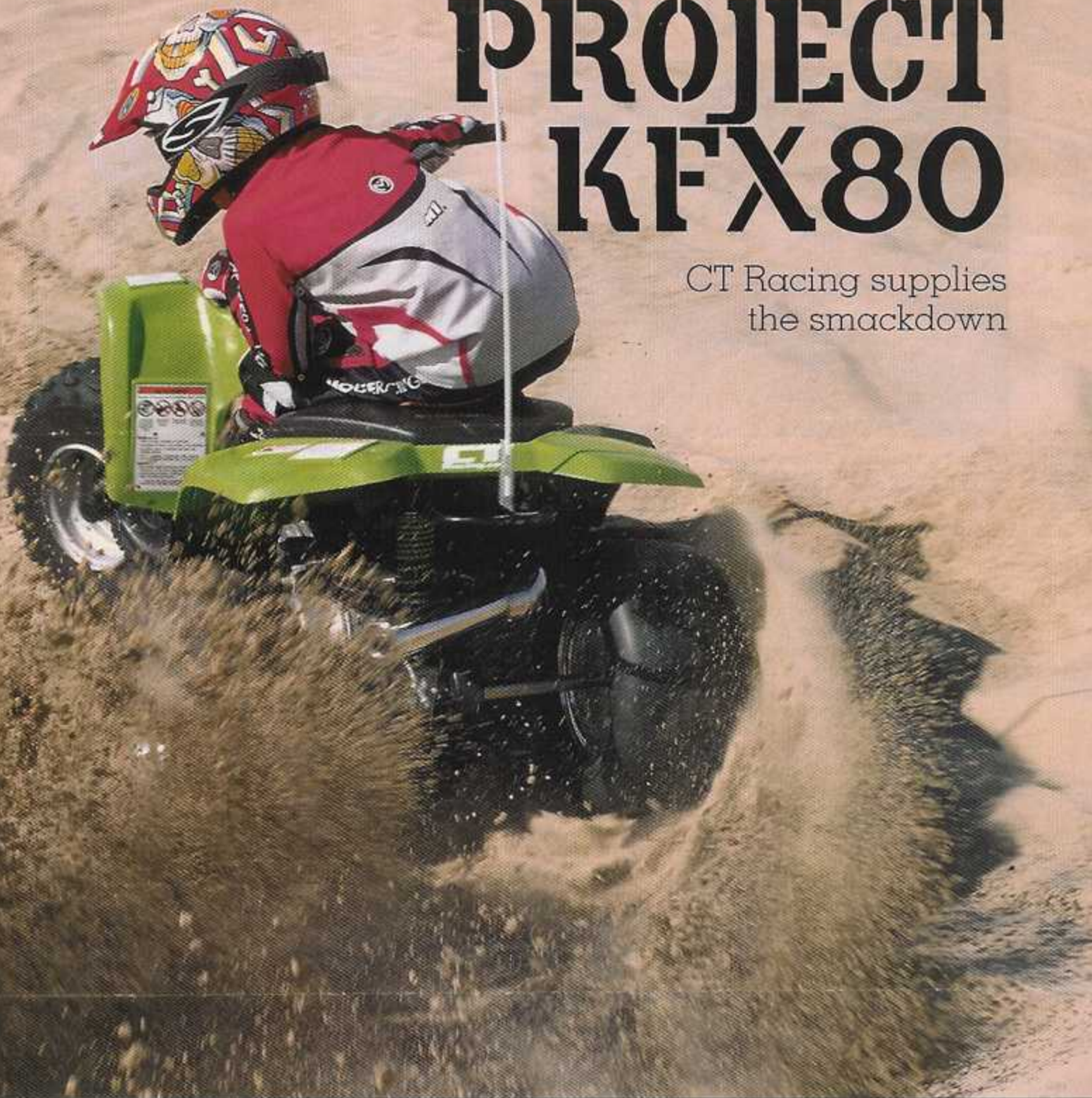


PROJECT KFX80

CT Racing supplies
the smackdown



THE TRANSFORMATION BEGINS

Once in the hands of the mad scientists at CT Racing (562-945-2453, www.ctracing.com), Allen and his crew set to work. You can send a quad to CT Racing for many things, but first and foremost is if you want your machine to go from My Little Pony to Smarty Jones in the horsepower department. That's exactly what CT Racing intended to do with this quad.

Why increase the power in a project mini? For one, the machines are

limited in their top speed. Yet many youths will quickly learn the basics of quad riding on a mini and be ready for more speed and excitement. Mom and Pop may not be so enthused about having to shell out a pile of greenbacks so soon for a bigger, more powerful quad. For a lot less money, you can increase the power and 'fun factor' of a mini and forestall the inevitable succession to a more expensive machine by a year or two. And, if racing is in your young one's

plans, then a kit like this is also a must-have.

CT RACING'S ENGINE KIT

Enter CT Racing. For \$745 you get their Complete Power Package: cylinder porting, a Wiseco Pro-Lite piston, and CT re-chambers the head for more compression and a more efficient burn. CT recommends having the head set up to burn 1/2 pump gas/ 1/2 race gas or 100 octane, but will also set it up for 100 percent race gas or just pump gas if

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CT Racing's Complete Power Package is awesome, but you do lose the oil injector. Premixed race gas is required.

the customer chooses. They modify the clutch for a higher stall speed. The air box top is modified to allow more air in, and the carb is ported out to make it larger. The bore of the carb is delta-shaped so it can't be bored; it has to be opened up by hand. The reed cage is modified and new special made-for-CT reeds are hung on the cage. Note: this kit is also available for the identical Suzuki LT80.

One important thing to know is that if you go for the race gas option, the two-stroke oil injector is removed. This kit requires high-test race gas with two-stroke oil mixed in. That's the price you pay in convenience when you go from a stock to a highly modified powerplant, and it's not unreasonable.

THE STINGER

Making a big impression was the exhaust pipe. This thing is a work of curving art. It snakes through the innards of the KFX80, from the engine, around the rear shock, and out the back like a stinger on a wasp. The shiny chrome of the CT Racing pipe clearly shows the many welded sections necessary to create it. To say it stands out in a crowd is an understatement. It's impossible to miss, and looks incredibly trick on the green mini machine.

TIRED OUT WITH GECKOS

With spring turning into summer, we decided to take the Kawasaki to the sand dunes for testing. As such, a set of 18x9-8 Kenda (614-866-9803, www.kendausa.com) Sand Gecko paddle tires mounted on shiny Douglas wheels (\$40 each, 760-758-



Whether from the sound or from the reflections of the sun, no one will miss the impressive chrome-plated CT Racing exhaust pipe.



The Kenda Sand Gecko paddle tires are mounted on lightweight aluminum Douglas wheels. The combination is four inches wider than stock.

5560, www.douglaswheel.com) were added. Both the Kendas and the Douglas wheels are new items, made for minis. The Douglas wheels have the three-bolt mounting configuration found on the Kawi's hubs, and are lighter and stronger than the stock steel rims. Nice.

We also wanted to use the Sand Geckos because they are much wider than the narrower and taller 19x7-8 Dunlop OEM tires. With the added power of the CT Racing kit, we knew the stock tires would be constantly spinning and burying themselves in the sand. Not wanting to spend all day pulling the KFX80 out, we mounted the much wider and more sand-friendly Kendas. They would translate the KFX's new power to traction.

TIME FOR THE TRUE TEST

The KFX80 started right up, and we got to hear the new pipe in action. It's definitely louder, as would be expected, with that classic two-stroke mini "zip-zip-ziiing" sound getting louder as the throttle is increased. It's not overly loud, but you might get a dB

inspection at your local ride area anyway.

After the normal brief hesitation that curses all auto CVT trannies, the power came on strongly. It's not neck-snapping, but it's a lot better than stock. And we do mean a lot. The Sand Geckos were digging into the dunes and getting the Kawi scooting along very quickly. For a mini, power coming on strongly is quite a compliment.

This additional power won't be scary for a rider who is used to a normal KFX80's power output. Rather, it will be exciting and fun, and they'll be roosting all over the track or trail in no time. Our test riders, brothers Liam and Connor Darrow, loved the new power characteristics. They were sliding, jumping and shredding every acre of sand at the dunes. The Douglas-mounted Sand Geckos would send sky-high roosts when they dug in deep. Even the adults of were having fun riding this mini.

We ran the CT Racing-modified Kawasaki against a bone-stock two-stroke Polaris Predator 90. No surprises, the KFX smoked the Predator. It will beat any non-modified mini out there, be it a two or four-stroke. Only a similarly-modified mini will be able to keep up.

MORE YET TO COME

We'll be doing more work on our Kawasaki KFX80, including suspension and handling improvements. When we're done our green machine will be able to out-handle and out-run any other mini out there. Stay tuned. □

PROJECT KFX 80

Suspension, bumper, axle & more

Remember Part 1 of the Project KFX80? We threw on some big ol' Kenda sand tires, Douglas wheels, and a killer CT Racing engine kit. A visit to the dunes proved that this little mini (which is, in fact, a Suzuki LT80 licensed by Kawasaki) to be a potent and fun machine for the smaller crowd.

NEVER ENOUGH

Unfortunately, we at *Dirt Wheels* are almost never satisfied with our creations. Like a mad scientist, we are always trying to improve upon our insane creations. Thus, we returned the KFX80 to the gibbering geniuses at CT Racing, (562) 945-2453, www.ctracing.com for another round.

Suspension was a necessity. As power was increased, we wanted to

have a corresponding improvement in handling prowess. An order was placed to Works Performance Products, (818) 701-1010, www.worksperformance.com for a full set of their shocks. Works will discuss riding needs with a customer to make sure they get the right springs and shocks for their riding styles and needs. Pierre consulted with the *Dirt Wheels* crew to make sure the shocks they made were just right for our test rider. The rider is eleven years old and weighs about 90 pounds, and is aggressive. Works decided a rear shock with an 70-100 pound spring, and front 100-pound shocks. The rear shock is preload adjustable and all come in a cool blue color.

The front shocks were easy to install. To get the rear on, we had to remove the unique CT Racing "stinger" exhaust pipe, which wasn't too hard. Total time: approximately one hour. The new fronts increase travel from 1.8 inches to 3.65 inches, while out back it increases from 2.1 to 2-3/8. Not bad for a mini. Cost is \$319 fronts, \$259 rear.



PROJECT KFX 80



How do you get a KFX80 to fly like this? CT Racing engine kit, Works Performance shocks, Durablue axle, James Lucky A-arm extenders and more, for a start.

WIDER UP FRONT

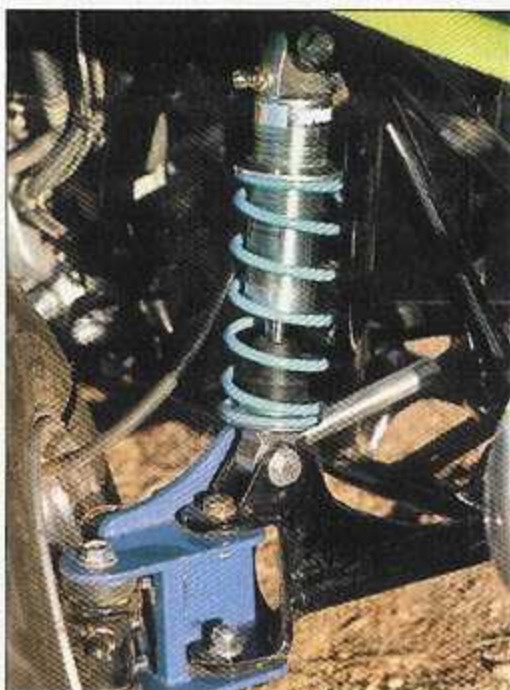
To complement the better suspension, we installed a set of James Lucky, (800) 233-2637, www.jlatvproducts.com A-arm extenders. These \$150 items add three inches of width to both sides of the KFX80, and make the mini more stable in turns and easier to control. The total six-inch wider stance matches the wider rear end, as you'll learn later in the article. The James Lucky extenders' brackets are of high-carbon steel with a blue powder coat finish to match our Works Performance shocks. The new tie rods are aluminum. All new nuts and bolts are supplied. It took another hour to get the extenders installed.

BRINGING UP THE REAR

Out back, a tough, +4 Durablue, (949-770-5533, www.durablue.com Eliminator axle (\$405) was installed to match the wider front end. With more power, we knew that there would be more jumping and abuse heaped upon this KFX, so we wanted the stronger Durablue unit. Plus, it just looks cool. Attached to the ends of the rear axle were Maxxis Razr MX 18x18-8 tires mounted on Douglas Blue wheels.

BITS AND PIECES

CT Racing shaved the front fenders for a slick, aggressive look, and applied their classic CT Racing stickers on the body. They also bolted a new CT Racing front bumper on the mini to keep the front end safe during crash-bang action on tracks and trails. This CT product is new and unique and costs a mere \$65. A Universal handlebar was added (\$100) for improved control and lighter weight.



The front Works Performance shocks increase travel from a measly 1.8 inches to 3.65. James Lucky A-arm extenders add a total of six inches of front-end width to the mini Kawi.

CRACKING THE THROTTLE

It was time to take the now even-garlier KFX80 out to the fields and hills for testing. We knew from Pismo that the CT Racing kit gave it plenty of motor mojo. Now we wanted to see how the new suspension components, axle and A-arm extenders would work.

Our test rider turned out to be just the right match for the mini Kawi. At eleven years old, he's right on the limit, size-wise, to fit the machine comfortably. He got on the throttle and we told him to start craning into turns, jamming through berms and whooped-out trails.

It's a good thing we put on the 70-100 pound Works Performance rear spring. He was pounding hard but it never bottomed. The ride was excellent, as one would expect from shocks

Maxxis Razr MX tires are mounted on Douglas Blue wheels. These in turn are attached to a Durablue +4 axle. Blue Works Performance shock and CT Racing pipe add to the tasty stew.

specifically made for a rider's needs. Let's face it: triple rate, remote reservoir shocks aren't really needed on a mini. But kids can get aggressive on the smaller rides and the stronger and more effective Work Performance units did an admirable job handling everything thrown at them, including some jumps. It's cool that you can get shocks that will handle any track or trail for mini machines such as this.

AND IN THIS CORNER

There's also no doubt that widening the stance of the KFX80 was a good idea. Come into a corner a little hot and you'll be glad for the extra width front and rear. The little green machine stayed firmly planted, thanks to the James Lucky A-arm extenders in front and +4 Durablue axle out back. Needless to say, the Eliminator axle stayed straight and true throughout the test. The Maxxis Razr tires grabbed traction and sent roost flying at the same time.

Keeping a mini machine stable is of vital importance to insuring that your child stays safe and confident. Doubly so when there is plenty more power coming from an engine kit and pipe. You don't want your young one getting up on two wheels in every corner. Adding a solid six inches up front and four in the rear helped out massively in this regard.

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?

As it currently stands, the KFX80 is fast, stable, handles great and looks sharp. Is enough enough? Maybe. But you can bet that we'll get the modification itch soon. You may be seeing this Kawi again in the future. □