



58. SUZUKI. The X7 has revived for Suzuki the glories they captured with their 1960s version of the 100mph 250cc bike.

58 SUZUKI X7

250cc motor cycles are popular largely because they are the biggest bikes available to learner riders and therefore it may seem to be a poor policy of Suzuki in advertising their 250cc X7 as a true 100mph machine, a point which will no doubt attract many novices to it. However, the X7 is a very good bike, and more than a match for bikes of almost twice its size.

The heart of the machine is a two-stroke air-cooled twin like its GT250 predecessors, the difference being that the X7 had adopted

the 'Power-Reed' induction of the TS trail-bike series, which boosts torque at low to medium engine speeds. Maximum power is 29bhp at 8000rpm which does indeed give the 278lb bike a top speed of just on the magic 'ton', while acceleration over a quarter mile from standing start is just outside of the 'fourteens', standing at 15secs dead. As can be expected, the price one pays for performance from such a small engine is fuel consumption and the X7 will return just 36mpg.

A six-speed gearbox is used which makes sure that the engine can be kept spinning high up the range for maximum acceleration, although the torque of the bike is so good that the front wheel can be lifted with apparent ease without resorting to slipping the clutch.

The X7 is not intended as simply a drag-strip type roadster, however, for a lot of thought has gone into the bike's chassis, so that cornering too is sporting. The company advertises that the machine has a banking angle of 45° on the left and 46° on the right, although this will vary greatly on riders' weights; they assume the roads are dry, too, for such cornering.

Although many smaller four-strokes have the luxury of electric starting, the Suzuki just has a kick lever, but with a compression of 6.7:1 on a two-stroke that should be no hindrance at all.

Styling is very modern with carefully colour-keyed paintwork with shiny and matt-black contrasting well with the basic scheme and alloy wheels.

If the morals behind this 'roomph learner' are debatable, Suzuki on the other hand should be praised for their cunning in just having 'X7' on the bike's side panels, so giving it a certain mystique and also saving the rider from letting on that his 'ton up' bike is a mere 250.