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JANUARY 2011

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IN THIS ISSUE  
**commuter**  
torque



# THUNDER ROAD

2011 HUSQVARNA  
TE/TC449 & TE511 LAUNCH

HUNTER  
DAYTONA

Cool for cats



**FEATURES:**

- Touring Vietnam
- Victory Vision on tour
- Project Hyosung
- Quad Torque

**ALSO RIDDEN:**

- Triumph Thunderbird 'Big Bore'
- Piaggio MP3



Korean cred  
DAELIM VJF250

## LAUNCH REPORT – HUSQVARNA TE449/511 &amp; TC449

TEST BY TODD REED PHOTOS BY PAUL FEENEY GROUP

Shoei helmet, Shift nylons,  
Alpinestars boots.Think big bores  
are dead?  
Think again.

## THUNDER ROAD

HUSQVARNA is entering a new chapter in the life of big bore off-road motorcycles. With three completely new bikes entering the marketplace in 2011, the TE449, TE511 and TC449, the European giant-killer is looking towards taking a larger slice of the motorcycle market by proving there's plenty of life left in big bore four-stroke off roaders. Husqvarna is keeping its prices competitive too, with the TC449's RRP \$11,495, TE449 \$11,995 and TE511 \$12,295; all prices +ORC.

It is no secret the Husqvarna engineers have been working towards an all new 450cc based model, with prototype spy photos leaked and an ageing production model 450 in the marketplace. It was only a matter of time before we would see a new big bore Husky sitting on our showroom floors.

## Chassis &amp; Suspension

Top to bottom, front to back and inside out these bikes got a new everything. Japanese suspension giant Kayaba has now taken over the management of the front and rear suspension. With so many new concepts on this bike, combined with the latest suspension technologies, KYB are an excellent label to bring in and get the new Huskys handling like a dream. It was also interesting to note the KYB units look strikingly similar to the suspension found on the Yamaha range. A new linkage system sits underneath the rear shock, labelled CTS. The 'Coaxial Traction System' is a linkage like no other on a motorcycle production line. The raised structure is mounted above the swingarm and it is claimed this system provides improved acceleration and less wheelspin. This linkage also offers increased ground clearance as there are no parts mounted below the swingarm. A grease nipple is also mounted on the vertical linkage arm, a nice touch for those of us who like to keep up to speed with the maintenance schedule on our bikes. The completely new double cradle steel frame also has a more rigid torsional structure, offering improved strength and less rear shock transfer through the bike.

## SPECIFICATIONS:

## HUSQVARNA TE449/511-TC449

■ Engine Type: Liquid-cooled single

■ Capacity: 449cc/477cc

■ Transmission: 6-speed – 5-speed

■ Fuel Capacity: 8.5 Litres

■ Frame Type: Cr/Mo steel cradle

■ Seat Height: 963mm

■ Dry Weight: 113kg – 108kg

■ Front Suspension: 48mm Kayaba

■ Rear Suspension: Kayaba Progressive Link

■ Brakes: Single disc front, single rear

■ Tyres: 90/90-21, 140/80-18 – 80/100-21, 110/90 – 19

■ Price (RRP): \$11,995, \$12,295 + ORC – \$11,495

www.husqvarnamotorcycles.com.au

## Engine

Take a close look and you might notice the powerplant sitting beneath the mighty Husqvarna looks a lot like the motor hanging below the BMW G450X. Well, just between us here at Cycle Torque and all of you readers out there, the motor comes straight from the BMW family, tweaked to suit the Husqvarna chassis and ergonomic layout. Since BMW acquired Husqvarna a few years' back the Italian brand has been able to advance in leaps and bounds over a very short period of time with its motor development. The 449 and 511 'donk' is your general DOHC, four-valve, water-cooled 450cc off-road powerplant. In TE mode, the 449 punches out a very respectable 49HP at the rear wheel, while the TC gets a bit more poke, due to some revised cam and timing settings to punch out a very competitive 53HP on the PFG group dyno. It also gets different gearbox ratios.

Fuel duties are taken care of by a Keihin 46mm Electronic Injection System, featuring a dual flap system on the TE model for smooth and progressive power delivery. A specifically designed six-speed off-road ratio gearbox works wonders on the trail and offers a wide range of options for all levels of riders out there. The TE comes standard with two exhaust options, a Euro 3 emissions standard system comes as standard and is required to pass through ADR standards. Once you get the big rig past ADR, then there is an Akrapovic system waiting for you to bolt on and unleash the rest of the power the TE has waiting.

On the TC model a very similar single flap, 46mm Keihin throttle body and Electronic Injection System provides the engine with all the right amounts of juice to get the big 449 running like a dream. A five-speed 'box gives the TC a more motocross-specific gearbox and increases the ratios between gears to get the most out of the big bore Husky out on the MX track. The MX model features a dual curve ignition system which allows the rider to switch between a smooth and aggressive map depending on rider preference or weather conditions. Bolted onto the TC is a full Titanium Akrapovic exhaust system. Yep the Akrapovic pipe is standard equipment on the MX model and anyone who knows the brand will understand

the Akrapovic system is made from the best quality materials and is an absolute work of art.

## Ergos

There are certainly a few features on the new TC and TEs which will make you look twice. The fuel tank is mounted directly below the seat and the fuel cap is placed right behind the seat at the rear of the bike, allowing the seat to extend right up to the front of the bike. The airbox is located at the front of the bike above the radiator and is tucked away behind the radiator shroud, usually where the fuel tank might be. You might also notice the front sprocket is mounted behind the main frame rail. While these are certainly innovative ideas and work well in theory, it will be interesting to see how the everyday consumer adapts to the changes made by the Husqvarna engineers. Once you look past the above mentioned items the Italian Stallion is all class. The cockpit features Magura tapered handlebars, which are quite comfortable and most riders will be more than happy with the standard bend. A Brembo hydraulic clutch is a 10 out of 10 item. The silky smooth action, combined with the very predictable feel makes for possibly the best feeling clutch action in the market. Brembo brakes control the stopping at both ends with a 240mm rear disc and a big-time 260mm front disc which once again is quite possibly the best stopping power in its class. Handguards come as standard equipment on the TE models, they are a must have for any off-road rider and it's great to see Husky throw in these aftermarket items as standard equipment



All new Kayaba Progressive Link shock.



BMW based engine is a powerhouse.



Underseat fuel tank allows the seat to go all the way forward – and keeps the weight of the tank nice and low.





### On the Track

First of all we jumped on the TE449 and headed out into the bush. We quickly got used to the TE after a few laps around our special test loop, and began to settle into a nice pace. The TE449 offered a very steady ride and was really comfortable on the trail. When we came to the rocky and snotty uphill the 449 had plenty of power and got us around with ease. The EFI works great in the bush and whenever you need that short quick response to get up and over a tree root or log the TE picks up and responds without missing a beat. The TE motor is a little more sedate than the TC motor, and through the trail we found this to be great along with the six-speed box. It allows the rider to cruise along at a leisurely pace or blast through the trees like an off-road champion.

While we were in the swing of things on the special test enduro loop we busted out the TE511. The 511 is simply a big bore version of the 449. After a few laps on the trail the extra power of the 511 was very noticeable and made the hill climbs and snotty trails that bit easier when you needed the power. The suspension on the 511 is identical to the 449, and on both bikes we found the suspension to be very comfortable and easy to ride. At times we found the standard clicker setting made it a little hard to turn in and find the ruts in the turns, but we're sure its nothing a bit of testing and clicker adjustment wouldn't fix.

The TC was the last bike left on the list to test, and the motocross track at the Husqvarna test facility in Braidwood NSW was in top condition. After spinning a few laps and finding a good rhythm on the flowing sandy layout the TC449 was handling anything and everything we could throw at it. Sailing over the the biggest jumps on the track was no problem, and the EFI worked fantastic as we never had a bog or miss all day long. The standard KYB suspension worked well and only needed some clicker and sag adjustments for us to come up with a great base setting. We tested the dual map ignition system and the aggressive style map was certainly the map of choice. The aggressive power delivery helped us to exit the corners and get up and over jumps much easier than with the smooth map, which at times felt too flat and linear. Overall we came away very impressed with the TC package.

### Verdict

Well we must admit we came away surprised with the new Husqvarna 449 and 511. The TC motocross model is a great bike for the track, and with a few tweaks such as a more aggressive EFI/ignition map and a rider customised suspension setup, this could be a very competitive bike in the open class for riders of any skill level. The TE was great fun in the bush and for the average weekend trail blazer, this bike simply needs you to add fuel and ride it. ■



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