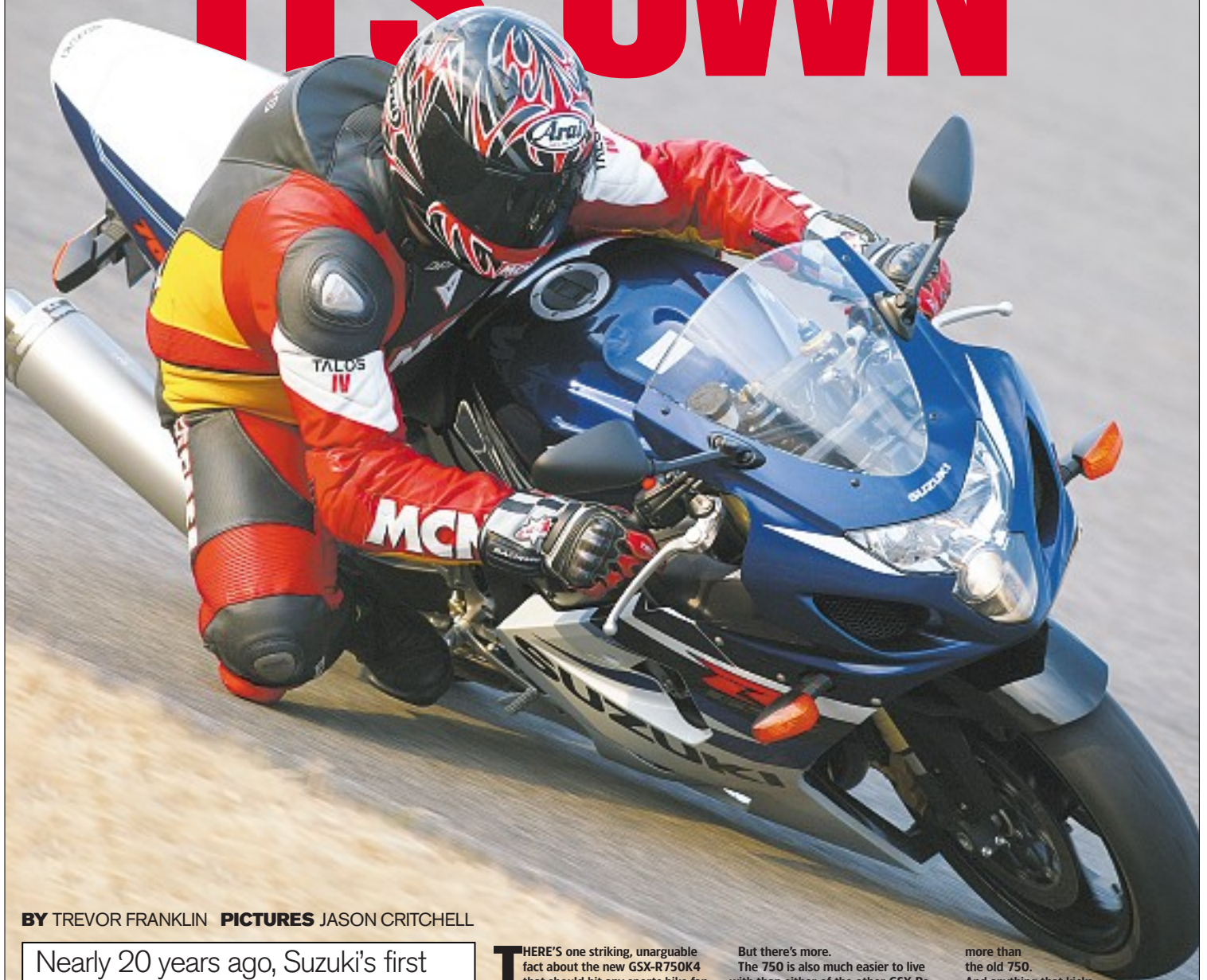


**ROAD TEST**★ **SUZUKI GSX-R750 96%****IN A LEAGUE OF  
ITS OWN****BY TREVOR FRANKLIN PICTURES JASON CRITCHELL**

Nearly 20 years ago, Suzuki's first GSX-R re-wrote sports bike rules. Its new 750 could do it all over again...

**I**N 1985 Suzuki revolutionised the sports bike world with the launch of its GSX-R750, a machine which effectively created the term 'race-replica'. Now, nearly 20 years on, an all-new GSX-R750 has been unveiled. The venue was Suzuki's own Ryuyo testing circuit in Japan (the same as it had been for the original) and MCN was there for this world first test. Early impressions are that Suzuki has produced a bike with the same neck-tingling attributes as the original. Our special 8-page report including full details, history and riding impressions starts here.

**T**HERE'S one striking, unarguable fact about the new GSX-R750K4 that should hit any sports bike fan where it counts – in the wallet.

The K4 is priced £7649 ready to ride away from a Suzuki dealer's showroom. Its little brother, the stunning new GSX-R600, costs £6849, while the big daddy GSX-R1000 is £8549. So, in price terms, the new 750 falls neatly between the two. But the funny thing is that the 750's engine performance *doesn't*. With a claimed 148bhp the new GSX-R750 sits much closer to the 1000cc than the rev-happy 600 – and that makes it a steal.

But there's more.

The 750 is also much easier to live with than either of the other GSX-Rs because it handles as sweetly as the 600 and goes, if not quite so ripingly (or scarily) as the thou', then virtually as well. On the open road it was never more than three bike lengths behind and on a track day I'd bet the 750 would stick its new slant-nosed fairing out in front thanks to its lithe handling and more manageable power.

OK, so the 750's 148bhp is a *claimed* crankshaft figure, but in the real world that will still translate to a likely 123bhp at the back wheel – five horses

more than the old 750. And anything that kicks out 120bhp-plus is a gas.

There's a decent amount of bottom end drive, too. Snap the throttle from 3000rpm and the rear Bridgestone BT014 digs in and the bike tears off. It's still grabbing the Tarmac at 6500rpm at which point the front tyre lifts and climbs higher and higher all the way up to fourth gear. With the right size bump, the GSX-R will flip backwards in second given half a chance.

*Continues over*



# ROAD TEST

NO matter how we tried or how fast, the new GSX-R remained utterly composed



From previous page

Back in the sensible world, the GSX-R750 also cheerfully pulls from minimal revs in any of the three upper gears. Get the downshifts spot on – which is easy as the gearbox is typically Suzuki-sweet, a precise shift requires no more than a gentle nudge through the left boot – so that revs are held steady at 8000rpm then the GSX-R will claw forward the instant throttle is applied.

And what a noise it makes when it does! The airbox growl sounds like a dog whose bone is being taken away and it gets louder, vying with the snarl from the exhaust, as the revs rise. Neck hairs almost jumped out of your skin when lines of bikes screamed past the Suzuki hierarchy watching from Ryuyo's pit lane.

The GSX-R750 has never lacked in the handling department, either. Last year's bike was brilliant – but this new version is exceptional. That's particularly impressive

**'Neck hairs almost jumped out of your skin when lines of bikes screamed past Ryuyo's pit lane'**

considering the 750 weighs only 2kg more than Suzuki's own stunning new GSX-R600 – but has 20 more bhp trying to tie its suspension and chassis in knots.

Along Ryuyo's long, undulating back straight the GSX-R's LCD speedo often flickered up to 299km – or 185.6mph – with the motor just 500rpm shy of the 14,000rpm redline. Yet it didn't once wobble or weave with 15.5 stones of leather-clad Franklin backed up against the

bum pad. Not even when slamming the bike on to its right side, knee-down at 130mph with the brakes on.

On a neutral throttle through 50mph hairpins the front end would bob around on its fork springs as it ran over small ripples but it would still track true and remain composed. This floating sensation was dialled out with suspension tweaks (see Five Minute Fiddle, right) but although the suspension was stiffer front and rear the bike remained granite-solid.

Another test of its chassis came on the front straight around 160mph when throwing the bike left over a slight crest while hooking top gear. Despite unloading and loading the suspension while changing direction, the 750 ploughed a perfect, wobble-free line.

But there is one area of complaint. The new GSX-R understeers or runs wide ever-so-slightly out of turns when hard on the gas and banked at toe-scrapping angles. While designing the bike to be stable/ultra-safe at all speeds, Suzuki has built it with a nose-up stance. Fair play to them, a rider's safety is paramount, and it isn't going to be a problem on the road. But track day fans might need to drop the front forks through the yokes by, say, 5mm.

It's worth remembering that even the original GSX-R750 was designed as a track-going implement which could cut through corners with ease, stop with the same eye-bulging power and take you to the next bend in the blink of an eye. The fact that the new GSX-R750K4 does all of this with ease yet in a friendly, safe way begs the question of whether anyone needs anything more.

Trouble is, at the moment, Suzuki is alone in producing a true sports 750cc in a world where 1000cc superbikes rule the roost. But based on the way the 750 delivers and how popular it is going to be when word gets out that this is still one of the best bikes ever, who knows what could happen? Just one thing is for sure. If the new GSX-R does eventually find itself with some 750cc competition it will have to be something truly special to beat it.

# The last GSX-R w

## HANDLING

NO faults here whatsoever despite running across some dire Tarmac when full-on and at full tilt – Ryuyo is a proving/testing circuit and consequently has varying surfaces by design. But no matter how forceful the bars were weighted or pulled or what speed I was travelling at, the GSX-R never showed any signs of retaliation. Not even on the standard soft/road-going suspension settings.

The Suzuki reacts quickly to steering input and is a breeze to lift from one side to another at lower speeds (see Suspension, below). It also gives a great deal of front end feel to gauge exactly what is going on. Feedback from the rear is diluted by comparison and it is hard to tell when the otherwise excellent BT014 Bridgestone was about to break free. But this was improved after some suspension tweaks, and the GSX-R's tendency to run wide was virtually eliminated, too.

## SUSPENSION

STRANGELY, the new GSX-R750 doesn't come equipped with Suzuki's own friction-reducing Black Diamond fork slider coating. No-one at Suzuki would give a reason why, apart from cost. One theory is that as the 1000cc class is much more competitive, Suzuki has gone to great lengths to give the larger bike any performance aid it can.

In standard trim, the GSX-R750's Showa forks and rear shock are geared towards road riding and soaking up whatever bumps they come across – in other words they are plush bordering on soft, with a great deal of fork dive and rebound on and off the brakes. Thankfully the Showa suspension is a lot better than previous models and is easily sorted with minimal adjustment (see right).



STOCK settings are geared for road but easily changed



## TEST VENUE: RYUYO PROVING GROUND, JAPAN

RYUYO Proving Ground is Suzuki's own testing circuit and is where the original GSX-R750 was developed in the 1980s.

At just over four miles it's long and includes an 80-90mph S-curve, a 70-metre radius corner, a 1.24 mile 180mph straight, a 200-metre radius high speed

corner, a second gear hairpin that opens out for the next two gears worth of speed and more.

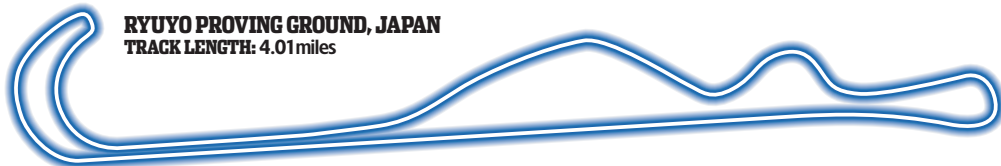
There are also numerous grades of surface from hot-rolled UK motorway Tarmac to super grippy track formula Delugrip. Oh, and there is no run-off to talk off (except tree-lined access roads

located along the straights) – only concrete walls and Armco.

There are also speed lumps (like British speed bumps – but a foot square in size) cordoned off by the occasional bollard, so it pays to have an accurate, safe handling bike on which to try and make sense of the place.

Overall, Ryuyo is a frightening, buttock-clencher of a circuit that takes no prisoners. Even after two days riding there were still sections of the circuit that I could have taken much harder... if it wasn't for the subconsciously limiting factor of my self-preservation instinct.

**RYUYO PROVING GROUND, JAPAN**  
TRACK LENGTH: 4.01 miles





# ...was brilliant. This is exceptional'



## COMFORT

**WHETHER** tucked in or sat bolt upright, most riders will be satisfied with the comfort offered by the GSX-R. The frame spars are 15mm closer than the 2003 bike, and, with the tank 30mm narrower at the point where knees grip when banked over, there is a lot of room in which to hide legs out of the passing air. The tank is also shorter by 15mm so getting tucked in behind the screen is easy – even for six-footers. (Not that you have to duck down far as the screen is tall and raked back enough to lift windblast on to the upper part of the helmet.)

Because of the smaller tank, the stretch to the clip-ons is shorter, too, and the bike is much more comfortable as a result – after two solid days of track blasting there wasn't a sign of wrist ache. All this new-found room behind the fairing also makes it easy to clamber from one side to another when romping through the twists and turns.



**SLIMMER**, shorter tank has improved the riding position

## ENGINE

**ASIDE** from the sublime manner the GSX-R drives from the first moment the clutch is dropped, not to mention the way the horses just keep rolling out as the revs rise (and it revs a lot more quickly and more freely than last year's bike), it's now a pleasure to hit the rev-limiter.

Like most bikes, past GSX-Rs stuttered so badly when the sparks were cut it could loosen fillings. But with the new bike, Suzuki has devised an electronic cut-out on just two of the injectors, so when the limiter chimes in at 14,500rpm, although the revs drop the bike doesn't dramatically slow as it is still producing power. Not that the new GSX-R is all top-end, either.

There's a healthy dose of midrange should you end up in the wrong gear going in and coming out of a turn. Wind the gas on and, sure enough, the GSX-R's 749.1cc mill will pull you out of the mire.

Vibration doesn't show at low revs unless you attempt to pull top gear from 2000rpm, and even that is just torque reaction. But nudge it nearer peak revs and slight unobtrusive tingles do snake their way through to the handlebars.

But overall there's only one way to describe the new GSX-R's engine: it's a refined, yet powerful development of last year's motor – and that was a bloody peach.

## BRAKING

**SUZUKI** has nailed the business of braking this year. The four-piston radially-mounted Tokico calipers are very, very strong in action. Suzuki made a big play about its new radial master cylinder. As the pump part is perpendicular to the clip-on, the lever pushes against it rather than trying to push it away. This helps give much greater feel, even when braking mid-corner.

It was right, too: there are bagfuls of feel through the span-adjustable lever. Constant hard braking from 180mph produced no signs of fade, and the opposing pressure at the lever remained constant. At first, the idea of swapping to braided steel brake lines seemed a stupid idea. But then you have to think about how much better they could still be – especially on the track. The deciding factor will be cost and whether you can really afford



**RADIAL** stopped are virtually faultless

such a luxury when it isn't really necessary.

As for the rear brake, it works when used... not too strong to lock up the moment it's touched, nor too weak to not be worth putting on the bike.

## FIVE MINUTE FIDDLE

THE GSX-R750 is first and foremost a road bike so the stock suspension is geared for dealing with the lumps and bumps of real roads.

But for fast track use, the Showa forks and rear shock need firming up to cope with the extreme cornering and braking forces.

The settings (right) were amassed over two day's track riding and set for a 15.5 stone rider.

Rebound and compression damping settings are reached by going to the maximum damping and then backing off the amount shown.

### STANDARD SETTINGS:

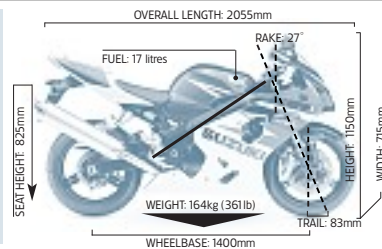
**Front pre-load:**  
Four lines showing  
**Front compression:**  
One turn out  
**Front rebound:**  
One turn out  
**Rear pre-load:**  
12mm of thread above the top locking ring  
**Rear compression:**  
One turn out  
**Rear rebound:**  
One turn out

### TRACK SETTINGS:

**Front pre-load:**  
Three lines showing  
**Front compression:**  
Half turn out  
**Front rebound:**  
Half turn out  
**Rear pre-load:**  
12mm of thread above the top locking ring  
**Rear compression:**  
Three-quarter turn out  
**Rear rebound:**  
Three-quarter turn out

### SUZUKI GSX-R750 K4

**£7649 otr**  
Available: March 2004. 24 months unlimited mileage warranty, 12 months AA cover  
**Colours:** Blue/white, grey/black, yellow/black  
**New for 2004:** New model  
**Insurance group:** 17 (of 17)  
**Info:** Suzuki GB: 01293-766000



### SPECIFICATION:

**Engine:** Liquid-cooled, 749cc (72mm x 46mm) 16v dohc four-stroke in-line four. Fuel injection. Six gears.  
**Chassis:** Aluminium twin-spar  
**Front suspension:** 43mm telescopic forks, adjustable for pre-load, rebound and compression damping  
**Rear suspension:** Single shock adjustable for pre-load and rebound damping  
**Tyres:** 120/70 x 17 front, 180/55 x 17 rear  
**Brakes:** 2 x 300mm front discs with four-piston calipers, 220mm rear disc with two-piston caliper

**PROS** ● 600-style handling ● Rock-solid stability ● Much-improved rider comfort ● Addictive top-end rush

**CONS** ● Occasional tendency to understeer in extreme track use ● Lacks any direct comparisons ● Indistinguishable styling

**96%**



## ROAD TEST

## Nothing radical – just honed to

SUZUKI has lavished the pick of the best bits from the GSX-R600 and GSX-R1000 on this bike to ensure it keeps the 750 class alive. This latest GSX-R750 doesn't boast anything radically new. Every technological feature has been seen before in one form or another. It is entirely conventional, but each component has been honed to work seamlessly with each other.

When the GSX-R was introduced back in 1985, it was the first big-bore sports bike to weigh under 180kg and claimed another first in 1990 when it got upside down forks. And now every possible race track-related feature has filtered

down to the new GSX-R's mouthwatering specialist. Radial-mounted brakes, massively stiff frame and a motor that just begs to be revved are all part of the package.

With masses of power and weighing little more than a 600, it offers the poke and handling to embarrass many a superbike.

Here's how Suzuki has made its 750 even better...

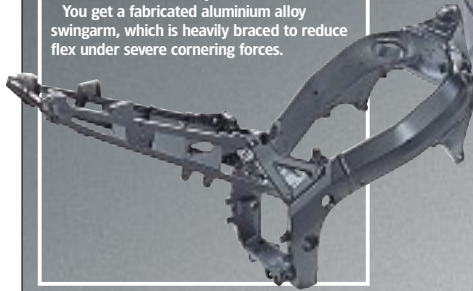
'Weighing little more than a 600, the GSX-R750 will have the poke and handling to embarrass many a litre sports bike'

## FRAME AND SWINGARM

THE frame is a fairly conventional aluminium alloy item. The cast alloy steering head and plated swingarm pivot are joined together by taller, thinner dual extruded frame spars.

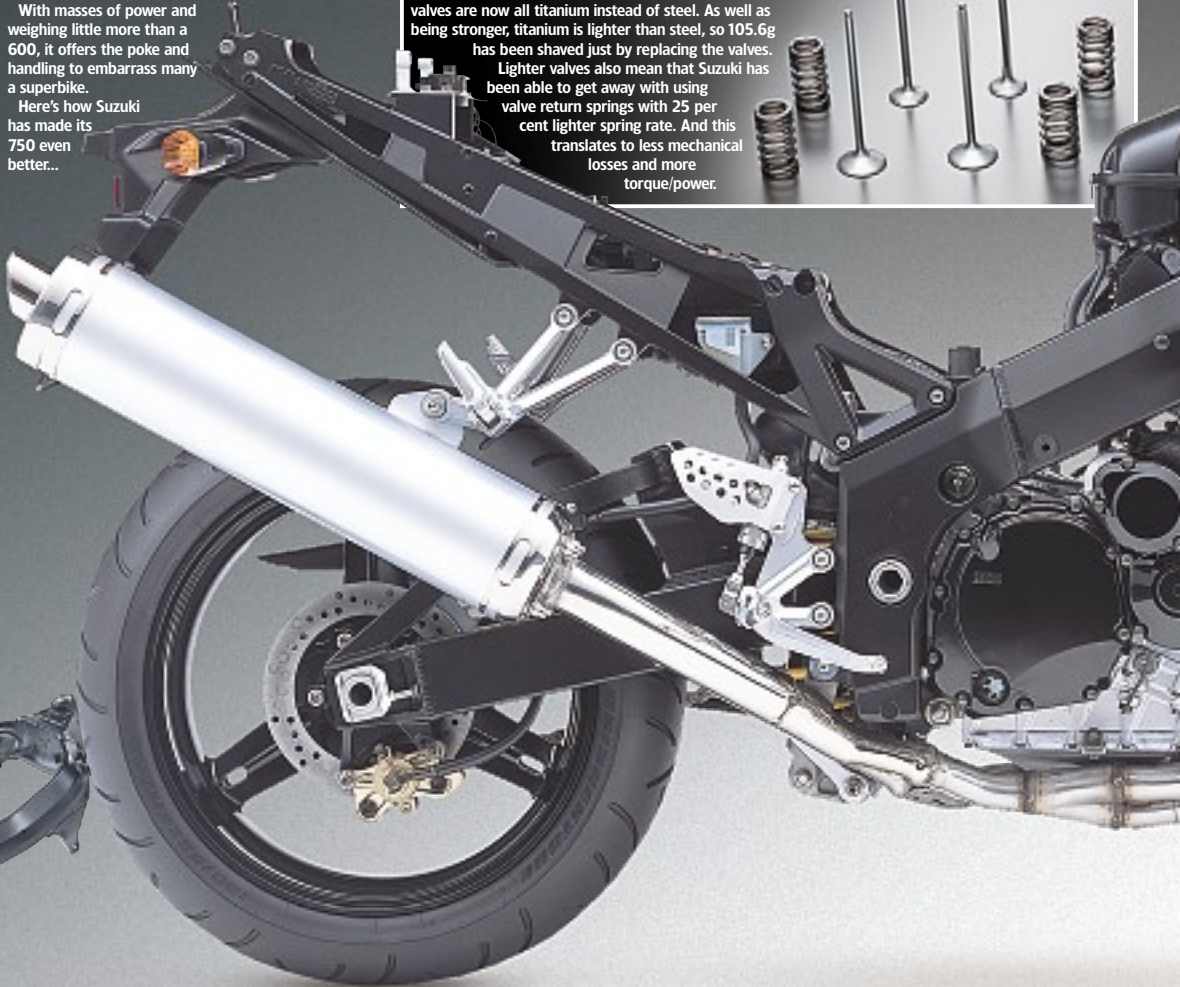
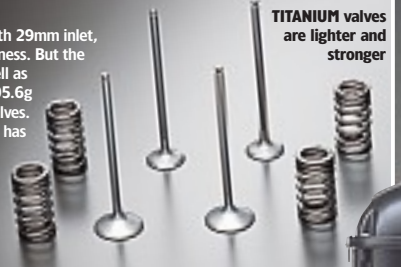
It is virtually the same as the GSX-R600's (in fact the dimensions are identical), but vertical internal bracing struts beef it up to handle the extra power of the 750 motor. The frame and swingarm is now painted black like the rest of the GSX-R family.

You get a fabricated aluminium alloy swingarm, which is heavily braced to reduce flex under severe cornering forces.



**VALVES**  
VALVE size remains the same as the old model with 29mm inlet, 24mm exhaust and all 16 have a 4mm stem thickness. But the valves are now all titanium instead of steel. As well as being stronger, titanium is lighter than steel, so 105.6g has been shaved just by replacing the valves. Lighter valves also mean that Suzuki has been able to get away with using valve return springs with 25 per cent lighter spring rate. And this translates to less mechanical losses and more torque/power.

**TITANIUM** valves are lighter and stronger



## HISTORY OF THE GSX-R750

ONCE Suzuki's flagship sports bike, the GSX-R750 is now in its 20th year. It looked like going the way of other mass-produced Japanese 750s like Kawasaki's discontinued ZX-7R, but lives on to fight another day. Even the mighty GSX-R1000 couldn't kill it off.

Honda's long-running popular middleweight, the CBR600, is often described as a legend. But the Honda has only been around since 1987 – the GSX-R beats that by two years.

It's now 20 years since Suzuki's first public airing of the bike at the 1984 Cologne Bike Show in Germany. It all started with the GSX-R750F, which hit showroom floors in 1985. Here we trace the bloodline from that model...

GSX-R750 1985-87 MODELS F/G/H  
aka Hyper Endurance

IN March 1985 Suzuki realised a dream by essentially introducing a road legal, 750cc aluminium framed version of its GS1000R race bike.

It weighed an astonishing 179kg, with a claimed power output of 106bhp at 10,500rpm, and featured race-like steering geometry. But many GSX-R owners paid the price for such a quick-steering bike. It quickly earned the tag of 'wobbler on the road'. The frame flexed badly, and it's rumoured the wheel and swingarm spindles did, too. The steel bodied rear shock didn't last long, either.

The engine produced a manic, top-end rush. And you also got the Suzuki Advanced Cooling System, where oil from the cooler was pumped directly under the piston – just like a P51D Mustang Second World War fighter plane. This reduced the engine temperature without the need for a heavier and bulkier water cooling system.

A year later the 'G' model came with a 25mm longer swingarm and radial tyres fitted as standard, in an attempt to calm the bike's nervous handling.

This was then superseded by the 'H' version in 1986, which had improved 41mm telescopic forks. But it had also gained a couple of kilograms, weighing in at a claimed 181kg.



THE GSX-R story kicked off in 1985

GSX-R750 1988-95 MODELS J/K/L/M/N/P/R/S  
aka Slingshot

IN 1988 the 'J' model ditched the slabby look for more curvaceous bodywork. Power was also up to a claimed 112bhp at 11,000rpm, thanks to a shorter stroke motor. Ducts on the front fairing led directly to the airbox, supplying a constant charge of cool air to new CV semi-flatslide carbs.

Everything was beefed up and the wheels went down to a modern 17in rim size. But this stability exercise also saw weight go up to 195kg.

There were a few detail changes in 1989, but the 'L' model saw another hefty revision in 1990. This included a return to a longer-stroke engine. Power went up to 115bhp, while weight went down to 193kg.

In 1992 the GSX-R750 got water cooling to give greater reliability as well as sound proofing the engine. But the bike's dry weight went up to 208kg. The

frame and swingarm were also revised for greater torsional stiffness.

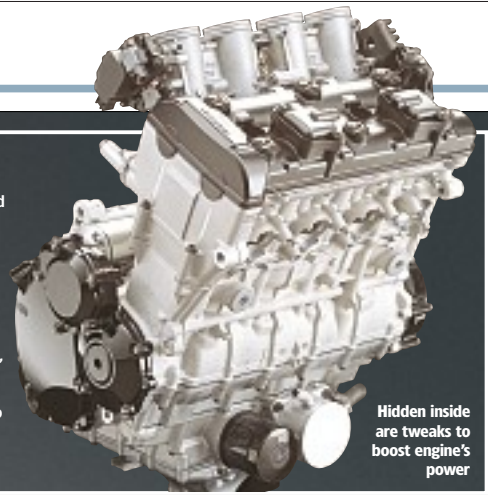
1994 saw the last major revision of this series of GSX-R. Engine components were lightened and strengthened. Six-pot front calipers made their way on to the anodised forks. The 1995 'S' model was the last GSX-R750 to feature the double-cradle alloy frame.



1994 saw the last of the Slingshots



# 750 perfection



## ENGINE

LOOKS virtually identical to the old K3 model GSX-R, but with mild tweaks to various internal components. Peak power is up to a claimed 146bhp at 12,800rpm (154bhp with ram-air effect) and 64ftlb of torque at 10,800rpm.

A large part of this power increase can be attributed to new ventilation holes in the crankcases, located at the bottom of the piston stroke. These allow pressurised air below the piston to escape to the adjacent cylinder, which reduces internal pressure and pumping losses.

Hidden inside are tweaks to boost engine's power

## CAMSHAFTS, PISTONS AND RINGS

THE cams have gone the same route as the new GSX-R600. The diameter of the interior has increased from 15.5mm to 16.5mm, making the wall of the hollow cams thinner. The inlet and exhaust camshafts are now 45g and 35g lighter respectively.

The pistons have 1.5mm shorter skirts, reducing

the height of each piston to 39.2mm from 40.7mm. Combined with thinner walls, this gives a saving of 15g per piston over last year's model.

The top compression ring and the oil control ring are now chrome-nitrided rather than chrome plated. This coating is significantly harder, less resistant to wear and reduces friction.

CAMSHAFTS are now lighter



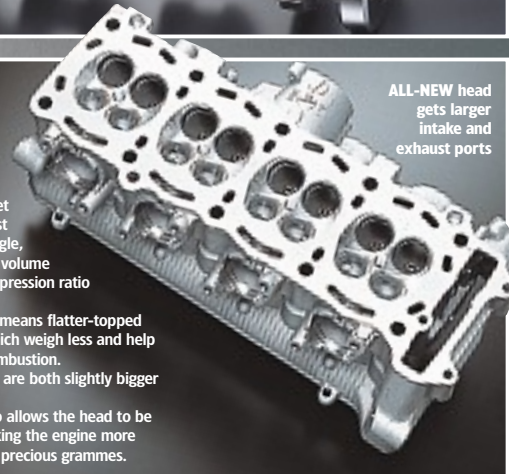
## CYLINDER HEAD

AN ALL-NEW cylinder head features a more compact combustion chamber than the old model. Suzuki have set the intake and exhaust valves at a steeper angle, reducing the chamber volume and increasing the compression ratio from 12.2:1 to 12.5:1.

Its more compact profile means flatter-topped piston have to be used, which weigh less and help produce a more effective combustion. The intake and exhaust ports are both slightly bigger than before.

The narrower valve angle also allows the head to be 8mm shorter front to rear, making the engine more compact and shaving off a few precious grammes.

ALL-NEW head gets larger intake and exhaust ports



### SX-R750 1996-99 MODELS T/V/W/X aka S-RAD

SUZUKI went back to the basics with the GSX-R in 1996 by making it lighter and more powerful.

The bike's race image was reinforced with new bodywork based on Kevin Schwantz's Suzuki RGV500 GP bike of 1995.

The motor was the most compact GSX-R powerplant ever, and magnesium outer cases meant that it was light as well. Dry weight was down to a claimed 179kg – the same as the original 1985 GSX-R750F, which had been gaining weight since its inception.

The motor still featured oil-cooled pistons and a heavily revised liquid-cooling system. Bore and stroke of the electro-plated barrels was 72 x 46mm for a high-revving peak power of 128bhp (claimed).

Wheelbase was down to 1400mm, with sharp steering geometry. Handling was a track day addict's dream and a racer's delight.

This and the '97 (V-model) were – and still are – a tool well worth considering when looking for a secondhand sports bike.

The biggest change to the S-RAD (Suzuki Ram Air Direct) bike was with the 1998 'W' model and the

introduction of fuel injection and modern-day electronics to boost output to a claimed 135bhp. There were also detail changes to brakes and suspension to further enhance the GSX-R's race-rep reputation.

1999 was the last year of the S-RAD ('X' model), but the only mods were the addition of a six-inch rear rim and colour detailing changes.



THE S-RAD version was introduced in 1996

### GSX-R750 2000-2003 MODELS Y/K1/K2/K3 aka The Business

COMPLETELY and utterly revised to make this the best GSX-R750 so far. It was quickly tagged as the bike with the power of a thousand and the handling of a 600.

There wasn't one bit of the bike that wasn't new. Narrower and shorter, the water-cooled engine was claimed to produce 141bhp. Second shock of the year was that Suzuki had lopped 13kg off the previous model's weight (now 166kg dry) and 5kg of that was shaved from the engine.

Fuelling was now the standard fuel injection but Suzuki set a new standard with dual throttle butterflies per inlet manifold to improve airflow for precise throttle control.

With the motor shortened considerably, Suzuki managed to squeeze in a 20mm longer swingarm for improved traction under load, but kept the wheelbase to a minimalist 1400mm for the famed sharp steering. The frame was still dual-beamed. It also got sharp new styling.

Front calipers went down to four-pistons grabbing 320mm discs, while it's rumoured that the rear

two-piston caliper can be traced back to the GS1000 of 1982 and subsequent GSX-R750s.

Over the years, Suzuki has changed almost every component on the GSX-R750 and completely restyled it several times. But it still retains a huge and loyal following, because it just keeps getting better.



A COMPLETELY revised bike was launched in 2000



# ROAD TEST

# When nothing but a GSX-R will do

Four readers tell us why it has just got to be a Suzuki GSX-R750

SUZUKI'S in-line four sports bike range has built up a huge and dedicated following. Since the 750 started it all in 1985 it attracts some of the GSX-R line-up's most ardent supporters.

We spoke to four readers who have parted with their hard-earned cash on different examples of the 750 breed, from an original Hyper Endurance 'F' model, through all the other major incarnations of the GSX-R750, including the Slingshot and S-RAD.

We asked the owners why they chose this long-running machine over any other mass-produced sports bike, and what they don't like about them.

We've also got a very special example of the bike (below right) and listed the top 10 add-on bits for these machines (below).

If after all this talk of GSX-R750s you feel you've just got to own one, then check out our guide to buying and selling (far right).

## COLIN SMITH • 1985 GSX-R750F

**Age:** 44  
**Occupation:** Civil servant  
**Riding experience:** 28 years  
**Bought bike:** 1996  
**Miles ridden on bike:** 80,000 miles  
**Miles on the clock:** 120,000 miles

'Apart from servicing it I haven't had to touch it in 80,000 miles'

### WHY DID YOU BUY A GSX-R750?

*I've always been a fan of the original GSX-Rs since they dominated endurance racing in the 1980s.*

### WHAT DO YOU USE IT FOR?

*I mainly use it for commuting and it's never let me down. It's been completely reliable. Apart from servicing I haven't needed to touch it in more than 8,000 miles of riding.*

### WHAT ARE THE BEST AND WORST THINGS ABOUT IT?

*The best thing is that it's very light and easy to manage, even compared to modern bikes I've ridden. The most annoying thing is the skinny wheels, which really restrict the choice of tyres you can use.*



ORIGINAL bike came with anti-dive forks

## ANDY COY • 1989 GSX-R750K



SLINGSHOT carbs gave model its name



FOUR-POT calipers were top kit in 1992

**Age:** 36  
**Occupation:** IT support engineer  
**Riding experience:** 12 years  
**Bought bike:** 3 years ago  
**Miles ridden on bike:** 21,000 miles  
**Miles on the clock:** 35,000 miles

*GSX-R makes, but it's never harsh and the power is there when you want it.*

### WHY DID YOU BUY A GSX-R750?

*I'd always wanted a GSX-R. It's the racing background and the fact that it's always been classed as a nutter's bike. The bad boy image definitely appealed to me.*

### WHAT DO YOU USE IT FOR?

*In summer I use it to get to work and for pleasure. I go on rideouts with mates at weekends. People told me that the riding position was bad, but I haven't had a problem with it. I can do about three hours on it before I get saddle-sore. Having only ridden much older bikes before this, I was worried about the amount of power the*

### WHAT ARE THE BEST AND WORST THINGS ABOUT IT?

*Even when I'm out with mates on newer, bigger bikes the GSX-R doesn't get left behind. The worst thing about the watercooled 'W' models is getting hold of parts. It's a model that everybody has forgotten.*

'The GSX-R still doesn't get left behind – even by bigger bikes'



## TOP TEN BOLT-ON BITS

AFTER 20 years on the market, there are a fair amount of 750s around. And there's a huge choice of add-ons to personalise them. Whether it's parts to make your bike quicker, noisier or better looking, there's something to suit all tastes. All these parts are available from Crescent Suzuki (01202-820170 or [www.crescent-suzuki.com](http://www.crescent-suzuki.com))

### RACE EXHAUST

A race exhaust will unleash the lovely growl that is strangled by the standard silencer, as well as releasing a bit of extra power. You can get a Yoshimura race silencer from £449 and full race system from £832.

### POWER COMMANDER

Post-1998 bikes are fuel-injected and will

benefit from a Dynojet Power Commander and some time on a rolling road. Tuning experts recommend avoiding Dynojet kits on earlier bikes with carbs. A Power Commander will cost from £258.

### SCREEN

Fit a colour-matched screen to complement your paint scheme or a

double bubble screen for better wind protection. Double bubble screens start at £39.95.

### REAR HUGGER

Tidy up your back end and keep road crud away from your shock and linkages. Glass fibre and carbon-fibre huggers are available from £98 and are extremely easy to fit.

### UPGRADED SUSPENSION

Better bouncy bits will give you better handling on the road, but will be especially noticeable when you're pushing it on the track. An Ohlins rear shock is £631, while Ohlins front fork springs start at £70.

### STEERING DAMPER

This will help to keep the front end under





**MICHAEL LAZER • 1999 GSX-R750X**

**Age:** 25  
**Occupation:** IT consultant  
**Riding experience:** 3 years  
**Bought bike:** November 2003  
**Miles ridden on bike:** 3500 miles  
**Miles on the clock:** 11,000 miles



**BRAKE calipers gained two extra pots**



**ANALOGUE speedo was often optimistic**

**WHY DID YOU BUY A GSX-R750?**

*I like the fact that it's seen as a nutter's bike. As soon as I rode it I knew it was the bike for me. I had a FireBlade and a CBR600F before the GSX-R and it's like the best of both those bikes. It feels lighter and spins up quicker than the Blade and has a revvier and more powerful engine than the 600 with better midrange than the CBR.*

**WHAT DO YOU USE IT FOR?**

*I use it as my sole means of transport. I commute to work on it every day, I go on weekend rideouts and I'm looking forward to track days as soon as the weather improves.*

**WHAT ARE THE BEST AND WORST THINGS ABOUT IT?**

*The best thing is the overall GSX-R package. There's nothing I'm not totally happy with. Some people complain about comfort, but I don't have a problem. The worst thing is definitely the white wheels. It takes a lot of work keeping them clean.*



**GAIL RICHARDS • 2002 GSX-R750K2**

**Age:** 33  
**Occupation:** Trainer and advisor  
**Riding experience:** 18 months  
**Bought bike:** 2 months ago  
**Miles ridden on bike:** 1000 miles  
**Miles on the clock:** 7000 miles



**GSX-R750 got a digital speedo in 2000**



**BRACED alloy swingarm is excellent**

**WHY DID YOU BUY A GSX-R750?**

*My previous bike was a Yamaha Thundercat. I decided that I needed something more powerful and nimble, but between 600 and 1000cc there isn't a lot of choice. It's so light, responsive and easy to ride. I thought that it might frighten me, but it was fine.*

**WHAT DO YOU USE IT FOR?**

*It's purely a pleasure bike and I like to get out for a blast on country roads at weekends. It's perfect for road riding. I'm looking forward to taking the GSX-R on a track once I've got more experience. I've done 400 miles in a day and was surprised to find that it wasn't uncomfortable.*

**WHAT ARE THE BEST AND WORST THINGS ABOUT IT?**

*The handling's superb – very light and really responsive both on and off the power. On the downside I found the clutch really stiff at first and the pegs are quite high, so it took a bit of getting used to.*



**The ultimate GSX-R750**

**A**s owner of the UK distributor for Yoshimura tuning parts Crescent Performance, Paul Denning is perfectly placed to create a very special Suzuki GSX-R750.

The top tuner turned British Superbike team manager started with a road-going GSX-R750 K1. And while the bike remains road legal, the chassis and engine tweaks carried out by his BSB technicians put the

performance and handling on par with a fully-fledged 750cc race bike.

A lightened and balanced crankshaft makes the engine more responsive to throttle input and lets it spin up quicker. The cylinder head is gas-flowed, and Yoshimura high-lift cams improve the speed the motor can take on fuel/air mixture and expel exhaust gases. The compression ratio has been increased.

Titanium valve retainers ensure the springs and valves stay in place when the revs get heaped on.

Peak power is up to 140bhp from 118bhp. And increased engine heat is dealt with by a factory-style radiator, so even trickling through town isn't a problem.

After shelling out £35,000 on this GSX-R750, Denning has just sold it before starting his next project.

**YOU have to spend £35,000, but...**



control. Steering dampers from Ohlins start at £188.

**CRASH PROTECTION**

Prevention is better than cure, so take steps to limit the damage if the worst should happen and the bike ends up going down the road. Crash bungs start at £49.95, while carbon-fibre frame protectors will cost you £78.

**BETTER BRAKES**

You can sharpen up your old stoppers and give your brakes more bite by fitting braided brake hoses and different pads. Goodridge stainless steel brake lines cost from £99. SBS dual carbon replacement brake pads start at £25. If you really want to push the boat out, a Brembo front brake master cylinder upgrade kit will cost you from £207.

**RACE BODYWORK**

This is worth considering if you do a lot of track days. You can get a glass-fibre fairing from £238 and seat units from £110.

**LIGHTWEIGHT WHEELS**

They not only look fantastic, they weigh less, which makes the bike easier to turn. Marchesini lightweight alloy wheels start at £1332.78



**A YOSHIMURA end can seems so right**

**TOP TEN GSX-R750 BUYING AND SELLING TIPS**

**BUYING** or selling a bike is full of pitfalls. And with a hard-charging bike like the GSX-R the stakes are even higher: they rarely get an easy life.

**SERVICE HISTORY**

GSX-Rs can be dependable, hassle-free machines. A full service history tells you that the bike has been cared for by a dealer.

**PAPERWORK**

Inspect it carefully to get a better picture of the bike's background. Previous MoT certificates are a more reliable indicator of mileage than the clocks.

**MCN BIKE CHECK**

Find out if that GSX-R has been written off, stolen or has finance outstanding. Call 01722-43555 before handing over the cash, it's £35.95 very well spent.

**IMPORTS**

Don't be afraid of import bikes, as long as the headlight and clocks have been modified to UK-spec. But French bikes are restricted to 100bhp and are a nightmare to derestrict.

**CONSUMABLES**

GSX-Rs like to be ridden hard, which eats consumables. Pay particular attention to the tyres, chain and sprockets, fork seals, brake pads and brake discs. Make sure they're sweet or you could be £500 out of pocket.

**NON-STANDARD BIKES**

Keep the standard parts for when you sell the bike – you'll usually get more by selling the parts separately. Always hold onto the standard exhaust can, which might be needed to get through the MoT.

**CRASHED BIKES**

Lots of GSX-Rs will have been crashed. Check that the steering-lock stops aren't bent or snapped off. Bent levers and scrapped bar ends are also a giveaway. Frame protectors could also be hiding damage.

**RACED BIKES**

Look out for pristine bodywork on a tatty bike, melted tyres and lockwired sump plugs.

**CLEANING**

Suzukis still need lots of care to keep them looking good. Clean beneath the fairing and check beneath it when you're buying.

**If you want to buy or sell a GSX-R750 or any other bike then check out MCN every week, or log on to [www.motorcyclenews.com](http://www.motorcyclenews.com)**

THANKS TO: D&K MOTORCYCLES AND DAVE MILLER



## ROAD TEST

&gt;&gt; CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

## GSX-R750 DEFINING MOMENTS

## WALKER LOSES BSB TITLE

'By lap 16 Walker's bike wasn't sounding right. And all of a sudden the motor let go completely. A billowing white cloud of smoke was left in his devastated wake'

It was always going to be an epic race day – the final showdown on October 8, 2000 in a battle between Chris Walker on the Suzuki GSX-R750 and Neil Hodgson on the Ducati 996 that had seen fairings clashing regularly throughout the British Superbike season.

Walker was leading the championship by 21 points over Hodgson before the final round at Donington Park. The 25,000 fans who packed the track side were almost holding their breath in anticipation before the first of the two BSB races.

Hodgson had nothing to lose. Even if he won both races, Walker could still clinch the title with a third and a fourth.

The opening race gave no indication of the bitter-sweet flavour of what was to come later in the day. Hodgson won, but Walker took third. The title that he'd been cruelly denied over the years was tantalisingly close.

And then came race two... Walker was doing the right thing – staying out of trouble



A DISTRAUGHT Walker returns to the pits in tears

and holding fourth while Hodgson scrapped it out for the lead with James Haydon.

But by lap 16 Walker's bike wasn't sounding right. And all of a sudden the motor let go completely as a dropped valve blew the engine. A billowing white cloud of smoke was left in his devastated wake.

He cruised past his stunned pitcrew and parked his stricken bike at the track side at Redgate. He started

the long walk back to the pits, but couldn't hide his disappointment as he walked past the hushed crowd.

Hodgson finished second and took the title everyone assumed was Walker's in what was the best finish to any BSB season.

Even now the bar-room debate rumbles on about who deserved to win the title in 2000. One thing is certain, though – Walker lost it thanks to a £30 valve.

## SCHWANTZ SLIDES

DEFINING weekend rather than single moment for Suzuki's GSX-R750 came at Donington Park, again (see story above), in the 1986 Transatlantic Challenge.

A then unknown 21-year-old called Kevin Schwantz arrived in the UK with no knowledge of the track but ended up out-scoring everyone in the eight-race series on a year-old machine. Schwantz finished second at Daytona

in the US only three weeks earlier on a factory Yoshimura GSX-R750. But he had to rely on the much more stock-looking bike of Tony Rutter (father of British Superbike rider Michael).

In varying conditions, including heavy rain, Schwantz won four of the races, finished second in two, fell off once and nearly binned it several more times in one of the most spectacular riding displays ever seen in the UK.

Schwantz and US team-mate Fred Merkel even performed 120mph synchronised full-lock slides at Starkey's Bridge. Schwantz had never ridden in the rain before.

As MCN reported at the time: "Schwantz turned in an acrobatic performance that would rival a rodeo rider in his native Texas, as he clung to his Suzuki after a massive slide in the fifth race. He held on to win."



'Schwantz turned in an acrobatic performance that would rival a rodeo rider in his native Texas'

## FIRST GSX-R750

CHRIS DABBS was two years into his road testing career when the very first production GSX-R750 appeared back in 1985.

He was one of the first

British journalists to ride the new machine and tested later versions as MCN road tester and then road test editor. Here he recalls that first ride.

THE first GSX-R was a raw, uncompromising beast that was most road riders' introduction to true race replica performance. It established its credentials on the race track within weeks of its arrival with a one-two at Le Mans and by the time the TT arrived, any British production racer worth his salt was GSX-R-equipped.

Mick Grant won the British Superstock championship on a GSX-R750 that year.

But it wasn't a bike that mollycoddled you. To ensure the flat-slide carbs didn't stick open, the throttle springs were ridiculously heavy and it certainly didn't like pottering about.

But right from the start the exhaust note let you

know you were aboard a very special bike. Its throaty rasp was a world apart from today's antiseptic whispers.

It was also a bike you had to grab by the scruff of its neck. Treat it meekly and the GSX-R would snap back over bumps with a rapid shake of the bars.

You had to attack corners, stay committed on the throttle and work the gearbox like a two-stroke to get it firing up the straight.

From its styling to its power deliver, riding position and viciously powerful brakes, the Suzuki screamed aggression. Some things never change.

