

7th Suzuki GSX-R1000K5

This is it. The pinnacle of sports bike design in the year of Our Lord 2005. Quite what He would make of it is a bit of a mystery, but there's definitely something divine about a bike that can make you swear this much.

'F***!' exclaims a potty-mouthed and sweating Gus. 'That's f***ing awesome. It's like Suzuki have made the absolute last word in performance motorcycles (this year). It's stupidly fast in a straight line, but bloody awesome through corners as well. No exaggeration or bullshit or poetic licence when I say that the 1000 handles as well as, if not better than, the GSX-R750 or 600.'

'He's got it in one, Dale,' says Bruce. 'That GSX-R isn't just a fantastically fast litre-bike like we're used to – it's also a bloody amazing chassis. It's probably the finest handling bike of any capacity available right now.'

But what's most amazing about the new GSX-R1000K5 isn't just the pace or ability of the bike – it's the versatility too.

It's not just quick on the track or down motorways. It's quick through the tightest and bumpiest of corners. Only the featherweight ZX-6R could beat it

through the bumps, bumps and 180-degree hairpin at Vulcan's – and that was only by five hundredths of a second.

'It's so easy to handle, too,' enthuses Gus. 'No matter what your ability level is, you can really have fun on the GSX-R. It does everything. The riding position is so compact, you'd think it was a 400, but it's not uncomfortable. The brakes are awesome, too. I'd be tempted to forget about the £3000 Brembos on my race bike and just get a set of these with braided lines and organic pads.'

But it's not all whipped cream and honey. The gearbox isn't up to the usual Suzuki standard, feeling more like a Ducati or Triumph at times. Both myself and Bruce missed gears at vital points.

The other fault is a little vague, and depending on riding styles you may or may not notice it. Both myself and Gus felt it, but Bruce didn't. Sit on a neutral throttle for more than a second mid-corner, and it's virtually impossible to get a smooth exit. At the merest hint of throttle, the GSX-R punts another 10bhp to the back tyre – whether you want it or not. I suppose they had to save something to fix for next year's K6.

'I nearly went straight on at the double-right,' admits Gus. 'I just touched the throttle between the two apexes and I shot forward and off-line by about six feet. I'm sure a Power Commander could fix it, but you shouldn't have to do it to a brand-new bike. But there's plenty of other bikes with worse fuelling – and it wouldn't put me off buying one.'

Second opinion

The motor feels unbelievably strong and spins up incredibly quickly. As of 11.53am on the first day of the test, it's the fastest I've ever been on a motorcycle. Don't tell my mate. **MI**



Second opinion

Pictures the scene: a Yamaha R1 is playing footy in the park, he dribbles from the half-way mark and passes three Firebrides, he charges forward having rounded the ZX-10R. A few jokers later and... bob – missed by a country mile. Suzuki have moved the goalposts again. So easy to ride fast that it's almost cheating. **BL**



Performance

- 0-100mph: 3.4s
- 0-150mph: 10.3s
- 0-180mph: 14.8s
- 0-200mph: 19.8s
- 0-220mph: 25.8s



'The 1000 handles as well as, if not better than, the GSX-R750 or 600'

■ PB laptime: 2m30.53s ■ Average speed: 124.03mph ■ Vulcan section: 26.48s



How we timed the world's fastest bikes

For this test, we've ranked the bikes purely according to their fastest lap times achieved under the aegis of PB's own Bruce Dunn. Bruce's gifted riding abilities are matched only by his ability to turn in robotically identical flat-out lap times over a whole day.

After spending weeks designing the PB test track, Bruce is more than acclimatised to it. But even so, we spent a whole day just getting to know the bikes and how they react to the challenging test circuit without timing them. On the second day, Bruce is given three flying laps on each machine. £4000-worth of Microsat GPS logging equipment is used to record their performance. The position and time data this provides allows us to calculate acceleration, deceleration and top speeds.

But this data has to be processed after the event. So to give us the absolute lap times for each bike, as it was ridden, we borrowed a MyChron TG lap timer system from Richard Vanags at P3 Unlimited.

This funky little system uses a battery-powered infrared beacon to signal a dash-mounted computer. This dash doesn't just show you your lap-time, it'll measure a split-time as well, and display everything as it happens. Beat the best laptime stored in its memory, and it'll flash a happy, smiling face across the display. It'll store over 1200 laps with up to nine splits in each of them, and it'll even display them as histograms if you want to search for the quickest splits or laps from a certain day. And all for just £205.



Bruce prepares for yet another timed run round the PB test track



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The PB test verdict

The GSX-R1000 beats last year's hot litre bikes round the PB test track – the R1 by four and Fireblade by eight seconds (we couldn't get our hands on a ZX-10R in time for the test). That's progress. And it isn't just down to the GSX-R's 10 extra bhp either. It thrashes them through the split times at Vulcans, too. But it can't match the 999's time through the really twisty stuff.

The biggest surprise, by some measure, was Kawasaki's ZX-12R. Almost a second a lap quicker than the R1 and if you look at the speed testing results, none of it is down to brute power. The Yamaha has a faster top speed and out-accelerates the big Kawasaki on every measure. But the ZX-12R has the faster lap time, making up all its ground through the twisty section.

There were 28 seconds (16 per cent) between the fastest (GSX-R1000) and slowest (Buell) over a three minute lap. But is that impressive enough for a bike

that makes twice the horsepower? Take the Buell out of the mix and all the other bikes got within 15 seconds over a lap (8 per cent) of the mighty GSX-R. And look at the split times through Vulcans and you'll see no more than 2.5 seconds between the fastest (999) and slowest (Hayabusa).

The Kawasaki ZX-6R gave a phenomenal performance for a 600, beating the Fireblade and GSX-R750, as well as the turbo-GSX-R. The 230bhp turbo bike should have proved there's no such thing as too much power. But keeping both wheels on the deck cost it a few places.

And that started us thinking about how much faster a proper race bike might be. So stand by for Fastest Bike in the World Part II, where we'll open it up to race bikes and seriously special specials. ■

■ **COMING SOON** Reckon you've got a bike that'll beat the GSX-R1000? Call us on 01733 468023.

THE BIG TEST IN NUMBERS

14 the number of bikes on the test **1** bike blew up
560 laps completed
922 the average cc of bikes **3483** miles ridden by the team over two days **19.8** the average mpg attained by the bikes **3.7** cylinders per motorcycle **1792** miles ridden with a wide-open throttle **0** bikes crashed **1** bike damaged in a van **£83.16** of fried food eaten in two breakfast sittings **186** highest top speed recorded **30** Michelin Power Race tyres used **12,913** total cubic capacity displaced by these bikes **668** litres of unleaded 95 RON fuel consumed **8** tired but happy riders



	Ranking	Bike	Split	Laptime	Average speed (mph)
	1	Suzuki GSX-R1000	00:24.48	03:00.53	124.03
	2	Kawasaki ZX-10R	00:24.75	03:03.02	122.35
	3	Yamaha YZF-R1	00:25.48	03:04.28	121.58
	4	Kawasaki ZX-6R	00:24.43	03:07.00	118.74
	5	Ducati 999	00:24.21	03:07.51	118.42
	6	Honda Fireblade	00:25.30	03:08.34	118.37
	7	Suzuki GSX-R750	00:25.50	03:08.88	117.84
	8	Suzuki Hayabusa	00:25.52	03:10.64	117.46
	9	Harley-Davidson GSX-R1500 Turbo	00:29.77	03:10.86	117.44
	10	Yamaha YZF-R6	00:25.81	03:11.81	116.88
	11	Suzuki GSX-R600	00:25.80	03:13.61	115.88
	12	Yamaha FZS1000 Fazer	00:25.58	03:14.47	115.14
	13	Triumph Daytona 660	00:25.31	03:15.91	114.53
	14	Buell RB12R	00:24.80	03:28.18	107.88