



SYM Wolf Classic 150— Wolf in Commuter's Clothing



Story: Blake Kelly
Photos: Mike Seate

With the economy still in a slouch, fuel prices soaring and less and less money in our pockets, the time of over-priced, fuel consuming monster glam bikes is on a downturn. Cheap, simple, and smart are the new cool. With that, SYM/Alliance Motorsports, a company that has its roots in the scooter world, has stepped up with a lightweight retro that's a real heavy-hitter—the Wolf Classic 150. A motorcycle embracing old-world feel with new age tech, the Classic offers an off the shelf café racer feel, a very reasonable sticker price, stupendous fuel economy and superb urban handling. The Wolf is on our Top 10 list of best bang for your buck.

Don't let its nimble appearance, small stature and just shy of 15 horsepower fool you. It's a single cylinder, 149 cc electric start, four-stroke city street thumping master. With a weight of 266 lbs, the Wolf Classic is lighter than some fast food junkies; the updated, twin-piston front disc brake has no problem



Road Test



halting the bike and a rider to an abrupt stop in any hectic urban environment or back road deer-dodging circumstance.

All these attributes help provide the Wolf with an 85 MPG fuel efficiency rating and a top speed of 65 mph - no lie. With a sleek, early BSA-inspired gas tank holding 3.3 gallons, trips to the gas station are far between and very few.

The Wolf's toy-like stature may underwhelm on first inspection, but once aboard the motorcycle, you take note of just how roomy this underdog really is. The footpegs offer plenty of useful, comfortable space with room to spare, even for my size 11 feet. There are nice details to be found from one end to the other including nicely made clip-ons instead of standard, tubular handlebars, rubber fork gaiters, a riveted café style seat with chrome passenger grab rail and, best of all, a smooth, thumping exhaust note that thrums from a Bonneville-replica muffler replete with a heat shield featuring embossed, Chinese characters.

By mounting the clip-ons on top of the triple trees instead of under them, the bike offers back relief and an all-day favorable riding position. With a glance in a storefront window as you make your way down a city street and you'll notice not only the vintage 1970s styling, but also how well the rider and bike become one. Handling finds the Wolf at home on city streets and tight back roads, but freeways with hyper-aggressive SUVs and the need for quick, roll-on acceleration, can be a challenge. The Wolf's nimbleness, however, provides quick transitions and split-second direction changes, making it perfect for filtering through traffic on our ever-crowded city streets.

The upright riding position, which places the rider well forward, helps with early visual detection of trouble, and helps move the bike where you're looking with only the slightest input to the handlebars. The Wolf's power-to-weight ratio is well-balanced, letting the motor pull the bike with ease and offers surprising quickness when traveling from point A to point B. Outside of highway use, anything over the top speed of 65 mph is seldom legally needed. Sure, for café racers, more speed is always better, but it's not always practical when we're talking fuel economy. Better than a ton-up top speed are plusses like a 24-month warranty, a growing dealer



Drilled disc brake is more than up top stopping the lightweight 150

network, and a bike that appears easy to customize for the DIY set. It's already a looker and the 2012 model comes in six tastefully rendered color combinations. There's even a kick starter for nostalgia buffs bent on impressing when leaving the local bike night.

With the history of SYM's engineering quality in its scooter production and reasonably priced at a \$2,999, the Wolf Classic 150 fits the bill when looking for a reliable gas-friendly commuter motorcycle with style. Whether

it's urban assaults or some back road fun you're after, this bike deserves a place on any buyers test ride list.

The Wolf helps hit the mark with small is cool again.

We Dig: Light weight, ease of use, café racer detailing.

We'd Ditch: The muffler's packing - a Wolf needs to growl, baby! **CR**



Detailing on exhaust heat shield is impressive- wonder what it says?

Wolf Classic 150 Specs

MSRP: \$2,999

Engine: 149cc Four-stroke, Air-cooled single

Horsepower: 149 BHP at 8,500 RPM

Torque: 9 foot-pounds at 9,500 RPM

Transmission: 5-speed, wet clutch

Fueling: Carbureted, manual choke

Rear Suspension: Twin chrome coil shocks

Front Forks: Telescopic, non-adjustable

Front Wheel: 18" w/240mm drilled rotor, 2-piston caliper

Rear Wheel: 17" w/130mm drum brake

Seat Height: 30"

Wheelbase: 49.21"