

YAMAHA MOTOR CO., LTD.

Yamaha News

JANUARY 1, 2004 ENGLISH

No. 1

BIMONTHLY

Himalayas High!

Three Chinese made Yamaha YBR125s and an intrepid crew of Yamaha people from Japan and China prove that there is no mountain high enough, no road rough enough to keep a good bike from getting you where you want to go.



The Saga of a 125cc Eve 5,000 Meters and Back

Since its debut in China in November 2002 as the lowest priced 125cc Yamaha brand motorcycle produced by any of the overseas Yamaha manufacturing bases, the YBR125 manufactured by Chongqing Jianshe-Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd. (JYM) has won a popular following thanks to its outstanding running performance, selling 100,000 units in its first year of sales. Last October, an adventurous group of riders set out to see just how tough the YBR125 is by making a daring ascent up to the climbers' base camp (elevation of 5,520 m) on the world's highest mountain.

Although much of the route followed one of Tibet's main roads, at over 3,000 meters most sections are unpaved gravel roads. At times the riders would be crossing broad grasslands and at others rocky trails carved into the cliffs along steep ravines. In order to reach the base camp on Mt. Everest they would also have to cross the Juewula Pass at an altitude of 5,250 meters. The motorized ascent would give the riders no chance to adjust to the increasingly thin air, so altitude sickness was almost a certainty. How would they fare in such a tough environment, and what about the YBR125?



The seeing-off event at JYM

Climbing toward the bluest sky on earth

The date was October 15, 2003. At 11:00 in the morning at the starting point in the Tibetan capital, Lhasa (elevation of 3,600 m), the temperature was 23 degrees C. and the cloudless sky was clear and deep with an almost mystical beauty that the word blue hardly did justice to. With the wave of a Yamaha company flag, three YBR125s, colored red, blue and black, pulled away from the starting point in the square in front of the Potala Palace, the crisp purr of the 4-stroke engines ringing sharp and clear.

In the spring of 2003, three YBR125s bearing the serial numbers 80383,

60567 and 41315 were shipped from the JYM factory to YMC in Japan to be prepared for this challenge. After making a few spec changes necessary to accommodate the extreme high elevation and rough trail riding conditions anticipated, the three machines were air-freighted from Japan on Sept. 21 to Lhasa via the midwestern Chinese cities of Xian and Chengdu.

Despite having plenty of time to prepare the machines, the intention of the YMC staff was to keep the machines as close as possible to the original YBR specs, and externally you could barely notice the difference. The only changes made were (1) the addition of an automatic high-elevation adjustment mechanism for the carburetor, (2) fitting them with off-road tires, (3) adding wide handlebars, (4) an additional pressurized air capsule for the front suspension and (5) an under-guard plate to protect the engine.

"Our aim was to maintain the originality of the YBR125 as much as possible and prepare the machines with an absolute minimum of modifi-

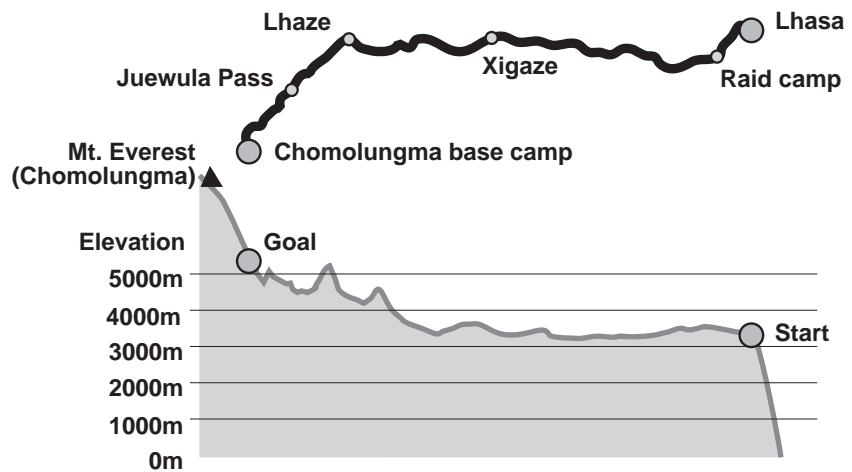


rest Ascent to Over

cations so that original performance remained the same,” recalls Mr. Tatsu Nomoto, who was in charge of the modifications.

As the three machines set out from Lhasa, it was Nomoto who rode the lead machine. A veteran of YMC's sports and racing promotion team with a wealth of experience in race participation and Yamaha Riding School (YRS) instruction, Nomoto is a true specialist in proper machine handling. On bike number two rode Mr. Masakazu Shiohara, a 30-year veteran of Yamaha race activities who has worked on the development of numerous production racers and factory race machines like the YZM400F and the YZR500. Few know more than Shiohara about the ingredients of a solid race machine or what things must be avoided. On machine number three rode JYM's Service Department Chief, Kenji Takeda, a 19-year service veteran who came to JYM four years ago and knows the YBR125 inside out. From the makeup of this assault team it was clear that for Yamaha this was a serious challenge, not just a fair-weather touring trip.

Despite having taken all the measures they could think of to prepare



for this raid back in Japan, the team knew that they were undertaking a challenge into an unknown realm. Soon after the start, Nomoto had plenty on his mind. He remembers asking himself, “Were there enough parts? Would one spare engine be enough? Would the desktop calculations they had made concerning the carburetor adjustments and such prove correct?”

Their trials had just begun. The three bikes climbed into the Himalayas followed by a support team led by Mr. Kazuyuki Yamashita and a camera crew, for a total of 15 people riding in four land cruisers and one larger truck.

Battling the dust of the trail

Here at latitude 28 degrees north, the tree line lies at an elevation of 3,500 meters. Once you climb above 2,000 m the trees begin to decrease in size

and number, and by the time you reach 3,500 m all that remains is a thin covering of grasses and a few shrubs. With little ground cover, the wind easily whips up clouds of sand and dust. The three riders wore double-thickness masks to keep the dust out of their mouths and noses, but after a few hours of riding the white masks had turned completely brown with a thick covering of dust.

Though the machines continued to purr on comfortably, the riders were suffering from difficult breathing and





Local residents turned out to watch

the telltale headaches of altitude sickness. It was impossible to keep the dust from getting into their eyes, and it reached the point where they could almost hear their eyelids grating against their eyes. Soon the insides of their helmets were caked with a thick layer of dust that made it difficult to raise and lower the visor. The film crew in the land cruisers also battled the dust that gathered on their lenses and clogged their cameras' aperture and lens motors.

As they climbed higher, the riders' blood pressure began to rise. Shiohara, who normally had a blood pressure of 120 over 60, was soon recording pressure 40 points higher in both the upper and lower measurements. Even the slightest exertion caused nose-bleeds that wouldn't stop. At 5,000 m the air pressure is 520 hectopascals. Operating the bikes stressed the riders' muscles and their systems cried for oxygen to clear the lactic acid that accumulated in their fatigued muscles.

The thinness of the high-altitude air is not something you can see, it is felt in the body. Gradually the riders became aware of the risks involved in this adventure and they found themselves having to concentrate more and more on the simple act of riding as the days passed.

Despite the disabilities of the riders and cameras, the YBRs ran on beautifully, unfazed by the altitude, dust and tough road conditions. At one point JYM Service staff member Yikuo Lin checked the three bikes' air cleaners. He changed the sponges, but the paper filters were still so clean that all he had to do was shake off a thin layer of dust and slip them back in. And, throughout the

three days of running, across three passes over 5,000 m, neither the spare engine or any of the spare pistons, links, jets, tires or chains would ever be needed.

On the night of the third day, under a magnificent Milky Way, Nomoto and his team retired to their tents early.

An oxygen cylinder becomes a life-saver

The plan for day four, Oct. 18, was to leave Tingri, ride up to the Everest base camp and back, covering a total of about 200 km. The expedition started out before dawn with one



Nomoto gets an oxygen breather while Raid Manager Yamashita takes his pulse

land cruiser running in the lead and the three YBRs following its taillights in the dark. By starting this early they hoped to see the world's highest peak in the warmth of the first morning sunlight. Team Manager Yamashita had carefully weighed the risks and given the OK. He wanted this to be a thrilling moment for everyone.

In the pitch black of early morning the temperature hung at 5 degrees below zero and the rocky trail was rougher than anyone had imagined as they crossed the Juewula Pass at 5,250 m. This was no fun ride. In the dark the riders had to rely on the subtle slipping of the tires to read the tilt of the rocky trail underneath. Using

only 2nd and 3rd gears to get the best possible grip, they crawled carefully up the trail. On the downhill sections after the pass they maneuvered their machines mostly from the standing position.

The team had one thing in mind: to get to a point where we could see the peak of Everest as quickly as possible. After two hours of running in the pale morning light, they still couldn't see the summit. Finally at just after 8:00 in the morning, there it stood. Towering above them in a clear blue sky was the 8,848 meter summit of Mt. Everest. On the other side of the ridge they could look down into Nepal. Though their helmet visors were coated with a film of dust, the riders could see each other's smiles beneath.

Soon they reached the Everest base camp and took some well-needed oxygen from the oxygen bottles. After eating breakfast, everyone gathered in an open area for a commemorative photo. It was then that someone shouted, "Where's Nomoto?" Hurrying back to one of the larger tents, Team Manager Yamashita found Nomoto crumpled on the floor struggling to breathe. The team doctor rushed to get him an oxygen cylinder, but at first Nomoto showed no signs of recovering. A dark cloud seemed to pass before Yamashita's eyes for a desperate moment, and he found himself praying.

Within 20 or 30 minutes, however



A team cheers for the camera with the world's highest peak, Mt. Everest in the background



the smile had returned to Nomoto's face and he was suddenly himself again.

That commemorative photo was finally taken with Mt. Everest in the background. As they started back down the mountain, Yamashita was relieved to see Nomoto ride out in the lead just as always.

An unexpected rider change

For the film crew in the land cruisers it all happened before they could even react. On the 19th, as the expedition was making its way down to



Takeda gets a check-up after falling due to oxygen deficiency

Xigaze, one of the riders who had just passed gingerly through a large puddle standing up on the bike suddenly drifted off the road on a gentle down-hill left-hand curve, scraped a wall and went down. "I don't know if it was dizziness due to the lack of oxygen or if it was the sun in my eyes," said Takeda afterwards. Though he had taken a hit on his right arm and shoulder, he was otherwise uninjured and the bike was fine. So Takeda got back on and continued to ride out the day. That night, however, the pain in his wrist worsened to the point where he couldn't grip the accelerator well. At first, Yamashita thought of retiring the one bike, but finally he decided to have

JYM's Lin relieve Takeda as rider for the last 300 kilometers.

Despite all his experience as a service technician, Lin had never ridden a bike for more than 100 km in a day. "It's OK, I can do it," he reassured Yamashita. Takeda's fall and the resulting injury had made everyone on the team realize how exhausting the trip had been. But the goal was now in sight and Lin's determination inspired everyone. "I wanted to make sure that all three bikes made it to the finish," he said later. And that is exactly what he did, riding the third YBR with all the concentration he could muster all the way to the goal on the 20th at Lhasa's Potala Palace.

As he rode ahead of Lin on this final leg of the adventure, Shiohara was saying to himself, "At one extreme there is working with a large budget to build and race faster and ever stronger motorcycles. And this 125cc machine has got to be the other extreme, a bike with a perfect balance of easy-to-handle performance and a very affordable price. This is another kind of real enjoyment."

"From the first time I saw the design plans for this model's engine I had the feeling that I was looking at one kind of perfection; an engine that could be built inexpensively but had what it takes to keep running strong, even if the actual use conditions are bad. On this trip, the riders started to break down, but this bike never showed a bit of strain." This is what Shiohara decided to say at the press conference in Chongqing two days later.

On the evening of the 20th the six-day touring raid was drawing to a close. There had been emergency oxygen supply, special measures to deal with the cold and the dust, a

crash and rider change and plenty of hard running in 2nd and 3rd gear. There were bent spokes, scratched up engine guards and dust-caked chasses to speak of just how tough their daring high-elevation challenge had been.

Now the goal was right in front of them; the end of a long six days and 1,370 kilometers. And through it all the YBR engines had continued to run without a sputter. Now that 4-stroke sound of their reliable YBR125s would be engrained in the riders' memories forever.

Comment from Project Manager Kazuyuki Yamashita (YMC China Business Group Motorcycle Operations)

"We planned this Everest base-camp expedition in line with the requests of the Japanese NPO "Himalaya Harmony." There was the option of using machines built in Japan, but we wanted to see just how much punishment this inexpensive 125cc machine built by Yamaha in China could take and what its real potential was. In this sense it was a new challenge for Yamaha. At the same time we wanted to use this event to build the YBR125 image, take photos and film for later promotional use, and also to gather data for future development.

On this raid all the riders adjusted quickly to the needs of the rough road conditions of the Himalayan plateau and rode well. Thanks to them, we were able to show just what a great, reliable bike the YBR125 is. We are now more certain than ever that this is a machine we can recommend with confidence not only to the people of China but customers everywhere around the world.

A Success Story in Brand Building



The 4th D.O. shop called "Yamaha Town" is opened in Ho Chi Minh City. Attractive remodeling with the arrival of each new model wins young people's attention



Our reporter: Hoang Ha, Assistant Manager of Sales & Marketing Division

made-in-Vietnam model, the 105cc "Sirius." But, by the end of 2002, Yamaha had won the position of "No. 1 in Brand Image" in Vietnam, and sales of Yamaha motorcycle had climbed from just a few hundred units a month to over

10,000. The story of this achievement is one of a determined team with a never-say-no attitude and an unflinching trust in quality and consumer-oriented marketing.

Investing in a golden market

When economic sanctions were lifted in February of 1994, Vietnam was a country with a rapidly growing population of over 78 million and an economy that was growing at an annual rate of about 8%. The first Yamaha survey revealed an estimated annual motorcycle demand of about 350,000 units.

The market potential was there, but there were also a lot of obstacles to be cleared. While they were waiting for approval to begin manufacturing Yamaha motorcycles in Vietnam, the staff of the fledgling Yamaha Motor Vietnam traveled around to bike shops with pamphlets of Yamaha's Southeast Asian market model Crypton. At that time, the name of the other leading Japanese maker had become synonymous with motorcycles, as its first Vietnamese market model sold over 60,000 units in its first year. "How can a piano maker build motorcycles?" asked many of the dealers.

When the first Yamaha Sirius models finally started coming off the assembly

line in 1999, the dealers still couldn't be convinced to carry the Sirius. But the YMVN team didn't lose heart. They knew they had a good product if they could just get it to the customers. "If the dealers wouldn't carry our bike, why don't we set up direct outlet shops and sell them ourselves?" someone suggested. Soon Yamaha D.O. (Direct Operation) shops were established in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City and other locations one after another. But the Sirius still wasn't selling.

Riding out the price war

The entry of inexpensive Chinese copy bikes from the end of 1999 fueled a tough price war in the Vietnamese motorcycle market. "The market was flooded with cheap motorcycles almost overnight," recalls YMVN's Director General, Mr. Takahiko Takeda. "We decided not to get involved in the price war but to concentrate on establishing ourselves as No. 1 in Quality. The great staff at our factory were part of this effort, and thanks to them we were able to push Yamaha as the quality brand instead of just another cheap product."

Within a year or so the difference between Yamaha quality and that of the cheaper Chinese makes was becoming evident and Vietnamese users were seeing the

benefit of paying more for the real thing. At the same time, the bright color schemes of the Sirius that conservative users had shunned at first were now becoming popular among young people in the urban centers like Ho Chi Minh City.

Yamaha as a trend-setting lifestyle leader

In 2001, YMVN came out with its new model "Jupiter," which quickly won acclaim from fashion-conscious young people for its design and coloring. This was followed in quick succession by the launch of the "JupiterR" and Asia's first automatic transmission commuter, the



People buy parts to fix motorbikes in Ho Chi Minh's Chinatown

Starting from Zero

Soon after Vietnam opened to foreign investment in 1994, YMC established a team of five people to lay the foundation for the Yamaha Motor Vietnam of today, a company now employing over 1,300 people. But it would take three years before Yamaha's application for a joint venture license was finally approved. By the time Yamaha started its operations, Honda had already established a firm market base thanks to efforts that started

from their used-bike export right after the war, and the "HONDA" name became synonymous with moped-type motorcycles in Vietnam. Yamaha was starting from virtually zero share in a long-isolated market

where the Yamaha brand name was known only for pianos.

It wasn't until October of 1999 that Yamaha was finally able to launch its first



The factory ground-breaking ceremony in Oct. 1998

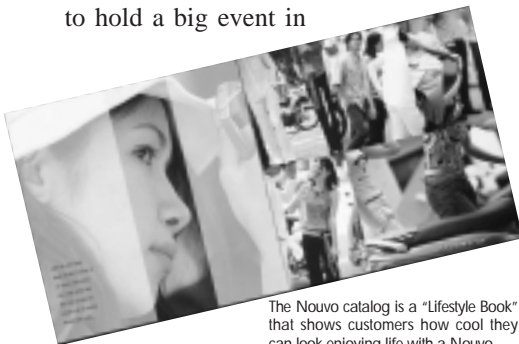


An early promotional campaign for the Sirius



Various types of shows are used with the PR caravans to gather excited crowds

“Nouvo” in 2002. The launches employed bold strategies focused on the image of Yamaha as a quality brand that can change your lifestyle. For the Jupiter launch, YMVN bought out almost all the advertising space in Vietnam’s major newspapers twice in November 2001. The success of regional test-ride caravan events coupled with attractions like song contests and concerts led to the idea to hold a big event in



The Nouvo catalog is a “Lifestyle Book” that shows customers how cool they can look enjoying life with a Nouvo

front of the Opera House in the center of Ho Chi Minh City. That event created a sensation by attracting an amazing 100,000 people. For the launch of the Nouvo, the marketing team decided to make “fashionable riding” the theme. One innovative idea was making the Nouvo catalog a

“Lifestyle Book” full of information for fashion-conscious young urbanites. “One of our themes is ‘Someday a Yamaha,’ which means making Yamaha the brand that people who are riding other makes

now hope to be able to ride someday,” says YMVN Director General Takeda. “We want Yamaha to be the brand that people in Vietnam look to for the next



This fashion show was one of the PR events for the JupiterV. Other events included music shows attended by famous musicians

exciting thing.”

Today, Vietnam’s motorcycle industry faces new problems, like new laws that limit bike registrations. Nonetheless, 2003 ended on a very strong note for YMVN. First of all, the company’s ambitious marketing took on a new dimension when YMVN became a major sponsor of the biggest sporting event ever held in Vietnam, the Southeast Asian region’s “22nd Seagames.” By supplying the Seagame organizing committee with 50 units of the Nouvo under an exclusive supplier contract and flying red Yamaha flags at the games’ many venues for the

32 sports contested, Yamaha was able to grab nationwide exposure. This was supplemented by a nationwide campaign in which 100 Yamaha uniformed college students toured the country handing out sponsor leaflets.

As the year-end shopping season began, Yamaha dealerships were full of customers looking at the two hottest models in the Vietnamese market today, the JupiterV and Nouvo. An estimated 5,000 Nouvos and 15,000 Jupiters were sold between Nov. 25 and Dec. 13., and YMVN estimates that it will sell a total of 22,000 bikes in December alone. That compares with just 2,345 units of the Sirius sold in its whole first year!

Though there are certain to be hard times again in the future, everyone at YMVN, from the president to the people in the factory to the ambitious dealer network that now boasts about 190 shops nationwide, are determined to meet the challenges ahead. Because they all believe strongly in Yamaha quality and their ability to build and supply products that surpass the expectations of the Vietnamese consumers.



One of the oldest dealer shops in Hanoi

Our foundation-building has only just begun

Yamaha Motor Vietnam’s Soc Son Factory started production in 1999 in a quiet rural area about one hour by car from Hanoi building less than 1,000 units a month. Having just added a new building, it now turns out 10,000 motorcycles a month. For the factory’s manager, Mr. Tatsuo Oba, starting up this facility was a long uphill task, and the work is far from finished. “When you say that Yamaha started from zero in the Vietnamese market, that was also true of our factory, too. Our joint venture partners knew almost nothing about motorcycles at first. It was a process of putting together facilities and teaching everything from the beginning. So, you can imagine how proud everyone was when we fired up the engine of our first Sirius model off the assembly line in October 1999. After that I kept telling our partners that with this model Yamaha could soon win 10% of the Vietnamese market. But for more than a year the Sirius was only selling at a pace of about 500–600 units a month and we had to scale back our original production rate. We were so desperate to sell bikes that we



Soc Son Factory Manager, Mr. Tatsuo Oba



The completed new factory building



This became the site of the new YMVN factory

would be at work on an order within two hours after it came in. Now I realize that that kind of speed is vital for a factory in today’s market. When Vietnamese consumers pay a price that is more than their yearly salary to buy Yamaha quality, that is a trust we can’t betray. We have a big responsibility to bring uncompromising quality to customers like these. And in that sense, our work has really only just begun.”

This Is My Country



Vietnam

Country name:

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Capital city: Hanoi

Area: 329,560 sq. km

Population: 81,624,716

(As of July 2003 est.)

GDP: \$183 billion (2002 est.)

Currency: VND (Vietnam Dong)

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam of today is a sovereign and reunified country that runs the full length of the eastern coast of the Indochina peninsula of Southeast Asia. Vietnamese people describe their country as a bamboo shoulder pole slung with two baskets of rice—the fertile southern Mekong Delta and the northern Red River Delta. From these lowland paddy fields stretch vast rubber plantations, rolling hills covered with thick jungle, and jagged mountains standing more than 3,000 meters high. Many say that Vietnam's greatest resource is its friendly, welcoming people. Long closed to the outside world, Vietnam retains a charming innocence. In the decade since the country opened its doors to visitors, the natural beauty and rich cultural heritage have made it a popular land to visit.

Geography and Climate

Vietnam shares 3,730 km of inland borders with China to the north and Laos and Cambodia to the west. To the east, Vietnam faces the Gulf of Tongking and South China Sea along a total coastline of some 3,260 km. The country's total length, from the northernmost to southernmost points, is 1,650 km, while ranging in width from 600 km at the widest point in the north and 400 km in the south to just 50 km at the narrowest point in Quang Binh province of the central coast region.

Vietnam is both tropical and temperate in its climate, which is characterized by strong monsoon influences, a high rate of rainfall, and high humidity, but also with a considerable amount of sunshine. The annual average temperature ranges from 22 to 27 degrees C. In Hanoi in the north, the average temperature is 23 degrees C, while in Ho Chi Minh City in the south it is 26 degrees C, and in central Hue it is 25 degrees C.

Thanks to its varied topography, the country has everything from tropical coastal lowlands to temperate zones above 2,000 meters. In the south, the rainy season lasts from May to November, but the showers are usually limited to brief bursts in the late afternoons. Along the central coast, the driest season runs from June to October. Visitors to the north are often surprised by the region's distinct seasons; summers are hot and humid while winters are invigoratingly cool.

Vietnam is crossed by thousands of streams and rivers, with a river emptying into the sea about every 20 kilometers along Vietnam's coastline. The waterways are a very convenient means of transport with major rivers like the Red River in the north and the Mekong River in the south. Forested hills and mountains cover much of the country's area and just over 17% of the land is arable.

History and Peoples

Vietnam is a country with a history as rich as the soil of its green deltas. Thanks to its geographical location, Vietnam has long been a transport junction from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. Trade brought new goods and culture, but also conquerors. Much of Vietnamese history reads like a romantic legend, full of heroic struggles and valiant victories that enabled this small country to retain its culture, traditions and its sense of history. In Vietnam, traditions carry real meaning. Ancient heroes are still celebrated in colorful temple festivals, people honor their ancestors, and village elders teach values of hard work, hospitality, and family loyalty. Vietnam has 54 ethnic groups, most of which live in remote mountain areas and follow age-old customs. In this sense, it offers unique opportunities for cultural exploration.

Economic and Social Programs

With a population of over 81.6 million people, Vietnam is a densely populated country. It is also one whose economic growth was stifled through much of the 20th century by war and later by the loss of financial support from the old Soviet Bloc, and the rigidities of a centrally planned economy. Since 1987, the Vietnamese government has embarked on the course of DOIMOI (Renovation Policy) and recorded important and significant socio-economic

achievements, including annual GDP growth of around 9% per year from 1993 to 1997. However, the 1997 Asian financial crisis brought out some of the problems in the Vietnamese economy and re-affirmed the belief of some government officials that shifting totally to a market-oriented economy would hurt the country. GDP growth fell to 6% in 1998 and 5% in 1999 before recovering to between 6% and 7% in 2002, in spite of global recession.

However, some major difficulties in economic performance remain, with domestic industries, including coal, cement, steel, and paper, reporting large stockpiles of inventory and tough competition from foreign producers. On the other hand, Vietnam has a variety of mineral resources yet to be developed. Beneath the forests are valuable minerals such as tin, zinc, silver, gold, antimony, precious stones, and coal. Vietnam also has abundant subterranean mineral water sources. In recent years the Vietnamese authorities have moved to implement the structural reforms needed to modernize the economy and empower its industrious people to produce more competitive, export-driven industries.

In addition to joining APEC (The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference), Vietnam has recently signed the US-Vietnam Bilateral Trade Agreement that went into effect near the end of 2001. These moves are expected to significantly increase trade.

An Increasingly Popular Tourist Destination

One of the industries that shows great promise of the future is tourism. As a country that values its past even as it modernizes toward the future, Vietnam is an especially attractive country for visitors. The friendly Vietnamese people and delicious ethnic cuisine add to the pleasures of travel here. Four of the country's more famous destinations are now protected under the World Heritage program, beginning with scenic Halong Bay in 1993, followed by the royal palace in Hue and, most recently in 2000, by the old city section of Hoi An and the ruins of the ancient city of Me Son.

If you have a chance to travel along the coast of Vietnam, you will be able to enjoy the beautiful beaches of Tra Co, Sam Son, Lang Co, Non Nuoc, Nha Trang, Vung Tau, and Ha Tien. In some places, you will see mountains jutting out of the sea. One such magnificent site is Halong Bay. Vietnam's coast is also dotted with thousands of islands, which are among the most popular tourist destinations, like the Truong Sa and Hoang Sa Archipelagos. The forests of Vietnam account for most of the total land area, and national parks are preserved by the state under a steady development plan.

With its proud cultural traditions, kind and industrious people and new trade relationships with the ASEAN region and the world, Vietnam is a country that is clearly on its way to a brighter future.



The elegant Vietnamese "aozai" dresses are popular today in both traditional and stylish contemporary designs



The hand-tailored Vietnamese aozai dresses are admired by women all over the world



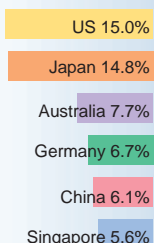
An outdoor market scene with people selling foods, sweets and vegetables



Typical dishes of cuisine served at a Vietnamese restaurant

Export commodities:

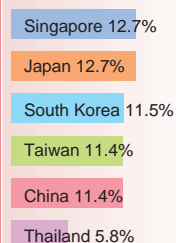
Crude oil, marine products, rice, coffee, rubber, tea, garments, shoes



Export: \$16.5 billion f.o.b. (2002 est.)

Import commodities:

Machinery and equipment, petroleum products, fertilizer, steel products, raw cotton, grain, cement, motorcycles



Imports: \$16.8 billion f.o.b. (2002 est.)

Yamaha Turns Ambitious Eye to 2004 MotoGP

As the successor to the GP500 World Championships, the new MotoGP class got its start in 2002, in a sort of hybrid year with 2- and 4-stroke machines competing side by side. The 2003 series became the true inaugural year for the MotoGP as all the major factories and teams fielded 4-stroke machines. In this season Yamaha competed with three teams entering a total of five Yamaha YZR-M1 machines. Riding in 2003 for the Fortuna Yamaha Team were Carlos Checa and Marco Melandri, for the

Gauloises Yamaha Team for 2003 were Alex Barros and Olivier Jacque, while Shinya Nakano rode for Team d'Antin Yamaha. Among these riders, Checa finished the 16-race season with the highest ranking, at 7th, in his second year on the M1, followed by

Barros and Nakano tied for 9th. Although this can hardly be called a good finish for Yamaha, all five riders showed their potential for improvement by finishing near the top in different rounds of the series.

Yamaha's 2003 season M1 machine featured new cowling and exterior design as well as a redesigned positioning of the crank shaft and the other two main axes. The adoption of fuel injection also brought a big improvement in top rpm. However, throughout the 2003 season the teams were often unable to turn good qualifying times into podium finishes.

YMC's MotoGP Project Leader, Ichiro Yoda says, "We were basically satisfied with the progress we made in boosting acceleration and top speed in the 2003 season. Especially after introducing F1 technology from Yamaha's Automotive



Checa in action. In 2004 he will team with MotoGP champ V. Rossi (Photo from '03 UK GP)



Mr. Shunji Yatsushiro on the M1 at the press test-ride event

Operations at mid-season, we saw a clear improvement in the engine's potential." This fact was proven by test data at each of the GP courses that showed the M1 to be competitive with the rival machines in terms of top speed. "The areas of improvement that we need to concentrate on have been narrowed down to just a few, and development work on the 2004 model is now proceeding at a very fast clip," adds Mr. Yoda.

Shortly after the last round of the 2003 season, Yamaha held a test-ride event to give racing journalists a chance to ride the M1. Former GP racer Shunji Yatsushiro was among the journalists who wrote about his impression of the M1. "In a word, it is a complex

machine. It is clear that the Yamaha engineers are using a variety of electronic control technologies to get an engine character that takes human sensibilities into consideration. Although it is still a machine in development, the stability and handling are quite good and we can look forward to more improvements that will make this an exciting machine."

Yamaha fans also have a lot to look forward to in 2004 as the present MotoGP champ Valentino Rossi joins the Yamaha side in a team managed by Davide Brivio and with Checa as his teammate. Meanwhile, Melandri will move to the French-based Tech 3 Yamaha team (present Gauloises Yamaha) managed by Hervé Poncharal. As in 2003, the team will be supported by Altadis and enter machines in the MotoGP under the Fortuna and Gauloises brand names.

The 2004 season will roar into action on April 18 with the South African GP at Welkom.



Melandri will ride for the Tech 3 Yamaha team in '04 (Photo from '03 Portugal GP)

WORLD TOPICS

We always welcome your contributions.
Write to Chief Editor Maki Yamaguchi of the PR Division,
Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd.,
2500 Shingai, Iwata, Shizuoka 438-8501 Japan,
yamaguchima@yamaha-motor.co.jp

November 11, Angola's Independence Day, was chosen for a grand ceremony to commemorate the start of production of the Yamaha YB50 motorcycle at the renovated factory of Yamaha's Angolan distributor, INDÚSTRIAS REUNIDAS ULISSES, LDA (President: Mr. Valentim Amoes) in Huambo. Representing the government of Angola at the ceremony was the honorable Minister of Administration of the Territory, Mr. Faustino Muteka, while Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd. (YMC) was represented by Executive Officer, Mr. Akira Araki, Senior General Manager, Mr. Shibata of Overseas Market Developing Operations (OMDO) and other OMDO staff.

In Angola, the YB50 has long been so ubiquitous for use as bike taxis and personal use that the name YB50 is synonymous with motorcycle for many Angolans. Most of the YB50s still in use here were assembled at a government factory here in Huambo with technical assistance from YMC between 1978 and 1981, when civil war forced that operation to be closed down. Now, the start of production at the reopened Ulisses factory marks a momentous 22nd-year comeback, and expectations are high that it will contribute to local industry and the lives of Angolans.

From Kazunori Sasaki, African Group, OMDO, YMC

Motocross race thrills 6,000 spectators

As a special event to correspond with the restart of YB50 production at its factory, the Ulisses company organized a motocross competition for the first time as a means to promote the Yamaha brand. Some 6,000 people gathered to watch, and the skillful riding and jumping of the local motocross competitors on the Yamaha YZ125 elicited great cheers from the crowd with every dynamic leap. The excitement of the event carried over well into the night at a concert organized in town that evening to supplement the event.

Angola Yamaha YB50 enters production at reopened factory



The Huambo factory where the YB50 goes into production



(From right) factory manager, Ms. Ana Maria, the Minister of Administration of the Territory, Mr. Muteka, Ulisses president, Mr. Amoes, YMC's Executive officer, Mr. Araki



Motocross spectators look on in excitement



The motocross race doubled as the Angolan national championship



The concert kept the excitement running late into the night

Guatemala

Learning the techniques of circuit riding

In the Central American country of Guatemala, one of the reasons an increasing number of people are purchasing Yamaha YZF-R1, R6 and FZS1000 models is to fulfill their dream of riding on a real race circuit. To help such users realize their dream in an environment that is controlled, sound and enjoyable, Yamaha's Guatemalan distributor Canella S.A. and YMC's Motor Sports Promotion Div. teamed up recently to organize two days of circuit riding classes at the AUTODROMO LOS VOLCANES in Guatemala on October 28 and 29. Over twen-



Participants line up to start their circuit runs under the watchful eyes of the instructors

ty owners turned out for each of the two days to be taught a curriculum including proper riding position, sound braking technique for entering turns at the desired speed, the approach to running proper lines through curves and other techniques necessary for sound and enjoyable circuit riding. The instructors were Yoshiaki Kato, a former World GP 125cc class competitor, and Masaru Iwasaki, the YMC Racing instructor who has trained such GP stars as Norick Abe.
From Katsunori Ookawara, Motor Sports Promotion Div., YMC

France

YMF teams score major wins at Moto Tour and Shamrock



Dominique Sarron dominated the Moto Tour Rally with the YZF-R6

Former World GP rider Dominique Sarron dominated the first edition of the Moto Tour Rally, a 2,300 km rally competition with 20 timed stages on closed roads and race tracks run between Paris and Toulon in southern France from October 5 to 11, 2003. Riding a Yamaha YZF-R6 for Team Yamaha Motor France S.A. (YMF), Sarron finished ahead of another Yamaha rider, Serge Nuques, riding a Yamaha WR 450 F. The victory in the scooter category went to Etienne Godard on a Yamaha T Max. The 7-day rally stopped each evening in a different city and around 50,000 spectators were on hand for the arrival in Toulon.

In another popular race, David Frégné of Team Yamaha Motor France Ipone won the 6th edition of the AMV Shamrock Rally, which took place from November 1 to 9, 2003. This was the second straight Shamrock win for Frégné, and he did it on the new Yamaha WR450F 2 TRAC. In fact, Yamaha riders swept the winners podium with Richard Chatelain 2nd on a WR450F and YMF's president and Paris Dakar legend Jean-Claude Olivier finishing 3rd on the WR450F 2 TRAC. Yamaha also won the ATV division with David Mandairon aboard a Yamaha YFM660R.



The performances of the Yamaha WR450F 2 TRACs ridden by Frégné and YMF's president Olivier proved the reliability of the 2-wheel drive function

From Communication and Events Department of YMF, France

The Netherlands

ATV riding course for Dutch dealers

Yamaha Motor Nederland B.V. (YMNL) set up a special riding ground near its head offices at Schiphol-Rijk to hold the country's first "ATV RiderCourse." The purpose of this course is to train Yamaha ATV dealers from around the Netherlands in the techniques and knowledge necessary for proper and enjoyable ATV riding. Some 27 dealers participated in four 1-day sessions held from Sept. 30 to Oct. 3. The instructor was YMNL's Mr. Gerard ten Hoopen, who has completed the Instructor Preparation course offered by the US-based ATV Safety Institute along with representatives from all the European Yamaha distributors. The Dutch dealers who took the course were very



Dutch Yamaha dealers receive ATV RiderCourse training near the YMNL headquarters in Schiphol-Rijk

positive about the results, saying that it has made them much more aware of the importance of correct ATV riding practices. Now it will be their job to communicate what they have learned to their customers who purchase Yamaha ATVs. As with all Yamaha product lines, ATV user education is an important element contributing to real customer satisfaction.

From Ferdinand Altenburg, YMNL, the Netherlands

Germany

YMG awarded for contribution to motor sports



YMG president Toru Iribe receives the DMSB prize from the organization president, Winnie Urbinger

At a ceremony on Nov. 15 in Bonn, Germany, Yamaha Motor Deutschland GmbH (YMG) President, Mr. Toru Iribe, received a prize of the Deutscher Motor Sport Bund (DMSB) for outstanding contributions to national and international motor sports. The DMSB is Germany's most important

motor sports organization, coordinating all race events for both automobiles and motorcycles, and this was only the third time the organization has presented this prestigious prize. The two previous winners were BMW, for its involvement in F1 racing, and Michael Schumacher, on the occasion of his F1 world championship. Yamaha Motor Germany was chosen for the prize

because for 25 years Yamaha has been the motorcycle company that has made the biggest contribution to motorcycle racing, both at the World GP (MotoGP) level and the grassroots level with its Yamaha Cup racing program. Over the years, such famous German motorcycle racing stars as Martin Wimmer, former 125cc world champion Dirk Raudies and 2000 world Supersport class championship rider for the Yamaha Motor Germany team, Joerg Teuchert, all got their start in Yamaha Cup racing.

From Karlheinz Vetter, YMG, Germany

Eritrea

First local YRS event highlights Yamaha 3S

The North African country of Eritrea was recently the site of a Yamaha Riding School program, held for the first time in the country's capital, Asmara. Organized by the local Eritrean distributor Anberbeb Share Co. and YMC's OMDO, the event offered instruction in proper techniques to improve riding skills. Forty-nine participants selected from 13 organizations using Yamaha motorcycles like the police and government agencies took part in the 1-day course in three groups from October 15 to 17. Besides training in riding techniques, the participants also received instruction in regular machine inspection and maintenance. All the participants agreed it was a highly worthwhile experience. And, coverage of the event on prime-time news programs gave the Yamaha brand some very favorable exposure. TV viewers in Eritrea have now had a look at one of the ways Yamaha's 3S policy and its post-purchase user support works. And many have surely gotten a stronger image of Yamaha as the brand that really cares about customer satisfaction.

From Kazuomi Hanabusa, OMDO, YMC



The satisfied participants in Eritrea's first Yamaha Riding School course

Senegal

Long-awaited Yamaha Showroom Completed



The newly opened CFAO Senegal Yamaha Showroom in Dakar

On October 2, 2003, Yamaha distributor for the West African nation of Senegal, CFAO Senegal, and YMC's OMDO invited industry representatives, government dignitaries and Yamaha distributors from the region to attend a celebration of the completion of the country's first exclusive Yamaha Showroom, in the capital city, Dakar. Representing YMC at the opening were OMDO's Senior General Manager Shibata, African Group Leader Koike and others.

A subsidiary of a French-based corporate group, CFAO Senegal is also the distributor of Renault and Toyota automobiles in Senegal, and until now there has not been a separate showroom for the Yamaha branch of the company's business. The newly completed Yamaha Showroom, which will also house service and parts supply functions, is designed to stand as a model example of an integrated dealership that contributes to better customer satisfaction in West Africa. It also features new VI tools prepared by OMDO specifically for this region that will help boost brand recognition and unity. In conjunction with the opening, a West African distributors' meeting was held, giving OMDO a chance to introduce the new VI tools and standards in use in this model showroom.

From Motoki Watanabe, Africa Group, OMDO, YMC



Industry representatives, government dignitaries and staff from CFAO Senegal and YMC's OMDO attended the opening celebration

From Kenji Kira, Service Div., YMC

The World, a Dream and a Yamaha

The people at Industria Colombiana De Motocicletas Yamaha S.A. (Incolmotos) are proud to be members of the worldwide Yamaha family and happy to serve as hosts to two extraordinary Yamaha owners who passed through Colombia this past autumn while chasing their separate dreams of around-the-world tours on their beloved Yamaha motorcy-

cles. The first to arrive in September was Mr. Pierre Brichler, a French school teacher who had started his tour at the southern end of South America in Argentina and already had 20,000 km on his 1981 Yamaha XT500. Incolmotos welcomed Pierre at their assembly plant in Medellin and spent two days preparing his bike for the remainder of his trip. Next came Mr.

Australia

Yamaha AG bikes still the trusted standard after 30 years

Ever since the first Yamaha AG motorcycle, the AG100, was launched in 1973, they have remained the market leaders in the unique agricultural- and farm-use market in Australia,



Yamaha AG bikes have been the workhorses of Australian farmers for 30 years

and are still in production, largely unchanged, 30 years later.

The sheer size of Australian farms and the distances farm workers, or "jackaroos," need to travel to get around them to herd cattle, fix fences and manage remote outback cattle stations, is the reason that farmers here have always used motorcycles in addition to horses and 4WD cars. Yamaha recognised early on a need to produce a motorcycle specifically designed for the Australian farmers' needs, so a group of YMC engineers were sent to Queensland in the early 1970s to

design the first agricultural (AG) bike.

That first bike they designed was based on the LT1 2-stroke, but sported high mudguards, fully enclosed chain, a special gearbox for easier shifting to neutral, a sturdy

bash plate, dual side stands and hand guards to prevent fingers being crushed by trees and to keep levers intact if the bike was dropped. It was the first time anyone had seen such simple yet effective guards, now essential fitment on all enduro bikes. Over the years, the AG100 has been followed by the 2-stroke AG175 and in 1984, the 4-stroke AG200L. So popular are these models that the Yamaha "AG" designation has remained the generic term for all farm-use motorcycles in Australia regardless of brand.

From Sean Hawker, YMA, Australia

China

Trainees certified as YTA Silver Instructors



Five service technicians from China and Taiwan were certified as YTA Silver instructors

Over a five-day period from Oct. 13 to 17, 2003, a Yamaha Technical Academy Silver level "Train the Trainer" (TTT) course was held at YMC's Guangzhou Training Center in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou. As the name implies, this course is part of the Yamaha Technical Academy (YTA) program and is designed to train Yamaha distributors and manufacturing base service technicians in the

skills necessary to serve as Silver (intermediate) level instructors who will in turn train service people in the Yamaha dealer network. Acting as chief instructor for this Chinese-region TTT course was Global Instructor Li Heng of Zhuzhou Nanfang Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd. (NYM), Yamaha's motorcycle manufacturing joint venture in southern China. Attending the course as trainees were service men from NYM, Chongqing Jianshe-Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd. (JYM) and Yamaha Motor Taiwan Co., Ltd. (YMT), which also made this course a positive opportunity for cross-channel communication and exchange of ideas.

At the end of the five days, two technicians from NYM, one from JYM and two from YMT were certified as Silver level service instructors.

From Kenji Kira, Service Div., YMC



The instructors, trainees and staff at YMC's Guangzhou Training Center



The number of bikes gathering over the weekend easily reached 1,200!

The Vmax owners club of Teufelsmoor in northern Germany, about 50 km north of Bremen, is one of the most active of the many Vmax clubs across Germany. But even they weren't quite ready for the response when they sent out invitations for their 4th International Vmax Meeting on the weekend of August 1 to 3. Some 750 owners from around Germany, Holland, Belgium, Italy, Norway

Colombia

Sjaak Lucassen of the Netherlands who had left his home town in March 2001 and was almost three years and 123,000 km into his world tour. What amazed everyone was the bike Sjaak had chosen for his world tour, a 2001 YZF-R1! Asked why he chose a supersport machine, Sjaak put his hand on his heart and said it was his dream to circle the globe on the bike he loved best, the Yamaha R1. Again, Incolmotos staff spent two days servicing the machine

and welding some fissures in the chassis that testified to the rugged route this R1 had come.

From Andrés M. Gómez, Incolmotos, Colombia



Sjaak Lucassen is proving that the YZF-R1 can take a world tour too



Pierre Brichler and his tough vintage XT500 (1981)

Japan

2nd Global Information Systems Managers Meeting launches GIG efforts



Forty-six information systems managers from 23 Yamaha group companies attended the 2nd Global Information Systems Managers Meeting

Information systems managers from 23 Yamaha Motor group companies worldwide gathered at the YMC headquarters in Japan over three days beginning October 6 for the 2nd Global Information Systems Managers Meeting. The conference agenda included the following presentations: 1) YMC IT Center's long-term vision, 2) group companies' IT mid-term plans and 3) introduction of the Global IT Governance (GIG) concept and how to implement it. The major focus of this year's conference was GIG, with discussions on themes relevant to the group's mid-term IT strategy as it relates to reforming corporate governance practices. All of the participants came away with an urgent sense of the importance of achieving effective IT governance globally for better corporate governance. To achieve this goal, we are focused on standardization, integration and leveling of our IT field in consideration of the local group companies' environments. Looking to the future, YMC's IT Center will be redoubling its communication and research efforts to formulate and initiate higher levels of IT integration throughout the global Yamaha Motor group based on what is best for the entire group.

From Akihiro Kawajiri, IT Center, YMC

Germany

Vmax popularity spawns colossal European user meet

and even from Eastern Europe said they were coming, many with friends, for a total of about 1,000 people. Add to this unofficial day-trip participants from the local area and the bike count easily reached 1,200. A majority of the Vmax machines had been beautifully and creatively customized by their loving owners, and plenty of parts shops set up stands to introduce new customizing parts. There was clearly an impression that the Vmax is the most customized bike ever sold in Europe and an important symbol of the Yamaha brand.

Yamaha Motor Deutschland GmbH (YMG) also sent staff to represent Yamaha, as well as a prize for one of the contests, and to show that Yamaha cares about customer satisfaction. Due to this summer's heat spell, campfires weren't allowed, but the hot partying went on late into the night with live music. And, the Saturday afternoon caravan of hundreds and hundreds of Vmax machines cruising through the local countryside was certainly an impressive sight.

From Hiromi Kuroi, YMG, Germany

Thailand

SWITCH campaign turned on at dealer convention



A SWITCH monument decorated the convention venue

SE Southeast Asia is one of the fastest growing and most competitive motorcycle markets in the world and Yamaha is showing that it is moving aggressively in the ASEAN market with the launch of a bold new branding campaign using the catch-word SWITCH with the sub-line that Yamaha "Makes Your Life Different." As one of the first big drives of Yamaha's new "ASEAN Brand

Communication Strategy," the SWITCH campaign kicked off recently at the "Yamaha SWITCH Dealers' Convention" in Thailand, held on Sept. 26 and 27 at the Royal Cliff Beach Hotel in the famous Pattaya resort area. The 450 Yamaha dealers and 140 members of the TV and print press knew immediately that something big was happening when they were transported in 30 buses wrapped in SWITCH advertisements and arrived at the convention site to find it decorated with a SWITCH gate and monument. The image characters for this campaign, the popular Taiwanese pop group "F4" were also on hand to add to the excitement. The dealers were introduced to the new brand strategy which stresses Yamaha as an "only one" brand with a distinct Yamaha character that is different from other makers. The campaign will be played out throughout the ASEAN region in TV commercials and print ads starting with Thailand.

From Ryuji Kuwano, MC Operations, YMC



YMC Senior Managing Director, Mr. Kajikawa and Managing Director, Mr. Nakajima were on hand to help launch the SWITCH campaign



Taiwanese pop group F4 is featured in the SWITCH campaign ads



Yamaha Booth Celebrates

The 37th Tokyo Motor Show finished its 13-day run last November 5 with an attendance record of 1.42 million people, roughly 10% more than the last show and the largest number since Japan's economic "bubble" burst 12 years ago. It was also one of the most international shows ever. Well over a third of the 12,300 members of the press who attended the two press days were from overseas, and the number from Asia was especially large. In all, some 192 automobiles and motorcycles made their world or domestic debuts at this show, and at the innovative Yamaha booth alone there were 13 world debuts and six Japan debuts. The theme of this Yamaha booth was "The Art of Engineering" and the contents gave visitors a look at the present and future of YMC. This "Art" theme carried over to the displays, where the models were displayed like works of art in a museum in



The XG250 Tricker mounts an air-cooled 250cc SOHC single-cylinder engine on a YZ85 size chassis. It gives the image of extreme sports using skateboards or BMX bikes. The special exhibition model "Tricker Pro" displayed along with it is designed to show the possibilities of a true action-riding machine. (Planned Japanese market production model)

order to heighten the sense that these new Yamaha products with their environment-friendly features offer new value and lifestyles as "personal vehicles" for the 21st century. Many visitors were excited to see the new European market models that had already been

unveiled at the Milan and Paris shows weeks earlier, but an equal amount of attention was focused on the special exhibition model of the "Tricker." Inspired by the "extreme sports" trend and dynamic

BMX bicycle competitions, the "Tricker" is a completely new type of sports machine with a sleek, muscular look like an animal about to leap into the air. This model and its 50cc little brother, the "Chivicker," drew a lot of attention from bike lovers.

The 250cc engine powered "Grand Majesty" also drew a lot of attention as the latest of the popular Majesty models, but what surprised many visitors was the next-generation exhibition model scooter "MABRICE." It features a "Long & Low" design that accommodates tandem riding so well and a unique hybrid drive system with an electric front-wheel motor to augment the 250cc engine and provide functions only possible with a hybrid. There is also the completely remade fashion scooter "Vino" that is sure to be even more popular with the switch to a 4-stroke 50cc engine.



The "MABRICE" features a young "Long & Low" design that is great for tandem riding and sports a unique hybrid drive system. The main rear-wheel drive is provided by the gasoline engine while an electric motor mounted in the front wheel hub gives auxiliary power during acceleration for an even more exciting ride. (Special exhibition model)

At the center of the booth visitors saw the Electric Vehicle (EV) display stage designed to show that Yamaha is the pioneer in this promising new field. Here they saw the "dolsa wind" concept model that surrounds the rider with sound and increases the joy of easy-paced riding by enabling riders to create sound freely as they ride. Other concept models incorporating Yamaha's Passol electric scooter technology expand the EV world, like the "Pocke" with its minimal body and multifunction design, the "DIVIDE," a fold-up EV that becomes an



The YP250 Grand Majesty mounts a new-design DOHC 4-valve fuel injection engine on a new frame with 14-inch front and 13-inch rear tires. The engine adopts Yamaha's high-performance DiASil cylinder while the frame makes use of new CF aluminum die-cast parts. (Planned Japanese market production model)

“The Art of Engineering”



attractive art object when wheeled in and parked in a room, and then the “Passol L,” a long-distance model of Yamaha’s ground-breaking electric scooter.

And, there was always a crowd of people around Yamaha’s revolutionary fuel cell motorcycle prototype, the “FC06.” Powered by a direct methanol type fuel cell, the FC06 is designed as a business- or commuter-use EV with a 50cc size body. And, due to its electricity generating capability, it can also serve as an



The “dolsa wind” has a riding position that lets you enjoy the flow of wind in easy-paced riding and a sound system that creates a surrounding sound space from a speaker box below the seat and speakers in the handlebars. The rider “composes” the sound with his/her normal riding actions. (Special exhibition model)

emergency power source.

What did visitors to the Yamaha booth think? Some of the typical comments included, “It was good to see lively models like the XT660X and the Tricker. The Tricker is especially exciting. It’s sure to be popular because it looks like you could play with it like a skateboard,” or “I was surprised by Yamaha’s EV section. Until now, most EVs have looked like an afterthought with no real appeal of their own. Now I see how far they have come. But it wasn’t just a technical display. Yamaha used its motorcycle technology to show new possibilities in terms of compactness and efficiency.” “The Mabrice surprised me too. The idea of putting an electric motor in the front wheel! That may be the most practical idea of all.”

The press also had a lot of positive comments. “This booth communicated more directly than ever Yamaha’s concept of products that reflect human sensibilities.” Or, “The Mabrice concept of an engine and electric motor hybrid is fascinating. It is a model that shows the highly practical side of Yamaha’s efforts instead of fantasy.” “When you think about the increasingly important role EVs will play in the motorcycle



The “DIVIDE” is an electric bike designed with a “metal art” concept. It features an electric-powered fold-up function and can be easily wheeled around in the folded position. Here is an EV that doubles as an art object. (Special exhibition model)

industry, Yamaha has shown that it is clearly one step ahead of the other makers. Two-wheeled EVs may still be a thing of the future, but this Yamaha booth made us realize that we have to start thinking seriously about them and take measures to prepare the necessary infrastructure.”

The YZF-R1 continues to be in the spotlight



The Marine Cruiser, A Whole New Type of PWC



Making a big splash when it went on sale worldwide in the spring of 2002 as the world's first personal watercraft (PWC) to mount a 4-stroke engine, the 3-seater Yamaha "FX140" won instant popularity, especially in the big PWC markets of North America and Australia. Designed to be a "touring craft with performance," the FX140 has already sold some 15,000 units in the two years since its release. What customers love about it is the unbeatable combination of agile handling and acceleration, outstanding fuel economy and quiet running performance.

For 2004, two new FX models have been added, with horsepower boosted to 160. Their North American market names are the WaveRunner "FX High Output" and "FX High Output Cruiser." Of these, the "FX High Output" boasts outstanding

acceleration and top speed thanks to its increased horsepower and lightened hull, while the "FX High Output Cruiser" is designed for performance plus long touring capability with features like an extra comfortable cruiser seat.

The design concept behind the FX series models is "an environment-conscious PWC with an overall 'mono-form' design that expresses cleanness and high-tech engineering." In the words of one of the designers who worked on these models, "We focused on getting lines that flowed smoothly from the front, through the seat and on to the back end in a way that had a clean feeling but also a sculpted look that suggests the musculature of a sleek and fast animal. At the same time the design achieves the sense of activeness and fun that is inherent in a PWC."

Another point was the fusion of function

and design. "The cockpit area, which centers around the digital meter panel, is characterized by the close grouping of shift lever and lid opener, the easily accessible lid storage compartment, the conveniently located glove box and a security system built into the digital meter assembly," explains the designer. You will also find plenty of attention to detail. "With everything from the clean integration of the different components, the automobile style squared front bumper and the way the stern area was designed to accommodate a variety of different types of use, right down to the design of the engine, we have made this a full-size 3-seater PWC design that also expresses the fun of marine sports."

The 2004 model "FX High Output" comes in Yamaha's factory racing blue with graphics that accentuate the flow lines. Meanwhile, the "FX High Output Cruiser" features a colored deck and cruiser seat that expand the excitement of these new models. But, both of these versions boast the same impressive body shape, designed to show you at one look that Yamaha has launched a whole new category of PWC that will be known as the "Marine Cruiser."