

Intimidated?

I have a friend who bemoans the lack of two-stroke Open class bikes. To him, a KTM 300 just isn't big enough—no bottom end power, he complains, you have to ride it like a 250. He's got a big four-stroke enduro bike, but he just doesn't like it. He's not a four-stroke rider.

He's not the only one complaining. There is a small underground of huge torque freaks who want to spend their day grunting around in third and fourth gear, but look at the lineups of all the popular manufacturers and it seems they've been left out in the cold.

Ahh, but ATK is listening. ATK is that little motorcycle company plugging away in Salt Lake City, Utah, building a handful of interesting bikes every year, and actually making a kind of living at it (their work philosophy is very similar to the one at this magazine, but that's an issue for another story altogether). Frank White is the honcho out there at ATK, and he is blessed with both a vision and a sense of humor. ATK builds a lot of unique big-bore four-strokes and a few 250 and 125 two strokes, and I'm certain Frank has heard "You guys should build a big two-stroke!" more than a few times. Hear it enough times and you might get the impression there's a market for it out there, maybe a small market, but a committed one (or one that should be committed).

So, in response, ATK has rolled out the 2004 ATK 700 Intimidator. What a perfect name for a 685cc two-stroke single! If you aren't intimidated by it, you probably shouldn't be allowed near it. Just think—in the tight woods of South Jersey you could snick it into fourth gear on the starting line and never shift all day. Riding on asphalt in a dual sport you could blip the throttle and shower your riding partners with chunks of rubber as your rear tire comes apart. Great fun! If you get lost in the wilderness you can spin the back wheel and dig your own well so you don't die of thirst.

Seriously, this bike features a 100mm piston and a 87mm stroke. Everything else on the bike looks normal, since it's using a normal frame and bottom end,

until you get to the weight, and consider the power-to-weight ratio: The Intimidator is said to weigh-in at 238 pounds, dry. Honestly, that puts it in the same neighborhood as your KTM 250—but with 685cc behind it?

There is no doubt—we have to try it. A message has been sent to Bountiful, Utah, and the challenge has been issued. Look for a test on the Intimidator in a future issue (if we live to tell the tale!).

