

bike just plain stomps the competition. If there were ever a hairy-chested beast in sportbikedom, this is it; heavy clutch pull and a stiff throttle spring only add to the gruff impression. Riding position is pure aggression, although it's not as punishing as the Ducatis.

But with this brawn comes brains. Traction is monitored by a sophisticated Dynamic Traction Control system that uses a pair of wheel-speed sensors to

determine rear-wheel slip; added input is obtained from throttle position, engine rpm and speed. Where it gets more complex is that a pair of underseat gyros are used to determine the bike's bank angle, and then, depending on which of the four modes (Rain, Sport, Track or Slick) is selected, the ECU determines how much power, traction intervention and wheelie control to dole out by retarding ignition and

controlling the throttle butterflies. Each mode has a predetermined allowable lean angle, beyond which the bike will not allow additional throttle input.

Cernicky ran the S1000RR in Slick mode, which allows up to 53 degrees of lean angle for full rider control and 5 seconds of wheelie freedom. Race ABS was turned off for hot laps.

"This thing is noticeably faster down the straightaway, even blasting into a

The \$22,499 Aprilia RSV4 Factory APRC SE has it all, including Öhlins suspension, forged aluminum wheels, full APRC electronics package, variable-length intake ducts and Max Biaggi Special Edition graphics.



possible to beat this day.

"This bike may not be as stable as the 10R, but I can feel everything it's doing, better," said Off-Road Editor Ryan Dudek.

On the road, the S1000RR is a bully. It cuts through traffic like an axe cuts through butter: total overkill. Ideal gearing, wicked power and the safety of TC; voted most likely to get you in jail. Comfortable enough while being brutal, fast and satisfying.



that ATC settings can fly via left-handlebar- (no need to close the throttle as on the BMW), allowing the rider to choose different settings for separate sections of track. Another cool feature is that AWC can be controlled independently from ATC and doesn't harshly slam down the front end like the BMW does in its Sport mode.

Throughout the two-day test, Cernicky struggled to get the RSV4's chassis setup to provide the nth-degree of front-end feel he was after. It was very quick-steering, but he found it difficult to read front traction at the limit. Even so, with ATC set on level 4 of 8 and with AWC disabled, MC ripped off the second-quickest lap of the day (1:54.29).

"With TC on, I could get the throttle open really early and anticipate controlled power-induced wheelspin that the system allows," Cernicky said. "I

BMW S1000RR

▲ Ups

- ▲ What part of 180 hp don't you understand?
- ▲ Well-balanced and well-behaved
- ▲ Has DTC because it *needs* it!
- ▲ Winning

▼ Downs

- ▼ Intermittent mushy feel from ABS at front lever?
- ▼ Abrupt, Sport-mode ignition cuts are annoying
- ▼ Can we control our own wheelies, please?

strong headwind," Cernicky said. "The motor screams hard all the way to red-line; pretty friggin' awesome. With TC off, a little warning light on the dash stays lit to remind the rider that he's in the danger zone."

Reminder flashing or not, Cernicky clicked off the fastest laps of the day, with and without TC: 1:54.11 and 1:54.37, respectively. With all that power on tap, a quickshifter and gearing much better suited to Inde than that of the 10R, the RR blitzed to a 148.7-mph peak speed on the 2200-foot-long straight. It *eats* asphalt.

"Ridiculously fast," said *CW*'s Marketing Manager, Garrett Kai, on hand to help us with testing. "Feels like it shortened the straightaway considerably."

Factor in a chassis that was set up perfectly by AMA SuperBike team owner Evan Steel, and the BMW proved im-

Aprilia RSV4 Factory APRC SE

Watching Max Biaggi blitz past the most powerful World Superbike competition at Monza this past spring, we couldn't help but drool at the thought of getting to ride the RSV4 Factory APRC SE on a track. Don't be overwhelmed by the alphabet soup.

SE stands for "special edition," while you can think of Aprilia Performance Ride Control (APRC) as a software suite that contains traction control (ATC), wheelie control (AWC), launch control (ALC) and a quickshifter (AQS). It functions similarly to the systems on other bikes but also allows the computer to calibrate to non-stock tire diameters. The Aprilia also utilizes a pair of gyros and twin accelerometers to fine-tune intervention.

What's so nice about the Factory SE is



Aprilia RSV4 Factory APRC SE

▲ Ups

- ▲ TC 2.0: great systems integration
- ▲ Awesome soundtrack: Pavarotti sings Slayer
- ▲ Wheelie control puts you in control

▼ Downs

- ▼ On/off throttle fueling glitch
- ▼ Really busy dash and rider controls
- ▼ Where's the onboard espresso machine?

ELECTRONIC COUNTERMEASURE

Aftermarket traction-control solution

What should you do if your favorite flavor of late-model super-sport doesn't offer traction control as a factory feature? The clever folks at Bazzaz (www.bazzaz.net) have an answer: Z-Fi TC. The \$949.95 electronic module incorporates race-developed traction-control, quickshift and fuel-injection-mapping capabilities in a single, compact unit that patches into the stock wiring harness via OEM-style connectors.

Bazzaz fitted our 2011 Suzuki GSX-R1000 testbike with Z-Fi TC and its included Quick Shift switch and shift rod. We also opted for the handlebar-mounted TC Adjust & Map Select Switch (\$129.95), a very useful accessory equipped with an indexed rotary dial that allows TC override and 10 steps of traction-control-sensitivity adjustment on-the-fly. The map switch lets the rider toggle between a pair of fuel curves, TC maps and shift-delay settings, all of which can be configured by propeller-capped tuners to individual gears. That is a lot of flexibility, but luckily, the Z-Fi Mapper software that we installed on our laptop PC proved easy to grasp and use when plugged into the Z-Fi TC unit via a USB cable.



Skinned with Metzeler Racetec K3 Interacts and retaining its stock fuel map, our Gixxer

was fairly matched with the factory-TC-equipped Electronic Warfare combatants. To streamline the process, we stayed with the baseline TC map that ships with the Bazzaz unit and utilized the sensitivity dial to tweak the effect. The Bazzaz system—available for most late-model sportbikes—doesn't employ wheel-speed sensors but instead relies on engine-rpm rate of change to determine if the rear wheel is spinning and ignition cut is warranted.

The system proved less intrusive than the OEM offerings represented in this group yet highly effective, as evidenced by the VBox data comparing Associate Editor Mark Cernicky's best lap time of 1:54.23 with TC enabled and 1:54.85 without TC. The former time was second-quickest of all the bikes, while the system on/off time disparity of .62 second was greater than that of any other bike. Also favorable for the Bazzaz

system was an 87.3-mph average speed in Turn 3 with TC vs. 84.9 mph without, while Turn 12 data showed 59.1 mph vs. 58.3 mph.

After returning to the pits following his non-TC timed laps with boot scuffs on the gas tank, Cernicky is a baptized Bazzaz believer. He'd been launched out of the saddle and nearly high-sided when he attempted to match the throttle application used during his previous TC-enabled laps.

Rounding out performance testing, the big GSX-R made 159.5 horsepower at 11,670 rpm and 77.4 foot-pounds of torque at 10,100 rpm. Robust midrange and superb clutch feel allowed a more relaxed holeshot at the dragstrip than the other inline-Four liter bikes we tested. A gnarly crosswind that was neither fun to deal with nor conducive to quick times on the day I gathered comparative times is reflected in the Gixxer's 9.98-second, 145.33-mph pass and "sluggish" 3.0-second 0-60 mph acceleration and 176-mph top speed.

While the \$13,599 MSRP of the GSX-R1000 plus the cost of the Bazzaz electronics exceeds the list price of the OE-TC-equipped Kawasaki ZX-10R, the bonus of a slick quickshifter and the system's ability to remap fuel delivery for an aftermarket exhaust add up to what I call a viable electronic countermeasure. —Don Canet

