

REVIEW: BMW S1000RR



REVIEW BY HEIN JONKER

Ever since this bike was launched in Europe I needed to ride it. I needed to find out how it would stand up against its Jap rivals. Unfortunately we don't have a proper circuit in KZN to really let this boy loose but I've spent enough time on it to say this: The BMW S1000RR has nothing to hide and offers more than some of its fellow 1000's on the market.

From the word 'GO' I felt right at home and couldn't believe the bottomless power-source it had, and not to mention the brakes. Watch-out my boy, if you are a 'green-horn' learn the brakes on your first ride and then start turning on the taps, it is very responsive.

Let's dig a little deeper to find out what the Germans were up to and how their first attempt to the Super Bike

Scene can affect us, I'll be brief.

First, BMW's system is simple to explain yet complicated in execution. The ABS and the traction control (DTC in BMW-lingo, for Dynamic Traction Control) are linked together. The right handlebar switch block has a mode button that allows the rider to select one of four modes: rain, sport, race, and slick. In rain mode, output is limited to 150 horsepower, as the lean angle sensor curbs acceleration if the bike is leaned over beyond 38 degrees. Sport mode allows the full 193 claimed horsepower, and will not allow acceleration beyond 45 degrees of lean. Next is race mode, which allows 48 degrees of lean before it weighs in and is the sticky street-legal-tyre track-day setting. And, finally, the slick setting is for slicks, and will accept throttle at up to 53 degrees of lean.

I began in rain mode at a sedate pace; I increased my lean angle in a slow, second gear corner, and open the throttle aggressively. It is an odd sensation, as the bike seems sluggish to respond, but as I exit the corner and straighten the bike up I started going faster and faster. The lean angle detector knows that I'm now on the fatter part of the tyre and allows for more acceleration.

BMW claims that the cylinder bore of 80 mm is the largest in the class, and yet the engine is rich in torque from low revs on the way to its 14,200-rpm redline. The bulk of the torque is available at 9,750 rpm, and variable length intake manifolds aid boost. The gearbox is magnificent. And much of the praise can be heaped on the shift assistant. When you're shifting up it is not necessary to use the clutch or to roll out of the throttle. As your foot nudges the lever the ignition is momentarily interrupted to facilitate a crunch-free shift.

BMW's design goal with the S1000RR was to minimize the height of the machine while visually stretching its length. They wanted the eye to run from the tip of the headlight out the tail to the protruding taillight. The headlights are intended to emulate the look of endurance racers, with the left light stretched to mimic the shape of a number plate. BMW also made no attempt to make the side fairing panels remotely similar. The left panel has a large duct for air expelled from the front-mounted radiator, while the right side has shark-gill vents to dispel heat.

Troy Corser, former World Superbike champion and current BMW rider, said this on how the BMW compares to the Japanese superbikes that he's raced. After thinking for a moment he says that it has elements of all of them, and then adds that in his opinion it's as good as any bike right now. The S1000RR has jumped into the toughest segment in motorcycling and shown itself, in many ways, to be harshly similar to the competition. That alone makes it a good bike. But figure in the sophisticated electronics and the price and it just might be the best bike for you and me.

All this said about the S1000RR; it exceeded my wildest expectations ... nuf said, ride it!

PRICE: R158 950.00 (Basic) - Incl. 14% VAT



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