production capacity to 3,600 engines per day.

Looking to the future, Motori Minarelli foresees bright years ahead, despite the fact that the European market for 50 cc

engines appears to have already reached maturity, making it difficult for it to absorb much more than the 1.2 to 1.3 million units currently being produced. But, Motori Minarelli has great expectations for the over-50 cc scooter segment in the years to come. And, as we have mentioned, the company has recently begun production of the Yamaha-designed 125 cc 4-stroke engine, thus opening up new markets for our products.

With such a strong future in our sights, Motori Minarelli is prepared for further expansion of our manufacturing facilities, having purchased an additional 25,000 sq.m. lot in Lippo di Calderara in 1997 suitable for a 12,000 sq.m. building. When this building is completed all the assembly lines will be moved to it in order to achieve the best possible layout and leave the machining shops more room in the old buildings.

All these challenges and new plans are part of Motori Minarelli's ongoing efforts to constantly improve both the quality and productivity of our operations so that we can continue to supply the European market with the high-quality engines they expect from Motori Minarelli at competitive cost.

From Carlotta Minarelli of Motori Minarelli, Italy

WORLD TOPICS

MOTORCYCLES

GERMANY

Supersport YZF-R1 going strong

German readers have rated Yamaha models very favorably in two German magazines that surveyed the popularity of motorcycle models.

In the poll by PS, a magazine that focuses on sports bikes, the YZF-R1 won first place in the over 600cc sports bike category, and first place overall. In fact, Yamaha was successful in two of five categories.

Another survey was conducted by Mopped magazine with six categories. In four categories, Yamaha won first place, and in another, Yamaha won second place. These results are the best that one brand could ever get.

In more good news for Yamaha in Germany, Helmut Dähne, who is responsible for motorcycle tires at tire manufacturer Metzeler, and who is still the fastest man on the famous Nürburgring Nordschleife, is participating in the production bike racing category. This year Dähne is competing in the production category on the R1, and has already won the famous 1,000 km race at Hockenheim.

From Karlheinz Vetter of Yamaha Motor Deutschland GmbH.



Helmut Dähne won the 1,000 km race at Hockenheim in his very first race on an R1!

MOROCCO

Yamaha Club leads promotional drive

"Due to the efforts of MIFA, Yamaha has a reputation spreading nationwide... The (Yamaha) brand has contributed directly to the growth of the motorcycle spirit in Morocco."

Auto Magazine Maroc



MIFA and the Yamaha Club attracted the attention of *Auto Magazine Maroc*, and an article appeared in the December issue

Yamaha promotional activities are making news in Morocco. An imposing new billboard takes a high profile, and a top magazine recently ran a story on MIFA's marketing activities such as the Yamaha Club.

The Yamaha Club was created by MIFA in January 1997 to give Yamaha customers the opportunity to buy motorcycles in Morocco at good prices instead of buying them abroad. The Club offers its members many advantages, such as special discounts on future purchases, better spare parts availability, costless assistance and a free of charge service during motocross competitions. At present, there are 48 members in the Club and the plan is to increase the number this year.

Members receive T-shirts and caps with the Yamaha logo, and bags with the Yamaha Club logo. Staff stay in close, personal contact with members by mail, telephone and fax, and a questionnaire is being prepared to find out members' expectations of the Yamaha brand and distributor.

MIFA is working hard to take charge of the competition motorcycle market to increase the number of Yamaha riders.

Numerous Yamaha riders are already ranked in the Moroccan championship, and MIFA is positive that in a few years, along with the Royal Moroccan Federation of Motorcycles for which MIFA is official sponsor in 1998, they can seriously develop motorcycle (and nautical) competition.

From Adriana Bobos of MIFA, Morocco

INDIA

Friends brave world's highest road

Two friends have trekked to the highest motorable road in the world and back on their Yamahas without so much as a single hitch. For 19 days last year, Depender Dedwal took his new '96 Yamaha RXG, and his friend Ashok Kumar took his '86 Yamaha RX-100 model through trying road conditions and extreme changes in climate. It was a true test for both man and machine and all four finished with flying colours.

The pair took off from New Delhi on July 22, 1997 and covered about 3000 km to be back on August 9 via Chandigarh. They rode the rugged Himalayan Trident track up to Khardong La, which is situated near the Indo-China border. At 5,800 m (18,380 feet), Khardong La is the highest motorable pass in the world.



Both the RXG and RX-100 proved the adventurers' idea: the best way to communicate with nature was on a bike

They enjoyed the adventure, communicating with nature and the magnificent scenery, but were faced with plenty of challenges. At one point, they rode a badly weathered dirt road usually under several inches, sometimes several feet, of water depending on the time of day. The lowest pass they crossed is Baralacha La at 4,830 m, but it is also the most treacherous - desolate with huge patches of

glacial ice and swift-flowing nullahs (ravines) criss-crossing each other.

"At times we had to travel up to 300 km of Arctic-like desert which was cold and inhospitable even in the day due to the lack of oxygen," said Mr. Dedwal. "Because of limited time and a small budget, we were always trying to cover maximum distance in a set time. In all these efforts, our motorcycles did their work effectively."

Mr. Dedwal was thankful for Escorts Yamaha's suggestions regarding operation and maintenance of the bikes during the trip. "I owe the success of this trip to the trouble free performance and unmatched reliability of these two Escorts products," he said.

The story was covered in the Hindustan Times Saturday Magazine in October 1997 with photos and an article entitled 'The Unbeaten Track'.

Vivek Gulati of Escorts Yamaha Motor, India

JAPAN

Kids get bike lessons from Norick



Yamaha GP rider Norick wants their first experience of riding a motorcycle to help children understand how fun bikes can be

On March 21, 1998, Yamaha GP factory rider Norick Abe played Headmaster at the first children's motorcycle school, teaching young kids to ride. Norick first rode a motorcycle at the age of 5, and got a taste for the fun of riding. He wants other Japanese children to know how fun bikes and motor-sports in general can be, but Japanese children don't usually have many chances to get near a motorcycle. So, Norick planned the school himself to give kids first-hand experience, and Yamaha Motor helped run it.

On event day, 19 children from 6 to 11 years who had never been on a motorcycle before turned up with their parents. First they learned the basics of handling a bike, the PW50. When they got to actually ride, each child easily managed their first kick start, and opening up the throttle little by little, they slowly inched forward.

At the end of the day, they tried 5 laps around the circuit with Norick. Some of the more energetic kids even tried to outrun their instructor Norick, giving us a glimpse of what might be the GP riders of tomorrow.

TURKEY

Istanbul hosts Bicycle & Motorcycle Fair

The '98 Bicycle and Motorcycle Fair was held at the Hilton Exhibition Center in Istanbul, Turkey, from March 26. Over the four days of the Fair, 28,000 visitors came to see the latest in two-wheelers. Beldeyama A.S., Yamaha's distributor in Turkey, was a major presence, and one of 125 companies participating.



The country's top enduro riders featured on Turkish TV on Yamaha's latest machines

They exhibited Mobylette brand mopeds which were produced in the Beldeyama factory, New Age bicycles, and of course Yamaha motorcycles.

Yamaha motorcycles attracted even more attention than expected, especially the R1 which was the star of the Fair. A lot of enduro and motocross fans also came to take a look at the YZ400F.

Beldeyama supports the two top national enduro riders, Suleymar Memnun and Boris Tok, of the Castrol-Yamaha team, and the stars were found by several TV channels at the Yamaha booth.

From Osman Lav of Beldeyama, Turkey

CANADA

Canada to Mexico 'Pony Express'

LETTER

We needed a good reason to take six weeks off work to go riding in the middle of the Canadian winter, and my daughter, Holly, provided one. Holly had a friend whose parents recently moved to Cabo San Lucas at the tip of the Baja Peninsula, Mexico, and she had what seemed at the time like a logical idea: "We could deliver a letter to them!" So, the Yamaha XT600s were prepped and loaded, and the modern version of the Pony Express rode again.

We started off on the bikes in Phoenix, Arizona, U.S.A., and from there covered 6,200 km through the rugged terrain of Baja, finishing off with a detour into the jungles of Los Angeles on the return trip. Our two Yamahas were the ideal way for us to cover the vast and basically unexplored regions of this motorcycle rider's paradise. The 4-stroke singles under the tanks provided sufficient thrust, and reliability, to make the journey an unforgettable adventure. Averaging over 60 MPG, the bikes were eco-



Holly with the XT600s that she and Dad Frank took on their postal mission

nomical, and the electrical start was much appreciated, especially for those occasional stalls in traffic, or on some desert sandwash.

Baja proved to be a perfect getaway for two bikers to escape a typical Canadian winter.

Oh yes...the Pony Express. The letter was delivered safely, just like in the old days!

From Frank Simon, Calgary, Canada

WORLD TOPICS

JAPAN

Rookie storms Superbike

It didn't take long for the Yamaha World Superbike Team's new rookie, Noriyuki Haga, to catch the attention of the Superbike racing establishment, as he finished first in the second heat of the series opener at Australia's Phillip Island to capture the win in his debut round of the World Championship.

But it was probably in round two of the Superbike series in Britain that most people realized this rookie is for real. Racing for the first time ever on the technically difficult Donington course, he literally ran away from the competition to win both heats!

With his shock of hair that he may dye blond or green as the impulse moves him and a happy-go-lucky personality, this young 23-year-old certainly breaks the mold for Japanese riders up until now. But when he gets out on the course he is a ball of fire battling wheel to wheel with the best in the world. No wonder fans around the world are standing up and taking notice. Since his first Superbike win requests for interviews never stop pouring in.

"The season has just started and who knows what lies ahead. I don't think I'll keep winning this easily. But, I have a



Haga is taking the superbike world by storm on his Yamaha YZF750

staff I can count on so I will be going for the title, one race at a time," he says, showing that he's not affected by all the hype.

Noriyuki began showing his unlimited talent in 1996 when he won the tough Suzuka 8-hour with Colin Edwards II and again last season when he took the All Japan Superbike title with 8 wins. Who knows where this winning streak will end!

FINLAND

Yamaha freezes out competition



Ice racer Ilkka Roininen rode off with the '98 Finnish Championship on a YZ 250 (Photo by Tuomo Seppänen)

A YZ 250 was the machine on which Ilkka Roininen took the '98 Finnish Ice Racing Championship in the 250 cc class. The ice racer is sponsored by Yamaha's Finnish importer Oy Arwidson Ab.

The '98 Finnish Championship was held between February 8 and March 15, and consisted of 6 races for each class, with each rider counting their five best results.

Roininen won three races, came 2nd twice, and on one occasion came 7th. Oy Arwidson Ab also sponsored a YZ125 rider.

Ice racing, the winter version of road racing that the Finnish consider their speciality, is carried out on tracks on frozen lakes using special spikes for good grip. Naturally, in this part of the world it is a popular winter sport among road race riders and motocross riders, and it makes good practice for road racing in wet conditions.

From Juha Harju of Oy Arwidson Ab, Finland

MOROCCO

Mediterranean Motocross Trophy

The 9th Mediterranean Motocross Trophy was held in Morocco at Lalla Takerkoust Lake, near Marrakech on March 7 and 8 this year by the Royal Moroccan Federation of Motocross (FRMM) supported by its official sponsor, MIFA Yamaha.

The Trophy, held twice a year in different southern Mediterranean countries including France, Portugal, Italy, Greece and Tunisia, is a high level sporting event that brings together riders from different countries, measuring their talents and capacity. It's also an excellent opportunity for the riders and their fans to discover other countries and traditions, and to make new friends. Yamaha dominated the first four places in the national (80cc) competition, while taking first and third in the 125cc class, and second in the 250cc class in the international race.

The aim of FRMM, together with MIFA Yamaha, is to develop motocross in Morocco to an international level, and this event takes them a step closer.

From Adriana Bobos of MIFA Yamaha, Morocco



The 1,600m circuit is naturally rocky and sandy, which makes the competition very hard for the riders but spectacular for the audience

GERMANY

This year's trip - jungle Thailand!

Every year, Briel Motorsport, a Yamaha dealer in Germany organizes an exciting trip on Yamaha bikes for people to have fun together and foster friendships with the different countries they visit.

This year's trip in January was to the jungle hill country of Northern Thailand, and the lucky participants were



People from the hill tribes kindly welcome the weary tourists

two staff from Briel Motorsport and a group of four German motorcycle riders. A highlight of their adventure was meeting people from the hill tribes in the sensitive border area near Burma and Laos. They observed that these people live life in very frugal circumstances, and carry ginger, fruit and vegetables to market in far away valleys. Over the years, other motorcycling destinations have been Spain ('90), France and Italy for offroad riding on old military roads in the Alps ('91), around the world, including Japan ('92), offroad riding three times in East Germany ('93), offroad with two staff members in the Spanish Pyrenees ('94), Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic and Hungary on the offroad Transdunubia ('95), and the mountains of Romania on the offroad Enduro-Mania ('96).

The adventure riders have plenty of ideas for other trips. One plan is to manage a trip to Namibia, Africa, and they hope many more trips will follow.

From Volker Briel of Briel Motorsport GmbH, Germany

MARINE

MAURITANIA

FRP fishing boat production in Africa

Last year, in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania's capital, Nouakchott, a technical assistance agreement was reached between Mauritania and Yamaha Motor for the manufacture of FRP boats. Preparations were then made to begin local production of the BLC40, a 40 ft canoe-shaped FRP fishing boat, and on March 17 this year the Yamaha outboard motor distributor MIP (Mauritanienne des Industries de Pêch), represented by president Mr. M. A. O. Yaha, held a ceremony at the factory to commemorate the start of production. The ceremony was attended by around 150 people, including the Mauritanian Minister of Fisheries and the Minister of Economic Planning, diplomatic offi-

We are always looking for interesting stories. Write to Chief Editor K. Shimizu of the PR Division. Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd. 2500 Shingai, Iwata, Shizuoka 438-8501 Japan.

cials from the American, French and German embassies, and a representative from the West African branch of the World Bank. The guests joined in conversation on the topic of common interest - the local production of the FRP boat. Representing YMC were Mr. Shinya Sato, Senior General Manager OMDO and other staff.

From Yukihiro Abe of OMDO, Japan



The locally made BLC40 outside the MIP boat factory in Nouakchott. Six boats had already been completed by the day of the opening ceremony

Crypton's 8,000 km challenge a success

BRAZIL

When the popular Yamaha motorcycle Crypton was launched on the Brazilian market, YMDB proposed a special challenge to two men. Their task was to test the bike by making a big 8,000 km trip in a very short time. Two volunteers Alexandre and Adilson, took that challenge and went on the road on March 11, 1998. YMDB supplied the two Cryptons, and the men made all the other arrangements. Along the way, Yamaha dealers were



The two riders and their long trip companions, the Crypton, with local kids in Aracaju

available for service and assistance. After 20 days they were back, and for the record, there weren't any problems with the motorcycles.

The original idea was to submit the new model to testing under real conditions of use, under different kinds of road and weather conditions in a very short time, much like an endurance competition.

The results have been impressive. The only things required were to change the tires and adjust other parts. After the trip, one of the tested Cryptons continued working hard, clocking up more than 3,000 km on the city streets, as a bike courier.

The Crypton challenge was part of YMDB's marketing plan to boost Crypton sales in Brazil. The new product has been extremely well-received by consumers and the Brazilian press. One of the most important industry magazines in Brazil published a report about Crypton stating: "Yamaha are definitely making a revolution in the Brazilian motorcycle market."

The Challenge is a clever way to introduce this kind of motorcycle into the Brazilian market. "We are working very hard to make the Yamaha Crypton one of the most popular motorcycle models in Brazil," said Mr. Takahashi, YMDB Commercial Manager.

From Sidney Levy of YMDB, Brazil



Alexandre (far left) and Adilson together with Mr. Watanabe (center), president of YMDB

Turning Yamaha technology into Gold

Just a few weeks after the end of the successful Nagano Winter Olympics, Japanese TV audiences found their hearts being won by the courageous performances of another group of athletes at the Nagano Winter Paralympics. Many viewers, who were seeing events like the downhill sit ski races for the first time marveled at the high level of competition. Japanese athletes thrilled their countrymen by eventually winning five medals, including two golds, in the Alpen ski events.

What most of the TV audience didn't know was that these performances against the best athletes in the world were made possible in part through the dedicated sit-ski development efforts of three Yamaha employees. Working largely on a volunteer basis outside their normal job responsibilities, Mr. Takumi Fukui, Mr. Nobuyuki Kanno and Mr. Hiroshi Tanaka of YMC's Research and Development Operations worked to perfect high performance suspension systems and chassis for the sit-ski mechanisms that could withstand the stresses of plunging down an uneven ski slope at over 100 km/hr while maintaining maneuverability and control.

On March 23, 1998, YMC's President Hasegawa presented these three engineers with special issues of the Yamaha President Awards which are given annually in recognition of employees or departments that have made special contributions to Yamaha business, the company or the customers. In his comment at the ceremony President Hasegawa said, "The Nagano Paralympics gave all of us a sense of excitement and deep satisfaction that was no less than the Olympics themselves. It is a wonderful thing to

know that behind the scenes Yamaha technology and the unsung efforts of these engineers were helping to make this exciting kando possible."



The main point of the sit-ski development was how to absorb the strong shocks from the bumpy snow surface

Technical Publication Center Opens

On April 17, YMC Director Katsuhiko Sakuramoto, Director Hiroshi Ukon and members of Yamaha Motor's Service Information Division invited representatives from printing companies to an opening ceremony for the new Technical Publication Center (TPC).

Amid the rapid advance of digitalization in all aspects of business, Yamaha's Service Information Div. last year launched its own Technical Information Publishing System (TIPS), a data base in which all manner of information, diagrams and photos used in the production of customer manuals and parts catalogues are stored digitally.

Meeting the needs of today's customers

requires not only the use of state-of-the-art digital technology in the hardware we manufacture but also high-quality digitalization of the software aspects of our corporate activities. The TIPS system is a good example of how hard and software aspects of our business can be digitally linked to better serve our customers.

One of the main functions of the new TPC facility, which is designed with a separate operations booth for each printing company, meeting areas and a photography studio, will be to promote higher levels of information sharing and clear division of responsibilities with Yama-



Chile's participants together with YMC special instructor Hidenobu Toh (center)

Just selling is not enough

Yamaha is a manufacturer of motorcycles, but as a company it does a lot more than just selling the machines it builds.

Instructing our users in the sound and proper use of these products is another of our important responsibilities. Towards this end, YMC, in cooperation with the Yamaha distributors in each country, conducts seminars to train people primarily from local dealerships to become instructors for Safety Riding Schools.

From March into April of this year our Motor Sports Promotion Division's instructor, Mr. Hidenobu Toh visited South America to hold training seminars in cooperation with the respective Yamaha importers in Chile and Venezuela, Yamaimport and Venemotos. In Venezuela, the two-time former 250cc road race world champion from 1983 and '86, Carlos Lavado, was among the "students" who listened intently to the experienced teaching methods of Mr. Toh.

Since Enduro racing is popular in both of these countries, an Off-road Riding School was held at the same time for selected customers. YMC is dedicated to continuing this program to train new riding instructors worldwide.



Former world champion Carlos Lavado (left) joined the seminar in Venezuela



The tape-cutting ceremony for the TPC opening

ha's cooperating printing companies. The end product of these efforts is sure to be more efficient production of high-quality product manuals that are another part of our quest for Customer and Community Satisfaction.

Before the eyes of all Africa

Held once every four years, the soccer World Cup stands along with the Olympics as one of the grandest spectacles of sport. Since regional play-offs began last year soccer fever has been growing around the world toward the June kick-off of this summer's France World Cup.

Africa is no exception. The continent is a hotbed of soccer fever as witnessed by Nigeria's recent Olympic gold medal and the increasing prominence of African players in the world's top professional soccer leagues. Perhaps no event symbolizes Africans' love of soccer better than the biennial African Cup of Nations, where teams from across the continent compete for the right to be called No.1 in Africa. For two weeks in February this year, the West African country of Burkina Faso hosted the 21st holding of this prestigious tournament.

It was a major undertaking for this country of 10 million and a land area slightly larger than the U.K., but under the leadership of President Compaore the country launched a program of preparations involving, among other things, the construction of a new stadium in the southern city of Bobo-Dioulasso and refurbishing of one of the two stadiums in the capital, Ouagadougou.

As a major sponsor of the Nations Cup, Burkina Faso's Yamaha distributor CICA Burkina and its CKD motorcycle factory SIFA also made a big contribution to the success of this event and offered the services of the country's most popular motorcycle, the Yamaha V80 (Mate) to officials at the three stadiums.

The Yamaha V80, outfitted with special tankard rear-carts was used as a quick transport vehicle for injured players throughout the tournament. Thanks to CICA Burkina and SIFA's sponsorship, the V80 was a highly conspicuous presence, along with the field-side Yamaha ad boards, for television audiences throughout Africa and in some European countries as well, and for the up to 30,000 fans who packed the three stadiums used for the Nations Cup games. Despite its size, Burkina Faso is Africa's biggest per capita motorcycle market. Anywhere you go in Burkina Faso today you are sure to be impressed by the number of motorcycles serv-



Nearly 30,000 fans flocked to the stadium to see the Burkina Faso National team play



The Yamaha logo stood out among the ads that ringed the field



The Yamaha V80, Burkina Faso's most popular daily-use bike saw important service in the Nations Cup as well

ing as daily transportation for the people. And, equally impressive is the number of Yamaha brand motorcycles you will see. Led by the incomparably popular V80 assembled at the SIFA factory and sold by CICA Burkina, these Yamahas have become the two-wheelers of

choice for the people, enjoying an amazing 90% market share. And many Burkina Faso soccer fans were surely gratified to see the V80 they use daily serving down on the soccer fields. After a spate of thrilling matches, it was Egypt that eventually won the Cup. But the home team also delighted its fans with a strong 4th place finish. During the course of the tournament government officials also took the occasion to thank the Yamaha staff and CICA president J. Leccia for the vital role they played in its success.

Double titles in AMA Supercross

This year's 16-round AMA Supercross series that started in Los Angeles on January 10 and ended in Las Vegas on May 2 was an exciting one for Yamaha fans across the USA. That excitement reached its peak in round 15 held in Dallas, Texas, on April 24 when Jeremy McGrath riding a YZ250 for Team Chaparral Yamaha captured the 250cc class championship. For McGrath, it was his 5th personal title but for Yamaha it was an even more memorable victory, being the first AMA Supercross 250cc title since Mike Bell was crowned champion in 1980. Meanwhile, in the 125cc Western Region series, YMUS factory rider John Dowd brought Yamaha its second Supercross title of the season.

McGrath started the series with a 3rd place at the Los Angeles round, followed by two 2nd place finishes in Houston and Phoenix to put him in the lead in the points race. Confident now in himself and the performance of his YZ, McGrath began to dominate the season in Seattle, where he pulled one of his patent run-from-the-front victories. Seemingly unstoppable now he won the next three rounds in similar fashion. Just as the countdown toward the title



McGrath dominated for much of the season on his YZ250

had begun at round 13 in Pontiac, however, fate seemed to turn its back on McGrath when a missed jump sent him down and out of the race. Misfortune followed again at Charlotte as a collision with another rider caused the first of two falls that left him to stagger home in 14th place. But showing himself a true champion, McGrath came back in round 15 at Dallas to clinch the championship with a 2nd place finish. In the final round 16 in Las Vegas he put the crowning touch on a great series by running away to his 7th victory of the season.

Many Supercross fans also had their eyes on another Yamaha rider in the same 250 cc class. Just 19 years old but already a two-time champ in the 125cc Western Region series, Kevin Windham had moved up to the 250cc class this year as rider for Team Yamaha (USA). True to the fans' expecta-

tions, Kevin battled consistently to top finishes and by the end of the Tampa round stood 2nd in the point standings. A victory at his home course in New Orleans followed by a 2nd at Minneapolis, a second season win at St. Louis and another 2nd place finish at round 13 in Pontiac put a come-from-behind victory in the race for season title within his reach. When Kevin pulled a holeshot at Charlotte and began to pull away from the pack it looked for a moment like the dream might become reality, until a fall took him out of the race. After another fall at Dallas in the semis that forced him to cancel out of the final as well as the final round at Las Vegas, Kevin still finished his first season in the 250 class with a respectable 4th place ranking. The other YMUS racing team star, veteran John Dowd, concentrated his efforts on winning the Western Region 125cc title. With a final record of three wins, two 2nds and two 3rds in the 7-round series he captured the title convincingly, the first in his 13-year career. In a spot entry in the Charlotte round of the Eastern Region championship Dowd added yet another laurel to his great season with a win in the 250cc class.



Veteran John Dowd showed championship form this year