



Do you remember your first ATV? For me it was a 1985 Honda ATC250R, and that was my pride and joy for many years. While this wasn't what I learned to ride on (my old ATC110), it was the first machine that I had purchased with my own cold hard cash. For being 10 years old, it wasn't the prettiest thing on the planet, but with a little TLC it cleaned up nicely and was a blast to ride out in the dunes. For whatever reason way back when, I decided to sell the ATC and to this very day I always wish that I never did. The amount of fun that I had on that machine is unparalleled to anything else I've ever ridden, and those of you who have ridden an ATV of this caliber know what I'm talking about.



OLD

SHRED

Shredding the sand on one wicked Honda ATC250R

Story By Eli Madero • Photos By Kevin Wing

For those who don't comprehend what I'm trying to get across, you might be the very people who cry out, "Those things are dangerous" as soon as you see the missing front wheel. Are they more of a handful to control than your average sport ATV? Absolutely, but when you give them the respect they command and take the time to learn how to ride them properly like you should with any machine, they can be one of the most exhilarating rides you will have ever been on.

The only time I ever see these machines nowadays are when I make trips out to the sand dunes, and no matter what kind of tricked-out machine that I might be on myself, it leaves me longing for that three-wheeled monster. That is what brings me to the tricked-out ATC you're looking at in this story. Back in the day when I was wandering through the offices of Duncan Racing (DRI) in San Diego, California, there sat one of these very classics that I've been speaking of getting a full overhaul. This was a customer's bike that got plenty of seat time, and even with the wear you could see, it was still a showstopper that easily draws plenty of attention no matter where you take it.

THE MAKINGS OF A ROCKET SHIP

When Honda released its water-cooled 250cc engine in the '85 ATC250R, it was far from being low on power, but for some there is no such thing as too much power. That is why Duncan Racing suggested a 305cc PC 2000 powervalve engine kit be installed for this specific machine. This kit contains a ported PC 2000 cylinder, Paul Turner exhaust system, Fat Boy 2 silencer, Pyramid reed valve, 39 PWK Keihin carburetor with twist throttle and a K&N filter with Outerwears. This combination would work great for this application because the increase in cc's provides plenty of torque, even more so with a powervalve, but also brings a ton of overrev that you want for dune riding. Because of the large skirt size of the cylinder, the stock engine cases need to be separated and machined to a larger diameter, so it was a no-brainer that the bottom end of the motor was serviced as well. This gave Duncan the chance to replace all of the bearings, crankshaft and any worn transmission components necessary as well as install a Hinson Racing clutch basket and one of DRI's own C-12 clutch kits.

To keep the ATC from being nothing more than a wheelie machine with



OLD SCHOOL!!

all of the newfound power, DRI installed a Laeger's +4 swingarm outfitted with an RPM Millennium bearing carrier and an Elka rear shock to soak up the deep sand whoops, keep the front end down and make the ATC more stable at high speeds. Further aiding in the overall stability of this ATC, a +4 RPM Dominator Racing axle was enlisted and mated with an RPM anti-fade brake hub. Since this was machine was going to be strictly a duner, a set of Skat-Trak eight-paddle Hauler tires were mounted on an older set of DWT Shamrock beadlock wheels, and a Skat-Trak Mohawk ribbed front was mounted on a solid aluminum DWT front wheel. This combination gives the ATC a unique look and plenty of forward propelling traction in the powdery soft sand dunes.

To ensure that any rider would be able to navigate through the dunes after the sun went down, a Ricky Stator Baja 2 lighting kit was added along with one of its high-output stators. This setup makes the stock lighting system seem like you were using a candle in the middle of the desert riding at 60 mph. To increase the stopping power of the OEM braking

system, the stock rubber lines were replaced with steel braided "Crown" series lines at DRI, and Roll Design TRX footpegs replaced the stock units to give riders a comfortable platform to rest their feet on.

To give the trike its unique look, countless hours were spent polishing the engine cases, cylinder and other aluminum pieces in addition to plating the exhaust pipe with a triple-plated show chrome for a mirrorlike finish. A custom red and white seat cover was installed, and the hard-to-find OEM rear fenders were given an aggressive trimming. The end result is one wicked-looking dune machine that can perform just as well as it looks.

TIME TO SHRED

To see just how well everything came together for DRI on this build, I was given the chance to take the finished product to the vast dunes of Glamis, California. Passersby looked at my test rider and I like we were crazy for being out in the 114-degree afternoon sun during the middle of summer, but that didn't stop us from topping the tank with a combination of Sunoco race fuel and Maxima Oils 927. It has been quite some time since we've had



to mix fuel for a test machine, but when our test rider kicked the engine over, the sweet smell of burning premix filled the air and put a smile on our faces.

From the moment that the engine comes to life you can tell that this little engine packs a punch. Don't let the *ring-ting-ting* of this idling two-stroke fool you because as soon as you click into gear and twist the throttle to pull away, that sound turns into a deep howl out of the Fat

Boy 2 silencer. Knowing what the engine in my old 250R ATC sounded like and how it felt when it came on the pipe, I could tell this PC 2000 cylinder was a completely different beast. How it's set up is for a high-rev application, but that power valve and large bore make a world of difference when coming off idle. With this engine setup we were able to cruise through the dunes and let the torque of the engine pull us up anything we pointed the front wheel at, and when we wanted to go faster, a twist of the wrist is all that was needed. If you wanted to whip the trike around like we normally do on an ATV, it was surprisingly easy once you cracked the throttle and got the rear end spinning, which sent a wall of sand spraying into the sky.

As far as comfort was concerned while riding this machine, it couldn't have been set up any better. The +4 swingarm/shock combination keeps you stable and straight when you're screaming through the dunes, and



keeps the front end manageable letting you wheelie at will with a little bit of throttle and clutch. The wide axle also provides a sense of security while you're whipping the rear end around on a dune face or drifting across a plane of virgin sand. The only thing that made riding this machine a handful was the straight paddle tire choice. These paddles are made for one thing, and that's going fast in a straight line, and if you tried

to drift through a corner and gave a little too much throttle, it tended to drive straight. It wasn't a bad thing, but it just made us stay on our toes while riding. All in all I came to the conclusion that if I were going to build my dream three-wheeler again, this is what I wanted it to be.

FINAL THOUGHT

Being able to ride this machine was for me a blast to the past on steroids. Not only did I get to throw a leg over a machine that closely resembled one that got me into the sport, but it was even more of an adrenaline rush with the powerful engine mods. I can't say that I'm a person who would be part of a cult, but with the following these awesome early ATVs have I will more than likely be a part of that group with another one of my own. *ATVR*

BUILD CHART: DUNCAN RACING ATC250R

Duncan Racing International:

619/258-6306, www.duncanracing.com

PC 2000 305cc engine kit: \$2,695*; includes pipe, Fat Boy 2 silencer, PC 2000 cylinder kit, Pyramid reed valve, prejetted Keihin 39 PWK carburetor, jet kit, K&N air filter, instructions and tech support.

*Any additional machining, parts, labor, chrome or modifications not included in price.

Laeger's Racing: 951/473-2620,

www.laegerracing.com

+4 chrome-moly swingarm: \$880 (chrome add \$200)

RPM: 928/771-9363, www.team-rpm.com

Dominator II Racing axle: \$459.75; Millennium bearing carrier: \$207.96; anti-fade brake hub: \$219.45

Ricky Stator: 760/787-0094,

www.rickystator.com

Baja 2 lighting kit: \$249; high-output stator: \$150

Elka Suspension: 800/557-0552,

www.elkasuspension.com

Stage 4 rear shock: \$1,095

