

## The Victory Hammer and the 131 HP Snake.

**What are the differences and are these real American sport bikes that you can cruise on all day?**

By Kirk Johnson

### About the Test Ride

I had the great opportunity of meeting with the GM of *Phoenix Arizona Victory*, Danny Harris, and the owner of the *Arizona Victory* shop in Tucson, Mike Schultz. They provided both of the Victory Hammers for the test rides. The stock Victory was new off the showroom floor, with less than 10 miles on it, and the Snake (Victory Hammer Custom) had over 4,000 miles on it. The custom or "snake," as they call it, is Mike's personal ride. They wanted me to ride both Hammers so I could get a feel for a showroom stock Hammer first and then one that has been upgraded with engine work, custom paint and accessories.

### About Victory Motorcycles and the Hammer

One thing that was not obvious at first was that almost all Victory models share the same engine and frame. Yes, that's right, if you purchase the Vegas, Vegas Jackpot, Hammer, Hammer S, 8-Ball, or Kingpin they all come with the same engine and frame, and in most cases, the same cables and batteries. The differences between the models are how they are appointed. For example the 8-Ball is the basic Victory with a base price MSRP



# Ride Review



of \$13,399. From there the models are upgraded with different accessories. This can include chrome, tire size, wheels and gauges to triple trees and sheet metal and of course paint.

At first, I thought that would really limit your selection. And to some degree, I guess it does. But look at the reality of it. There is no limitation to cross modifications. Say you want a basic ride, but you thought that a 250 tire was the most important thing for your ride. They can do it. Try that with any Harley. To some degree, you can select your entry point or theme and from there, customize the bike the way you want.

Two very interesting and I think great benefits come from having a common element, that being having the same engine, frame and other parts across the line. If you walk over to the parts department and ask for a part, they will have it and you may not even have to provide a year and model number. Not only that, the parts that are used have been proven to work and are very reliable.

To customize your new ride, Arlen Ness and his son Cory worked side by side with Victory engineers to design the Arlen Ness Signature Series. You know these customized accessories will look great and fit your bike per-

fectly. Plus there are many other after market accessories to personalize your ride just the way you want it.

If you want more HP, they can do that to any Victory and the price is the same across the line. Plus they have a great working agreement with S & S. If you were to upgrade with S & S engine modification, they will still warranty the engine and parts. How cool is that.

### **The Stock 2007 Victory Hammer**

The stock Victory Hammer that I test drove first featured the following; detachable rear seat cowl, inverted front forks, Brembo dual front disc brakes, aggressive handling V-bar, 100 CI Freedom V-Twin engine with 6-speed overdrive transmission and the ultra fat 250 mm rear tire.

The engine is a fuel-injected, counterbalanced, torque-laden 100/6 Freedom V-Twin power plant with 4-valves per cylinder and an overhead cam. It's air and oil cooled and features a silent chain-driven oil pump to reduce engine noise. It produces 104 ft-lbs of torque and 86 horsepower. According to the charts and feel of the performance from the test ride, the torque of the engine peaks out about 2,500 PRM.

### **The SNAKE (Custom Victory Hammer)**

They built the Victory hammer to represent Arizona and thereby Arizona Victory. The 2005 Hammer is painted a copper rust color with snakeskin and copper plating. They then installed an S&S 106 stroker kit, complete with cams, valve springs and air box. The heads were flowed and the power commander was installed with custom mapping.

The results were very impressive. According to the Dyno, numbers came in at 131 HP and 139 Ft

Lbs torque. Top speed of 142 MPH has been recorded.

Bike design and paint drawn and selected by local Artist "Skogie" Paint was applied by Ed with Carl laying in the Rattle snake skins strips and airbrushing in Arizona Victory logo

The Victory solo seat with locking trunk was also installed after receiving paint treatment. TST then applied the copper powder coating to the wheels, frame and numerous other components, along with plating the extreme heat components with copper. Forward controls were relocated 2 inches forward using Victory's relocation kit. Since the Hammer is already a performance machine, a number of stock components were retained such as the 4 piston Brembo brakes, rotors and braided steel brake lines.

### **The Stock Hammer Test Ride**

The Hammer, fresh out of the shop for a quick shakedown inspection, was warmed up and ready to go. I jumped on the ride and headed north to fun country north of the 101 on Cave Creek road. I played on some of the back roads with curves and found that the Hammer is a lot of fun to play with. This ride is not a real lightweight; it comes in at just over 650 pounds dry. But the ride was surprisingly sporty. Yet running down the road, it ran just like the great lightweight cruiser that it is.

Acceleration and cornering was great. I did notice that for some reason that, the bike tends to wander a little bit when cruising down the lane in a straight line. Don't know what that was from. It might be from the 250 tire chasing me that when on uneven payment tends to load the bike and influence the directional stability. Although it was not a major concern, I did find myself making sure I paid attention to where I was riding. This did not happen on the snake when I rode it.







The suspension was tight and the Hammer clung to the corners very nicely. Acceleration was great. I did find several on-ramps to play with and found the 3 digit numbers were pretty easy to obtain before you have to merge with the 101 traffic. This little beast runs strong. Not sure how it would do next to a stock V-Rod, but it would blow the doors of anything that H-D makes. In fact, I am sure two up on the Hammer, or for that matter any bike in the Victory line, would blow the doors of any single H-D rider with the exception of the V-Rod. This is because of the strong low-end torque inherent in the great little 100 incher on the Victory line.

The counter balance mill, bolted directly to the frame was very smooth. Only under hard acceleration did you have any vibration and that is to be expected. Having the stock exhaust was annoying. Too quiet for me. You could actually sneak up on people. I am not used to that. Now remember, this unit is right off the showroom floor and for that I give it a very good rating. How many stock bikes do you know of out there?

## The Snake Test Ride

The "Snake" is Mike Schultz's, owner of the Arizona Victory shop in Tucson's, personal ride. I was not as kind to his ride. I know a little about Mike and I know that when he climbs aboard his scooter, he rides it with sincerity. I also knew that the snake would not go back on the showroom floor for sales.

That being said, I did not really push the bike hard, but had a lot more fun with it. Wow, was this a great treat. With the extra HP and torque, you find yourself wanting to twist the grip all the time. You can play with this bike; it is very docile, willing to do anything you want. From smoking the tire from a dead stop to trying to find the peg feelers on corners. This is what it is all about.

This Hammer was quite a bit quicker than the stock model. You always look forward to the next on-ramp where you can run the Hammer through the gears. It would trigger a grin every time.

Then there are times you have to ride on the 101 or down Cave Creek as if you are a sane driver. No matter where you are you feel at one with the ride. After you get to a speed of about 60 or 70, you can grab overdrive or sixth gear. This is nice for those long



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runs across the country, very smooth and very little vibration. You can sit on this ride all day without a problem.

The upgraded exhaust sounded great. I have heard some Victory's that sounded terrible. They were just plain loud. This exhaust system had a great sound to it. Maybe because of the long and straight pipes gave it a little character – not sure. But it did have a great sound to the pipes. Even when you backed off the throttle, the engine

did not shut down like some of the fuel injected Harley's that I have been on and you still get a great sound from the exhaust.

## Summary

Although both bikes are very similar, they ride a little different. For one, the Snake seemed to be on rails. It was solid straight while cruising down the lane and I did find the suspension a little tighter. Mike said afterwards that he had thicker oil in the shocks.

Obviously, the Snake was more fun with the upgraded engine work and the custom look that made this ride a bike you want to be seen on. Overall, both bikes ran great and are a must ride if you have any interest in the



sport of riding. Be it on the corners, on-ramps or even just cruising down your favorite highway chasing the sun. Make sure you check out these great rides. **RUMBLE**

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