



## Little Big Man

### Motorcycle Review : Daelim Daystar 125

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I glided to a stop at a red light, thwacked the throttle open once, and popped it into neutral. A guy on a Honda Phantom turned to stare at my machine. Meanwhile, an older guy in an E-Class Mercedes was also checking out my bike. I haven't had this much attention since riding a fully-polished custom with a very loud exhaust.

It was funny at first, because when motorcyclists think of cruising bikes, they don't normally think of the Korean-made Daelim. But maybe they should. If the Daelim Daystar is guilty of demanding a little more attention that it deserves, it's also a much better bike than most people might think.

With showy custom tear-dropped paint, more chrome and shiny plastic parts than you can shake a stick at, and some seriously nice mag wheels, the Daystar clearly says: "Look at me".

Make no mistake, the Daystar is a great bike for tooling around town, cruising some windy roads, or simply commuting to work. Part of the reason for this I think, is that the Daystar has been designed with the rider in mind. And to me, that's what motorcycling is all about.

But let's get down to the real question: could a Korean-made motorcycle be better than a Japanese-made bike? The answer depends on what you're looking for. And this Korean-made bike certainly does give its Japanese competitors a good run for the money.

There's no denying that the Daystar has more standard features than the Honda Phantom. So in a way, the Koreans have beat the Japanese at their own game. Which may be why the Daystar gets so much attention and respect on the street.

I recently took a Daystar for a weekend test drive and I discovered many pleasant surprises about the bike.

Nestled within its light frame is a 124.1cc four-stroke, four-valve engine. The engine winds up nicely to about 8,000 rpm where power peaks at about 13hp. While that may not seem like a lot of muscle, the bike only weighs 160kg dry. And the engine propels it nicely up to a top speed of about 110-plus kph.

Coupled to the engine is a user-friendly five-speed gearbox. First gear gets you going pretty quickly right off the line while the engine raps out in a hurry and it's time to hit second. Once on the highway I unsuccessfully looking for sixth gear a few times, almost expecting it to magically appear. But as I approached 100kph and settled into the big saddle I realised I was already exceeding the speed limit and I just needed to cruise along with the bike at its own pace.

The peppy 125cc powerplant is both oil and air-cooled. And it is efficient. With both highway and city driving the bike manages to keep within acceptable engine temperatures. Although the bike does not have a temperature gauge, I noted that it wasn't overly hot after taking it in on the BKE and running it at 100kph for at least ten minutes.

After this rigorous test, I inspected the radiator and found that it was not overheating, so I am confident in saying that the bike will perform well in the rather extreme heat conditions we often find in Singapore.



#### SPECIFICATIONS

Wheelbase	: 2,240mm
Seat Height	: 130mm
Dry Weight	: 160kg
Engine	: 4-Stroke, 4-Valve
Displacement	: 124.1
Bore & Stroke	: 56.5 X 49.5
Compression Ratio	: 11.5 : 1
Carburetor	: PD Type
Transmission	: 5-Speed
Starter	: Electric or Kick
Max Power	: 13.2
Brakes	: Front Disc/Rear Drum
Fuel Tank Capacity	: 13 Litres

Spent gasses from the engine are sent out a single header into a one-into-two exhaust system that sounds remarkably good despite the bike's small engine capacity. I suspect that the exhaust was designed primarily to look the part of a big V-twin and think it might be nicer to simply run a single straight pipe out the rear, keeping in sync with the single piston engine layout.

Nevertheless, I had a great time on the Daystar. Its heart is definitely in the right place. It gives the rider an immediate sense of confidence and features a lot of goodies and nice parts including mag rims, attractive engine covers, large foot floorboards and nice paint and colour schemes—whether you choose stock or custom paint.

The Daelim Daystar is available from Choong Kok Agency (CKA) tel: 6748 5455, which has been the sole distributor of Daelim motorcycles since 1995. Special thanks to everyone at CKA. ■