

MOBY'S RIGHT TO REPLY

Bitch, bitch, bitch, whine, whine, whine - 'oooh how can we compete with carbon wheels! Get over it. Or, indeed, pick the phone up and get your own! Are we done? Good. Right then. I won. Splendid. All gloating aside though, the ZX-10R, and specifically this one, is bloody mint, and deserved to win. Ignore all the disgraceful shite you may have read elsewhere in the UK bike press, this bike is awesome, and if you spend a few more £s on it, it can be epic. The wheels define it, yes, but so does the power-fest unleashed by the Yoshi. Anyone who tells you that 180bhp at the wheel ain't enough better be rocking up to a MotoGP grid. My only failure was not sorting the soft shock. Ho hum, I won anyway.



King of the curb, and all the rest of the track, the ZX-10R in this trim takes some beating

Kawasaki ZX-10R

And now it's time for the big one – and I'm not just talking about its owner. The year of the Mamba's non-denominational Lord, anno domini 2011, should have belonged to Kawasaki. Peering above the parapet to see the German guard let down, it finally launched its ZX-10R upgrade to great acclaim. Then Aprilia came along and pissed on Team Green's chips with a heavenly chassis

quarter system extracts power from every nook and cranny. The crap coloured tacho can barely keep up, such is its intent – and ability. A 10bhp gain top end is impressive, but right across the spectrum of the tacho is power and torque lurking at the ready. It may be uninhibited, but it's certainly not uncontrolled as the map is well metered and throttle inputs executed accurately. The Dynojet quickshifter gets to work and does its

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package and electronics surely programmed from the man himself. But at least that gave Moby something to aim at. After all, if you're number one, why try harder? It's clear that the big boss is not a fan of mine. Why else would he send me out with the just mercury touching four degrees, on a freshly tuned 180bhp machine on brand new race rubber? Maybe he was hoping not to pay my invoice...

Yes, the ZX-10R is a threatening machine, but at least it's rideable as my first forays on track proved. The motor is just ballistic. It's sensational as standard, but here the Yoshi three

thing with ease (there should have been one as standard), meaning that surge is uninterrupted, until you get to a corner, that is.

And here's where Moby pulls out his perennial trump card – the BST carbon fibre wheels. Say what you like about the expense, they don't half work. And the faster you go, the better the improvements get. Together with the scrubbed in Bridgestone R10s, corner entry is like all your birthdays and Christmas's in one. Though the suspension is stock, the feel from the BPF's at the front is an exulted one. The rear isn't as sophisticated, but at least it has

Kawasaki's clever and accommodating traction control system to fall back on. Excellent braking, improved looks, stacks of crash protection and the biggest hugger you'll ever see all combine to make the best of fleet at the start of the year, the best on fleet by the end of it. Stick a fork in it, it's done. ▶

Highlights

Price: £11,699

Mods: £5,553.29

Price/Mods ratio: 47.4%

Verdict **9/10**

Someone needs to race this thing, it's wasted on the road. Massive power, awesome control, but it's still a bit ugly.

- MEGA MOTOR, RACE RUBBER, BRAKES
- SUSPENSION SET-UP, LOOKS, PRICE

DON'T BE FOOLED BY

Sales figures. The Fireblade may have trumped it this year, but the Kawasaki is the more focused bike.