



Test Beta RR 350

The Ideal Enduro Bike?

The Italian firm Beta has already demonstrated in the past that it knows how to produce more than superb trial bikes. Indeed, thanks to a long and close cooperation with KTM engines delivered to them for their enduro bikes, the Italians have gained some experience that enables them to be autonomous as regards the manufacture of all their motorcycles. Last year, Beta released the 'RR' series which was composed of the 400, 450 and 520cc. Just one year after their release, Beta expands and presents us with a new 350cc engine. In the words of the firm itself, this release took a little longer since the specifications provided that the RR350 was to have the maneuverability of a 250 along with the reliability of a motorcycle of larger displacement.



An Ideal Compromise

I did not need to travel many yards before I realized that the RR350 is more than a motorcycle with an engine that would fill the gap between the 250 and the 400. This proves that Beta is aware that the RR350 is addressed not to the same audience as the 400. Thus they consider the traditional 250 rider who does not seek the maximum power and will be more interested in the bikes handling and the power delivery of the RR350 engine. This is because a 250, with limited power, can quickly punish pilot error. Also, to always be with a finger on the clutch lever is not great. Finally, there is also fear of a powerful engine ... Hence the value of a bike like the 350 which appears as the ideal compromise. I had the opportunity to try the 350 in the toughest conditions. For that, I went to Portugal, the Algarve, where you can meet sand dunes and rocky and steep climbs.

"Trialduro"

One is struck by the height of the handlebar, which is indicative of how we will be sitting, it is not so much that the handlebars are too far out, but rather the stem is very high, which obviously has implications on the handlebar height. At first I was afraid I would meet with the phenomenon of understeer but overall, this set up only has advantages. I've never felt so comfortable on an enduro motorcycle. I strongly suspect they have developed this Beta bike closely with a trials rider and finally, if this is indeed the case, it's a good idea. The combination of this very natural position on the bike, the engine being very flexible and very light AJP clutch, found in any brand of trial bike that respects itself, can make that maneuver as you would with a trials motorcycle.



The 349cc engine has all the qualities that one would hardly dare to hope for, including a lot of torque low in the revs and power that remains to the end. The engine keeps a lot of flexibility because the engine goes faster in the turns, which is usual for the two-stroke engines, and with the torque of a much larger displacement. It seems that this bike has all the

qualities that can be found on small motorcycles and high displacements. A kind of summary of what is best, actually!

Remain Philosophers!

As regards the chassis, it has not opted for the bike to be as light as possible and for various reasons. It was considered that in fact this bike was intended for use during an endurance period that is the longest possible for pilots who have Enduro as a hobby. Anyway, everything on the bike was designed in the lightest materials. Thus, the lower part was built in the composite material, even lighter than aluminum, but more below was placed additional reinforcement as protectors and covers a protective plate for the engine to reduce the maximum damage when dropped. The logic of building 'light' on top and 'heavy' at the bottom is obvious. You see that on trials bikes!



Now, let's be clear, we do not want to say that this bike is heavy. Moreover, there is a lot of details on this bike from being noted that when conducting his first interview. So much so

that one thinks that everyone in the Beta factory, the assembler to the accounting, noted everything that needed to be on a dirt bike. Thus, it releases the saddle with a push to find the toolkit. Everything is easy, no need of help. Ultimately, we can say that you could disassemble and reassemble the bike with your eyes closed. One thing that has any interest also is the fact that the gas tank is attached with two screws at the top. In short, there are on this bike a lot of little things that really simplifies life. A kind of philosophy that prevailed in the design of this bike somewhere ...



Acupuncture

The character of the bike is enough to kindle enthusiasm from the pilot. With the flexibility of the engine and the feeling of doing a little trial over the handlebars and the center of gravity down, we did not really want to push the engine up into the extremities but to adopt the trialist style - which is to maintain sufficient engine torque with the possibility, when necessary, to use all available power. The engine mapping also provides that we can ride smoother, which means among other things by choosing a longer transmission in the options list. Personally, I never found the power was too great. Although it was also thought to amateur pilot with protections for the engine block, it must still note that the 350 has titanium valves, which obviously affects positively on the quality of performance. The balancer should normally reduce vibration and hence reduce the tendency to have arms that inflate (syndrôle the boxes). This does seem to be the case in the low and midrange but when navigating in the 13,000 extremities, it seems to have ten thousand needles stuck in their hands. But still, good, acupuncture is a tendency, no?



For the rest, the sublime suspensions kept us safe from harm caused to the shocks of any kind. Marzocchi fork works very nicely and allows you to place the 350 with a precision millimeter perfect. The feeling of having all the control is indescribable. We are constantly wondering how far one can go before going too far. Master cylinders and calipers are Nissin while the discs are manufactured by an Italian workshop in the area. The wheels seem to have been completely taken from KTM, including the orange logo on the black rims but the shape of the brake disc and the logo are Beta and dispel any possible doubts that remain.

The Cream of the Crop

It's really nice to see a family business as Beta has taken its destiny because she deeply believes in his abilities. For my part, I think the RR350 is the crème de la crème among enduro bikes. It is hoped that Beta can build up an adequate network of dealers and that the motorcycle is saved from teething problems. Under this condition, we believe the future of this small family business could be particularly rosy.

Text: Rob De Rover | Photos: Frank Schröder

Beta RR350

Engine: 349.1 cc, liquid cooled, 4 cyl.

Bore x stroke: 88 x 57.4 mm

Compression ratio: 12.9:1

Max. Power: unknown

Max. Torque: unknown

Injection: Keihin FCR-MX39

Transmission: six-speed transmission by chain

Setting: cradle of chromium molybdenum

Front Suspension: Marzocchi 50 mm UPSD, travel 290 mm

Rear Suspension: Shock Marzocchi, 290 mm travel

Front brake: 260 mm disc with 2 Nissin

Rear: 240 mm disc with Nissin 1érier
Tires front / rear: 90/90-21 / 140/80-18
Wheelbase: 1490 mm
Dry Weight: 114.5 kg
Seat height: 940 mm
Tank Capacity: 8.0 l.
Maximum Speed: unknown
Colors: white / red
Prices for Belgium: € 8700.00

VOS REACTIONS

