

# HARLEY-DAVIDSON SHOW XR1200 PROTOTYPE AT INTERMOT AND NEC.

You don't get much bigger news than a new model from Harley-Davidson – doubly so if it's a prototype that they're canvassing opinions on – it's only a shame that the news broke at the Intermot in Cologne within days of the last issue going to press: the penalties of publishing bi-monthly. So, most of you will already know about it and a lot of you will have seen it at the International Bike Show at the NEC.

For those who are blissfully unaware, I'm going to paraphrase what I put on our website when news broke, to save time, and I'll do it as bullet points rather than a wordy piece, there's a reprise in the NEC review elsewhere in the issue and I don't want to repeat myself too much, but what you are looking at here is a reworked Sportster generating between 85 and 90hp – and when was the last time you heard Harley bandying horsepower figures around – offering a proper tribute to the all-conquering XR750 on the road courtesy of:

**XR750 inspired bodywork and livery.**

**Restyled cases that distinguish it from the XL.**

**Restyled tank with aircraft filler with the airbox beneath exposing the OHV V-twin engine.**

**Downdraft EFI with electronic active air intake system.**

**Night-Rod Special style twin silencers.**

**Tacho-dominated instrumentation, with digital speedo.**

**Sport-tuned Showa suspension, including 43mm inverted/ Upside-down forks.**

**Proper rearset foot controls.**

**Lightweight cast swing-arm.**

**Model-specific lightweight wheels.**

**Twin high-performance 4-piston Nissin discs up front.**

**Specially designed ZR-rated low profile Dunlop Qualifier tyres (127/70x18 front, 180/55x17 rear).**

**European ergonomics to built to better suit the European body shape.**

**A bucketful of attitude.**

**Style oozing out of every detail.**



If you get the impression that I'm enthusiastic, you're right. The XR1200 is the model that will bridge Harley and Buell model ranges and I'll be surprised if Erik's team hasn't had a hand in this somewhere, but if they did Harley really should be shouting that from the rooftops, to the benefit of both companies.

Do I want one? I know that I've never wanted to ride any Sportster more than I want to ride this one and wonder whether the prototype will be available for press review ... in which case I hope we get to swing a leg over it before the shaved apes of the mainstream press destroy it, trying to prove that it isn't an R1. Whether I'd then want one would depend on how it stacks up against my Buell Cyclone: could be interesting.

Do you want one? if so, make sure you let Harley-Davidson Europe know: it's their baby. In fact it remains to be seen whether it'll be offered in the US - assuming it makes the grade in Europe - so any Yanks who are salivating at the thought of a sporty Sportster had better make your feelings known locally or emigrate. The prototypes shown at the NEC are very highly advanced, and there are many rumours suggesting that if reaction was very positive they could be on dealers' floors by early 2007.

