

LIGHTNING XB5
NEW STREETFIGHTER
STRIKES GOLD FOR BUELL



ZX-6R RACE vs ROAD
NINJA MASTERS BATTLE
AT THE TARMAC DOJO

SACKS OF NEW STUFF
LEATHERS, SUSPENSION,
WHEELS, HELMETS, GANS...



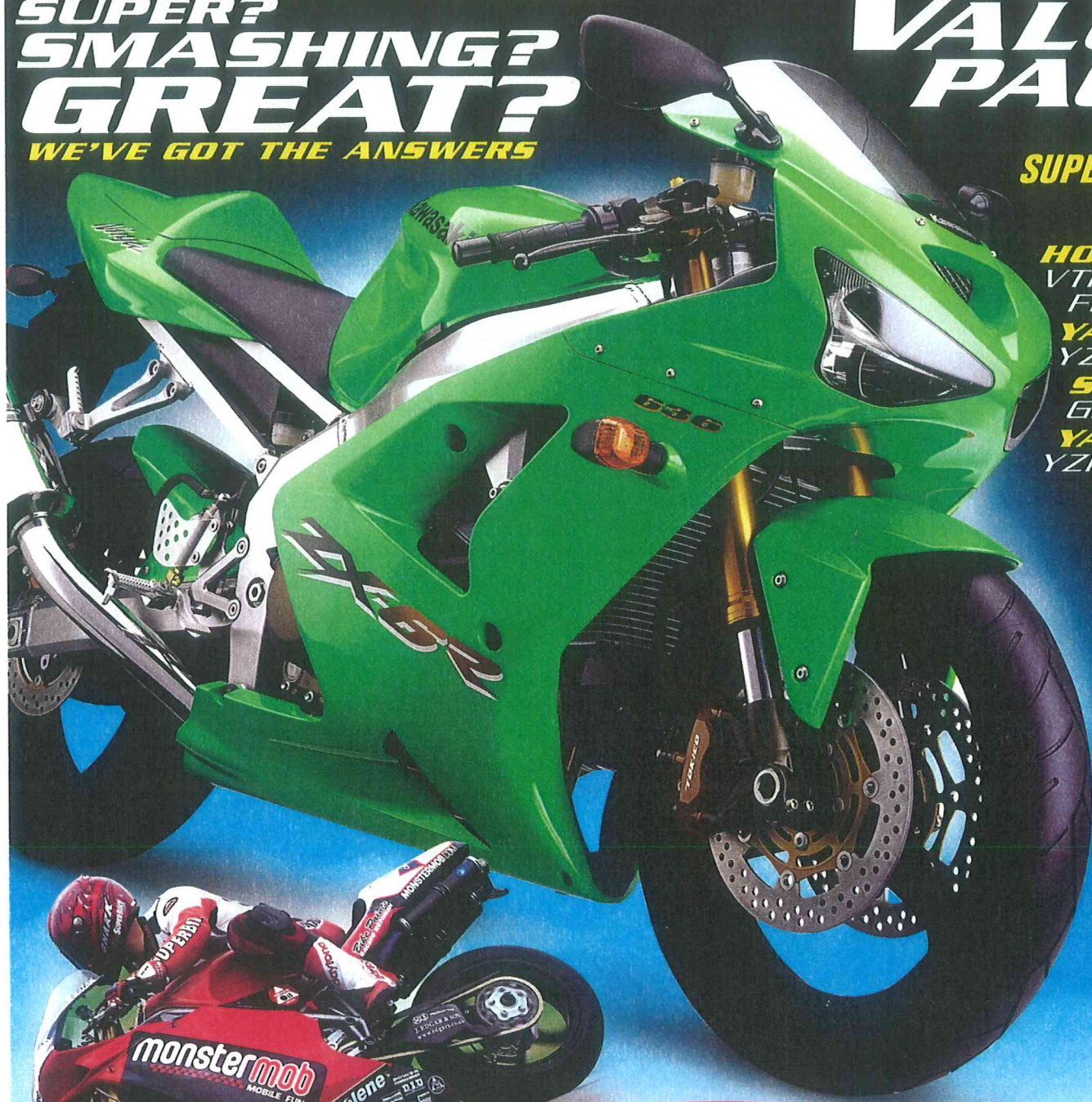
SUPERBIKE™ MAGAZINE

FIRST TEST: 2003 KAWASAKI ZX-636R & ZX-6RR
SUPER?
SMASHING?
GREAT?
WE'VE GOT THE ANSWERS

THE VALUE PACK

BUDGET
SUPERBIKING
TEST

- HONDA VTR1000 FIRESTORM
- YAMAHA YZF-R1
- SUZUKI GSX-R750
- YAMAHA YZF-R6



PRINTED IN THE UK

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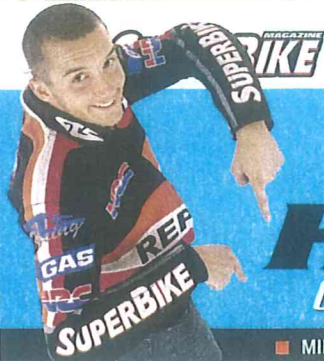
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JANUARY 2003

EXCLUSIVE

BRITISH CHAMPIONS

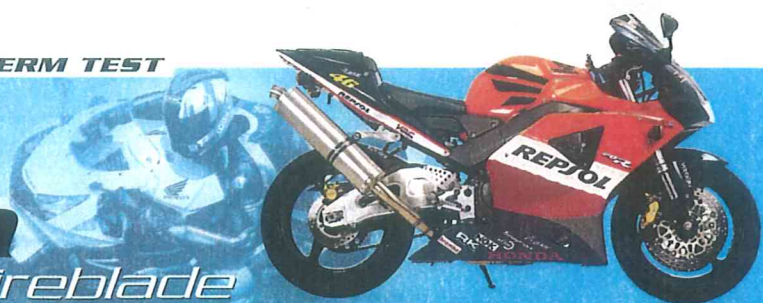
WE RIDE THE BIKES THAT WON THE TITLES
MONSTERMOB DUCATI 998RS ■ MONSTERMOB DUCATI 748RS ■ TECH2 SUZUKI GSX-R1000
ROUNDSTONE SUZUKI GSX-R600 ■ TECH2 SUZUKI GSX-R600



Road Test Editor
Jamie Wilkins

Honda CBR954RR Fireblade

■ MILES DONE: 4,031 ■ STUFF DONE: Almeria Trackday, Carbon wheels, rear-sets, tallied up the cost ■ BIG PLANS: Hibernation



The Blade and I have been busy this month. The big news was the launch of a new kind of foreign track day from Tracksense. Based around the concept of a package holiday you can make one phone call to Tracksense which arranges track time, hotels, flights, coach transfers, all your meals and transport for your bike. This is the first time such a complete deal has been available and it's all the better for including two days on the brilliant Almeria circuit and three nights in a four-star hotel. Flight times mean you get a half day in the coastal resort at either end and it's all for the startling price of just £599 per rider. Every single person I spoke to said they had a great time and thought it was outstanding value for money. And, because not everyone relishes four days away from the trouble and strife, you can take the missus too.

Like a bonded package holiday your money is safe because Tracksense works through a major tour operator which offers bonding and insurance. In short, if anything goes wrong you're covered. Extras available include bike hire and bike livery where you leave your bike in Spain between track days. It will be serviced free and checked over in readiness for your next visit for £60 per month. I had a fantastic time and recommend Tracksense for their professionalism and thoroughness.



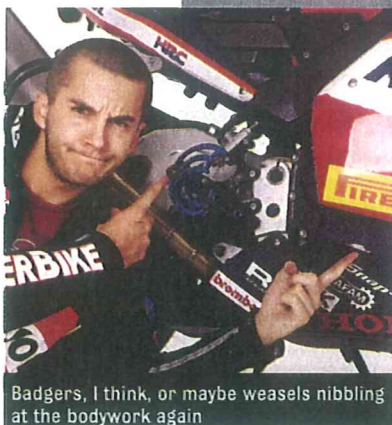
“...I'm thinking of taking one tooth off the front for some daft wheelies through winter...”



The Blade went really well at Almeria even though it isn't a fast track. On day one I fitted my new Rapid Art rear-sets that are on the products page. They aren't mega high but it stopped the dragging of peg and boot from upsetting the bike. They also look dead cool and the simple lever adjustment makes them easy to set-up. Happily the gear change quality is unaffected. For the second day I fitted a pair of BlackStone Tec carbon wheels from HPS. They look incredible, weigh nearly a full kilo less than the next lightest wheels available and are so strong they come with TUV approval for road use. I had expected the bike to feel a bit better but the results were very impressive.

I rode on Pirelli SuperCorsa SC2s both days. These are my favourite track tyres by miles and I always go quicker on them. With a new pair each day and identical 30° weather, the wheel test was totally fair. I already knew the track from previous visits (*Hmmm. So nothing at all to do with increased track familiarity? – Sceptical Ed.*). On the first day I had been lapping at 1-53 with an (indicated) top speed of 162mph. On the second day my times were 1-50 and the bike showed 167mph on every lap.

Basically, the reduction in gyroscopic inertia meant that the bike accelerated quicker and so



Badgers, I think, or maybe weasels nibbling at the bodywork again

reached a higher top speed. It also changed direction better at high speed. The £2300 price tag may seem high but what else can you do to a bike – for that money – to make it so much faster?

After tyres, a pipe, Power Commander and some gearing mods, you'll be spending big bucks whether it's on suspension components, engine work or weight loss. Spending that dough on light wheels will do more for your lap times.

Speaking of gearing though, the Blade is still too tall. At the end of Almeria's 1km back

straight it was still in fifth. She's fast and no mistake, but I'm thinking of taking one tooth off the front for some daft wheelies this winter. The suspension got a tweak in Spain too. It was diving too hard on the brakes and bouncing off the travel stops so I added a half turn of compression damping, which solved things.

Now it's back in the UK the tyres have been swapped for some Bridgestone BT012SS with the standard OE 190/50 rear. I use a 180 Pirelli on the track because it turns faster but at the cost of increased wear. For the road I'll stick with the bigger size. The 012SS warms up quickly and functions well in the wet which should help me look after the sexy RacePaint UK panels. JW

Jamie's Fireblade Total work done to date

NUMBER PLATE - Undo bolt behind reflector from inside boot, cut the rest off. Fit piss-take mini plate from M.A.L, prices vary

SEAT COWL
Ermac pillion seat cover
£81.74

BODYWORK
Rossi paint by RacePaint UK
£1000

STEERING DAMPER
Sprint
£235

SCREEN
Pyramid Plastic, dark tint double bubble
£63.75

AIRBOX MOD
Flap wired open

REAR-SETS
Rapid Art, beautiful but the pegs still deck out, £330

GEARING
Renthal 44T sprocket (+2), Talon 44T for carbon wheels
£26

FUELLING
Dynojet Power Commander IIIr
£250

REAR SUSPENSION
+ Half turn rebound, + Half turn compression

EXHAUST
Arrow race system,
£716

TYRES
Bridgestone 012SS, Avon Pro-Xtreme, Pirelli SuperCorsa road and SC2 (x2), Metzeler Rennsport RS2 and Michelin Pilot Race M2 all tested. Pirelli best on track, Bridgestone on the road, all around £220 pair.

THROTTLE
Remove all play for better response

CRASH PROTECTION
R&G Bobbins, they work.
£46

WHEELS
BlackStone Tec carbon five spokes
£2,339.43

BRAKES
SBS Race pads
£40

FRONT SUSPENSION
+ One turn preload, + one turn rebound, + half turn compression

A total spend of
£5127.92
(Plus £1,540 on various tyres)

Thanks people

Tracksense 01276 473616
Rapid Art 0064 7 847 6990

www.tracksense.co.uk
www.rapidartF1.com

BST wheels, HPS 0870 774 7740
Pirelli 01788 540606
Bridgestone 01926 488500

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