RACE TEST

1988

CZ

TYPE 513/514

Czechoslovakian MX is back, with apologies to H.G. Wells

WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?

Why did CZ disappear 11 years ago? Rumors abound. The Commission in charge of exporting didn’t think it was right for Czechs to be walking while their motorcycle factory built bikes for capitalist American teenagers, better that they build transportation machines for motorcyclists in the middle 70’s, to their little essence. It wasn’t unusual for CZ shops to suffer a mysterious fire or sudden explosion in the heartland of America. A sort of Buy American or else policy. By 1976 the agricultural-looking CZs were falling behind the times. Sales had dropped off. The big profits of the early 70’s had disappeared. Whatever the real story was, the fact remains that CZ evaporated in one quick season.

ON THE GP SCENE

But CZ never pulled out of the motocross racing business (only out of America). Czech riders continued to race the Grand Prix. The talented Jaroslav Fiala won the Spanish GP in 1977 after Americans saw the last Czech motocross bike. Czechoslovakian engineers built a water-cooled 125 works bike that lit Churandy raced at the 125cc USGP. Single-shock bikes were debuted in 1982 in the 250 GPs, but the great days of CZ domination were over.

CZ once dominated motocross. It made the two-stroke popular. It was CZ’s idea to produce and race lightweight two-stroke Open bikes to gain down the heavy, but powerful, BSA four-strokes. Great GP riders, such as Paul Friedrichs, Dave Bickers, Joel Roberts, Rolf Tibolin, Guennedy Moisecev,...

and even Roger DeCoster rode Czech iron. Americans had to wait. Tony DiStefano, Steve Stockdale, Wyman Pridy, Rick Bangert, John DeSoto and Marty Springsteen spent their early days on CZs. Americans used to call them Seize Eazy instead of CZ, but if the bikes had one claim to fame, it was some reliability. They were slow, sturdy and stodgy—not what you’d look for in a girlfriend, but great for an early 70s M XM.

ENTER THE TYPE 513/514

What is the 1986 CZ like? To tell the absolute truth, it is exactly what the 1977 CZ should have been like (only ten years later). Had CZ tried to fight back in 1977, instead of pulling out of the USA, they might have been forced to produce the Type 513 (2100cc) and Type 514 (4000cc) ten years earlier.

With a retail price of $1795, CZs are available (on a limited basis) for $1000 less than their Japanese competitors. For that saving, one grand you don’t get cartridge forks, disc brakes, till or such gear, single shock suspension, a plastic gas tank, water cooling, power valves, reed valves or CDI ignitions. Remember, that isn’t what you get, it’s what you don’t get!

What do you get? A basic barebones no-frills motorcycle. How would we describe it? Solid, sturdy and stodgy. What are your chances of winning races on it? About the same as a Skoda sedan on the Monaco Grand Prix grid.

HOW FAST IS IT?

Don’t ask! CZ 250s weren’t half the fire after 1974, and this is the same basic CZ
1988 CZ SPECIFICATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE 513 (250)</th>
<th>TYPE 514 (400)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGINE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroke &amp; stroke</td>
<td>70mm x 64mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Displacement</td>
<td>245.2cc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carburetion</td>
<td>36mm Keihin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transmission</td>
<td>4-speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignition</td>
<td>Bosch alternator</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHASSIS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelbase</td>
<td>37.9 in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forks</td>
<td>270mm C2 air fork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shocks</td>
<td>21 mm C2 dust seals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tires</td>
<td>Steel, 2.25 in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas tank</td>
<td>Steel, 2.2 gal.</td>
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Tractor technology: CZ surprised the motocross community with a new front hub. There is no truth to the rumor that it came off of Khrushchev’s Skoda sedan. The brakes work as well as the hub looks.

Three spring-loaded bronze friction plates are separated by steel plates. It works (the pull is heavy).

Carburetion is by a 36mm Keihin (equipped with a tickler). Yes, we know you don’t know what a tickler is. A tickler is a plunger mechanism which floods the float bowl. Since the Keihin doesn’t have a choke, the tickler is used for cold starting. Intake is straight piston port (no reeds, valves, or core induction).

Ignition and spark are slightly antiquated. The Type 513/514 uses contact-point ignition. The Type 513 is an alternator unit, whereas the more modern Type 514 has a magneto. Yes, we know you don’t know what contact points are, but take our word for it, every internal-combustion engine used to have them (and CZ still does). As far as speed, the 1988 CZ isn’t going to set any records, get any holeshots or make

In action: Riding an ‘88 Chay-Zed is like nothing else in the world. It is a learning experience. Two hours on a CZ is better than three weeks at a motocross school. It makes you ride right.

engine that was used 15 years ago. The complete lower end (carb, clutch, tranny design, and crank) is old parts. The cylinder (again, the same casting) has been ported differently.

A four-speed transmission is used on both the 250 (Type 513) and 400 (Type 514). A four-speed 500? The clutch is the old-style dry clutch. Yes, we know you’ve never heard of a dry motocross clutch, but take our word for it; the CZ clutch does not run in oil.


In a quick pass coming out of a turn; however, the bike is fun to ride. But only fun to ride if you know how to ride it.

THE TESTERS’ COMMENTS

"What is it? You’re kidding! I’m not riding that! Hey, check out the shift-lever throw. It’s about eight inches between shifts." "It might be slow, but it goes faster than the forks can handle. They say just from the weight of the bike. We had to put air in the forks to get them to come up the last three inches."

"I like it. I think my ’74 South Bay CZ was better, but it had a lot of work done to it. I’d

No tricks: This is the motor that made the stars of yesterday. No power valves, reed valves, or fancy ports. A piston-port kick start feeds a roughly cast aluminum cylinder.

Spark and sputter: Paints and a condenser? The age-old ritual of setting the gap, filling the points and carrying a matchbook cover with you aren’t things of the past with the Type 513/514."
be willing to race it at a local race. I don't think I could win, but if I did, everybody in my class should quit."

"It's too tall. I can't believe people used to race on engines like this. Each shift takes a concentrated effort. I have to lift my foot off the peg to shift up."

IS ANYONE GOING TO BUY THEM?

CZ is going to sell an amazing number of the 1988 Type 513/514s. Why? Because Americans have a fascination with CZ (the only other old bike to generate so much respect is Hodaka). There will be more than enough older, retired racers who merely want a bike to go trailriding on. High tech isn't important to these riders. Having fun is. Even for our wild-riding teenage testers, the CZ was a blast. It was like riding a piece of history, except that it was brand new (and thus, didn't have to be babied). This isn't a race bike and if it sees any motocross action (apart from the annual vintage CZ World Championship), it would be surprising. But if you want to buy a bike with history, character, personality and nostalgia attached to the price tag, the Type 513/514 is for you.

For more information on ordering a 1988 Ceske-Zavody, contact Bertus CZ, 721-707 Glendora Ave., La Puente, CA 91744, (818) 917-6171.

CESKE-ZAVODY
TIME CAPSULE
AMERICANS ON CZECH IRON

• American teenagers used to love CZs. If you had the money and the desire in the early 1970s, you rode European motorcycles. Yes, there were Japanese bikes available, but European bikes were better. A good rider had three choices: Husqvarna, Maico or CZ. Yes, we did leave out Bultaco, Cezka and a host of others, but most serious riders opted for the Swedish, German or Czech machinery. Maicos broke, Husqvarnas wouldn't turn and that left CZ as Mr. Reliable.

• CZ Who rode 'em? Who loved 'em? What was it like in the heyday of Czech Iron?

Homemade: Tony DiStefano hand-built his own National-winning CZ. The Czech factory gave him a works bike. After trying it, he gave it back.

• Partly: Mike Runyard (left) and Brad Lackey (right) were both CZ riders. When Lackey was 17, the Czechs gave him a cabin behind the factory to live and train in.

Big John: Hawaii's John DeSoto was the idol of thousands of American teenagers. John had one style of riding—flat-out and hauling. John made his CZ do whatever he wanted, whether it wanted to or not.

Ampmobile: Steve Stackeble rose to National prominence in the early '70s by riding the famous Amp CZs. Kent Howerton even tried to ride an ampmobile for two races.

• Railing it: Gary Jones added two CZ World Championships to his four 250 National Championships. Gary rode a special 125 to win the 250 CZ title.

Big Sandy: Rick Burgett earned his factory Yamaha ride by hammering the Trans-AMA Support class on a Chay-Zed. The Oregon racer was the best mud rider in America.