



Our senior test rider Rich Taylor had the honors of destroying the lovely Series before putting the RQ3-suspended RM-Z0 through its paces. At the end of the day, Taylor couldn't stop bringing his prizes.

# // RG3 DIAMOND KIT, TRIPLE CLAMPS, AND LINKAGE

BY THE TESTING STAFF OF TWINKLE PHOTOGRAPHY

**APPLICATION:** Most bikes (tested here on an '06 Suzuki RM-Z450)  
**PRICE:** RG3 Diamond Kit \$2,208.00, RG3 Four-Post Triple Clamp Set \$499.95, RG3 Rear Suspension Linkage \$409.95  
**RATING:** 9

9

**HAVE YOU NOTICED** how motocross track conditions have been changing over the past few years? With the emergence of four-strokes—or should we say the extinction of two-strokes—the conditions of the tracks are completely different than that of a few years ago. Gone are the short sections of sharp braking bumps caused by the hard braking of a light two-stroke. Those sections have been replaced with long areas of big, odd-sized braking bumps, and are usually accompanied by an oversized big bump or two strewn in the mix towards the middle or the end of the section. It's not at all uncommon to find big crater in the landing areas of jumps or big holes on the faces of the takeoffs. This new level of track roughness is caused by the heavier weight and engine character of the big four-strokes that have become so popular. The motors are heavy with a tremendous amount of engine-braking that the two-strokes didn't have, and under acceleration, the rear ends of the four-strokes have a tendency to squat and stiffen up, due to a huge amount of low-end torque that the big 450cc motors put out.

That said, the suspension experts of the world have their work cut out for them. Stock bikes are set up to suit a general category of rider, but that doesn't necessarily mean it's set up for you. Out of the box, we think the stock Suzuki RM-Z450 suspension is great for most riders, but we turned to RG3 to see how well they could make the big yellow bike really shine. Rob Hendrickson and RG3 have been working with Showa suspension and team Suzuki for several years. Factory Showa actually contracts Hendrickson to help out with factory race team setups, as well as many of the production bike baseline settings, so we were pumped to see what RG3 could do with our RM-Z.

To kick things off, RG3 hooked us up with their Diamond Kit treatment, which consists of an RG3 revolve with custom settings to the rider's weight, skill level, and application. Custom hard anodizing of the shock and fork outer bodies and a diamond-like carbon coating to the fork and shock shaft offers the lowest friction levels and highest durability. An RG3 rear shock linkage was also bolted on and offers a flatter, more linear ratio. In layman's terms, it is designed to eliminate the sudden spike of compression dampening in the middle of the suspension stroke. Capping off the entire package was a set of tried-and-true four-post triple clamps. The patented RG3 clamps transmit less shock to the arms while maintaining a solid, controlled feel.

On the track, we were immediately impressed with the new ride of the RM-Z. The forks had a well-balanced feel that was plush on choppy bumps and very controlled where it needed to be. Bottoming control was awesome! We could plow into the biggest of G-out sections with complete confidence and control. The shock, meanwhile, was every bit as impressive as the forks. Small acceleration bumps went nearly unnoticed and the rear wheel hooked up better than ever under hard acceleration in the rough stuff, propelling us out of every turn. The linkage helped keep the rear wheel on the ground on the bigger acceleration bumps, and square-edged bumps no longer felt like big bone-jarring curbs that would send the rear wheel skyward. Instead, the shock soaked up the sharp stuff and kept the bike powering forward. We did notice a slight amount of bottoming in the bigger G-out sections, but the bottoming feel was very soft and controllable, with no metal-to-metal clank.

Overall, we were very pleased with the RG3 setup. The tracks may be rougher these days, but RG3 can bring back the comfort and control.

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