

## VICTORY KINGPIN'S

## EVIL TWIN

**The kinder, gentler Kingpin Tour**

Motorcycle manufacturers generally design and build models purpose-specific. Their street machine is a totally different animal than Le Tour Delux, as it should be. It's rare a bike has the esthetic and performance for both. Ever see a Road King without saddlebags or ridden a Sporty 400 miles? It aint pretty.

Is there such a creature that can actually grace both worlds? Running with a street gang by day yet slay hundreds of miles by night? My search for this elusive Jekyll and Hyde led me to the 2009 Victory Kingpin. Its unique platform actually boasts a larger front tire than La Tour Delux big brother, the Vision. It's a 130/70/18 with a 3.5" wide tire creating a wider bead on the tread. With inverted forks and 4 piston caliper front brake the Kingpin is a true road warrior. Literally only 0.1 inch difference in wheelbase than the Vision, 2-up riding is very passenger friendly. There are floorboards for both with ample legroom and a heel-toe shifter. With 3 different windshield heights available, integrated leather covered saddlebags and trunk that doubles as a comfortable passenger backrest. Other amenities like heated grips, GPS and lower wind deflectors enhance the touring experience. But, the kinder gentler tour persona becomes an evil twin after returning from a weekend in the Sierras. Shedding her touring finery of a windscreen and Tour-pak, replacing the 2-up seat with a solo, the Kingpins demeanor changes entirely. With flared fenders and stretched fishtail gas tank exposed and revealing the aggressive snarling headlamp, a leaner, meaner Kingpin is released.

Let's face it; most of us can't afford two motorcycles so I intend to put my split personality theory to test. The first 500 miles on the Blue Ice Kingpin are open highway and the Freedom 100ci, 1634cc engine produces generous muscle. Cracking the throttle, this '09 let out a growl that actually surprised me. The Victory 6-speed overdrive constant mesh is truly amazing.

**MY FRIEND GIVES THE BACKSEAT THUMBS UP**

At around 3K RPM at 80 mph the bike feels like it's idling. She's purrrfectly comfortable right here yet with a twist of the throttle more thrust is available. Turning cruise control on I settle in. Leaning into the lower back support and stretching out on the floorboards. The GPS is set for Phoenix some 258.8 miles away. Picking up a friend I will get a passengers opinion of the Kingpin on the way back. Generally

sunny through this part of the desert I'm in for rain, some ferocious rain. I don't mind getting a little wet but desert down pours are like flying a plane, 95% boredom 5% sheer terror. The lower deflector's definitely help keep rain and road wash away and the Kingpin felt confident and solid. Keeping pace with traffic at 70, I blew right through the bursts. The heated grips came in real handy. By the time I hit

BY GARY (KOZ) MRAZ

Phoenix it was late, I was cold, wet and tired.

With Phoenix a distant memory the Kingpin hardly noticed my passenger. Power, response and handling remain very consistent. The suspension is adjustable accommodating any load. She was concerned about luggage space for the trip back. Not really a seasoned rider, she had to Fed-Ex ahead enough shoes, hair care and makeup to rival KISS. Good weather, a few hours in the diamond lane and we're back to Palm Desert.

I've been invited to ride with a private club called the Desert Motorcycle Riders, I hear they have some bad-ass bikes and ride hard. Enough of this Mr. Nice Guy stuff, I need to change gears. Unbolting the entire tour pack and 2-up seat is a breeze. With only 8 easily accessible hex head bolts and 4 more securing the seat, the entire Tour-Pak comes off as one piece. It only took 15 minutes, but you'll need a safe place to put the 60lb behemoth. Remove another 25 lbs of windscreen and accessories, slap on another seat and you're done.



## TOM PRIMING THE DESERT MOTORCYCLE RIDERS

lection of Imelda Marcos). As a street machine?...I'm gonna be real hard to find when Victory wants' this bike back.

Hiding from Manny (Victory's Press Bike Repo-man)

Beneath a thin veneer of well mannered civility lies a mischievous alter ego. Motorcycle riders are multifaceted and generally we have diverse personalities. The Victory Kingpin reflects this diversity in both form and function and it's a joy riding these twins, whether naughty or nice.

Suddenly Dr. Jekyll becomes Mr. Hyde. A leaner center of balance for more aggressive riding, the true nature of the Kingpin comes to life. The classic flared fenders and gorgeous Blue Ice & carbon fiber paint scheme is sheer art next to DMR Member Lee Chandrasena's stunning 1941 Indian four. The Kingpin's sleek design and classic look truly compliment this crowd. I even dig the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary monochrome Victory Logo.

## VINTAGE NOUVEAU CLASSIC



Do Not let the presence of gray hair fool you, today's ride is lead by Tom Roach. He's a lifelong enthusiast, competing professionally in motocross, drag racing and even on a Baja 1000 winning team and owner of several motorcycle dealerships. The Desert Motorcycles Riders was founded over a decade ago by Tom, Trevor Deeley and several others. The Deeley Motorcycle Exhibition houses the largest privately owned motorcycle collection in Canada. <http://www.deeleymotorcycleexhibi->

tion.ca . Currently, the 70 select members are made up of snow birds and locals riding everything from Ducati Monsters, American V-twins to Lee's vintage Indian four. They break into three packs, fast, medium and slow, I chose fast. I don't know who the hell these guys are but this definitely aint no Sunday ride in the park. The route today is Pines to Palms Highway 74, the 371, 76, 78 and hwy 79. 240 miles of hair raising heart pounding throttling through the twisties, stopping only for gas and lunch. When we blew past a parked CHP without touching the brakes, I expected a classic Hollywood chase scene but no lights, no sirens...NADA. Afterwards one of the riders smiled and said, we own this road, and I think he meant that literally.

The Kingpin is a solid performer; The 130/70 and 180/55 tire combo and low center of gravity make this an exceptionally well balanced and superb handling American motorcycle. Yes I scraped up the floorboards up a bit but I was clocking the twisties with Ducati's. Overall, it's an outstanding touring bike. I easily fit an extra full face helmet, laptop and all my necessities just in the trunk. (Sorry I couldn't fit the shoe col-

**NEWSFLASH!** New for 2009 is the Kingpin LOW, yes all this fun and excitement can be yours as a low inseam rider. With the rear shock's tuned and shortened which give the bike a lowered stance and drop the frame an inch.

The seat width is smaller at the tank and the shape of the side covers are slightly indented allowing the rider to hug the bike better. The floorboards have been moved back 2.25 inches and the handlebar reach extended 2 inches toward the rider.

