

**M**OTORCYCLING IN THE U. S. is somewhat different from what goes on in the rest of the world. Americans prefer machines that are perfectly legal on the highway and yet can be used for any of the various off-the-road activities that we are able to dream up. In short, ours is an all-round sporting market, requiring a rugged, flexible machine.

This differs from most countries in that a rider decides whether he is going touring or racing, because dirt riding is usually confined to actual competition. But, thanks to a tremendous land mass, motorcycling away from roads and traffic offers a great deal of fun and excitement to the largest part of our market. And a motorcycle that will do

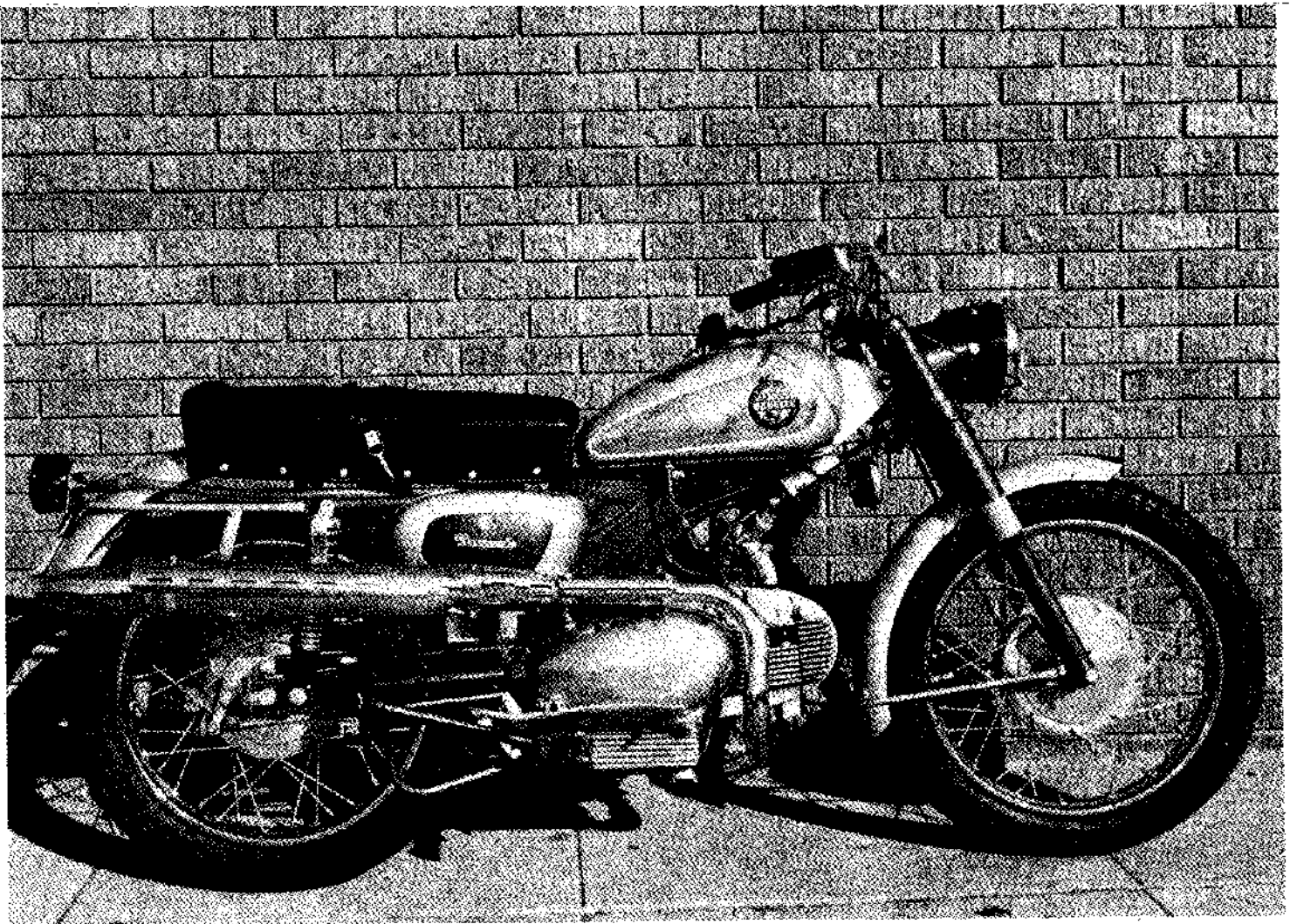
both jobs well is therefore more appealing to the majority of people.

One company to realize this fact is the Italian Benelli concern. Benelli has been building some of the most exotic racing, and some of the best utility touring machines in Italy for many years. Their new model, designed specifically for the American rider, is called the Barracuda.

The Barracuda began life as a 175, known as the Sprite, which was eventually engineered into a full scale 250, and still called the Sprite. Each development step was carried out with the American rider and the Barracuda in mind.

Weight-wise, the new Benelli could be considered

## 250cc BENELLI BARRACUDA



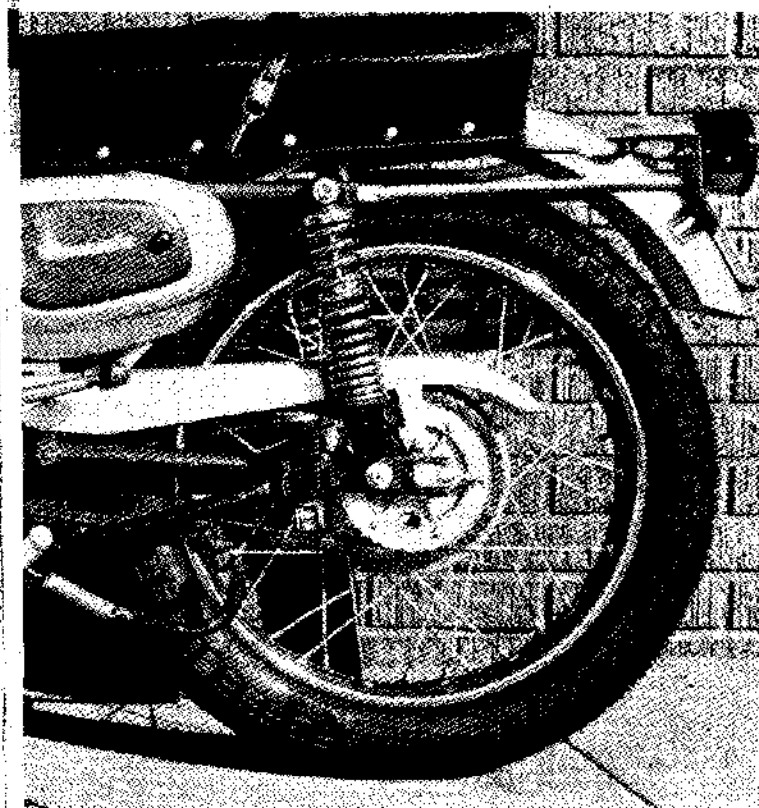
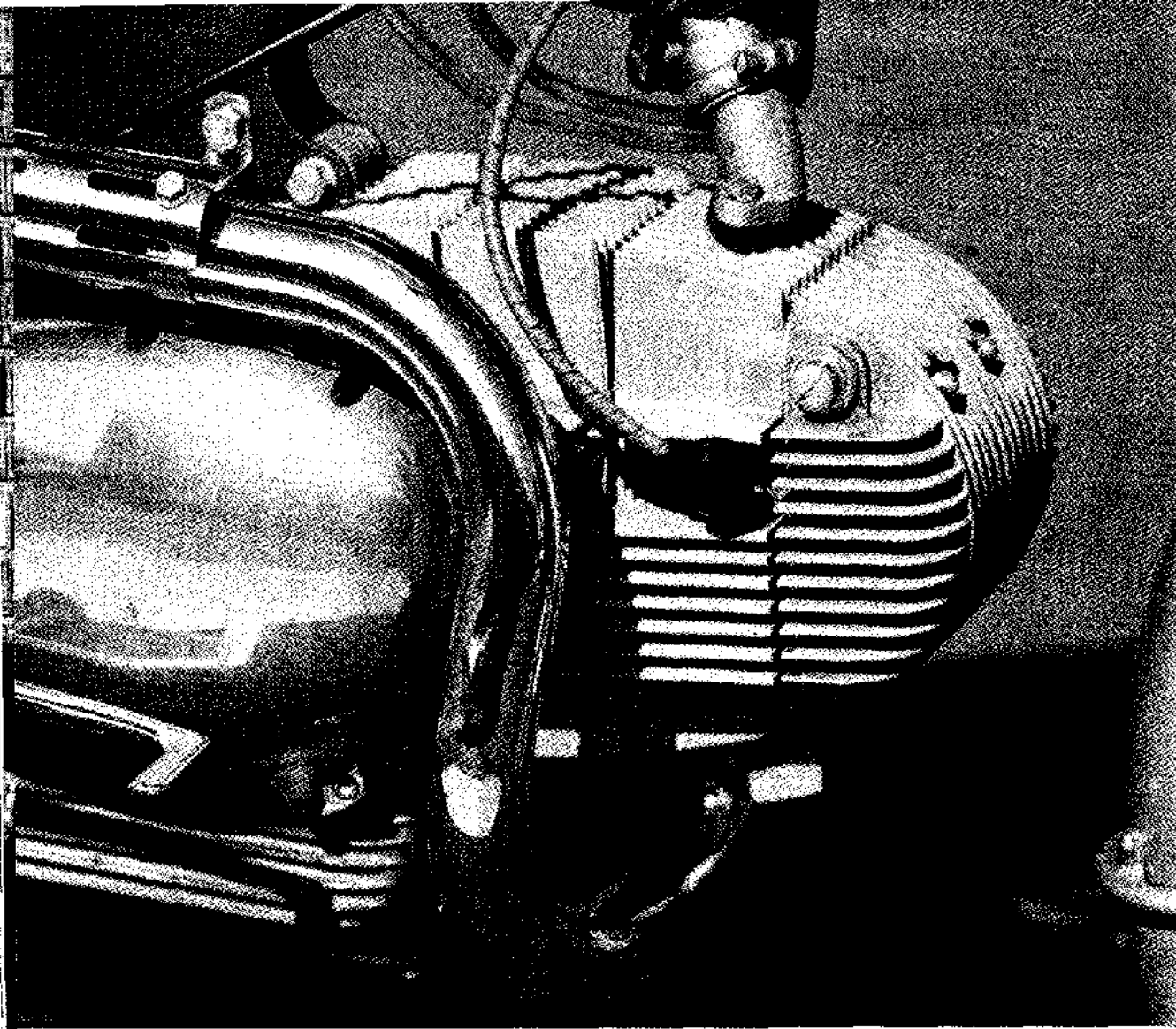
light, especially for a street machine, and this is one of its really good points for off-the-road use. At the same time, it has a sturdy, stable ride for the time it will spend as a touring machine. Suspension, front and rear, is extremely good for road riding; however, as in the case of most dual purpose machines, it is not up to the hazards of fast motoring across rough terrain. Suspension is adequate for the person seeking transportation through the woods.

We criticized the seat fitted to the Sprite, which was intended primarily for the street. Thus, we were more than a little surprised to find the same seat on the Barracuda, although the comfort requirements are much greater when a machine will be used in the rough. Granted, we are a soft, pampered lot, but the seat is much too narrow.

Another point of criticism, since the machine will sometimes be used where rocks and boulders are common, is the lack of protection for somewhat sensitive engine parts.

The engine is of rather typical Italian engineering with overhead valves and unit construction. Even the horizontal layout is common among Italy's designers, offering a lower center of gravity than with a vertical cylinder. Benelli has utilized the advantage of a low engine mass to

**CYCLE WORLD**  
**ROAD TEST**



keep overall machine height down, and the Barracuda proved popular among the wives of the testers.

The backbone-type frame is constructed from welded up steel stampings with a tubular rear sub frame. The engine is suspended below the main frame, while the rear engine plates also serve as the swing arm mount. Two long, small diameter tubes extend rearward from the front peg mounts to carry the folding passenger pegs. There is an unusual bend in the kickstart crank, but this is to enable the operator to have a good stroke before hitting the foot peg. Also, the stroke does not start from a too-near-vertical position.

Brakes are one of the Barracuda's really strong points — light, positive and fully up to the job. The horn is almost undetectable when the engine is running. Paint and general appearance of our test machine were excellent. All main engine castings were polished, and throughout the test there was a complete lack of oil leaks. The engine idles very nicely, with almost no trace of valve gear noise. Starting, even from cold, did not present any problems. It was not necessary to go into a well-rehearsed "drill" before getting the fire lit.

A low first-gear ratio helps the Barracuda for serious trail riding, and it is in this area that the machine is the most fun. The small tank, low center of gravity, comparatively light weight, low seat height, plus a smooth running engine, make it almost ideally suited to difficult going. This is not to imply that we feel it is a motorcycle for prospectors only; it will, if asked to, turn some very respectable rpm, as the quarter-mile time illustrates. ■

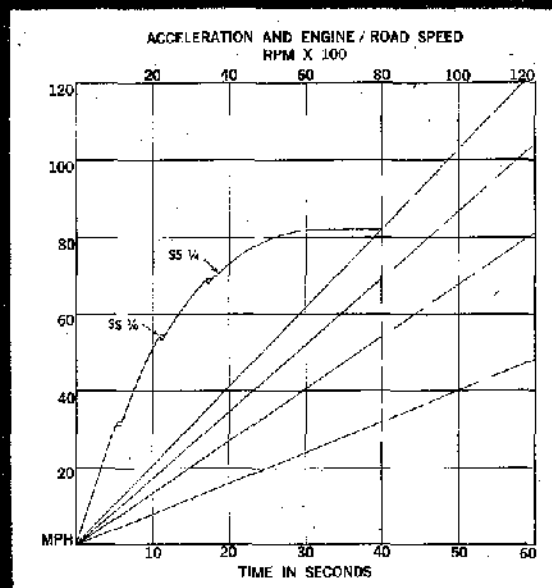
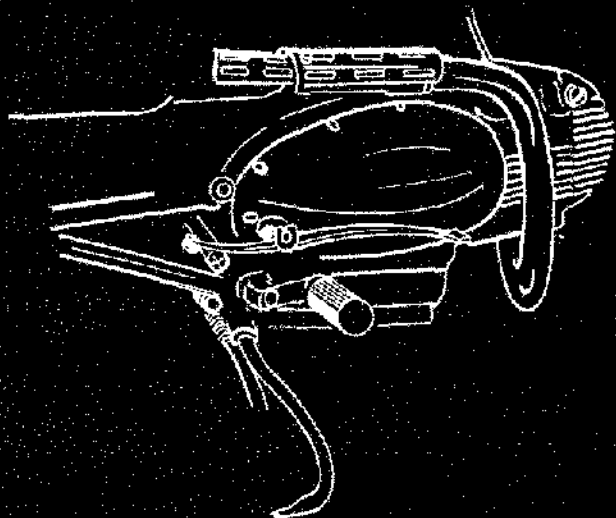
# BENELLI BARRACUDA

## SPECIFICATIONS

List price	\$649
Suspension, front	telescopic fork
Suspension, rear	swing arm
Tire, front	3.00-18
Tire, rear	3.25-18
Brake, front	7.0 x 1.37
Brake, rear	6.25 x 1.19
Total brake swept area, sq.-in.	53.5
Brake loading (test weight/swept area) lb/sq.-in.	7.7
Engine type	ohv, single
Bore and stroke (inches-millimeters)	2.92 x 2.24, 74.8 x 57.4
Displacement (inches <sup>3</sup> -centimeters <sup>3</sup> )	14.9, 245
Compression ratio	8.5:1
Carburetion	Dellorto 24mm
Ignition	flywheel magneto
Bhp @ rpm	24 @ 8,000
Oil system	wet sump
Oil capacity, pts.	4.0
Fuel capacity, gal.	2.8
Starting system	kick, folding crank
Lighting system	alternator and battery
Air filtration	paper element
Clutch	multi-disc, wet plate
Primary drive	helical gear
Final drive	single-row chain
Gear ratios, overall:1	
5th	none
4th	7.2
3rd	8.6
2nd	10.9
1st	18.0
Wheelbase	48.3
Seat height	31.0
Seat width	8.8
Foot-peg height	10.5
Ground clearance	7.0
Curb weight (w/half-tank fuel)	250
Test weight (fuel and rider)	410

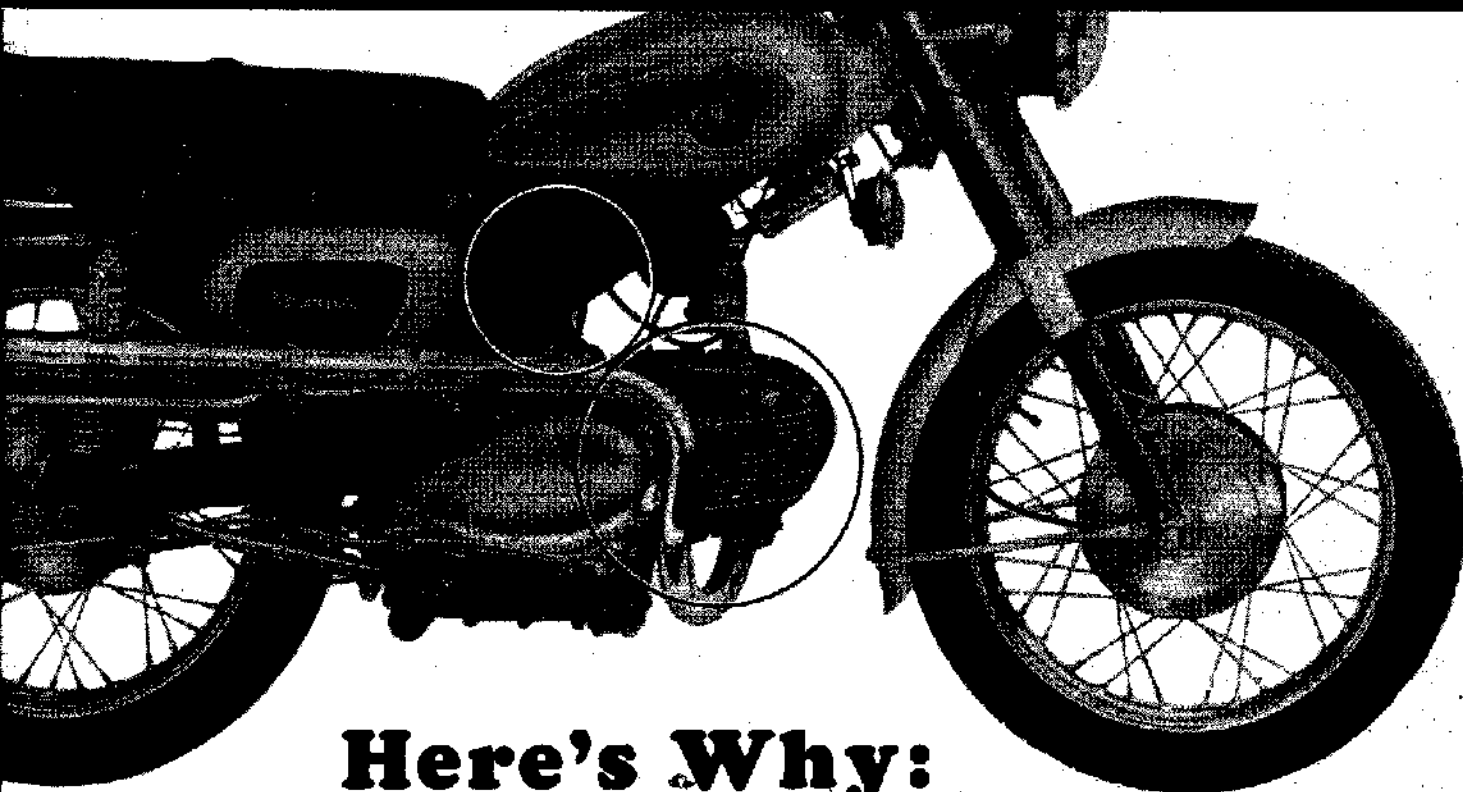
## PERFORMANCE

Top speed	82
Maximum speed in gears (@ 8000 rpm)	
5th	none
4th	82
3rd	69
2nd	54
1st	32
Mph per 1000 rpm, top gear	10.2
Speedometer error	
30 mph indicated, actually	29.2
50	48.6
70	67.2
Acceleration, zero to	
30 mph, sec.	5.0
40	7.4
50	9.9
60	13.5
70	18.1
80	29.9
Standing 1/8-mile, sec.	11.0
terminal speed	54
Standing 1/4-mile, sec.	18.4
terminal speed	71





# Why Does Benelli Out-Handle Anything Around?



## Here's Why:

### 1 Horizontal Engine

Lighter and more compact, it lends itself to better cooling and performance. Greater power to weight ratio gives every Benelli the edge over competitive cycles when it comes to acceleration. Benelli is the cycle with PIZAAZ.

### 2 Pressed Steel Frame

60 years of engineering experience in the motorcycle industry led us to this development. The steel backbone provides maximum strength while reducing over-all weight for greater ease of handling. You know you're in control when you're on a Benelli.

The only  
motorcycle with a  
**25,000 Mile**  
**25 Month**  
**Warranty**

*No other cycle has this winning combination!*

# Benelli

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