

# Class on a Budget



## A SOLID BARGAIN FROM THE BIGGEST ATV BUILDER IN THE FAR EAST

### STAFF REPORT

No argument, Kymco is the most successful Taiwanese ATV importer in the rapidly transitioning ATV Industry. Here's what we mean. Sales of new ATVs in the 2011 model year will not likely hit 300,000 units. That number has plummeted from 900,000 units in 2005. There are currently seven established North American and Japanese ATV manufacturers and anyone looking at the numbers just reported would recognize there's little need for an eighth OEM. Rumors are abundant one of the big seven may be folding their tent in the next year - yet at the same time, Kymco is making serious inroads into this biz.

One reason Kymco's business is growing is its 2-pronged approach to the ATV market. The company is a major supplier of complete ATVs and also supplies engine and driveline components to Arctic Cat. This year, Kymco is also being named as the supplier of a complete ATV model with another Japanese brand. With these kinds of roots in the business, it has to be a pretty simple equation for Kymco to take ATVs it's branding for other manufacturers and market these credible rides themselves. That's precisely what the company is doing and it looks like it's working.

The ATV we're talking about here is the fully jammed 375 4x4 LE. This unit should look familiar, it's mechanically identical to Arctic Cat's 350 4x4. The biggest difference is the Kymco version gets extra bling thrown in at a surprising price. The 375's feature list reads like a "must have" for any buyer in the sub-400cc segment: Double A-arm IRS, double A-arm IFS up front. A watertight CVT tranny with hi/lo range and shiftable 4WD. There's no diff-lock but the Arctic Cat version doesn't have shiftable 4x4 either. The Kymco has selectable 4WD. Kymco throws in a nice winch with roller fairlead, sweet cast aluminum wheels and very striking black plastic bodywork.

More than a few people have told us how visually appealing the LE presents itself. We agree. This is a very nicely equipped ride in this price sensitive segment and we're hard-pressed to come up with any glaring faults - save one. The 375 LE, as with all Kymco branded ATVs, is a smidge over-sprung and over-damped at both ends. The hardware is in place to deliver ride quality, however, Kymco is missing something in its validation process with regard to suspension compliance and ride comfort. We would recommend any



**Details, details, details! Kymco is really good at creating stuff that looks good and finishing off the operation and appearance of details some of its competitors overlook.**

375 LE buyer spin the snail cam preload adjustable shocks to their lowest setting at all four corners to achieve a tolerable ride. At this soft setting, the heavier the pilot, the better the LE rides.

When we compare build quality, styling, engine power, transmission and ergonomics, in almost every area of critical comparison, this well equipped rooster scores strong against the competition. You would be well advised to take a long, hard look at the Kymco 375 LE when shopping in this competitive segment.