

# RAMP IT UP

**While road-tyred minis aren't new, being fully road legal is**

STORY SAM MACLACHLAN | PHOTOGRAPHY PETER MULLER/SAM

**IT WAS** obvious, five minutes into the ride, that I'd totally missed the point of the Motovert RX. It was like riding in the Land of the Giants, even the most diminutive four-wheeler towering over me and leading me to question the intelligence of my decision to ride it home. In peak hour. In Sydney...

Once off the main arterials, however, it was hard to concentrate due to the commotion I was causing. Pedestrians, drivers and particularly school kids were pointing, laughing and/or staring like I was riding a kangaroo home. I was pissing myself laughing, too. It seems ridiculous to be riding something so small on the road, but hey, it's fully registered and I had to get home somehow.

Despite the hilarity, I was glad to get home in one piece and decided to raid the local skate ramp instead of commuting around the place – that's the real point of the Motovert.

## POINT TAKEN

The Motovert RX is a road-tyred pitbike in every way – a tiny 735mm seat height included – but it's complete with lights, blinkers and a number plate which, in the context of how

small this bike is, looks like a surfboard. Motovert claims the RX is the best selling pitbike and now it's the first able to be road registered. Since it first arrived, there are a few others that are road registrable, but the Motovert was the first.

And yes Motoverts are Chinese-built, but there's not much Chinese about the good bits sprinkled on the RX. Marzocchi forks, for instance, Pro Taper bars, a DNM adjustable shock, Pro Grip grips and the pod-style foam air filter are all names and concepts familiar to off-roaders.

On the bitumen, the Motovert turns with a sniff of bar input, those 12-inch wheels don't need much of a shove, and laying it over for road-racer style cornering is that much fun, I dare even the most hardened dirt nut to repress a smile.

The suspension is impressive in more than name only and I'm genuinely impressed with how it handles the state of our roads. Small wheels can equal stability issues, but I hit some clangers and it stayed reasonably on track.

The front brake is a bit lacklustre in comparison to how the rest of the bike performs, with the rear much more powerful.

Speaking of power, while it isn't the fastest pitbike around in standard form, the 125cc Jialing four-stroke single can



Looks hot, even with the rego plate and indicators



That's proper bling, totally standard



One quality front end, though the brakes look better than they work

get up some good speed and accelerates bike and rider hard enough to keep both out of trouble on the road.

It churns it out through a four-speed gearbox via a light, manual clutch, the only issue there being neutral is at the bottom. More than a couple of times I trod down one too far, and was left rewinding madly and not going anywhere when the traffic lights flashed green. I soon learnt to keep an eye out for the neutral light on the comprehensive dash, which also makes riding on the road easier.

Motovert has plenty of bolt-on bits to help the horsepower stakes too, so if you need more, you don't need to look far.

## SKATE PARK

With my lesson learnt, my next ride involved a skate park. I'm lucky to have one locally, tucked away from houses and out of sight of those members of society who aren't as much of a fan of bikes as they should be.

The Motovert in standard trim isn't super loud, so I wasn't feeling too conspicuous as I snuck in and pulled my first re-entry off a wall. Instant smile and a heavy compulsion to do it again was the result, so I did. And again.

This is what the Motovert is about; the light weight (80kg, claimed), short wheelbase and easy to use engine had me thinking I was some sort of pitbike pro, which is far

from the truth. Got me thinking though...

Again I was getting some mirth from passers-by, who couldn't seem to get angry with me because I was obviously having so much fun and probably looked pretty comical. I was getting those re-entries pretty sorted by the end though.

## TO RX OR NOT RX?

The Motovert RX is a lot of fun, that's obvious. Pitbike junkies have a whole new set of options available to them with the road registration, such as being able to get to places legally and easily.

The quality of the bike is good, though I would be replacing some of the more important bolts with high tensile items and would rig the suicide sidestand so it doesn't snap a new bruise into my shin every time I went to mount up.

It has a key-operated electric start, good looks and has plenty of fun factor about it. If you're looking for a cheap commuter though, I wouldn't recommend it as it's almost invisible to peak hour drivers. I can just see myself and a few mates riding in a pack to a favourite skate park, industrial area or stormwater drain in fits of laughter, however, and that's what the Motovert is all about. Rego adds a whole new dimension to riding a pitbike and I'm all for it. I'm heading back to that skate park right now.



The engine pulls okay, but pitbike engines rarely stay stock...

## SPEC CHECK

### 2008 MOTOVERT RX

- **Engine:** Single cylinder, four-stroke
- **Displacement:** 125cc
- **Transmission:** Four-speed
- **Fork:** 35mm USD Marzocchi
- **Shock:** DNM, fully adjustable
- **Wheels:** 12 x 1.85in
- **Claimed weight:** 80kg
- **Seat height:** 735mm
- **Warranty:** 12 months
- **Retail price:** \$3000 plus ORC