

MXP RIDES » THE REVOLUTIONARY '09 HUSABERG'S

MX PERFORMANCE

WWW.MXPMAG.COM

**AMATEUR
REPORT**

**RISING STARS
COVERAGE FROM
THE TRANSCAN**

**COMPETITION
DENYED**
ERIC NYE, THE FIRST
NUMBER **1**
IN MX2



BRACES

BUYER'S GUIDE

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2008 • \$3.95



ANTI MAINSTREAM

**MXP'S SHANE CUTHBERTSON FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE
REVOLUTIONARY 2009 HUSABERG FE 450**





**HUSABERG'S ENGINE
AND CHASSIS
PACKAGING IS AN
ALL NEW CONCEPT
IN THE OFF-ROAD
WORLD**



ANTI MAINSTREAM

WHAT HUSABERG SAYS...

ENGINE: The heart of the new generation is a SOHC engine with a displacement of 449.3 or 565.5 cc. The design incorporates a 70° cylinder angle, which enables the crankshaft to be repositioned more than 100mm higher and 160 mm further back, moving the crankshaft's rotating masses closer to the motorcycles center of gravity. In this position, the gyroscopic forces generated by the rotating crankshaft have the lowest possible leverage effect on the bike.

ENGINE MANAGEMENT: State-of-the-art Keihin engine management ensures exceptionally smooth responsiveness and handling in addition to increased performance. Temperature and height compensation are also state of the art. Thanks to this system the engine starts straight away in every situation therefore the bike is Electric Start only.

CHASSIS: The new engine concept also breaks the mould when it comes to the chassis. The highest priorities for the Husaberg engineers were: a weight distribution that facilitates handling, the incorporation of high-quality components, and the lowest possible weight. A transparent fuel tank extends beneath the seat and helps keep the bikes centre of gravity as low as possible. The subframe is constructed out of cross-linked polyethylene plastics.

FRAME: A new chrome molybdenum frame with a perimeter design ensure the greatest torsional rigidity and reliable tracking stability at a minimum weight. Its construction allows the bike to have the narrowest overall width and more ground clearance – a huge advantage in difficult terrain.

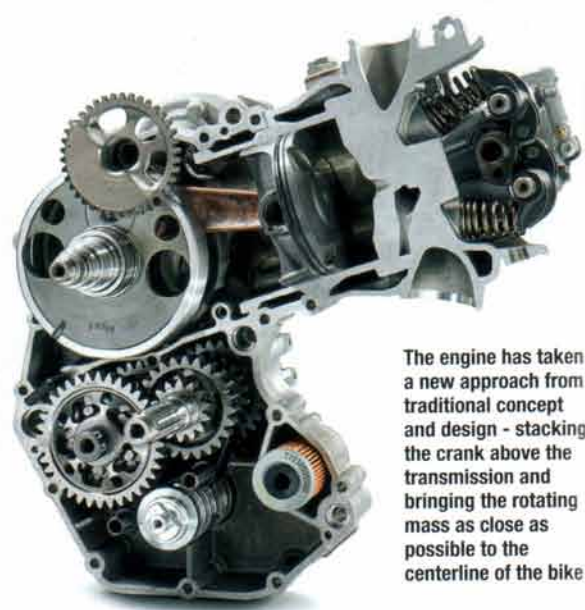
SUSPENSION: 48mm WP upside-down open cartridge forks guarantee sensitive responsiveness and high damping reserves. PDS shock from WP with a lightweight, aluminum reservoir features adjustable rebound damping plus adjustable high and low-speed compression damping.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS...

It would take an entire feature to describe how wicked this bike performs with all of these innovative features. Maybe with some extra saddle time, a more detailed test could be performed, but for now here is the skinny direct from the seat of my pants.

Once I pushed my way through the frothing mechanical junkies to get a look at this bike, I was immediately impressed with the fit and finish of the machine. The ergonomics are ultra modern, the components are the best money can buy, and it appears that no detail was overlooked. The long

Utilizing plastics to construct the sub-frame is another bold move to keep the weight down



The engine has taken a new approach from traditional concept and design - stacking the crank above the transmission and bringing the rotating mass as close as possible to the centerline of the bike

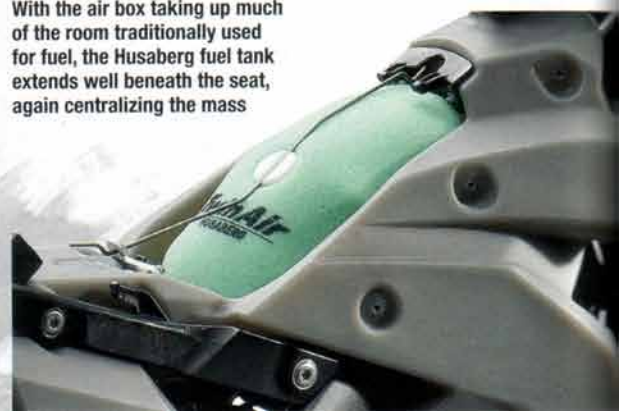
and wide feel customary to the 2008 Husaberg FE 450 has been replaced with a narrow-clean feeling ergonomic package that puts the pilot in the optimum position.

Ok, time to see if all this technical mumbo jumbo actually works? Upon arriving at the test track we were greeted with a three-mile grass track, which was very dry and serpentine through a small valley.

First up was the big dog! Why a 570 cc engine? I have no idea, most likely because Husaberg is proud to be "Anti-Mainstream", and this motor definitely proves that motto! With the engine management system all you have to do is hit the magic button and she fires right up no problem. Purring like a kitten, I whacked the throttle a few times and was astonished at the response - instantaneous! They call this connectivity, which is a major benefit of the EFI system. Just a side note before I click into first gear - this bike is quiet! I mean whisper quiet, well below 94 db, and I applaud the engineers for taking the initiative to reduce the bark and help preserve our sport. Ok, off I go and immediately realize the 570 is the ultimate! Here you have a motor pushing 60 hp that responds like a 125 and handles like a 210 lb motorcycle. It is way fun and could just be my race weapon of choice come next year.

The 450cc engine is typical Husaberg - smooth and linear. Power output is boosted with the new engine and the EFI makes it very responsive. It is a torque monster and will putt around at very low RPM's without stalling - perfect for scaling those nasty trail sections. The motor also revs out forever, keeps pulling, and wants more. The cool thing about this is that it takes way less energy thanks to the incredible rideability. ➔

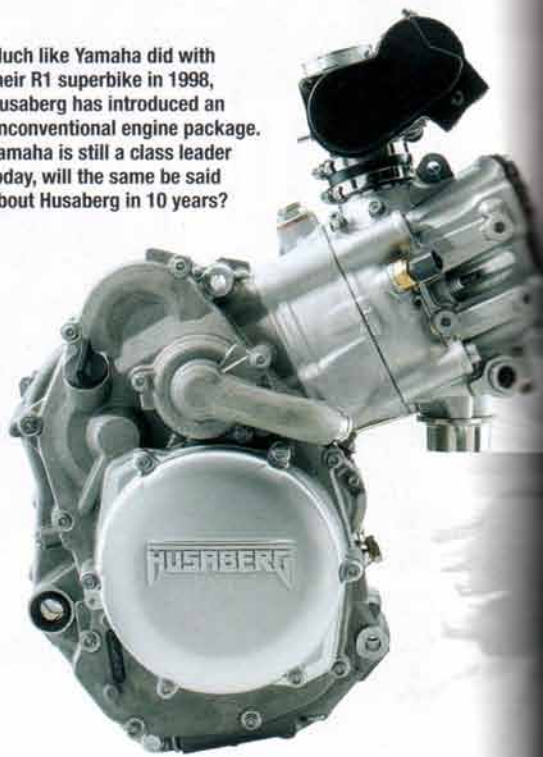
With the air box taking up much of the room traditionally used for fuel, the Husaberg fuel tank extends well beneath the seat, again centralizing the mass





ANTI MAINSTREAM

Much like Yamaha did with their R1 superbike in 1998, Husaberg has introduced an unconventional engine package. Yamaha is still a class leader today, will the same be said about Husaberg in 10 years?



Speaking of rideability, the 450 and 570 feel like you are on a 250 four-stroke at best. I would even go as far as saying they handle just like a 250 two-stroke with the added benefit of stability. I honestly could not tell the difference between the effects of the additional cubic displacement on the 570. Very little input is required to move the new bike around as it is extremely forgiving and changes direction instantaneously. The new riding position and ergonomics allow the pilot to be 'in control' instead of 'trying to control' the bike.

Next is the chassis and suspension. With the seat off you can tell the engineers wanted to add rigidity to the frame. Riding the bike confirms this has been accomplished, as the old wallowy-flexy feel is replaced by confidence inspiring handling. This is a major hit with me, as the 2008 was not predictable and caused many pucker moments at speed. The suspension is well-balanced front to back, again something that was difficult to accomplish on past models. The shock position has an aggressive angle and is very similar in appearance to the KTM's. Typical of the WP PDS system, no linkage means zero maintenance hassle, which is great for off-road guys playing in water and mud all day long. The shocks performance was flat wicked! It handles all the trail garbage with ease and keeps on tracking straight with minimal feedback to the rider.

My overall impression is that these bikes are the real deal. All those fancy concepts and technological innovations actually work! Trust me these are not small details – they are huge improvements – leaps and bounds! Unlike similar smaller com-

panies who have failed to bring their concepts to market, thankfully Husaberg is under the wing of the KTM mother ship, which has allowed these innovations to become reality. Make no mistake about it; this is Swedish engineering at its best, with all little help from big brother. **ADP**



WWW.CORNERGRASS.COM

SHANE CUTHBERTSON
WWW.SHANECUTHBERTSON.COM

