

# SUPERSPORT SIX HUNDREDS

Most manufacturers have stuck to their guns in 2010, meaning the middleweight division is the most closely fought battleground there is

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**D**uring a time when the world's economy is asking for some change for a cup of tea, it seems that developing mental new metal has taken a back seat at motorcycle manufacturers. If the choice is kicking back in the R&D department or going under, then you can see why it's all gone a bit quiet.

There are, of course, some notable exceptions. Honda has ploughed the economy of a small country into the VFR1200 and Kawasaki's new Z1000 is a welcome tonic in the times.

The Europeans have been busy too, building bad-boy 1000s, namely BMW and Aprilia with the uber-trick S 1000 RR and

gorgeous RSV4. Ducati continues to punt out outrageously expensive and overpriced exotica. Recession? What recession?

While the big guns and naked division continue to blossom, the 600s have remained steadfastly stagnant. With the exemption of the CBR's ABS system and the Showa forks that look after the front of the ZX-6R, old is the new new. Obviously, there's no desperate need for traction control, but a decent injection boom-chika-wow-wow into the class wouldn't hurt. It's almost as if the Japanese manufacturers and the worldwide recession have B-rated the class.

That doesn't prevent you getting a vast choice of metal for your moolah, and last

year's champion, Triumph's Daytona 675 heads the 2010 faction. The champ returns with some new clocks and fresh looks to face the elite of Japan's screaming fours, including a tweaked R6 from Yamaha.

A pioneer of the headbangers, the GSX-R600 has remained worryingly dormant for a while, but still has a heavy following from Gixer militants. Completing the line-up, and the year of kick-ass paintjobs, are Honda's CBR600RR and Kawasaki's ZX-6R. Sights for sore eyes.

Thanks to the snow, we threw a sod-the-recession double six and drove down to Cartagena in Spain to give you the most definitive and informative test you'll read. ➤





**SUZUKI  
GSX-R600**

The smallest of the Gixer clan is much like the pub slapper; old, ugly and no-one wants to ride it. Unchanged in any significant way for five years, it would have been nice for the GSX-R to be given a treat for the 25th anniversary of the marque. Back in the day it was one of the original nutters, brandishing a then-typical Gixer bovva-boy attitude that used to run in the genes. It deserves better and desperately needs a makeover. Oh well, there's always next year. Friendly, smooth and just plain easy to ride; that's the Gixer Six to a tee. Despite our libelous introduction, the Suzuki's USP is

that it's the easiest of the quintet to ride at any speed, regardless of talent and experience. And if you're lacking balls, then the GSX-R600 even comes with a knob to cull the power. We often bemoan the lack of technology and fun shit to play with on modern machinery, but the Gixer's buttons are just pointless. The S-DMS switchable maps are surplus to requirements, useful on a Hayabusa, useless on this. It's like putting ABS on a milk float. With the class hovering around 100bhp, every pony counts. The Suzuki's engine is hardly fit for the knacker's yard, but it's no thoroughbred, either. The fuelling is second to none, but the GSX-R lacks raw pace and pure power. Any excitement is dulled by delivery that is honest and linear;



On it's own, the Suzuki is a cracking bike. But in it's class it's last



An '08 bike on a '09 plate in a '10 test. Tells you a lot about the state of the class

**SECOND  
OPINION**



**SUZUKI GSX-R600 - 4th**  
Poor Gixer, I feel absolutely rotten placing it fourth! It's a terrific bike, especially on the road, and it's the one that fits me best of all. But, like the Honda, it's feeling it's age. Only the slipper clutch and riding position give it the nod over the CBR. Looks wise? It couldn't ever be called pretty, but that blue and white does suit it very well indeed. It's almost Honda-like in many ways and Suzuki need to reinvigorate that aggression the earlier models were famed for. I'm excited to see what they come up with next.

**EVERY PONY COUNTS. THE SUZUKI'S ENGINE IS HARDLY FIT FOR THE KNACKER'S YARD, BUT IT'S NO THOROUGHbred, EITHER**

**SUZUKI GSX-R600**



**Don't be fooled by:**  
The fact your buddy has a K6 and keeps whoopin' your ass - your shiny new one ain't any quicker



**Highlights**

- Original nutter
- Now softly spoken
- Switchable maps
- Good roadster
- 163kg
- 104bhp

**£7,799** (otr)

**Verdict**

If you're a Gixer man, you'll be happy with this Suzuki - just don't test any of its rivals...

Stability, brakes, bump management

She ugly, slow, a tad dull

**Final Score**  
Score relates to other bikes in this test only  
**7/10**

**Engine**

The 2008/9 lump is a tweaked version of 2007's. Refined intake ports and throttle bodies, plus a new intake cam profile, all aid torque in the low to midrange. The compression ratio is up, along with reshaped pistons and new piston rings. The exhaust is refined, and 2007's end-can got beefed up for emissions and supposed performance. The S-DMS switchable map from the Thou' is fitted here, with iridium spark plugs as standard.

**Chassis**

The electronically-controlled steering damper has filtered down from the Thou', and while the forks remain the same, the internals have been refined. The current Gixer also gets three-way adjustability, with high and low speed compression damping on the forks. The brakes are updated with refined discs, calipers, and master cylinder. There are also adjustable footrests, and new design wheels with a special Bridgestone BT-016 as OE fitment.

read lacklustre and tame. It verges on boring. Stretching the cable is crucial on track. While the others scream for more revs the Gixer just cries for another cog. R6s dominate race grids worldwide. You'll find few GSX-R600 race bikes in any significant championship. Given the competitiveness of the class they barely grace circuit car parks, too. But its broad spread of power is a boon on the roads, along with a smooth gearbox and a flexible, no-frills chassis that spares the dramatics of rivals. Perhaps that's why the Suzuki's only relative success has been at the TT.

The twin-speed suspension is soft and pliable, but well damped, which makes for sublime bump management. This ensures the Gixer is one of the elite tracking real roads. The downside is having to wait for the suspension to settle when you're



**AND YOUR TESTERS ARE...**

**Alastair 'A-Force' Fagan - Tester**



Two days in the van, surviving on French and Spanish service station food alone, nearly drove Fagsy to dieting. But he soldiered on, scoffing les chocolate fingres, until he was sick

**Benjamin 'BJ' kubar Cronin - Tester**



Eschewing national stereotypes, Beej tucked into all France and Spain had to offer - Gauloises and San Miguel. He drew the line at frog's legs and throwing donkey's off church towers

on a hot one. The squat from the shock on exits hampers feel for the hardcore, although this is only really noticeable on track. Once the bike is settled it offers bags of mechanical grip.

Confidence comes when a bike steers neutrally and with balance, and the Suzook breeds this with a precise and measured feel on entry. But try and change direction quickly and the GSX-R's weight and age work against it.

The rest of the package is sound. The OE Bridgestone BT-016 tyres are decent enough for road smiles and should survive a few trackdays, too. The slipper clutch will take endless abuse and rescue you (along with the solid brakes) as you bang it down before a corner.

It actually sounds pretty good, doesn't it? It is, and it's a refined and complete bike that's crap at nothing, good at everything, but master of naff all. It ultimately leaves you wanting more, something that the rest of this

motley crew can capably deliver. It's the cheapest on test, but it has to be. If there's more Gixer in your blood than white cells, you can save yourself the thick end of three grand by grabbing a low mileage K7. We like 600s that engage. The GSX-R, for us, doesn't. ➤



Is the track's cafe this way?





## YAMAHA YZF-R6

You've got to hand it to Yamaha, 2009 was a huge success. The big prize, the World Superbike championship, went Yamaha's way for the first time ever. But the more relevant news was that Cal Crutchlow and his YZF-R6 managed to steal the Honda Cup (also known as the World Supersport championship) from eight-time winners on the trot, Ten Kate. But the track seems to be the only place where the R6 does its winning because the bike refuses

Regardless of the minimalist changes, the updates have made the throttle lighter and more positive, adding sensitivity to the mix. There's a hint of improved midrange, too, although nothing so gutsy that will cure the raving rev-monster from wanting to ping off the ceiling. Think of it as mildly wheezy instead of the asthma afflicted previous model.

This mild plumping will make things more bearable on everyday rides, but you still have to abuse the fly-by-wire throttle and keep the needle above 10,000rpm for momentum. Below 5,000rpm it's still very fluffy. You might as well have put diesel in the tank. Once you're in the go-zone it makes you feel like a hero, yet only the best will get the best from the Yam.

The chassis remains untouched, carrying its mass rigidly to ensure a firm and unforgiving ride. This works as long as the surface is smooth. Your typical British road,

however, is more like kryptonite to the R6's Superman intensions. Willingly thrashing the Yamaha on the UK's pothole riddled roads in favour of any other 600 has been found to be a form of self abuse.

Unlike the rest of the middleweight clan that have a few minor flaws that work against them, the R6 is one big hamstring if you solely ride it on the road.

The suspension is hard with little scope for bump management and the frame itself offers little flex. It's skittish, twitchy and no amount of adjustment will turn it into a magic carpet ride. MotoGP technology may have filtered down from Valentino Rossi's M1 to help Cal Crutchlow with his race-bred R6, but that process doesn't really aid you and me spazzing round the UK trying to get our knees down.

If you're willing (and able), properly hooning the R6 will involve ditching the OE Dunlop Qualifiers. Why Yamaha and Dunlop team up to dress their R series in this inappropriate rubber is ridiculous. Having to pay a

Hungry and focused, Alastair gets one more lap in on the R6 before lunch



**“UNLIKE THE REST OF THE CLAN WITH THEIR FEW MINOR FLAWS, THE R6 IS ONE BIG HAMSTRING IF YOU SOLELY RIDE IT ON THE ROAD”**

grand more than any other 600 is bad enough, but having to spend another £200 quid on a set of tyres that will stick is another kick in the

nuts. You'll also have to budget for some brake upgrades because the R6's bark is certainly more impressive than its brakes' bite - which are distinctly lacking in ultimate power and feel.

Riding the R6 at anything less than 110 per cent is a sacrilege, but the effort required to get to this hallowed zone will sadly exclude almost anyone without the surname Crutchlow. Right, where's the deed poll office? ➤

## YAMAHA YZF-R6



### Don't be fooled by:

The salesman's patter, especially when he whispers the price. Nine grand is a big chunk of change - think secondhand instead



### Highlights

- Track assassin
- 2010 tweaks
- Variable inlets
- Ride-by-wire throttle
- 166kg
- 107bhp

**£8,999** (otr)

### Verdict

Trackdays only? Then take the R6, it's too focused for the road but offers big track potential

**Top end, track skills, feel-good-factor**

**OE rubber, road etiquette, brakes, price**

**Final Score**  
Score relates to other bikes in this test only

**7/10**

### Engine

The 2006 lump got over 50 tweaks for '08/'09, primarily the Yamaha Chip Controlled Intake (YCC-I). Compression is up from 12.8:1 to 13.1:1 thanks to the piston design that feature a crown with a slight convex shape to create a pent-roof combustion chamber. There are ultra-fine atomising injectors, a revised exhaust valve angle, and polished intake ports, to enhance combustion efficiency. 2010 sees a new exhaust and ECU changes.

### Chassis

The Deltabox frame was tweaked for '08, not redesigned, for higher rigidity. The swingarm gets similar treatment. The new magnesium subframe saves 450g. Reworked internals in the forks give a wider range of damping, and the actual fork tube length has been increased by 10mm for geometry adjustment. The rear shock gets increased spring rate and similar internal fondling, and a removable 3mm ride height spacer.

Lean and mean, the R6 only makes sense when ridden hard on track



**HONDA CBR600RR**

Forget the fact that this CBR600RR a lady's face plastered all over it and lipstick marks on the seat unit, and revel in something different from the Big H. Honda must have a new designer, although we wonder if he's still on the payroll? Genius and madness are closely related, and we're not sure which camp this 'Special Edition (with bold graphics)' paint scheme falls into. Whadya reckon?

The 2010 RR was certainly a catalyst for long discussion in Spain. And then all the way through France, too. Not only were the Marmite aesthetics up for debate, but we argued all the

way back home trying to justify giving the wee Honda a podium place after desperately struggling around Cartagena.

The thing is that the flowing sections of this cracking Spanish track, where high revs and peak power are crucial, didn't show the CBR in its best light. Jumping from bike to bike all day highlighted its lack of balls – and how valuable 5bhp is in this class. Then again, the tighter stuff wasn't much fun without a slipper clutch, either.

With the ultra-short first gear only any good for the pitlane and getting it up the ramp into the van, the shift down from fifth to second for turn one needed a slipper to smooth it. Having to manual slip was all the rage in the 20th century, now it's a pain in the cock. There's potential in the



midrange, and the way it starts to bulge fools you into thinking there's more to come, but the top-end simmers out just when you want it to kick in. The motor feels inherently strong and has obvious

potential that race teams manage to unlock. 5bhp, in the form of a can and a Power Commander, gets it back with the players in the class, but adds expense, too.

The chassis, too, has huge



potential, but it's let down by soft suspension at either end. Playing with the knobs works to an extent, but the Honda springs are so soft as standard that no amount of adjustment is going to firm things up. The best front-end in the business suffers from dive on the brakes, and severe dip from the rear under hard acceleration. You really have to think ahead with the Honda when you're riding hard.

When you've not got a sweat on, or are riding on the road, it's easy to see why the CBR is comfortably on the podium once more. It's the best road-only option by far. Aside from your favourite 90-degree bend or ring-road roundabouts, you can live without the slipper clutch. The small cockpit and lack of room isn't an issue, either. Nor are the soft suzzies, as they offer sublime bump absorption without going south too aggressively.

Whereas the R6 only feels

comfortable flat-out, the Honda feels complete so long as there's daylight between you and 100 per cent. At least there's some contrast in this class.

Being the lightest on test is always an achievement to boast about, and the CBR makes the most of its featherweight advantage. It needs some abuse to provoke an adverse reaction from it. Manners maketh the man, and the CBR has them in spades.

In the same respect as buying the new BMW S 1000 RR, if you've got the money to spend on a new CBR, you might as well get the full-spec daddy. Having said that, it seems like ABS Hondas are harder to get hold of than Jacko's quack. Although piling on an extra ten kilos and £630, the genius stopping system is unnoticeable in weight and function, and doesn't affect any of the bike's balance. It's worth the wait and the weight. ➤

**“ THE MOTOR FEELS INHERENTLY STRONG AND HAS OBVIOUS POTENTIAL THAT RACE TEAMS UNLOCK ”**

**HONDA CBR600RR**

**Don't be fooled by:**

The paintjob. At certain angles you don't notice the girl, but be prepared for all the jibes about 'riding a/like a bird' that you're bound to get

4

TRACK

5

FAST ROAD

3

HOOLIGAN

4

NEW RIDER

4

DESIRABILITY

- Highlights**
- King of the road
  - Lightest in class
  - Electronic damper
  - No slipper clutch
  - 155kg
  - 104bhp

**Engine**

The lightest ever 600 engine is smaller than any inline-four 250 to date, which is impressive stuff, moving the engine main shafts in the crankcase, whose casting weighs over 900g less. Lightweight aluminium forged pistons are treated with molybdenum for durability. The engine also has a knock sensor to monitor for pre-detonation and maintain optimum spark advance. New for '09 were pistons, cylinder head and a refined exhaust.

**Verdict**

If you're allergic to circuit based shenanigans, the CBR will suffice fro road duties

Front-end, lightness, road manners

Too soft, lacks slipper clutch, 'box

Final Score

Score relates to other bikes in this test only

8/10

**Chassis**

The frame is four castings. The wheelbase was shortened by 20mm to 1,375mm, the swingarm gained 5mm (now 573mm) and the steering head was extended by 13mm (as measured from the crankshaft). The suspension is the same. The front uses a 41mm inverted HMAS cartridge-type fork, with Unit-Pro Link at the rear. The seating position has shifted rearward by 15mm. A combined C-ABS is an option for 2009 but weighs an extra 10kg and is a £600 extra.



Benjamin rides like a girl. Or should that be rides a girl? Or is it both?

**SECOND OPINION**

**Honda CBR600RR - 5th**

My patience with the Honda has finally run out, despite it being just as good on the road as the Suzuki. Getting on the CBR at Cartagena just made me go backwards, fast. I was made to compromise on the Honda, unlike on any of the others. It drove me round the twist. I'm more than happy to accept its overall podium position, but I personally wouldn't buy one any longer. When it first came out in 2007, it was a revelation from Honda, a CBR with far less road emphasis that still delivered on track. But that was then, and now I'm fussy.







**KAWASAKI  
ZX-6R**

The renaissance of the ZX-6R is complete. But for the fact that Triumph got their act together and made some smart changes to the Daytona, you'd be looking at the incumbent class winner.

And this is where the Kawasaki has longed to be, on top, lording smarmily over its rivals. The 2009 model, both sophisticated and savage at the same time, was a huge leap forward for the green machine and invigorated a bike that had lost its way.

2010 provides only new colours and a revised damper for the ZX-6, but we agreed that a day thrapping around

**SECOND  
OPINION****Kawasaki ZX-6R - 2nd**

It is so close for me, between the Kwack and Trumpet. As far as my personal brain decider goes, these two are quite a length ahead of the competition. They both get to within a gnat's cock of the Yamaha's track prowess, without any of the debilitating limitations on the road. The BPF front-end of this bike is astonishing, and the engine is almost as tractable as the Triumph's - astonishing! It was blowing past track-prepped bikes in Spain on the straights, just like the 675. If the Triumph wasn't so damn good, this'd clean up.

on track proved the gap between the 6R and the 675 wasn't as big as we imagined. Cartagena is a circuit that flatters most 600s, but by the end of the day the budding romance between track and Kwak had blown into a full on affair. The two were made for each other.

Previously, it took Kawasaki an extra 36cc of enhanced libido to stay strong, but it now dominates the four-pot sector with the best motor of the lot - 110bhp is a magical number from a stock supersport bike. Given the configuration, the ZX naturally lacks the oomph and usability of the 675 at lower revs, but then compensates with a stonking dose of power when the midrange and top-end merge. It's nowhere near as breathless as the R6, but you still need to keep the needle honest to get the best from the 6R. Thankfully, there's enough below 8,000rpm to keep everyday riding a pleasure, too.

Chassis-wise, Kawasaki continues to persist with bizarre geometry. Lazy 103mm trail figures equate to a sluggish feel to the bike in comparison to the razor sharp ability of the rest. This



was most noticeable trying to fling the Kawasaki through the slower sections. It's involving, and verges on hard work in the context of its wispy rivals. To make up for this resistance, you can punish the front-end relentlessly and really load the forks. The big talk on the launch of the bike was the Showa Big Piston Fork - basically an anti-dive mechanism that banishes issues when braking, ensuring complete

stability. I don't care who you are, you won't get this puppy riled. Some complain that the BPF's rob the ZX of front-end feel, but trust us, it works beautifully.

Like past versions of the 6R, it feels sturdy and robust, but the improved finish on the bike now makes it feel almost armour plated in comparison to its forefathers. Öhlins has had the grace to give Kawasaki a damper that works now, and though it'll take seismic movement to get the bike to slap, there's renewed reassurance that the damper will now do its job.

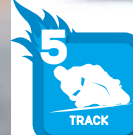
Usually on a trackday or ACU test, it's an R6 frenzy with any other bike getting tuning-forked off. But for 2010 it looks as though the ZX-6R may be the weapon of choice judging by the patchwork of green that was bossing the Cartagena garages. After seeing the Ninja take

the British 600cc superstock title, the bandwagon is well and truly on a roll.

Once an out-and-out lager lout, the ZX-6R has matured like a fine wine. The end result is the same - you still get drunk on insane ability - but you slip into that state in a much more sophisticated manner. It's been a while since Kawasaki has had the biggest cock on the 600cc block, but the ZX-6R is now the best supersport machine... from Japan.

**“ THE ZX-6R DOMINATES WITH  
THE BEST MOTOR OF THE LOT ”****KAWASAKI ZX-6R****Don't be fooled by:**

Energy drinks - too many and you may be mistaken for somebody with Parkinson's. Don't smoke crack, get high on speed

**Highlights**

- 🔥 **Best true 600**
- 🔥 **Showa BPF fork**
- 🔥 **Öhlins damper**
- 🔥 **Superstock champ**
- 🔥 **157kg**
- 🔥 **111bhp**

**£8,149** (otr)

**Engine**

The '08 motor was tweaked for more midrange and a smoother throttle. New internals include lighter, different profile camshafts and new profile pistons, while revised cylinder porting aids performance across the rev range. New double bore velocity stacks with twin height inlets allow for power gains from mid to top. Revised collector pipes and an all new end-can improves low-end performance. Longer throttle bodies result in better driveability.

**Verdict**

The best 'real' 600 and the bike to go for if you can't escape the anti-Triumph demons

🔥 **Motor, set-up, BPF fork, corner-entry**

🔥 **Hesitant steering, not a 675**

**Final Score**  
Score relates to other bikes in this test only

**9/10**

**Chassis**

Curbed weight was reduced by a claimed 10kg. The frame structure remains similar, but with a steeper caster angle for quicker steering (hence the Öhlins steering damper), and changes to rigidity for better feedback and flex. The engine was remounted in the frame for better mass centralisation, with the CoG being 16mm higher. The highlight remains the Showa Big Piston Fork for a new feel when you're knee deep in corner.

The green shoots of recovery look like this. Kawasaki's got it spot on





The 675 is a bike worthy of Ali's 'float like a butterfly, sting like a bee' quote



## THE 675 HOUSES ONE OF THE MOST FORMIDABLE MOTORS

### TRIUMPH DAYTONA 675



#### Don't be fooled by:

Thinking you'll get a bargain with the old model. They look the same but the differences are astonishing



#### Highlights

- 🔥 Straight outta Hinckley
- 🔥 Road and track king
- 🔥 Slipper equivalent
- 🔥 Awesome soundtrack
- 🔥 162kg
- 🔥 107bhp

**£7,999** (otr)

#### Verdict

What matters is the mix of road and track ability. The Triumph has that, a whole lot more

🟢 Everything...

🔴 ...not being Japanese will worry some people

Final Score  
Score relates to other bikes in this test only

**9/10**

#### Engine

The extra power comes from refining the cylinder head. New exhaust ports sport constant expansion profile and oval exits. The 25.5mm exhaust valve is tweaked, and lighter headers added. The 30.5mm inlet valves and buckets are new, as is the exhaust cam, and a new cam-chain tensioner increases smoothness. Beefier conrods withstand the extra 400rpm, while the crank and balance shafts have been modified, and the ECU tailored to suit.

#### Chassis

The 675's original chassis remains, geometry therefore stays 23.9° rake and 89.1mm trail. While fork internals aren't dissimilar from before, the way they now work makes the difference and they're fully adjustable, as is the rear shock. The rear wheel and sprocket carrier saves 1kg of unsprung weight and reduces inertia. There's a 3kg saving overall. More powerful monoblock Nissin calipers are present. The cockpit is also new, sort of.

### TRIUMPH DAYTONA 675

While all the Japanese models have decades of development, big-buck R&D and bigger siblings to look up to, the closest comparable relationship the 675 has is with Mother Teresa; it's a miracle worker that has to make-do with a small budget for sandals/development. After years of effort, refinement and racing input, Triumph has finally done the Queen proud – even her grandson, Harry, has been smitten by its charms, and rides a Daytona.

In the 675cc inline triple, the Daytona houses one of the most

formidable motors in existence. It's hard to imagine the three-pot ever being bettered by a four cylinder block. No other 600 can touch the Triumph's absolute performance and complete versatility. This asset shines through on the roads and constantly tricks you into assuming you're on a bigger bike.

An amazing spread of usable power and grunt combines with mass-thrashability to please every pilot. Like Hugh Hefner, it just keeps pulling. Whereas the Japs were pining for another cog at Cartagena, the Triumph could pull a taller gear, rev harder and longer, and still bail you out. Thrashing the 675 like

the class dictates, means you drive past each of the Triumph's rivals before other targets come into its crosshairs – including tailing some Junior Suicide bikes. Jumping on anything else after the 675 feels distinctly underwhelming.

The benefits from the triple don't stop at engine characteristics and the mechanical symphonies it conducts. The slimline motor permits the design of the ultra-nimble chassis, which in turn gives you an invitation to the 250GP handling party. If there's a fault with this set-up, then it's a minor one. The stick-thin profile of the Daytona doesn't give you much to grip on to when you're hard on the brakes. A lack of room to manoeuvre in the seat will also trouble the lanky.

Unlike any other bike on test, the 675 has the perfect suzzie set-up that

cope with ability, weight, and, more importantly, blends road and track together as perfectly as politicians and expenses scams. Twin-speed adjustability guarantees accurate dial-in and pleases the pernickety – not that it needs much fiddling (unlike an MP's expenses).

A front-end bias gets the Daytona turning with superb speed – again, like no other can replicate. It's as at home when buried deep in a corner with 50 degrees of lean as it is bolt-upright. Impressively, the nose heavy posture doesn't sacrifice rear grip, and (along with the rock hard R6) the 675 possess the least amount of weight transfer. The only difference being that the R6 throws shapes and makes you feel like a true gladiator. The 675 still makes you feel like a hero, but gets the job

done without the histrionics of the Yamaha. Pirelli Supercorsas make sure it does the best OE rubber and ensures the only limit of grip is yo' ass.

Aside from dreary colour options (Limited Edition Blue aside), there isn't much to grouse about. The only people grumbling will be Triumph's Japanese rivals. Even the quality and longevity, which we've first-hand experience of, is much improved. 2010 sees the arrival of some snazzy new clocks befitting the new decade.

But while some preconceptions still remain, you just have to break the mould and get to your nearest Triumph dealer to see that we're right. We experienced this on the front line in Spain, when many readers rocked-up and asked which 600 was the best. 'The 675'. 'Eh, but it's a Triumph?' That's exactly what the 675 is – a triumph. ➤

### SECOND OPINION



#### Triumph Daytona 675 - 1st

I can't describe how happy it makes me to place this first in mine, and FB's, order. The only complaint I have isn't really its fault – I have to think about my body position as it's hard to hang on to when you're going for it. StompGrips will fix this instantly, and this woe doesn't apply to road-riding. Right, whinge over. I love this bike, absolutely love it. Get yourself past the Triumph badge, because they've battered the opposition, this is a bike worthy of anyone's attention. It's quick, handles like a dream and this version dropped jaws right across the pit lane. Winner!



Three is the magic number. Yes it is. It's the magic number. Thank you De La Soul

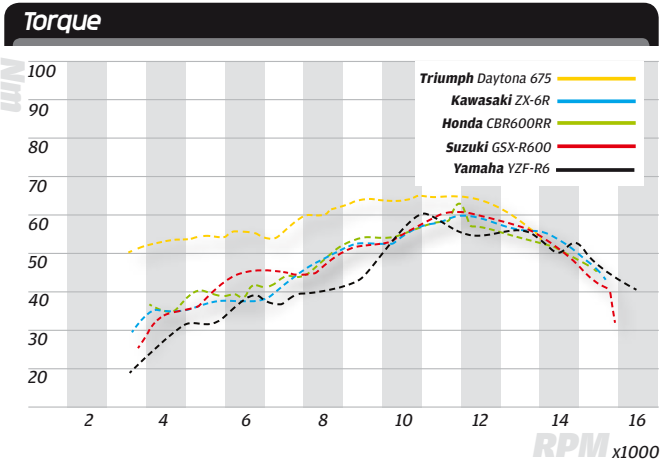
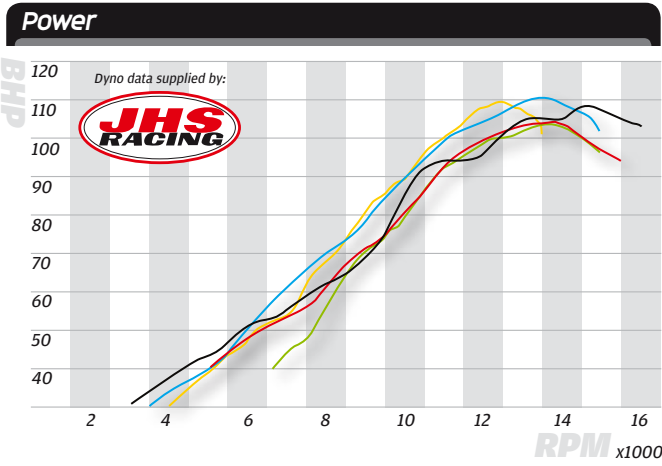




	SUZUKI GSX-R600	YAMAHA YZF-R6	HONDA CBR600RR	KAWASAKI ZX-6R	TRIUMPH DAYTONA 675
ENGINE					
TYPE	599cc, liquid-cooled, DOHC, inline four	599cc, liquid-cooled, 16v, inline four	599cc, liquid-cooled, 16v, inline four	599cc, liquid-cooled, 16v, inline four	675cc, liquid-cooled, 12v, inline-triple
BORE X STROKE	67mm x 42.5mm	67 x 42.5mm	67 x 42.5mm	67 x 42.5mm	74mm x 52.3mm
COMPRESSION	12.5:1	13.1:1	12.2:1	13.3:1	12.65:1
FUELLING	Electronic fuel injection	YCC-T EFI	Electronic fuel injection	Electronic Fuel injection	Electronic Fuel injection
TESTED POWER	104bhp @ 13,500rpm	109bhp @ 14,500rpm	104bhp @ 14,100rpm	111bhp @ 14,000rpm	110bhp @ 12,600rpm
TESTED TORQUE	61Nm @ 11,000rpm	60Nm @ 10,400rpm	59Nm @ 11,100rpm	60Nm @ 11,600rpm	65Nm @ 10,750rpm
CHASSIS					
FRAME	Aluminium twin-spar	Aluminium twin-spar	Aluminium twin-spar	Aluminium twin-spar	Aluminium beam twin-spar
F SUSPENSION	41mm fork, fully adjustable, twin-speed	43mm usd fork, fully adjustable, twin-speed	41mm usd fork, fully adjustable	41mm Showa BPF fork, fully adjustable	41mm usd fork, fully adjustable
R SUSPENSION	Monoshock, fully adjustable, twin-speed	Monoshock, fully adjustable, twin-speed	Unit-Pro Link, fully adjustable	Showa monoshock, fully adjustable	Piggy-back monoshock, fully adjustable
FRONT BRAKES	Four-piston radial calipers, 310mm discs	Four-piston radial calipers, 310mm discs	Four-piston calipers, 310mm discs	Four-piston radial calipers, 300mm discs	Four-piston monoblock calipers, 308mm discs
REAR BRAKES	One-piston caliper, 220mm disc	One-piston caliper, 220mm disc	One-piston caliper, 220mm disc	One-piston caliper, 220mm disc	One-piston caliper, 220mm disc
DIMENSIONS					
WHEELBASE	1,400mm	1,380mm	1,375mm	1,400mm	1,395mm
SEAT HEIGHT	810mm	850mm	820mm	825mm	825mm
DRY WEIGHT	163kg	166kg	155kg	157kg	162kg
FUEL CAPACITY	17L	17.3L	18L	17L	17.4L
PRICE					
PRICE FROM	£7,799 (otr) Suzuki GB 0845 850 8800 Suzuki-gb.co.uk	£8,999 (otr) Yamaha UK 01932 358121 Yamaha-motor.co.uk	£8,123 (otr) Honda UK 0845 200 8000 Honda.co.uk	£8,149 (otr) Kawasaki UK 01628 856750 Kawasaki.co.uk	£7,999 (otr) Triumph UK 01445 251700 Triumph.co.uk
0-60:	3.01s	3.31s	3.02s	3.27s	3.12s
0-100:	6.49s	6.57s	5.69s	6.46s	6.62s
0-120:	14.77s	13.17s	10.98s	13.59s	9.68s
Stg 1/4 Mile:	11.88s @ 116.85mph	11.07s @ 131.49mph	10.36s @ 144.99mph	11.12s @ 129.62mph	11.13s @ 125.54mph
Standing Mile:	32.25s @ 138.63mph	28.63s @ 167.93mph	26.26s @ 175.84mph	29.07s @ 159.31mph	29.93s @ 151.84mph
Top Speed:	157mph	169mph	185mph	162mph	152mph



Its supersport crown retained, the 675 goes for yet another lap of honour



**THANKS TO:** • Dave, Karen and everyone else at Hottrax (08455 193195, hottrax.co.uk) • Alan Rawlings of BikeChannel.com • Fi at Honda • Luke at Suzuki • Simon at Yamaha • Andrea at Triumph • and Lambo at Kawasaki • Let's all make love



Barcelona, scorchio. Valencia, scorchio. Inghilterra, nieve!

**CONCLUSION**

What a day. Between us, we managed to rack-up over 200 laps of Cartagena to deliver the only result that matters. We certainly knew about it the next morning. Riding the bikes back-to-back in an identical environment is the only way to declare a winner. Many people get in touch to ask why we slate certain bikes, and our response is always, 'have you ridden the rest?' No, exactly. Once again, despite a lack of significant updates, you're spoilt rotten if a 600 is on your 2010 shopping list, as there simply aren't any bad bikes leaving the production lines. Rather, there is a wide array of ability within the

class, from track handling so sharp you could cut yourself to ability far more sympathetic to more mundane chores. There's a bike to suit everyone, although after 2010's price rises, not necessarily everyone's budget. Bottom of the pile is fought-out between to very different bikes, the GSX-R600 and the YZF-R6. Unfortunately, for the Suzook, it doesn't have the niche track-based skills that the Yam boasts as a major USP, but it's definitely the ideal my-first-sportsbike and a step-up from a more everyday SV Six-Fiddy. Regardless of diminutive revisions and bling new colours, the R6 is destined for fourth place ➤



in the pecking order, but if you hone in on its positives it could end up being your perfect trackday / race companion. The changes have boosted its road credentials only very slightly, so it may take a cross-plane crank for the Yam to regain decent hierarchy. And then there's the price – it's a grand dearer than any other rival. You could buy a shit load of genuinely useful bolt-ons with the money saved on a cheaper, better balanced 600.

A lonely third place is the Honda, taking full advantage of its road skills. It needs too much cash chucked at it to trouble the winners, and as with the litre class, the Honda needs remedial remedying for track abuse; namely power gains, suspension tweaks and braided hoses to combat the



First and worst, almost in unison. Supersport really is this close

## “EVEN THE BEST OF JAPAN CAN'T MEET THE CHALLENGE THAT TRIUMPH HAS SET”

brake's inherent fade.

So that means it's down to two sublime machines. It's so tempting to declare the Kawasaki the winner because it's gone from zero to hero in such a short space of time. Kawasaki has employed innovative

solutions to revitalize the ZX, and each one has paid off with obviously tangible results.

But even the best of Japan can't meet the challenge that Triumph has set. It's time to cue Tina Turner, because thanks to a motor

seemingly engineered by God himself, and a chassis to match, the 675 is simply the best. The Daytona retains the supersport crown, and looks remarkably comfortable sporting this glittering headwear. **E**

## SPANISH LOVERS

### Hottrax it South...

Along with Serrano ham and Cesc Fabregas, Cartagena is one of Spain's unsung jewels and is now regularly on offer to the public via trackday companies like Hottrax. It won't bust the wallet either – Hottrax were offering three days on track, three nights in a hotel and bike transport for £400. Bargain. It's one of the most frequented European circuits by racers who wanna beat the UK winter and test in decent conditions. And it's easy to see why. Situated in the south just half an hour from Murcia, Cartagena has everything. Fast, proper balls-on-the-tank flowing corners require full commitment. A couple of 180-degree loops at the end of the lap give the front-end a rest and puts the focus on the shock. To finish, there's a kilometre-long straight. A word of warning though – Cartagena is über physical with ample braking zones that punish the upper body. 1000s are hard work, most will go quicker on a 600.



Is this the end of the land of the rising sun? Thanks to the Triumph 675, it's already set in the 600s class