

YAMAHA YXZ1000R: MAKING IT EVEN BETTER

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THE #1 UTV / ATV MAGAZINE

AUGUST 2017

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When Randy Norman decided to upgrade from his Polaris Ranger 700, he stepped up to a manual-shift Yamaha YXZ1000R built for fast desert running and flying on two-tracks.



DUNCAN GPR YAMAHA YXZ1000R

A three-cylinder with four wheels for a motorcycle guy

By the staff of Dirt Wheels

□ GPR Stabilizer has a long history with performance quad racers and riders. Owner Randy Norman has a long history going fast on dirt bikes. He was something of a specialist at high-speed, Grand Prix-loop, cross-country events.

GPR grew out of his desire for a better damper. Now, he has entered the world of UTVs, and after seeing his friends have trouble with CVT belts, he knew he wanted a Yamaha YXZ1000R with a foot clutch. In other words, a car he could drive hard.



DUNCAN YXZ

(Left) In addition to PRP seats and belts, Norman's YXZ has a Lowrance GPS, PCI Race Radios helmet-to-helmet and car-to-car radio, and a normal stereo for music. (Right) Owner Norman is a guy who thinks performance is cool, so he wasn't tempted to go with giant tires on the YXZ. We approve of that choice. He selected the STI Chicane RX tires for the desert.

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM FRIENDS

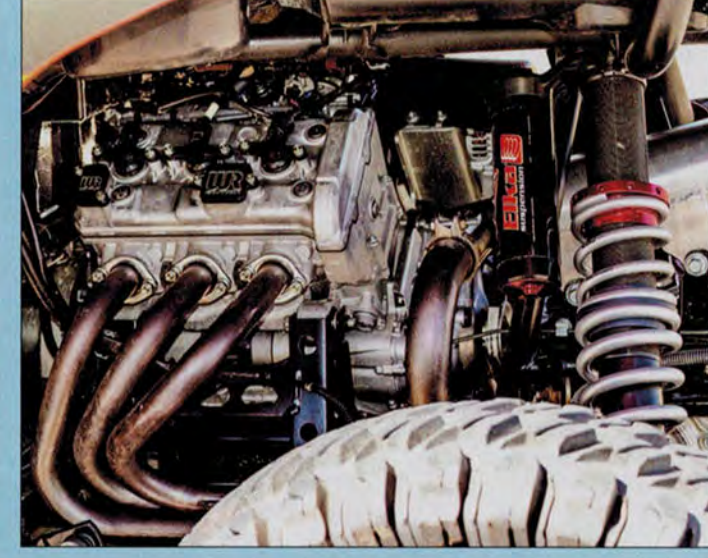
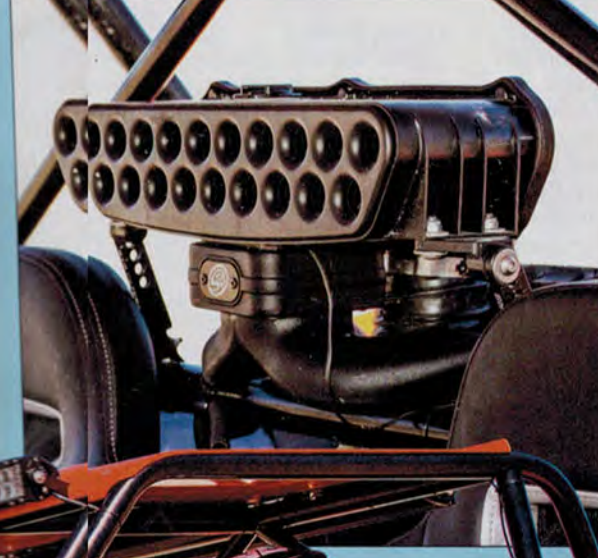
Naturally, Norman had friends and customers racing the new Yamaha. "They started talking, and I started making a list." He was looking for a good-running, fun and fast car that was reliable. It is just Norman and his wife, so a two-seater is fine. He wasn't really interested in racing or even playing in the dunes much. Mostly, he was looking for a machine that would allow long loops exploring fun two-track in the desert and mountains.

Yamaha's YXZ1000R doesn't respond well to tall tires, so Norman stuck with STI Chicane RX eight-ply desert tires in 28x10R14 for all four corners in spite of running wider rear rims. The bead-lock STI HD5 rims are 14-inches, but 7 inches wide in front and 10 inches wide in the rear. He sprung extra cash for the orange locking rings to complement the graphics. Wheel control was boosted with Elka Stage Five shocks at all four corners. For now they are set just as they were delivered, but plans are afoot to meet with Doug Roll to get them dialed specifically to this machine.

He took warnings that the stock cage could crack seriously, so TB Metal Worx made the cage, spare-tire carrier and aluminum roof, and each piece was powdercoated. Cargo carrying is seriously limited with the tire mounted as low over the bed and forward as possible to maintain good handling and suspension action. While the cage was being constructed, Norman opted for PRP seats and belts. He rides with a regular group, so the interior sports

a PCI Race Radio with helmet-to-helmet and car-to-car communication. There is a Lowrance GPS to help with those explorations. A stereo system is installed for when conversation and exhaust music isn't enough.

A large GGLighting LED light bar on the roof makes sure that the fun can go on until all hours. A GYTR alternator kit makes sure there is ample juice for these accessories. Norman wants convenience, and safety is also important, so the machine has a center and side mirror, as well as a cage-mount fire extinguisher.



(Left) This is, after all, a desert car, so the particle separator makes life a lot easier on the air filter and extends service intervals. (Right) Yamaha's triple-cylinder motor is a real screamer, and more so with the exhaust and EFI tuning it received. The Elka Stage 5 shocks work very well.



QUEST FOR FIRE

With his insistence on reliability, Norman didn't want to go crazy with engine mods. "I upgraded from a Polaris Ranger 700," Norman joked, "so I am jumping from a buggy to a race car." He did ask for Duncan to install a Fat Boy exhaust and an AFR+ tuning kit that included a gauge, a control module and a Bosch oxygen sensor. An S&B particle separator makes sure it breathes clean air. In further search of reliability, a Weller Racing water-pump housing with a built-in temperature gauge keeps track of the engine heat.

Even though he likes a manual transmission, Norman found the YXZ too easy to stall, so he added an Alba Heavy Hitter flywheel that is over twice as heavy as the stock one and with greater outside diameter. "Now you can just let the clutch out in first gear and it will idle up into the trailer without stalling," claims Norman.

Starting with a YXZ in orange helped begin the look of this machine, but the D'Cor graphics from Duncan and the wheel rings add some clear style to this machine.

Yamaha's YXZ1000R has been known to jump with the front end low, but Elka Stage 5 shocks smoothed the suspension action and leveled out the flight.

IN THE DIRT

We were ready to drive as soon as this machine rolled up, but we suffered through the photos first. When we did get our turn behind the wheel, we saw that Norman had a machine that suited his vision of ripping fast two-track. Like other opportunities we've had to pilot a YXZ1000R with Elka shocks, the ride creates an instant impression. The entire ride is smoother with better control. Being a base model, there was room for suspension improvement, and the Elkas did not disappoint. The rear shocks didn't buck over jumps, which is great compared to a stocker.

FULL ASSAULT

With the current state of tune, Norman's YXZ has massive boost in the top half of the powerband. It really screams when it gets the rpm up. As always with manual-clutch Yamahas, we had to resist the urge to shift earlier than necessary. Power at low rpm is manageable with the flywheel weight, but response is soft until the tach is halfway up the dial. Even though we were in open desert, we had to get a feel for the trail routes before we took the machine over third gear. Our driving was a mixture of desert and dunes, and there was never a lack of power or speed. The Chicane tires are best suited for packed and rocky desert with the DOT-rated, flat-resisting, eight-ply-rating and closely spaced tread lugs.

FINAL TEST

We can tell you that we won't be calling Norman to borrow this baby if we have slow-speed, technical rock crawling in mind. Not that it matters, it is unlikely that he would part with it now that he has it dialed in to his liking. After all, the Ranger 700 is already down the road. He likes that the YXZ fits in the trailer in the spot that the Ranger occupied. That was so that he can take the YXZ when he is doing race support. That should allow time to explore some new riding areas. With a spare tire, a GPS and a rugged car to explore with, that sounds like a good plan. GPR could easily stand for "gone play riding." □

DUNCAN YXZ

Norman had the benefit of friends who were experts on the YXZ, so he added a better cage, seats and belts. Starting with an orange machine helped; the D'Cor graphics put the look together.



PARTS LIST

Duncan Racing International:

www.duncanracing.com,
(619) 258-6306

Fat Boy 4 slip-on.....	\$699
DRI/D'Cor custom graphics.....	\$379
TB Metal Werx: (619)846-6752	
Roll cage w/ aluminum roof.....	\$1950
Cage powdercoat.....	\$350
Roof powdercoat.....	\$125
Spare tire mount.....	\$360
Powder coat spare tire mount.....	\$125
AFR+: www.afrplus.com	
Tuning kit w/ gauge, controller, O2 sensor.....	\$399
GYTR: www.shopyamaha.com/accessories/side-by-side	
Alternator kit.....	\$661

Weller Racing:

www.wellerracing.com

Thermostat housing/ water temp gauge.....	\$85
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Alba Racing:

www.teamalbaracing.com

Heavy Hitter one-piece flywheel.....	\$199
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Elka Suspension: www.elkasuspension.com

Stage 5 shocks.....	\$1995 (front), \$1995 (rear)
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S&B Filters: www.sbfilters.com

Air cleaner kit.....	\$399
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PRP Seats: www.prpseats.com

Seats.....	\$995
Seat belts.....	\$60

GGLighting: www.gglights.com

Front.....	\$399
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PCI Race Radios:

www.pciraceradios.com

I-Com Elite UTV package.....	\$525
GPS Lowrance	
Trophy M5 Baja.....	\$399
RBL Store rear light.....	\$199

STI Tire and Wheel:

www.stitireandwheel.com

Chicane RX Radial 8-ply 28x10x14.....	\$181.99 ea.
STI 14x7 & 14x10, 5+2 HD 5 w/ beadlock.....	\$137.71 ea.
Orange rings.....	\$34.79 ea.
Lug nuts/MTA 12mm x 1.25-in. chrome.....	\$2.50 ea.

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Stereo install.....	Price varies
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