

BMW power helps Nitro Snowboarders achieve Big Air

Snowboarders are always looking for the next challenge, whether it is attempting a new grab, twist or flip off a Quarter Pipe, or riding rails, ledges and steps in an urban environment. The quest for more speed and 'bigger air' has brought about a unique collaboration between BMW Motorrad and Nitro Snowboards, with a G 450 X being used to artificially accelerate riders to help them jump higher and further.



It all started when Nitro Snowboards engineer Florian Lang spoke to BMW Motorrad G 450 X project manager Christian Wettach about his frustration with the underpowered winch systems that were being used. As Christian explains, their conversation sowed the seeds for the development of an exciting prototype.

“There was already a system in place with a small engine and winch that allowed riders to artificially accelerate before performing jumps and tricks, but it wasn’t really strong or powerful enough, so I suggested using a motorcycle and adapting it accordingly,” he said. “We provided a BMW G 450 X and the Nitro Snowboard boys experimented with a few set-ups before settling on a system which could be easily and quickly adapted from the standard motorcycle.”

The system uses an attachment to the rear wheel, which holds around 220 metres of cable. When this is wound out, the snowboarder uses it as a ‘tow rope’ and holds on to the end, while the BMW ‘rider’ puts the engine in gear, opens the throttle and reels in the cable. The snowboarder hangs on and accelerates to a speed of around 100 km/h in around 200 metres before letting



go of the cable at the last second to launch off the ramp.

“It’s a simple system, but it works perfectly,” said Christian. “The operator of the G 450 X uses third gear for the broad spread of power required for rapid acceleration. Using a little clutch for a soft start and then a lot of throttle, the system is perfect for giving the riders the kind of speed needed to perform the tricks they can do. The winch fitment only takes around 10 minutes to adapt from a standard machine and all is controlled with the throttle, clutch and of course the brake, once the riders have let go of the cable!”



According to Nitro Snowboard’s Andi Aurhammer, the winch is completely portable and allows riders to achieve the take-off speeds that could only be described as “sick” in snowboard parlance.

“We’ve had a lot of fun with the BM Winch, as we call it! Powered by the G 450 X, it is capable of propelling you to around 130 km/h if you are brave enough to hold on,” he said. “The acceleration is massive and when we’ve been testing it the problem has actually been landing some of the jumps because of the massive distances travelled – more than 40 metres in some cases!”

The winch system was first used in public during a recent ‘Red Bull Warm Up Session’ in Innsbruck, Austria, which was an urban rail contest featuring international snowboard stars who performed a variety of tricks on straight and double kinked rails, ledges, wall rides and step-up, step-down jumps. The organisers weren’t satisfied with their own winch system, so they asked Andi if the BMW-powered winch would give the riders the speed they needed on their descent towards the jumps and rails.

“The G 450 X was a big hit in Innsbruck,” he said. “Because the regular winch basically wasn’t good enough, the Red Bull guys asked for my help and we demonstrated this one, which gave the riders the speed to ride the best lines and do the most spectacular tricks on the rails. On the jump up the steps, some of the riders even overshot the landing, as they had so much speed! We’ve got lots of plans to use the BMW winch for

street urban displays, where we can build some amazing obstacles and use the BMW power to give us the in-run we need to pull the biggest tricks.”

To view footage of the BMW-powered winch in action, please click on the following link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bEBhyIDRTt4&feature=channel_page or watch it on the Movie section of the Nitro Road Warriors website at <http://www.nitro-roadwarriors.com/>