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DR DREAM
★RIDESMALCOLM SMITH REPLICA
KTM 400 EXC

ROOST FOR CHARITY

Story by Karel Kramer • Photos by Derek Steahly and Karel Kramer

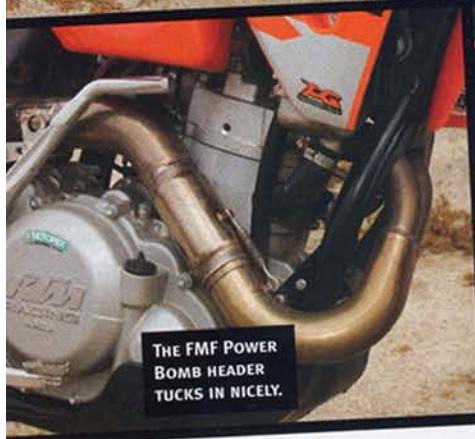
Off-road legend Malcolm Smith has come full circle when it comes to motorcycles. He started riding and racing on a four-stroke, but after switching to two-strokes in the mid-'60s, Smith thought he would never switch back. He has, though. Most of his rides these days are on KTM's 400 EXC. MS has his own bike, but this particular bike is a replica assembled by Scary Fast's Dave Simon. Simon purchased and built the bike, and he is donating it to the Malcolm Smith Motorsports Foundation. The nonprofit foundation will auction the bike on eBay in July, and all the proceeds will benefit the El Oasis Orphanage in Valle de Trinidad, Mexico, which was featured in the movie *Dust to Glory*. Malcolm assures every dollar donated goes to the orphanage.





74 DREAM RIDES

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A SCOTTS DAMPER MAKES
CONTROL EFFORTLESS IN
SAND, ROCKS AND CHOP.

Like any MS bike, this EXC isn't high on frills, but it does have a variety of well-thought-out mods that make it work far better on the trail. As far as the engine is concerned, it gets Power Nows on both sides of the carb and an FMF Q2 exhaust system. There are also some protection add-ons, an Enduro Engineering soft seat, a Scotts damper and Slaven's suspension front and rear. MS rides the Colorado rocks much of the time, and Colorado-based Slaven's (www.slavensracing.com) came up with a setting that keeps the bike level and balanced. This 400 EXC soaks up

rocks and chop well, and the rear end is very controlled with none of the loose feeling that many plush KTM rear shock setups have. It works fine in whoops as well, but it obviously isn't aimed at wide-open, rough running. The engine is simply magic on the trail, with smooth, controllable but energetic power. The stock 400 pulls smoothly and revs freely, but the MS bike has more zip and energy from right off idle to all the way through the rpm range. Every revolution of the crank generates trail speed. Wheelspin is almost nonexistent. MS usually runs a 13-tooth countershaft sprocket, but with the FMF and

Power Now products installed on this bike, he felt it was fine with the stock 14-tooth sprocket. Our only concern: A lower first gear would be nice. This bike is all about effortless trail miles, especially compared to our long-haul 525 we had along. It is comfortable; with the damper there is no need to hold onto the bar tightly and the rest of the bike is ready for anything. We're not sure there has ever been a four-stroke that is less physically demanding. You spend all your available energy picking lines and smiling like Malcolm Smith. We wondered about that grin he has!