

SPOTLIGHT: MAXIMA RACING OILS A WINNING FORMULA

Maxima Racing Oils was founded in 1979 when drag racer Dick Lechien needed a two-stroke oil for his son Ron's motocross bikes. That first purpose-built oil, Castor 927, remains a staple of the company that 37 years later has grown to offer a full line of high-performance lubricants for the powersports market.

Located near San Diego in Santee, CA, Maxima Racing Oils currently employs almost 50 people in an 80,000-square-foot production facility, and produces two-stroke and four-stroke oils, transmission and suspension fluids, coolant, brake fluid, grease, and a host of maintenance products for motorcycles. The company has also branched out into the bicycle and performance auto industries, but powersports remains 90 percent of its business, according to President Danny Massie. "All combined we're in the millions of gallons of product getting kicked out, with close to 200 unique formulations that we blend for all our segments. The moto industry is the bulk of our business. Our output is 30,000 litres per day per shift."

Maxima creates and produces all its powersports oils in-house, and has close ties with the companies providing the base stocks and additives that go into manufacturing a premium oil. "We are in a very strong position from a technol-

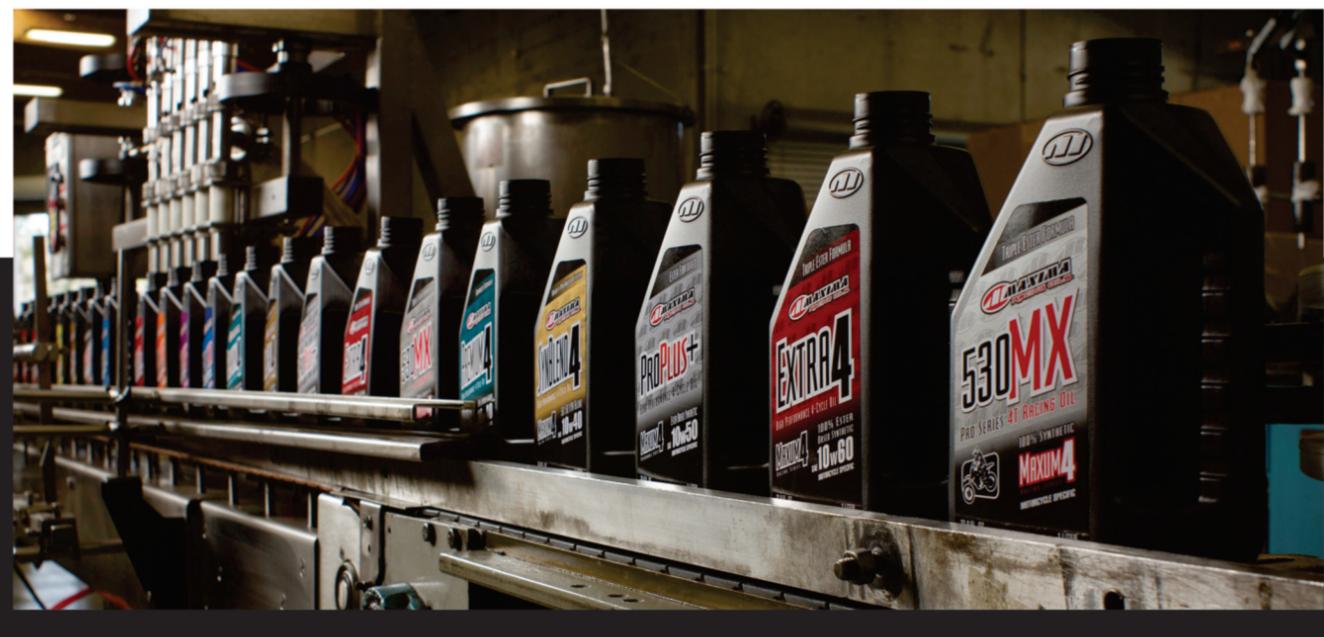


ogy standpoint," says Massie. "We have development relationships with some pretty large companies; we have a development contract with the largest additive company in the world to bring new technology out for small engines. It helps them in selling to their other customers, and it helps us because we have that alignment with a very large company that has testing and chemical reactive technology abilities to allow us to really create our own additive, which we do have, proprietary to Maxima."

In the four-stroke range of motor oils, Maxima offers a full line from its petroleum-based Premium to the top-of-the-line, full-synthetic 530MX. At every step on the ladder, premium ingredients are used, says Massie. "In petroleum-based oils, there's Group 1 and Group 2 base oils, and we use a Group 2-plus, which is a very, very pure, consistent stream of base oils. Less im-

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Maxima also has Extra in its full-synthetic range, which is a triple-ester blend of synthetics. And topping the line is 530MX, also a triple-ester oil that Massie considers a step above other companies' full synthetics. "530MX was very purpose-built, which our whole company really is. We have three very different, very distinct ester synthetics in there and those are in there for specific reasons. We have one to improve ring seal, which equates to horsepower. We have another for specially coated materials,



purities means it works better in the cold, it's more stable in the heat. It certainly costs a bit more, but that's where we've positioned our company within the petroleum segment.

"The strong side in our semi-synthetic oil [Syn Blend] is that it's a 50/50 blend of synthetic vs. mineral oil. Most semi-synthetics probably have no more than 15 percent synthetic, so we're not only using more percentage of synthetic, we have more synthetic content and better synthetics than most on the market." Massie is referring to the use of Group 5 base synthetic oils, the best of the Group 3, 4 and 5 available.

"When we move up from there, we go into our full-synthetic line, where we have Pro Plus. That's our newest one, about two years old. It's a full synthetic, it's got amazing clutch feel and life. Pro Plus was introduced in our line to fill the void and help people go from semi-synthetic to full-synthetic. Pro Plus still has esters in it, our proprietary additive technology is in there, which is for overall wear and clutch compatibility. It's got a lot of plusses going for it and it's only two bucks a litre more than a semi-synthetic whereas most of our competition is five to six bucks more."

like DLC that you see on buckets and pistons. And then we have another one in there that builds rapid film thickness. 530MX is a 5W-30 oil. No owner's manual specs out 5W-30 in motocross. We can drop viscosity of oils but still maintain total protection and horsepower by building rapid film thickness, so that 5W-30 may have film thickness that's thicker than most 10W-40s relative to engine speed. Those are unique things that these esters allow us to do.

"The foundation of the company is purpose-built product," says Massie. "Those that choose to get more technical I think appreciate companies like Maxima that are a little more on the forefront of really developing the new stuff. Some of the things we do today are probably going to be available to some other companies, some of our competition, in a few years. I do feel like we're on the forefront there because we have the ability to create components that go into making our final formulations. In general, we are in the development stage on creating very specific products. We build motorcycle engine oils, we understand gearboxes, we understand clutch performance."