

### THE CRF 150

Few magazines or web site discuss the different bikes that are out there for beginners, women riders and shorter men. Below are some facts that I found out while teaching my girlfriend Kim how to ride.

Kim is a great mountain bike free riders and top downhill ski racer so when she sounded pumped on the idea of dirt biking I was very excited. Then came time to choose a bike. I knew that I liked the tight single track trails that BC is littered with and I knew from her background that she would to.



A couple of things that we took into consideration was weight, price, and durability. At the time the CRF was only out for a year so finding one that was used was very difficult. She sat on the Yamaha TT125L which is an awesome bike but it felt a little small to her 5'6 frame. The CRF felt perfect to her as did the CRF230. I knew that she could ride the 230 however I also knew that the 250 pounds of weight was just too much. The CRF was already heavy at 218 but it was more manageable than the 230. If we were riding in the BC interior trails then a 230 would have been fine but I wanted her to learn proper skills so she could ride the tight snotty stuff at McNutt near Maple Ridge.

Kim, like most riders, wanted to save money by buying a bigger bike now so that she would grow into it and I think this is the first mistake most riders make. So after a few days of thought she finally agreed that the 150 would be her best bet. The first few days I took her to Cat Lake in Squamish BC. Here she learned how to shift, brake and corner which yes is a lot different than mountain bike. It was hard to watch someone ride while looking down at the shifter and not worry

but before long she was ripping around. She even ventured into some trails on her first day and even got stuck.



We rode a lot over the first 4 months but Kim seemed not to have as much fun as me. Getting stuck and trying to fight a heavy motorized vehicle is very tough and does take time. At least this is what I told her.

Then one day we were over in Shawnigan Lake on Vancouver Island and we were out for a whole morning. I was trying to find some easy trails but was having a hard time doing that. Before we headed back to the car I found a cool little hill climb. I led and halfway up there were more roots and step ups than I would have liked to encounter and I was ready to turn around and apologize to Kim for taking her up this trail.

All of a sudden I heard the roar of her muffler as she was hammering up this very technical trail. She wised right by with a big yahoo and since then she has been hooked. In May of 2005 she bought a new KDX 200, but more on that later....

### CRF150 Advantages

- Low height make putting your feet down easy.
- Engine pulls nice and easy so there is no pop like a 2-stroke
- Changed the front tooth to one small cog which made the bike have a little more pep
- So awesome on gas
- Put a CRF50 Adult handlebar on it so it was more comfortable when standing

- Stiffened the soft front suspension with thicker fork oil and shimmed it with some spacers to make it stiffer
- Lighter weight than the CRF230

### **CRF150 Disadvantages**

- Weight

### **Summary**

**If you are looking for a great starting bike then look no further. If you are 5'6 and over the CRF150 is for you if you are taller than 5'8 or 5'9 then I would go up to the CRF230 and if you are shorter than 5'6 then I would go to a Yamaha 125L. All of these bikes perform flawlessly. I like the CRF150 and TTR 125L because they are inexpensive , fun and you will get almost all your money back when you sell it to move up to a big wheeled bike. The skills you learn on these two bikes will help you when you move up as well. The 230 in my opinion is a lot to pay for a bike to learn on. I would rather make it easy on a rider's pocket book and give them something they can throw around sooner and pick up all the right skills and then have them move on. Just my 2 cents!**