

The performance motorcycle scene in India is improving



INDIA'S TOP 5 PERFORMANCE MOTORCYCLES

With the growing entry of global automakers, the Indian 2 wheeler scenario is at its best today, with more to come. We find out which are the top 5 performance motorcycles (below Rs. 3 lakhs) on sale in the country.

India, the place where all global MNCs want to be and the biking industry as well. What started off as a commuter industry is now turning into an industry where the consumer has high awareness. Still maximum sales amount to 100 and 125cc machines but at the pace our two-wheeler industry is growing, we can expect the biggies to get a major chunk of their portfolio here.

To start off with, Honda has already committed to us the launch of the CBR250R, a

single cylinder machine which has huge potential due to the value it will offer. Bajaj will soon be launching the KTM Avatar (125cc) which is a street bike and looks the part. Other players are planning to enter with their high capacity machines as well (no, not the 1000cc ones, we already have them). The question is, which are the best 5 performance motorcycles in our country currently. Well it's not that difficult of a question to answer, or is it?



Kawasaki Ninja 650R

The success of the Kawasaki Ninja 250R has compelled the Japanese automaker to set up shop in India. Also on the cards is the launch of the Ninja 650R, which will re-write all superbike rules in the country. We can't wait to get a hand on it.

EVOLUTION



Three of a kind

These three bikes have been greatly responsible for changing the biking scene in India. Before they came, nobody even uttered the word 150cc by mistake, everything revolved around mileage and 100cc machines.

Number 5 - TVS Apache RTR 180

The TVS Apache takes the 5th and last position on our test. It might have not even been here, had the Mahindra Mojo (funny name, we know) was available for testing. The Apache 180 uses a 177.4 single cylinder motor producing 17PS of power. But don't go on technical specifications as the Apache 180 rides like a mean machine. The acceleration is very good and the Apache 180 is easily the fastest 180cc bike in the country. Infact the sound of the Apache motor is so good, you will find yourself revving it up

even when you really don't need to. Add to that easy handling and one of the best instrumentation in our country. The Apache 180 is said to get fuel injection (will make the throttle response crispier) and ABS soon, which will make the bike even more better. However unless and until TVS does not increase the size of the engine, the Apache is said to stay at the number 5 spot. News of a 220cc Apache has been going around but since there is no official confirmation, the Apache 180 is the best TVS Motors has to offer to us.



The RTR 180 has fantastic handling

Number 4 - Hero Honda Karizma ZMR PGM-Fi

The most awaited bike upgrade of the decade, the Karizma ZMR takes design cues from the mighty Busa and people with absolutely zilch bike knowledge even mistake it for one. The important thing is not how fast it goes, but how it gets there, shifting down is merely an option if you would like to make some noise while going faster. Otherwise, in any gear, as long as the meter shows 2,000 rpm, the ZMR is ready for the kill at even the slightest twist of the throttle. It just demonstrates how good

the engine really is, yes it's not the fastest bike around, but who cares, it is really relaxing to drive. More so because, as an example, if you were to find yourself behind a slow moving truck just twist the throttle, move over to the opposite lane, no worries at all and a few seconds later, voila, the truck appears in the rear view mirror, turning into a dot within a few seconds. At cruising speeds, the wind becomes louder than the engine which really overshadows the real fact that it is like a tiger waiting to be unleashed.



KARIZMA ZMR



Above All, Really!

Hero Honda may have positioned the ZMR as Above All (something which the Pulsar fans will certainly disagree to) but one needs to ride this machine to actually feel what its made up of. Trust us, without riding the ZMR and judging it is like smoking without fire.

**THE R15 IS THE
PERFECT TRACK TOOL.**

Performance kits

Yamaha offers performance kits for the R15 which can make the bike even faster but won't make it the fastest bike in the country (below Rs. 3 lakhs), it will increase the performance of the bike by a big margin. Price - Rs. 45,000/-



Number 3 - Yamaha YZF-R15

The R15 has re-written all rules in the Indian motorcycle segment. It features such technological innovations which we can only dream of in superbikes such as DiASil cylinder and Deltabox frame.

Performance of the R15 is a little disappointing for a bike costing 1+ lac. Surely it has very good performance for a 150cc engine but still as the old saying goes "There is no replacement for displacement". Low end grunt is missing, you need to revv the engine to extract the best out of it. This makes it difficult to ride the R15 in the city. However as the revvs climb higher this

The R15 is a
mini superbike

Yamaha justifies why it has an "R" in its name. Once above 5000RPM the R15 really starts to pull and once past 6500RPM the Yamaha motor comes in its own. The power comes in beautifully at higher revvs, something no other bike in our country can boast off. Top speed depends on your weight and your leaning ability. Overall, the R15 is such a performance machine, that it can turn novice riders into Valentino Rossi.

NUMBER 2 - BAJAJ PULSAR 220 DTSI



The Pulsar did to bikes what the iPod did to music!!

The Bajaj Pulsar 220 DTSi is the meanest edition of the Pulsar till date. Featuring a huge carb and tuned to be the fastest Indian, the Pulsar 220 can frighten you with the sheer amount of power and amazing exhaust note it has. The Pulsar 220 has brutal acceleration and be it any gear, it always shows why it's definitely male by moving in quick velocities in very little time.

The Pulsar has a crazy fan following

What makes the Pulsar such a performance machine is not the way it moves, but the way you move it. The Pulsar inspires you to ride it fast and the overall look of the bike gels with this fact very well.

The best thing of the Pulsar is its price, no machine comes close to the Rs per bhp value offered by the Pulsar 220 at Rs. 70,000/-



Number 1- Kawasaki Ninja 250R

The Kawasaki Ninja 250R is touted as the best 250cc machine in the world and not without reason. Last year it won almost all the bike of the year (BOTY) awards, including Motorbeam BOTY. Featuring a 249cc parallel twin engine producing 33PS of power at an insane 11,000rpm, the Ninja has the goods on paper and it delivers it on the road as well. The bike turns in very quickly and with very little effort which makes it a lot of fun to ride on in the twisties. Weighing in at just 152 kgs, the 250R is not obese by any standards. The Ninja 250R is just a flat out

blast to ride. While the insane acceleration is a whole lot of fun for the rider, it is close to suicide for the pillion, as the Ninja doesn't feature grab rails.

In any gear if you wind the throttle above 6000rpm, all hell breaks loose. It screams and howls like a racing bike making you feel all the more special and justifying the Rs. 3 lakh price tag (you can get the number 2,3 and 4 bikes in this book for that much).



Currently no bike in the country comes close to the performance of the Ninja 250R and this is set to remain the same for a long time to come making it the number 1 performance motorcycle in our comparo today. Well you already knew it, didn't you? Let the good times roll!



**The baby
Ninja turns
heads where it
goes**

2010

WORLD'S MOST AWARDED

The Pulsar 220 is the most VFM performance machine



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