

The XS1 tracked perfectly at high speeds after we replaced a defective front fork assembly. But the bumps were still felt.

the covers are removed. These are the easiest valves to adjust of all tested bikes.

All of the routine maintenance jobs can be done with the tool kit that is supplied in a pouch under the seat. One of the really nice tools is the Phillips screwdriver that can be levered with a wrench without fear of the blade's stripping loose from the handle. An Allen wrench is supplied to fit the screws that secure the outer engine cases.

Both carburetors are the vacuum-operated-venturi type similar to those used on the 450 Honda and 750 BMW. These are made by Mikuni on license from Solex. Minimum venturi size at full throttle is 30mm. Carburetion on our test bike was absolutely spot-on. Throttle response was instantaneous and the sparkplugs remained a dry, malt-brown color. Cold starting was a cinch. The separate cold-start metering system from Mikuni's slide-carbs was carried over to these. A little lever on the left carb lifts a slide to provide a rich mixture. Separate fuel taps supply each carb and since there's one on each side, they both have to be turned to the straight-down position for normal running. The ignition key is right up between the speedometer and tach on the fork bracket. One click over, and a little green light shows that you're in neutral. The second kick does the deed every time. The kickstart pedal is in a position that feels very natural and there's nothing to scrape meat off your ankle on the way down. When the engine is cold, it's necessary to let it run for a few minutes before returning the choke to the off position. Once the oil warms you can hear the engine start to run heavy and it's time to lever the choke off. The engine runs clean immediately and the tach needle rockets at the slightest throttle opening. There's no crunch when you pull in the fairly stiff clutch lever and push down with your left foot for low gear.

Very few advance revs are needed to get the bike off to a smooth, easy start. Clutch disengagement is silky. When first trying the bike in a parking lot, we were immediately impressed with the engine's flexibility. There's lots of smooth, even pulling from 2000 rpm. The engine really gets on the cam at 4200 and pulls like hell up to the 7000 rpm power peak. Handling is very light at low speeds and the machine feels much lighter than its 440-pound curb weight. Like we said before, the bike feels like the other 650 vertical twins at low speed and while idling. Engine note is a loping gallop accompanied by a corresponding reaction in the handle-

