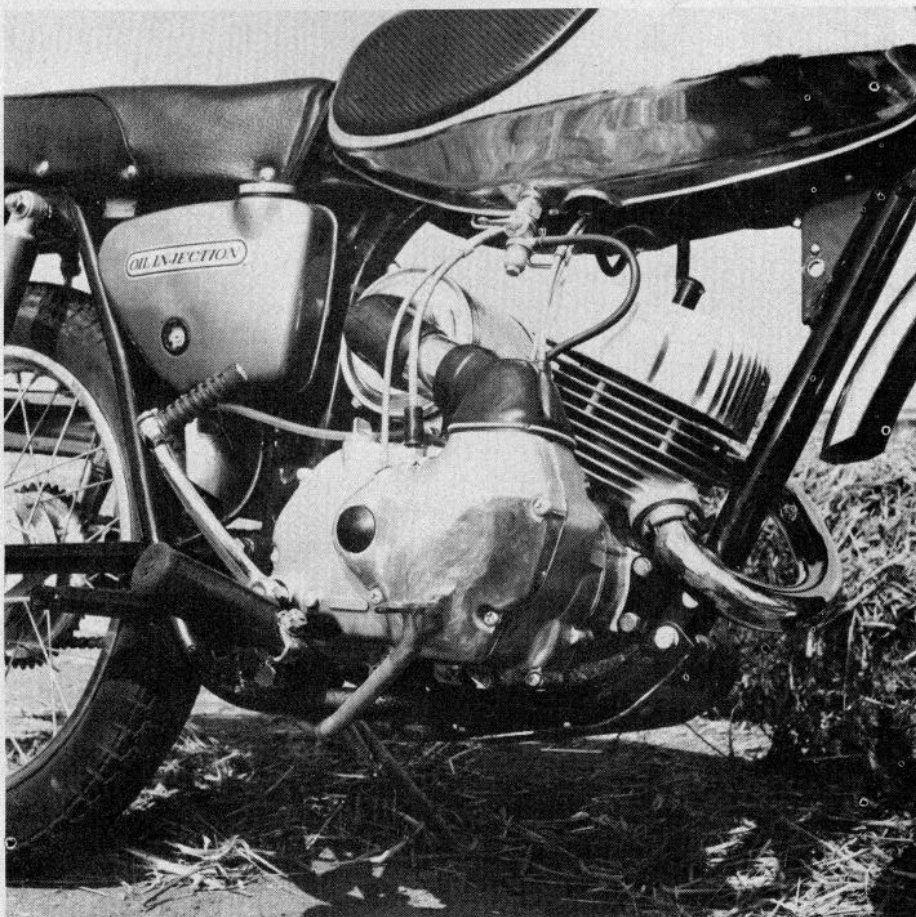


# Bridgestone 100 Trail

**Happiness is a small,  
warm off-roader . . .**

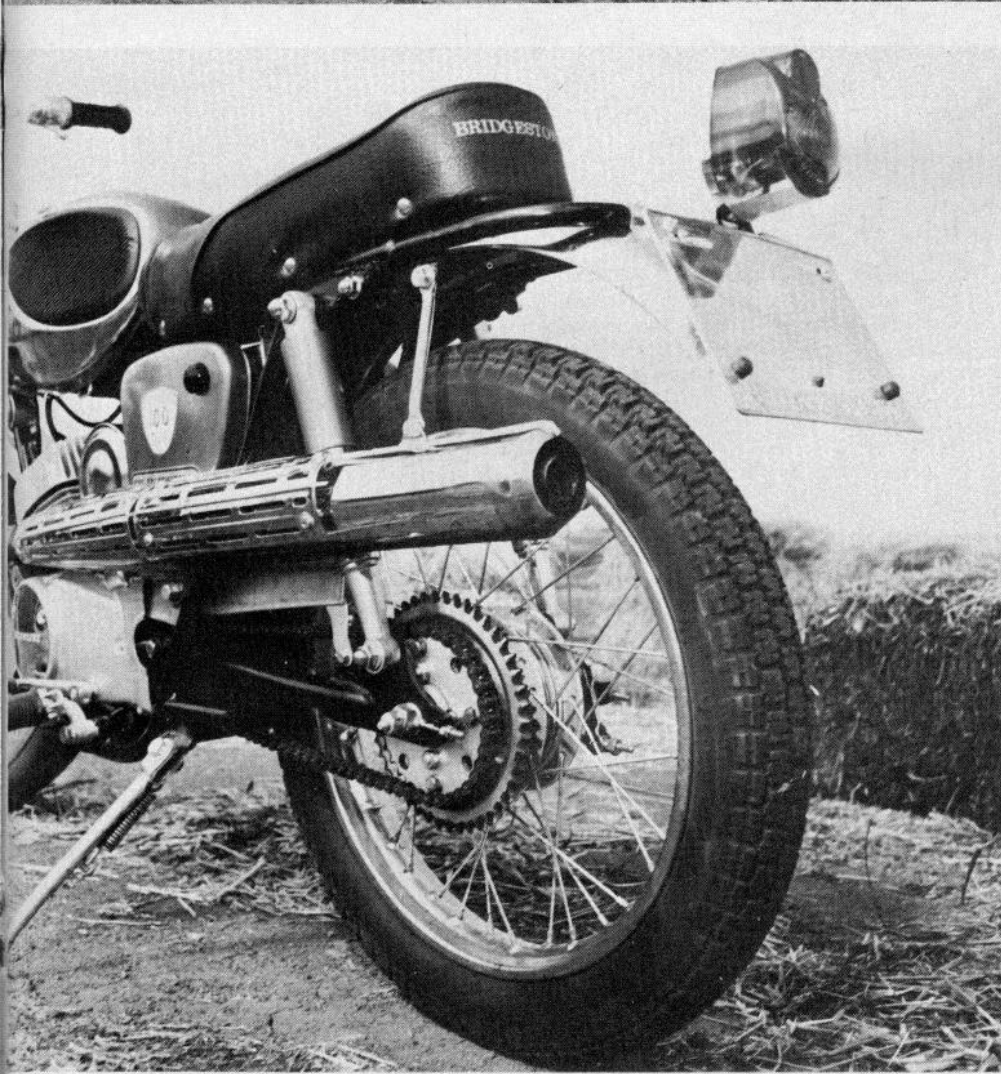
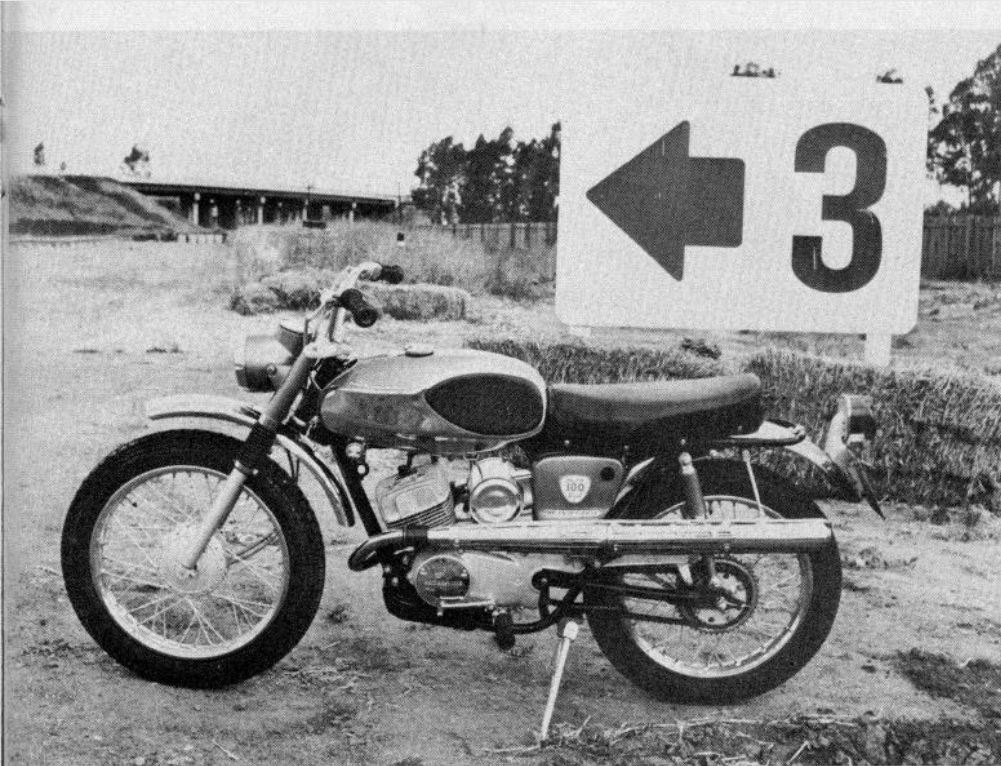


**C**OMPETITION among makers of light-weight trail bikes is as fierce as in any other class of machinery. This intensity results in continually improving products, much to the customer's benefit. An example of the constant development of these sporty dual purpose machines is Bridgestone's new 100 Trail, a mount that reflects the trend toward greater sophistication among small displacement trail motorcycles.

The 100's predecessor, the 90 Mountaineer (CW, Feb. '66) was a tough little performer, but the new bike includes a number of refinements. Most obvious, as the name of the machine reveals, is an increase in piston displacement, to an actual capacity of 99 cc. Equally important is the change from the pressed steel backbone type frame of the 90, to the full cradle tubular frame of the 100. This vital modification makes the 100 Trail a really strong mount for the treatment it may have to take in the backwoods. The frame, combined with good suspension characteristics, keeps the bike on time in the roughest going, absorbing jolts that might throw lesser machines off course.

Sophistication is evident in many other components. The engine is a disc valve unit, and consequently enjoys a wide spread of power. The four-speed gearbox operates on a rotary pattern, so that when the bike is in top gear, a depression of the lever moves the box into neutral, and a successive downward pedal movement returns it to first gear. The main benefit of the system lies in reduced gear changing in city traffic, but some riders apparently dislike the rotary pattern, claiming that it is confusing. The question is a matter of taste. Lubrication of engine components is by oil injection, with its advantages of easier topping up, and more efficient oiling. Dual sprockets are accepted as commonplace today, but still are a useful fitting for a small machine. The Bridgestone also features a large air cleaner located behind the cylinder barrel, a two leading shoe front brake, and indicator lights for headlight high beam and gear pedal neutral position.

The two-stroke single-cylinder engine is an alloy unit, with chromed cylinder bore, of true short stroke design—bore and stroke are 53 by 45 mm. Compression ratio is 6.8:1. Bridgestone claims 11 bhp at 7500 rpm.



Primary drive is by helical gear to the multi-plate clutch and gearbox. One rear sprocket has 34 teeth, the other 47. The engine is fed by an 18-mm Mikuni carburetor.

A large single seat is fitted to the bike, whereas the 90 carried a dual saddle. The 100's seat is so large that it could hardly fail to be comfortable. Slots for mounting rear footpegs are cast onto the frame, which is also used for Bridgestone's 100-cc roadster, and the importer reports that many buyers are ordering the extra set of footpegs, and accepting a somewhat cramped two-up riding position. Ridden solo, the bike offers a non-tiring setup for the road or trail.

Saddle height of the bike is a mere 29 in., which makes the machine's center of gravity very low. Folding footpegs are provided, and handlebar grips are among the best found on any motorcycle. They are formed of rubber, with a rectangular honeycomb pattern, and offer excellent leverage, yet do not blacken the hands, unlike some rubber grips.

Performance is brisk, and the maker's claim of a 65-mph top speed is realistic. The engine quickly buzzes to peak rpm, and gear changes, up and down, are made as fast as the feet and hands can move. The ratios are carefully matched so that there is a smooth progression of speed. On pavement the bike can be flicked effortlessly into corners, and leaned over as far as the average rider wants to go.

On the trail, the bike's full potential is best realized when the overlay sprocket is put to use. Then the engine's generous spread of power can be fully appreciated. The factory has equipped the bike with 17-in. wheels, and shod them with tires of its own manufacture—Bridgestone is one of Japan's leading tire producers. Tires on the 100 Trail are universal pattern of 3-in. section front and rear, and no alternative is offered. It would be interesting to experiment with a set of knobby covers, which would certainly make the bike even more of a motorized mountain goat! Brakes are fully adequate for any use the machine might be put to.

The test machine had a really tough start in life, when it was hustled along, virtually fresh out of a crate, to the trials course at CYCLE WORLD's international motorcycle show. There it was thrashed, bashed and crashed by an unending stream of riders who varied in ability from hamfisted novice to international endurance trial level. The 100 endured jarring spills without major damage, and its engine gave not a sign of complaint at the treatment it suffered. This is proof of the machine's durability, and the quality of construction also is impressive. Castings, welds and machining are of the high standard that is associated with Japanese bikes, and the 100's appearance is totally pleasing, with its low profile and the unusual but effective styling of its 2.5-gal fuel tank.

While comparisons will be made between the 100 Trail and the older 90 Mountaineer, Bridgestone stresses that the two machines have little in common—that the 100 is in fact a totally new motorcycle, and not a revamped 90. At the manufacturer's suggested price of \$425—fully in line with prices of its immediate competitors—the 100 should find a steady supply of willing buyers. A roadster version of the 100 is priced at approximately \$399. ■