



Ye olde faithful

Words & photography: Chris Pearson

Quadzilla 250E

It's Britain's best-loved road-legal quad, and it's been around for the best part of a decade. So, why do so many people still love Quadzilla's classic 250E?

In the fast-moving world of quadricycles, it's hard to find a model that has been around for as long as the Quadzilla 250E. It remains a best-seller in the Quadzilla line-up and, despite its relatively small size (physically and capacity-wise), it is still great fun to ride. It's a small machine with big aspirations.

The model's success is attributable to many aspects, not least the price. It also offers great ease of use and a superb power-to-weight ratio. It really is a go-anywhere, do-anything machine; from day-to-day riding to full leisure use, the 250E handles it all. Built by the Taiwanese SMC company for Quadzilla, the design is no less effective some six years on from when it was first introduced into the Quadzilla line-up.

There is a bit of maintenance involved in owning one. The final drive chain, albeit lighter than an equivalent shaft-drive set-up, needs a regular check for correct adjustment and lubrication, so a few minutes each week will need to be put aside. That said, it's easy to factor this chore into the usual oil-level and fluids check which safety-conscious riders regularly carry out.

Back in charge

The five-speed gearbox is a pleasure to use. Seeing as most quadricycles these days have fully automatic transmission, it makes a nice change to be called on to have some rider input in this respect. There is no finer feeling than clicking up through the gears across rough terrain, or short-shifting in the lower ratios for maximum acceleration as the engine stays in the area of peak torque. On the road, this equates to a smooth and speedy ride, easily able to maintain position with other road-users, while speeding away from junctions and slower corners well ahead of most cars and vans. The five ratios that make up the transmission get eaten up fast, making this road-legal quad a very exciting bike to ride.

The final drive ratio has recently come in for revision; a 36-tooth rear sprocket now replaces the original 40-tooth item. This gives the 250E a better attitude and higher top-speed for on-road use without unduly compromising the off-road drive and acceleration. Also new since we last looked at the 250E (some four years ago) is the white colour-scheme, alloy bumper and oil cooler, with the choice of travelling backwards now available – by selecting reverse gear via the lever on the right-hand side. Compared to more modern quad transmissions, the reverse option is a little tricky to engage, especially when in a hurry, but practice makes perfect, and it soon becomes second nature to operate.

Stop right there

The air/oil-cooled, twin-cylinder power-plant is a tried-and-tested unit, and it feels all but unburstable. Unlike a thumping, single-pot engine, it revs and revs, giving the little quad a respectable top-speed on the open road and a lively nature off it. The lack of liquid-cooling works in the machine's favour, too, by saving weight, which in turn means the little power on tap has a good deal less work to do. The light weight also aids the brakes, and it's a good system anyway; with light work to do, the stopping force is very impressive indeed, easily up there with best anchors in the business. The light yet stable chassis allows great liberties to be taken when braking hard.

The 250E looks like it's staying for a good while yet, with well over 6,000 units sold in the UK – and counting. The design is well-sorted and trouble-free, with few reported problems. Anyone testing this machine for the first time will find it modern-feeling, light on its tyres and willing to get a move on. It may lack some of the refinements, like luggage-racks fitted as standard, but it's a competent machine in every respect. And the price is very attractive too; in fact, the 250E is £100 cheaper now than when we tested it back in July 2005. Add the now-legendary backing that all Quadzilla owners receive, and you won't need to think long about whether this machine is a good-value, sensible buy.



Punchy, light and loveable, the 250E is one of those quads that just makes sense



Specifications Quadzilla 250E

Price: £2,499.00
Engine: single-cylinder, air/oil-cooled four-stroke
Capacity: 233.8cc
Bore Stroke: 53mm & 53mm
Power: 18bhp @ 7500rpm (unrestricted)
Torque: 14.75ft-lb @ 5000rpm
Transmission: 2WD, five-speed manual Reverse, chain final drive
Starter: electric
Frame: steel cradle
Front suspension: twin A arm adjustable oil-damped shock absorbers
Rear suspension: Monoshock swing arm

Front brake: 200mm discs single-piston floating-calipers
Rear brake: axle mounted 200 mm disc single-piston floating-caliper
Front wheel: 175/70-10
Rear wheel: 255/60 -10
Length: 1,595mm
Width: 1,050mm
Wheelbase: 1100mm
Dry weight: 180gs
Fuel tank capacity: 8 ltrs
Colours: Red, White, Black
Contact: 01507 522900
www.fasttoys.co.uk

Looking back

David Bradford recalls *QUAD's* first test of the 250E, back in 2005

"It was nearly five years ago, but I lucidly remember testing the 250E. Why does it stand out in my mind? Because, I think, there is something very pure about this machine. It is basic, yes, but in a good way. The motor, with its manual gearbox, is punchy and engaging. I came to quads from a road-bike background, and riding the little Quadzilla felt somehow more like enjoying a two-wheeler, such was its nimble performance. In fact, the parallel-twin motor is very similar to Honda's CB250 power-plant – so it brought back memories of my trusty CB250 Nighthawk, which I used as a winter hack but loved for its no-nonsense efficiency. Spending that warm summer's afternoon power-sliding the 250E around grassy fields remains one of my fondest quad-testing memories. A true modern classic – and long may it remain."



QUADBIKES R US
 Walden House Farm, Great Totham, Nr Maldon, Essex, CM9 8PN
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