



Sled Review

The 2013 Yamaha FX Nytro:

An In-Depth Review by Our Snow Goer Canada Staff



On the snow out for a leisurely trail ride.

This past winter Snow Goer Canada designated our 2013 base FX Nytro as our “test sled” for the season. We chose the Nytro for two key reasons; one, Yamaha had made some seemingly minor changes that significantly improved handling and ride quality, and two, to be perfectly honest the Nytro had always been one of our least favourite sleds to ride. The main reasons for this were the twitchy front end and what we felt were poor suspension calibrations. In short, we loved the motor but didn’t always enjoy riding the sled. We wanted to like it, we tried to like it, but couldn’t.

When our FX Nytro arrived, with one of the great new wraps, we did a little research on Totallyyamaha.com to see what Nytro owners were doing to modify their sleds into more trail friendly sleds. We added a larger capacity, aftermarket fuel tank from Trail Tank and a set of aggressive

carbide runners from Qualipieces for the Tuner skis. To top it all off, we also added a set of Elka Stage 5 front shocks, from Accelerated Technologies, to calm down the front end.

In total we logged a little over 2000 km on the Nytro, approximately 1000km of which with all the mods, and came away Nytro converts. We loved it. Even though the writing is on the wall that the Nytro won’t be around much longer with the introduction of the new SR Viper, we feel the 2013 and 2014 Nytro is a great deal in both price and performance. In our opinion, the 2013 FX Nytro (base model) is the best riding and handling Nytro that Yamaha has produced.

Fuel Economy

We didn’t keep track of the fuel mileage on the Nytro this year as this motor has proven itself over the last

5 seasons to offer great fuel economy while delivery excellent power. What we can comment on is the increase in fuel range that the Trail Tank delivered with its capacity of 37L over the stock 28L tank. Fuel range was the similar to other fuel efficient sleds on the snow, such as Ski-doo’s 600 SDI with a 40L fuel tank. An upgrade to a Trail Tank is highly recommended.

Motor

What can we say that hasn’t been said before? The acceleration is amazing and very addicting and the mid-range hit is instant. Compared to 800 2-strokes on the market, this motor feels stronger in the mid-range, which is where most of your riding takes place. The Genesis 130FI may be closer in power to 700 class 2-strokes on paper but the high revs and torque of the triple cylinder 4-stroke allow it to compete with higher



powered 2-strokes. This is one of our favourite motors in the industry. Efficiency and performance don't usually come hand in hand but this motor delivers both very well.

Suspension

For 2013 Yamaha softened the front and rear suspension calibrations on the base Nytro to make it more trail compliant. The front piggyback shocks were replaced with a pair of "cheaper", but lighter, non-piggyback shocks that actually work pretty well for normal to aggressive trail riding. In general, we noticed a significant improvement in the ride quality from both the front and rear suspensions over typical trail bumps at normal trail speeds. This might not seem like a big deal but the reality is that it transformed this mogul-masher-only sled into a more versatile trail sled that suited a wider variety of riders. We could actually trail ride the sled all day and not get beat up by the suspension. The base model's suspension calibrations are very well suited for both normal and aggressive trail riding which in all honesty is how most Nytro owners/buyers ride their sleds.

It's no secret that the one major flaw on the Nytro has always been the front suspension. They have always been twitchy and unstable compared to the competition. The shock and ski changes to the 2013 model really improve the front suspension's performance through the bumps and corners however it still wasn't on par with the competition but, we were convinced we could improve the performance of the front end. We spoke with Accelerated Technologies, an Elka shock dealer and suspension shop in Ontario, about unlocking the hidden potential from the Nytro's front suspension and they highly recommended trying a set of Elka Stage 5 front shocks with dual rate springs. Accel. Tech. worked with us to determine what low speed compression, high speed compression,



FX Nytro with wrap kit, before the mods.

and rebound settings to use. To say the Elka front shocks drastically improved the ride is an understatement, the results were very impressive. Overall the front end soaked up the big hits and whoops significantly better than the stock shocks while actually improving the ride quality over the small bumps, thanks to the dual rate springs. It was a huge improvement in every way. The Nytro became stable and predictable through 6-12 inch bumps on both straight stretches and through corners. We went from having very little confidence in the front end to having full confidence that the line we wanted was the line the sled would take.

It didn't take long to realize the Elka equipped front suspension was outperforming the rear. If we had had more time, and less warm weather, we would have gone a step further and installed a set of Stage 5 rear shocks to complete the package however, the front Elka shocks alone are a highly recommended upgrade.

Handling

The single biggest improvement to the handling came from the dual keel Tuner skis. They significantly calmed down the twitchy and unpredictable

front end. The Tuners eliminated darting, allowed for easy steering effort, and provided great bite in the corners. The combination of the Tuners and Ripsaw II track work well



Nytro with the Trail Tank installed, hard to tell the difference from stock.

2013 Yamaha FX Nytro

together to reduce inside ski lift through corners by allowing the track to break loose easier. We added a combination of Qualipieces carbide runners to our Tuners that provided light steering but lots of bite in the corners without being too aggressive. We ran a 4" carbide on round host bar on the outside keel with a 6" carbide on square bar on the inside. There was still inside ski lift but it was manageable and much less than past models without these changes. When we added the Elka Stage 5 front shocks we experienced a night and day difference in the handling of the Nytro. It was at this point that the sled went from a great handling Nytro to a good handling sled in general, even when compared directly to the competition. There were a few key factors that contributed to improved handling from the shock upgrade. Number one was the Stage 5 shocks as they were tuned properly to how we were going to ride the sled, number two was the dual rate front springs, and number three was adjusting the rear suspension to ensure we were getting the best possible handling from the sled.

The sled was set up to allow the front end to sag quite a bit more than it did stock by keeping a fairly light preload on the front springs and tightening the limiter strap on the front arm of the rear suspension. The front end of the sled was dropped over an inch lower than stock which allowed the A-arms to be more parallel and the skis stance to be at its widest point. The low speed compression clickers were set so that the sled resisted body roll through a corner while the high speed compression clickers were adjusted so that the sled was still able to soak up the bumps through that same corner.

With the Elka shocks installed the Nytro was a blast to ride. It cornered as well as other sleds on the market and definitely the best cornering Yamaha sled we'd ridden in quite some time. It felt light and nimble

and was very stable and predictable, completely opposite to our past experiences on Nytros.

Comfort

The seating position of the Nytro is great for aggressive trail riding and works well for normal trail cruising as well. The ergonomics are not typical of the other rider forward sleds on the market but that's okay with us, we liked the Nytro's handlebar position and found it works well when standing or when seated and leaning in the corners.

The addition of the Elka front shocks improved the comfort of the Nytro for trail riding however in stock form this the 2013 base Nytro is the most comfortable to date.

Wind Protection

The low windshield actually does add a little wind protection and the hand guards work well to deflect the cold wind around your hands however it's still a cold sled to ride. It's intended to be ridden hard through bumps and aggressively through the trails, making the rider sweat, so keep that in mind. Accessory tall windshields and deflectors are available.

Accessories & Modifications

Elka Stage 5 Front Shocks with Dual Rate Springs

The Elka front shocks were a huge improvement and totally transformed the sled's handling and ride characteristics. Accelerated Technologies, of Buckhorn, Ontario, provided the shocks with valving, spring rates, and compression settings selected for the way we were going to ride the sled. Every customer gets this treatment. Accelerated Technologies also went over the sled and set up the sled for better handling and also lubed all the pivot points in the front and rear suspensions to reduce resistance. Every sled, new or used, can benefit from this service.

www.acceltechracing.com and www.elkasuspension.com



Elka Stage 5 shocks from Accelerated Technologies.

Trail Tank Extra Capacity Fuel Tank

Knowing the small capacity of the stock fuel tank limited the Nytro's range, we opted to add a larger capacity aftermarket tank by TrailTank High Capacity Sled Tanks. This is likely the most popular and practical upgrade you can make to a Nytro. The capacity of the Trail Tank was 37L, a 9L increase over stock. This increased the Nytro's range to the same as the other efficient sleds on the market.

The quality was great and install went smooth thanks to the great instructions. The hardware that comes with the tank for fastening the side panels has been improved over previous years. Everything you need, including gaskets, o-rings, and fasteners comes with the tank. They are also available in black or clear, we prefer the clear that way you know exactly how much fuel is in the tank as the fuel gauge will not be 100% accurate with the increased capacity. SGC highly recommends this upgrade. www.TrailTank.net

Qualipieces Carbide Runners

In the fall SGC spoke with Qualipieces about a combo of carbide runners for the Nytro with the Tuner skis. Qualipieces was happy to provide 3 sets of runners that they had tested in various combinations the previous winter. We had a super aggressive combo and a semi-aggressive combo. We stuck with the semi-aggressive set up as this



Qualipieces runners ready to install.

worked great to provide good bite in the corners but didn't overpower the Ripsaw II track or add to any inside ski lift. We used a round bar with 4" of carbide on the outside keel and square bar with 6" carbide on the inside.

Durability was excellent. We logged closer to 2000 km on the carbides and showed little wear, plenty of life left for another season

or two. Considering about 600 km were logged in limited or marginal conditions, we were very impressed with the durability. www.qualipieces.com

Likes

The amazing Genesis 130FI engine - Just like most reviews of a Yamaha sled we've done, we loved the motor. The mid-range punch of the 135+ hp, inline triple 4-stroke is nothing short of awesome. A very fun, efficient, and reliable motor that is just as happy being ridden hard as it is cruising.

Tuner skis - Why couldn't Yamaha have had these on the 2008 Nytro? They work very well with the Nytro and we strongly recommend upgrading your Nytro with a set of Tuners.

Improved ride quality on the trails - The softer shock and spring calibrations on the base Nytro made a big difference in the ride quality for typical trail riding.

Yamaha wrap kit. Our Nytro came with one of Yamaha's wrap kits and we got a lot of looks on the trail.

Dislikes

Lack of storage - Even though this is intended as an aggressive trail sled the reality is most sleds go out for long days of riding. An area to store extra gloves, hat, maps, or whatever is needed.

We don't think it should be necessary to modify a sled so much to get it on par with other sleds in the handling and ride quality department. But, adding aftermarket parts is half the fun for some riders.

The front suspension geometry - It's too bad the Nytro didn't come with the racing front end that Yamaha has been using on the cross country circuit. This sled had the potential to have more of an impact on the market but fell short due to the twitchy front end. •

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