

What's the most a World Championship can cost? Yamaha may be in the process of finding out. The V-Four on the right is the fourth—that's right, *fourth*—all-new bike Kenny Roberts has raced in one year. And we're not talking refinement of stale designs, either, folks. The latest yen-eater features some techno wonders that'll likely have the factory engineers squashing bugs and the rival manufacturers scratching their heads.

The most obvious new component, the V-Four powerplant, features an extremely narrow Vee angle, with the carburetors nestled between the cylinders. Rotary-valve induction graces the engine, but there's nothing mundane about the system: the valves mount across the engine. Likewise with the shock—it's transverse-mounted. The rear wheel compresses the shock from both ends via a bell-crank system located above the shock—very trick. Roberts, in his first race with the V-Four in Austria, finished third.

