

**WOW!** IT'S THE NEW LOOK KIWI RIDER

# KIWI RIDER

NOVEMBER 2008

\$10 INCL GST

**TESTED**

KTM RC8

CAN-AM SPYDER

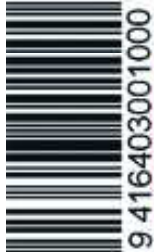
BMW R1200GS

**FEATURED**

YAMAHA'S RADICAL NEW R1  
ROSCO'S STH AMERICAN RETURN  
ANDY'S MX SAFARI

# ULTIMATE VICTORY

WE RIDE VICTORY'S NEW VISION



**FIRST PICTURES:**  
DUCATI'S BIG-BORE  
MONSTER



# VISIONARY SPLENDOUR



WORDS: **Big Dave**  
PICS: **Geoff Osborne**

You can't miss Victory's new Vision, a veritable behemoth (in the best possible sense of the word) of a motorcycle aimed at couples who don't mind standing out from the crowd. Big Dave has the story.





**There's certainly no missing Victory's new Vision, a bike which effortlessly combines style, comfort and confident individuality.**

Victory produced their first motorcycle, appropriately enough, on the fourth of July 1998. Now, not long after the Polaris subsidiary's 10th anniversary, Auckland company Silver Fern Imports in Takanini is the first local dealer to be able to offer the company's range of custom styled bikes to Kiwi riders.

New Zealand is the second export market the parent company has officially entered – after the UK. And as you're reading this they will have just gone on sale across the Tasman as well.

Our introduction started at Hotel du Vin, South of Auckland, with a private KR showing of the new and impressive range.

Then, after a briefing on the company, its people and their marketing strategy, I had an opportunity to throw a leg over several different models for a punt through the Hunuas and up the Pohutukawa coast.

The Vision is available in two models – the Tour, which features the top box and integrated passenger throne (what else would you call it?) and the Street – which has a more conventional rear end... if, that is, you can call anything about this bike's styling conventional.

### INDIVIDUALITY & COMFORT

Victory says that their research shows that buyers of this type of motorcycle crave individuality and comfort as their main priorities. The Vision surely delivers.

I saw plenty of old-skool Cadillac in its presentation and really enjoyed the individuality. It is quite a stunning looking thing.

Arlen Ness is often referred to as the 'King of Choppers'. He has produced some of the most outrageous, outlandish and some of the most drop dead gorgeous pieces of two-wheeled art ever, and his influence runs throughout the styling of the Victory range.

Victory says that it took over six years to develop the bike. I didn't find that surprising. They have produced a very refined motorcycle.

It's 'probably' the best handling and has the best ground clearance of any of the Full Dressers ('Supertankers' in Big Dave speak). It is quite a nimble motorcycle for one so large.

At its heart is a delightful air/oil-cooled, fuel-injected 106 cu in (1,731cc) 4 valve V-twin engine with a bore and stroke of 101 x 108mm. It's finished

with heaps of chrome and as well as being fabulous looking (being particularly well-showcased, or I suppose the word is 'framed' by the bodywork) it also produces some very decent grunt, the factory quoted figures of 67.66kw (92 hp) and 147Nm (109ftlbs) of torque.

Pushing all 365kg along is a carbon-reinforced belt that runs from a six-speed gearbox which incorporates a genuine (better than 1:1) overdrive. The gearbox is like most of the super units, reasonably noisy, but the changes are firm and positive and belie the clunks it makes.

### ROLLING STOCK

Up front the Vision sports a 130/70 tyre, the rear being a 180/60 and the wheelbase 1668 mm. Coupled with its low centre of gravity and 130mm travel front forks and air adjustable rear suspension, it really does handle exceptionally well for a large motorcycle.

Wheeling it around town, or for Osborne during the photo shoot, was a breeze and its open road manners are relaxed and precise.

The large slab of front bodywork does pick up some dirty air turbulence when travelling behind a truck on the freeway, but open road touring is just sit back and relax, fold out the adjustable air deflectors and roll away the distances in comfort and luxury.

Victory claims the Vision has the lowest seat height in its class – something us 'full size' men usually can find a disadvantage – but the comfort of the Vision is really outstanding.

It has four inches of padding in the heated seats. They remained comfortable and the bike begs you to sit on it for full days on end.

Heated grips are also standard – as is the electrically-adjustable windscreen. It has a button adjustment for up and down and is also available in aftermarket shorter or taller versions.

It really is a matter of dialling in and sitting back – or upright. The Vision has the best foot accommodation I've used on a bike. The large adjustable footboards give great flexibility in the positions the rider can adopt. If you feel like giving it the berries (don't worry – you can) then it's a matter of perching toes on the rear edge and it's quite a sporty attitude.

### LOUNGING AROUND

Cruising down the Waikato freeway to a photo shoot I had my heels resting on the leading edge of the boards



and it was laid-back-lounge-room comfortable.

The unique swept back handlebars put the rider quite rearwards on the machine and the bodywork is mounted further forward than the other full dressers. It feels like there is a lounge room of space between you and the dashboard. The ability to move legs around and the spacious feel is a really big plus for days-on-end riding.

I found a lot of hot rod/muscle car in the dashboard and cockpit. It's minimalist and very styley. Most of the stereo controls are mounted on the tank top with the cruise control and volume switches hung under the switch blocks. It was all very easy to come to grips with.

The engine is reasonably quiet and remarkably smooth in cruise mode. It has the lovely pulse that a massive V-twin develops when you gas it up, but on cruise it takes a conscious effort to find even the slightest tick from the donk. I was incredulous at times.

The range on a tankful varied with how sportily I pushed the bike along, but it was about 'big tourer' standard. It rides harder than you might expect; it's an enjoyable bike to toss around too.

Stopping is taken care of by a set of three 300mm discs, twin floating rotors with three-piston calipers up front and one two-piston unit aft. They are linked, provided good feel and were confidence-

Top-of-the-line Vision model is available in a number of guises including with or without top box. Comfort is first rate for rider and pillion alike and though panniers provide slim pickings the top box goes a long way to redress the balance.

inspiring, even when doing low speed manoeuvres on the gravel.

But that isn't what the Victory Vision is about.

### LAZY DAYS

It's about a unique motorcycle that can roll away days behind the handlebars. The top box behind the throne and rear speaker assembly can accommodate two full face helmets. The integrated panniers have several storage compartments to give a total of 111 litres of cargo, plus it has a nice glove box for iPods and phones to wire directly into the stereo.

GPS and a ton of custom options are available from the substantial Victory catalogue. The range of clothing looks sharp and the whole product range has the Arlen Ness style about it. One that

this hairy biker found very attractive. I took the Vision to the Howick bike show and thought it stole the show.

The Vision is available in black, steel grey and cherry and there are Touring and Street (sans top box) models available with different 'premium' or 'comfort' specification levels and prices ranging between \$33,995 and \$35,995.

For that you get a mega comfortable tourer that is a super cruiser and show bike as well. It's enjoyable to ride, has celebrity cred and looks like something from Star Wars crossed with a Cadillac.

And in case you're the 'better half' and you're wondering . . . the co-pilot rated the passenger comfort as 'Best Yet. Best foot position and all round comfort. Loved the headed seat.'

It has some good innovations too. The crash protection system that stops the bike from entirely tipping over is great. The integrated bars also provide extra foot space.

I suspect you'll start to see a few more Victorys on the road shortly. The 10th Anniversary Special Edition sold out online in seven minutes.

What we saw with the Vision is a unique looking motorcycle that does the job it was designed to do very well. Lovely engine and road manners, tourability and cruisability.

If you are in the market for a large tourer or just a unique bike...a Vision is well worth looking into. **KR**





Look and even feel of Vision model is unique and a tribute to relative sector newcomer Victory. Marque was created from the ground up by owner Polaris, a company which attempted a toe-in-the-water with its original cruiser range here several years ago before deciding to focus on the home market for the time being. Now it is back with export markets established here, in the UK and across the Tasman. As befits its range-topping status Vision gets largest capacity version (1731cc) version of the company's distinctive long-stroke air/oil-cooled 50° V-twin engine which comes complete with 6-speed gearbox and belt final drive. As well as distinctive looks the Vision is typical in that it has a surprisingly nimble spring in its step. Ground clearance also a surprise.

... a unique looking motorcycle that does the job it was designed to do very well. Lovely engine and road manners, tourability and cruisability.

## SPECIFICATIONS VICTORY VISION

### ENGINE

**Type:** Air/oil-cooled SOHC 4-valve-per-cylinder 50° V-twin 4-stroke

**Displacement:** 1731cc

**Compression ratio:** 9.4:1

**Bore x stroke:** 101 x 102mm

**Starting system:** Electric

**Engine management:** Electronic ignition

**Fuel system:** Electronic fuel injection with 45mm throttle bodies

**Clutch:** Wet multiplate

**Transmission:** 6-speed

**Final drive:** Belt

### FRAME

**Type:** Tubular steel

**Swingarm:** Aluminium

**Front suspension:** Conventional 43mm dia. telescopic fork

**Rear suspension:** Linkage-type w/single gas-charged shock absorber, air adjustable

**Brakes:** Linked system comprising twin 300mm rotor floating discs with 3-piston calipers up front & single 300mm floating rotor with 2-piston caliper rear

**Wheels:** Cast aluminium 18 x 3.0 in. front & 16 x 5.0 in. rear

**Tyres:** Dunlop Elite 130/70R18 front & 180/60R16 rear

### DIMENSIONS

**Wheelbase:** 1670mm

**Rake/Trail:** 29°/137mm

**Seat height:** 673mm

**Dry weight:** 365kg

**Fuel tank capacity:** 22.7l

**RRP:** \$33-35,995 depending on specification

**Test bike:** Victory & Silver Fern Motorcycles

### GEAR

**Helmet:** Davida

**Pants:** Triumph Jeans

**Boots:** Johnny Reb