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JANUARY 2014

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A KTM 300 conversion motorcycle is shown in a wheelie position, with the front wheel high in the air and the rear wheel on the ground. The motorcycle is orange and black, with a large front fender and a prominent engine. The background is a desert landscape with rolling hills under a clear sky. The text "KTM 300 CONVERSION" is overlaid in large, bold, yellow and orange letters.

# KTM 300 CONVERSION

*Can't find a 300? Convert your 250  
and make it run like a 500!*

*Michael Leib flicks our built-to-the-hilt KTM 300 conversion machine during an early-morning test session. The machine hits hard and fast, making it competitive with the big four-strokes and more reminiscent of the old 500 two-strokes.*

The KTM 300 is the second-best-selling engine group (first is the 350) in KTM's lineup. People can't even find them, as the sell-through is staggering. This makes the 300 conversion kit all the more appealing, since it's much easier to find a 250—and you can probably even get a good deal on one. This project KTM 250SX came to us fit with a KTM Power Parts 300 cylinder kit and a bevy of Wiseco parts in the high-compression piston and clutch. It had a Pro Circuit performance exhaust and suspension, plus a dose of bling, running gear mods and ergonomic updates. It was setup as a vet motocrosser, with the suspension set for a 200-pounder who craves the outdoor MX world. The pilot wanted a machine that could fight with a 450 and dance like a ballerina. It turned out to be a rocket of titanic proportions.



*It started life as a 250SX and morphed into a 300cc MX weapon.*

# KTM 300 CONVERSION

## THE KIT

The 300 kit is available from KTM Power Parts and sells for a fairly hefty \$949.99. It consists of a new cylinder, head, ignition box, piston/rings/circlips, gaskets, and power-valve flapper. So, actually, the price of admission is acceptable, especially when you consider that just purchasing a new 250SX cylinder would set you back a little under 400 bucks. Our bike came fit with a Pro Circuit pipe and silencer, the muffler being the straight-through moto model.

The installation of the kit is straightforward, though poor instructions hamper the process. Jetting changes came via the Intelajet. It adds a separate air-fuel delivery device that features external adjustability for improved response and fuel mileage. The Intelajet allows you to control fuel flow externally by rotating the knob in the appropriate direction—richer or leaner. The new KTM 300 piston was shelved in favor of a high-compression Wiseco unit. Remember, one of the goals with this machine was to make it competitive with a 450!

## THE TRACK TEST

This 300SX will make your eyes water and lips curl. It hits with a ferocity that is almost alarming, and since we were used to the high-torque and flywheel-heavy zest of a 450, this dude took some getting use to. Thankfully, it wasn't just our older pilots who were shell-shocked. Justin Jones praised the powerband, saying that it was nice to get on something with an explosion factor: "The power is really amazing! It comes on quick and hard and snaps in the direction desired, while still having a hard-grunt bottom end similar to a 500. Easy to ride yet still powerful—just like a lightweight two-stroke should be." It feels like it goes flat a little early, so we plan to adjust the power-valve spring tension after having gone slightly richer with the Intelajet device, looking to get rid of some of the tinniness and abrupt hit. Richer jetting helps thicken the feel of the power, and this helps control by slowing down the hit. Overall, the only gripe with the powerband was an early sign-off and maybe too much hit down low. We can always tune for more subtle response, but starting with too much is far more acceptable than trying to make more.

Suspension-wise, Pro Circuit continues to make us happy. Two of our beanpole testers felt that the machine was over-sprung, but the bigger vets praised the fork's initial freedom and its ability to "stay up" under duress and not dive. The combo of properly sprung suspension and the right sag (105mm) helped keep the machine planted and fairly stable and improved cornering over stock.

## JUSTIN'S NOTES

Justin Jones is our pro tester and a regular on the podium of the WORCS Pro division.

—This engine package is unbeatable for a mid-size two-stroke. Even with carburetors almost becoming a thing of



Here's the 300 conversion kit from KTM's Power Parts division.



Pro Circuit performed their magic with the suspension, dialing it in for a big-guy Vet rider with new valving and a stiffer spring rate out back. [www.procircuit.com](http://www.procircuit.com)



Intelajet provided a means for fuel-flow adjustability via their Dial-A-Jet. Dial-A-Jet is like a power jet, but it has air bleed, so instead of feeding raw fuel like a power jet, the device meters the air and mixes it with the fuel in a chamber, delivering a pre-atomized fuel mixture into the center of the carb throat. [www.thunderproducts.com](http://www.thunderproducts.com)

the past, the SX never even hinted at having the slightest problem.

—The gearing was good for your average motocross track, but if you were racing anything a smidgen faster, I'd go smaller out back, since I seemed to be shifting into fifth more than I like to.