

Gunner Revealed in Chicago

By John "Gunner" Gunnell

I've been "revealed." Now, there's a scary thought! But it isn't as bad as it sounds. It was actually a new motorcycle that shares my nickname that Polaris revealed at the Progressive International Motorcycle Show in Rosemont, Ill. That's out by Ohare Airport, so we're talking Chicago and it is a big event.

I went down to the Windy City on a Friday to cover the early February show for Free Riders Press. I knew nothing about the new Gunner bike being launched. When I saw a big lock box with "Gunner Reveal" plastered all over it, I asked what it was all about and one of the sales guys said they were bringing the Gunner out on Saturday. Could I get a peel! No way! "Come back tomorrow."

So, I tracked down Kyle Clack, Victory Motorcycles' external relations manager,



The 2015 Gunner promises to be a bare bones bobber with a big buzzer.

and mock complained that it just wasn't fair that his company was bringing out a new bobber bike called the Gunner and I couldn't see it. His answer was simple-even he couldn't see it until the next day.

After scraping up info on the 2015 Gunner, I found out they really didn't name it after me (no real surprise). Actor R. Lee Erme of "Full Metal Jacket" fame is Victory USA's spokesperson. Erme served in the Marines for 11 years, rose to Staff Sergeant, and later was given the honorary rank Gunnery Sergeant. When injuries forced his retirement, he went into acting, won a role in Francis Ford Coppola's "Apocalypse Now" and later played Gunnery Sergeant Hartman in Stanley Kubrick's "Full Metal Jacket." This won him a Golden Globe Award nomination, the nickname Gunner and the honor of having a bike named for him.

Erme's tough demeanor reflects his years in the military and helped him win more roles in war movies and jobs as a technical advisor on combat films. His drill-instructor-like, no BS attitude also earned the respect of bikers he rode with at rallies such as Sturgis. With Victory pushing itself as the alternative "Made in USA" motorcycle manufacturer, the actor had a tough guy image that fit the product well. And the new 2015 Gunner bobber lives up to that image.

When I got home I did find Pre-reveal teaser photos of the Gunner on the Internet of course. There are no secrets



Riding the new 1731cc "stripper" motorcycle should be a real blast.

from the "Great Wizzard" these days. The gorgeous professional pictures showed the new bike's horn cover mounted between the jugs of the Freedom 106 V-Twin engine. Victory bought proprietary rights to the 1731cc power plant sitting in the bare-bones bike. Those big jugs should add up to a ride that'll give a drill sergeant some of his own medicine.

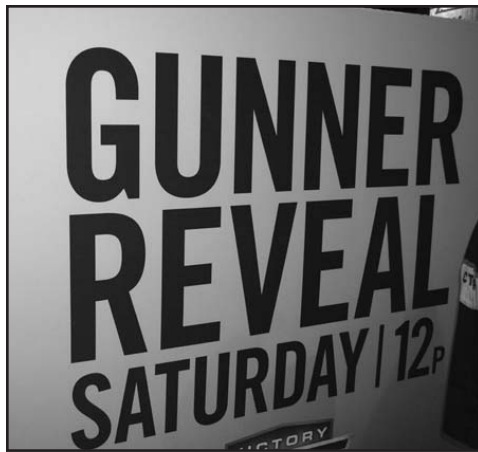
I'm looking forward to having some fun with this whole thing, too. A few years ago, Jack Roush told a funny story about a teen-ager challenging the Roush Mustang he was driving when they stopped side-by-side at several traffic lights. Jack teased the boy right into his company HQs. When the lad said, "Mr. What do you have in that thing?" Roush acted dumb and said, "Gee, I don't know kid!" Then, he opened the hood and said, "Look at that; they put my name on it!"

Pretty soon I hope I'll be able to play those kinds of tricks with my own Gunner. That is if the Feds, the Governor and the dreaded insurance agents don't stop raiding my wallet. But what I'd really like too are some of those Gunner signs they had hanging up. I asked Kyle Clack, "Can you put a few of those aside for me when you're finished with them? They will look really great in Gunner's Great Garage when we host ANBATE meetings and bike clubs."

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Black is the dominant hue on the Gunner, though you can get a red seat.



The Gunner reveal was set for Sat. Feb. 8 at noon.

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