

Pit bike a police magnet

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26Feb08

THEIR noisy bark has often shattered the peace in our parks, suburbs and back streets.

Now the infamous pit bike, much to the horror of many Gold Coast residents, has been made road legal and is expected to start a new mini-bike craze.

Australian importer Mojo Motorcycles has just released the Moto Vert RX 125 which features a similar engine and frame to the pit bikes that are responsible for hundreds of complaints to police and are the bane of many lives.

However, this model, which can reach a speed up to 80km/h, is able to be road registered so it can be ridden legally on public roads.

Simon Makker, editor of Australia's leading freestyle motocross magazine, *Freerider MX*, has been given one of the new bikes to test ride and has not wasted any time buzzing up and down Gold Coast streets.

"You definitely get a lot of attention riding it around," said Mr Makker.

"At the lights people are always checking you out, it's a weird look -- half curious and half condemning you."

With the *Freerider* test bike from a Victorian importer being the first Moto Vert RX 125 in Queensland, Mr Makker said he had trouble registering it with Queensland Transport.

"They didn't want to register it," he said.

"First one officer came out, then there were two, then after half an hour they had three checking it out and scratching their heads.

"They didn't know what to do about it. They said 'Are you serious? You want to use this on the road, you're going to be killed'."

The Queensland Transport officers, who eventually registered the bike after Mr Makker convinced them it was no worse than a postman's bike, warned him the bike was likely to attract the attention of police.

"If they pull me over, more than likely they'll just want to check it out," said Mr Makker. "So I'll just have to be more careful."

Despite its size and engine, the bike is not restricted from riding on the motorway as are some small scooters.

"I'm not going to ride on the M1, it would be hair raising," said Mr Makker.

The first shipment of the bikes to land in Australia earlier this year sold out immediately in Victoria and Mr Makker expects a similar sales rush in Queensland when more become available.

"I think they're going to take off because they're real fun and fairly safe," he said. "Once word catches on, everyone will want one. They are way cooler than any scooter out there. I wouldn't be surprised if the postmen even started using them."

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The now legal mini bike gets a test run down the Gold Coast Highway at North Burleigh. Inset: Editor of Freerider MX magazine Simon Makker sizes up the latest boys' toy