

costly components, tires that perform better, better brakes and more compliant suspension. The engine is more complex than the Yamaha's. It has shim-adjustable valves, two cams and a self-adjusting cam chain. All these features pretty well justify the difference in retail price.

TRIUMPH

The 1982 Triumph is fitted with Bing constant-velocity carburetors. Our test bike was actually converted from a 1981 model. At our insistence, Triumph rushed a set of the new carbs and cylinder head over here to be fitted to a test bike for our big twin tour test. Calibration of the 1982 carbs was not complete and, as a consequence, our test bike did not run as it should have. When Triumph Motorcycles America Incorporated attempted to lean the carbs out for normal running, it would detonate badly. They chose to richen the mixtures to avoid detonation. At any altitude over about 2000 feet the bike ran so rich it would misfire and did not make much useful power. At the altitudes we spent much of our riding time, the "Bonnie" would not go over 55 mph due to excessive richness. Correct jetting and modified carbs were installed after we returned the bike and we again rode it with the finalized carburetion calibrations and found carbureting superb. It is fitted with the same Bing CV carbs that have seen service on BMW twins for over a decade and they are superior instruments. It is unfortunate that the timing of our test did not allow us to run the bike as it will be delivered to dealers.

Vibration, again, was the major complaint of all the testers but one. The rich mixture of the Triumph added to the bike's vibration; when we retested it, it ran much smoother—with about the same level of vibration as the Yamaha. Vibes would build with rpm and at no point was there a surge of vibration as we experienced with the Kawasaki. Like the Yamaha, the Triumph was comfortable if the road speeds were kept to within 10 mph of the national legal limit. Vibration was felt in the bars and seat but was most intense in the footpegs. Triumph's footpegs are rigidly mounted to the frame, whereas both the KZ and XS have theirs isolated in rubber. Also, the Bonnie's footpeg rubbers are harder than either of the other two. Handlebar vibration was actually the lowest of the three with the seat transferring about as much as the Yamaha.

The engine was responsive (with good carburetion) and produced power over a wide rpm range, becoming breathless after the 7000 rpm redline

was exceeded. Although shifting was stiff, the Triumph was a pleasure when ridden fast, as the gear ratio staging was superb. Ratio staging was similar to the close-ratio gearboxes available for racing on the Kawasaki Z-1 or the BMW. No rider was left with a hopping rear wheel while he entered a corner, due to poor gear staging. The Triumph had the stiffest shifting but the best ratios of the bunch.

Clutch action was harder than either of the Japanese offerings. It was positive and powerful but we felt that the clutch spring tension could have been reduced without adversely

affecting performance.

Triumph's front brake is a Lockheed unit. The rotor is hard chrome-plated iron and the caliper is one of the best available today; both the Honda and Suzuki Superbike racers use the aluminum version of this caliper to stop their 160 mph racing bikes. The rear is fitted with the same combination of disc and caliper to make the Triumph the braking champ of the three test bikes. Its brakes never faded and had a positive progressive feel that gave all the test riders supreme confidence in the Triumph's stopping power. Both the clutch and brake levers were a bit too

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