

REVIEW - HONDA CRF 250R



REVIEW BY WILLIAM MORRIS

Thanks to Stefan at Honda Pinetown for organizing this review, and for getting the bike to and from the track.

OVERVIEW

The CRF250R is Honda's finest offering into the 250cc MX competition arena. Power comes from a liquid cooled, single-cylinder, four-stroke boasting 31.5kW at 11 000rpm and 29.2Nm at 9500rpm. Straight from the outset it is obvious that this is a track focused tool. Just a quick glance at the motor and realization hits that CRF is on the cutting edge of technology. This is not a bike "for the whole family". Respect is due and necessary, or you will

taste dirt in no time at all.

CONGRATULATIONS HONDA, THEY'RE TWINS!

The immediate standout on the '06, of course, is the twin pipes tucked neatly in under the number panels, the purpose of which Honda claim, are to sharpen power delivery and give smoother, more responsive handling. Well, they certainly look impressive! This bike is extremely well balanced and gave me lots of confidence in the air. The low centre of gravity, thanks to the radiator being mounted 5mm lower than the '05 model, was a major part of it, and the parallel pipes, if anything, seemed to add to the impeccable balance. Front and rear adjustable Showa suspension has been improved for extra bump absorption, giving a beautifully smooth ride whilst providing plenty of feel; landings especially felt solid, but not hard, and yet forgiving at the same time. Suspension has come a long way over the years, and this is as good as it gets. The 240mm discs front and rear bring you to a halt as quick as you could wish for on dirt. The front dual-piston calliper felt especially strong adding to the confidence factor that just seems to grow with every minute on the Honda. The acceleration from low down is astounding; remember that this is a four-stroke, so the power curve is far more usable than a two. Bringing the front up at any speed is an absolute breeze with loads of grunt being the order of the day. Top end is there as well, but the bottom and mid range is so impressive that it is a little overshadowed.

MULTI TALENTED?

This is a motocross sensation with podium spots to prove it, but what about trails, sand, hills and the like? Can she "do it all"? In my humble opinion, indeed! The CRF's handling is agile, sharp and responsive, thanks to its light weight and balance with perfectly matched suspension. Add to the mix smooth and practical acceleration and you have yourselves a fantastic trail bike. In the sand you realize how light this bike really is, with the low centre of gravity giving the impression of being even more so. At a 93.3kg dry weight the Honda is truly a lightweight, but don't think for a moment that translates to weakling! The twin-spar aluminium frame is absolutely solid and crafted to withstand a serious hammering. Weight loss from last year's model is due to a few minor changes including shorter and lighter front fork outer tubes, a lighter and stronger front wheel hub, and a lighter swing-arm construction, but the exhaust system is a little heavier and brings the actual total to about half a kilo heavier than the '05.

OVERALL RATING

All around, Honda has put together a captivating machine that is practically race ready, whilst being a brilliant all rounder. If you are looking at getting into motocross seriously or just want to leave your friends in the dust out in the bush, get yourselves down to Honda Pinetown and organize a test ride. I give it two thumbs up!

PRICE:

R52999.00 Including VAT



Tel: (031) 702 5603, Fax: (031) 702 8446

110 Old Main Road, Pinetown

Website: www.hondapinetown.co.za