

Metzeler

RACETEC INTERACT K2



The choice/money driven deal for many national race series championships worldwide, the Racetec K2 obviously has some talent when you look at lap times on race bikes. It takes a few laps to shred the plastic hardness and attract some heat, and the K2 takes some working on a road steed to reach the correct riding parameters. But to get the best, you need pukka suspension.

You know when the Racetecs are primed for action, there's a subliminal connection that brings endless confidence. Everything about the K2s steer towards massive corner speed, with the best front tyre in the business – certainly on track. It exudes almost eternal, ball-busting grip that encourages braking later, turning later, trailing the brake later, and



insisting on higher apex speed with massive lean. A good half a second was lost on its best lap due to the high winds, which played havoc in the faster corners. But the rear tyre also plays a part, struggling for side grip on the gas. Acceleration and drive capabilities are epic for four laps but tail off afterwards, with lots of carcass movement. The Metzeler's suit more point-and-squirt type riding, as the stability and outright grip right on the edge simply isn't there – even tapping the throttle to steady the front got the rear stepping out. Pick the bike up slightly, and you'll be rewarded.

The K2 is definitely the quickest steering tyre out there and probably a little too edgy for the road. The BMW felt lighter on its wheels and more willing to be chucked around at Mireval. New lines were being exploited, thankfully not the scenery.

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Free internet access at the hotel had its costs...

Available sizes
120/70ZR17
180/55ZR17
180/60ZR17
190/55ZR17

Weight
Front: 4.20kg
Rear: 6.38kg (190-section)

Time
Tuesday/Wednesday 5:15/9:00pm

Temperatures
Ambient: 22/17
Track: 27/19

Pressures
Front: 31psi
Rear: 27psi
Hot Rear: 33psi

Tyre Temperature
Front (right/left): 62/60
Rear (right/left): 95/70

Stiffness
Front: 50 Shore A
Rear: 56 Shore A

METZELER RACETEC K2

Check out any club racer paddock (where there's no single make rules) and you'll find bikes primed with Metzeler's Racetec series rubber. The K2 is the hardest compound option of the race tyres, the K3 being a road version. Of course, the Racetec uses the patented zero-degree steel belt at its core, using a new winding process (part of the Interact element of the tyre) to reduce stress resistance across the profile. Lower tension winding in the crown creates more flexibility in the tyre, so it can enlarge its footprint at crucial points. Higher tension at the shoulder area is designed to give the tyre maximum and, more importantly, uniform pressure on the contact patch. This enables the tyre to track a corner better, giving more consistent feedback and improving longevity. A new rear tread pattern gives more linear performance and reduces overheating. The tyre is available in big bike sizes only, including a race-spec 180/60 size for supersport machines. There are two softer compounds than the K2 (K1, K0) designed with racing in mind.



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After a shocking start, where the tyres felt plain horrible and I nearly pulled in to check that everything was as it should be, the K2 story nearly rose as high as its eponymous mountain.

Born grippy, the K2s obviously have a similar feeling to the Pirellis – and perform to a similar level. The front steers fast and the rear generates fast – that’s the story. The front has loads of feel and confidence mid-corner, but corner entry is where the Metzeler feels strong. With severe wind problems (it was something that Al ate) affecting times we decided to knock off half an hour early and try again in the morning. The cooler conditions didn’t hamper performance, and it revelled in the still morning air. With so much feel, I was pushing braking markers back and felt I was carrying more corner speed – they also could explain the disc



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warping that I started to feel. A few aches from the day before were soon eased by some flying laps, and the bike felt like it was coming to me well.

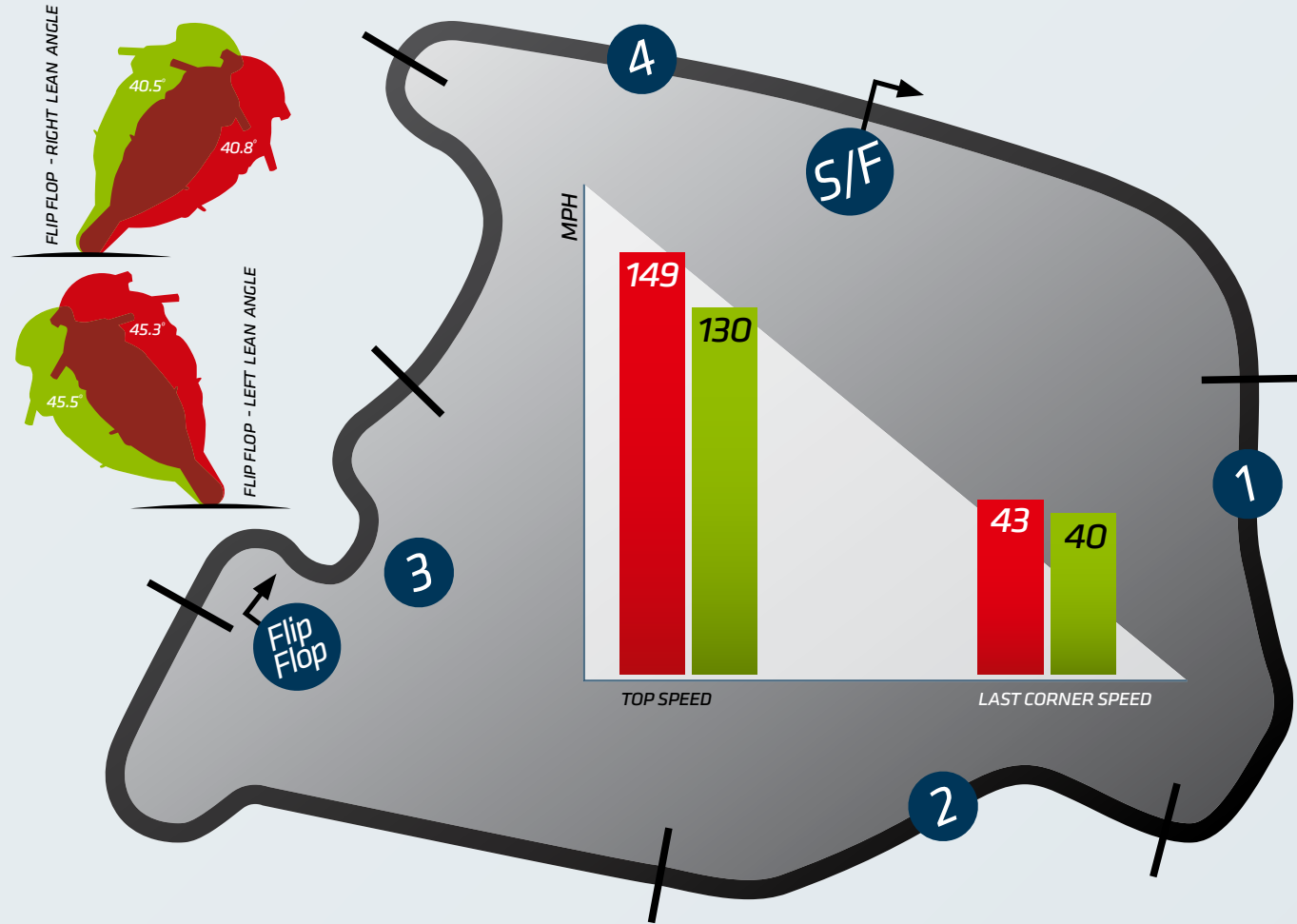
I’m just not brave enough to exploit all the rear has to offer, it’s as simple as that. I was playing with the throttle, applying it as early as I dare, and the rear still refused to move away from its line. I started to hit the rev limiter in second on the run uphill to the last left, such was the confidence I had to open the gas early out of the previous turn.

Both front and rear did everything I asked of it – and given the laptime, maybe I wasn’t asking enough of it. But it felt fantastic and I’d written the scores down days before I learned the lap time.



PRICE
£109 FRONT, £130/£139 REAR

CONTACT
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TEST	LAP TIMES	TOP SPEED	BRAKING TIME INTO 2nd CORNER	BRAKING FORCE	ACCELERATION OUT OF 2nd CORNER	TIME THROUGH FLIP FLOP	FLIP FLOP RIGHT LEAN ANGLE	FLIP FLOP LEFT LEAN ANGLE	SPEED CARRIED THROUGH LAST CORNER	LAST CORNER TO FINISH
TYRE/BIKE	MINS	MPH	SECONDS	FORCE (g)	SECONDS	SECONDS	DEGREES	DEGREES	MPH	SECONDS
METZELER RACETEC K2										
BMW S 1000 RR	1:20.635	149.74	4.001	0.96	14.313	14.062	40.8	45.3	43.02	8.438
KAWASAKI ZX-6R	1:24.044	130.79	4.688	0.64	14.502	14.237	40.5	45.5	40.67	8.062

RIDER	SCORE OUT OF TEN	BMW S 1000 RR ALASTAIR 'A-FORCE' FAGAN	SCORE OUT OF TEN	KAWASAKI ZX-6R SIMON 'ROOTSY' ROOTS
TEST				
WARM UP	3	PRETTY SCARY WITH HIGH WINDS BUT NOT AS LIFE THREATENING AS THE BRIDGESTONES	3	PROPER HORRIBLE, EVEN ON THE SECOND LAP I STILL WANTED TO COME IN AND CHECK IT OUT.
TURN IN	10	RELENTLESS IN ITS TALENT. IT'S YOUR BRAIN THAT BECOMES THE LIMIT, TURNING LATER.	9	ONLY A STRONG WIND STOPPED GOING BANANAS. OTHERWISE THE ULTIMATE CONFIDENCE.
SIDE GRIP	9	ONLY BLIP BEING THE REAR COMING AROUND WITH A SMIDGEN OF GAS. FRONT IS HEROIC.	9	FEELS GREAT IN A CORNER, NOT EVEN TRYING TO PUSH EVEN WITH MORE LEAN. VERY HAPPY.
ACCELERATION GRIP	9	CARCASS MOVEMENT AND SOFTNESS HINDER AFTER 5 LAPS. IMPRESSIVE BEFOREHAND.	9	LEARNING TO PLAY AND EXPLOIT THE THROTTLE AS THERE'S SO MUCH GRIP TO PLAY WITH.
BRAKING STABILITY	9	NOT A GREAT DEAL TO COMPLAIN ABOUT OTHER THAN A FEW SHIMMIES LATER ON.	8	A COUPLE OF KICKS UP FROM THE REAR TEMPERED PERFORMANCE HERE, BUT DISCS STARTING TO GO.
CONSISTENCY	8	YOU COULD MANAGE 10 TRACKDAYS ON A FRONT TYRE. REAR NEEDS SET-UP.	9	VERY CONSISTENT AND WITH NO SURPRISES YOU JUST WANT TO PUSH ON THAT BIT HARDER.
HEAT CYCLE	7	A RACE TYRE THAT'S DESIGNED TO BE DITCHED AFTER ONE SESSION. SAYS IT ALL.	8	NOT QUITE AS COMMITTED THE NEXT MORNING, TEMPERATURES WERE LOWER. STILL GOOD...
OVERALL	9	LAP TIMES WERE RUINED BY HURRICANE DUNLOP BUT STILL AN EPIC TYRE. PROPER.	9	WERE IT NOT FOR THE WIND, WHO KNOWS WHAT THIS TYRE IS CAPABLE OF. EXCELLENT ALLY.