

REVIEW: '08 BUELL 1125R

REVIEW BY HEIN JONKER

Yes, what a different bike. My first impressions were ... well I was on my knees on the floor around the bike when I first saw it wanting to find out what they've done to it, why and how. Then only did I get up and looked at the cosmetics of the bike, i.e. the huge nose and the air-intakes housing the radiators.

All sorts of questions started popping up, like:
How will it handle?

Why are the pipes so close to the tyre and aiming straight at the rear brake disc?

Isn't the exhaust-box too close to the rear tyre and would that cause hotspots on the tyre when standing still?



Then John from 1000Hills Harley-Davidson | Buell called me and told me to fetch the bike and that Buell decided to give it to me for 3 months ... OH, YES! and at the same time NO, NO, NO because I had to ride it in first (140km/h for 1000kms), punishment at its best on any bike.

STYLE and COMFORT - The riding style on the bike is great, my legs and feet are well placed, sitting up and over the tank with no strain on my neck or hands while riding. NO numb bum either, the seat is hard but I prefer it that way, this is NOT a tourer or cruiser. The pillion seat, my son tells me, is nice and comfortable, and the low pillion foot-pegs an added bonus.

LIGHTS - These are great, at night the headlights light-up the area from right next to me and forward making me feel I'm riding a wave of light all the time and when I hit the "brights" all is day in front of me ... a big plus for night-riding.

DISPLAY - The display could've been placed a little more forward as you need to LOOK down or take your eyes off the road for a second to have a look down there.

MIRRORS - The mirrors could be slightly wider out as I'm effectively only able to use the outer half of it to see behind me. The mirrors do not hold their adjusted position but that could be corrected by making a little adjustment on the nut on the mirror-stem.

INDICATOR SWITCH - The indicator button is a little far off from the left thumb, especially if you want to indicate to the left ... so I've opted to not even use it at times.

HEAT and FANS - The exhaust-box does get a little hot and I can feel it on my right boot ... if it doesn't melt I'm not going to worry about it. As for the fans, well that is a plus in the times of "load shedding"; my wife now has an alternative to her hair-dryer. On a more serious note, apart from the noise, if it bothers you, ride the bike and you won't hear it.

HANDLING - Keeping the 140km/h restriction in mind, it handles very well. The 180 rear tyre is a must on a bike like this, the low centre of gravity and weighing in at 170kg makes this O SO EASY to throw into the corners and bring it up again. Throttle response is quick and not to bring the front wheel up is sometimes very hard to suppress, not that I mind the bottom-end grunt.

COMMENTS FROM OTHER BIKERS - It does very much get the attention and turn heads and people have the miss conception that Buells are only stunt bikes. I had a good time explaining the changes done to this bike and that it is in actual fact slightly more powerful and cheaper than the Aprilia RSV1000 ... their jaws dropped. Lekka field goal for Buell!!! A few sat on it and agreed that the sitting position was great, also liking the new front-end and some were blown away by the huge 8-piston front brake caliper. Ideas were quickly thrown around how to fit an aftermarket exhaust on it and the fitting of a race screen, etc.

MY IMPRESSION - It is a bike that will grow under your skin just like an alien predator invading your body with its vibrating attitude saying: "It is me and nothing else". Keep your eye in the next issue for more on more technical issues and the performance of this bike now that it's run-in ... Oh-yeah!

PRICE - R115 000.00 Incl. 14% VAT



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