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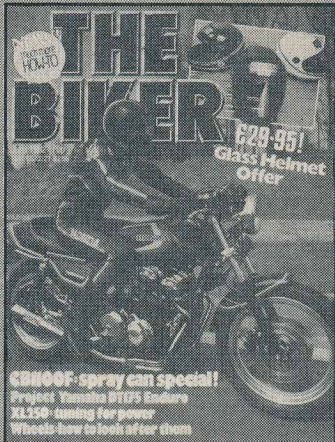
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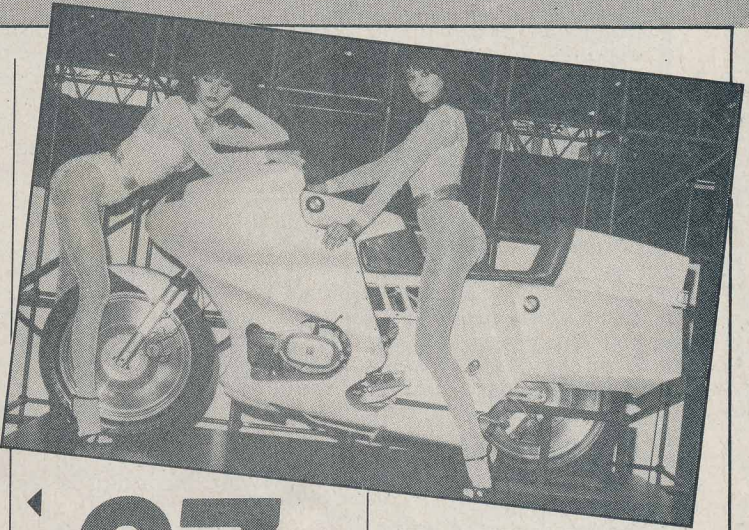
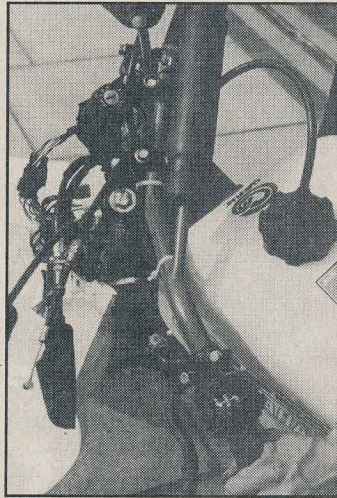


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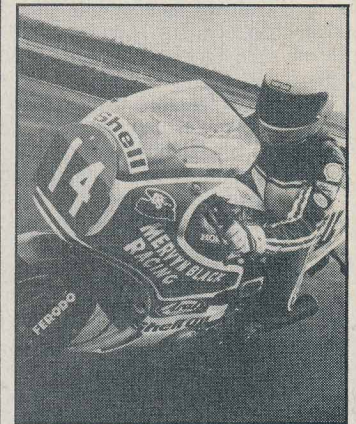
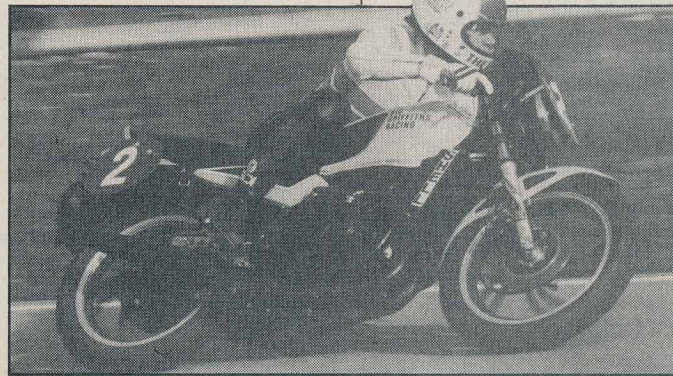
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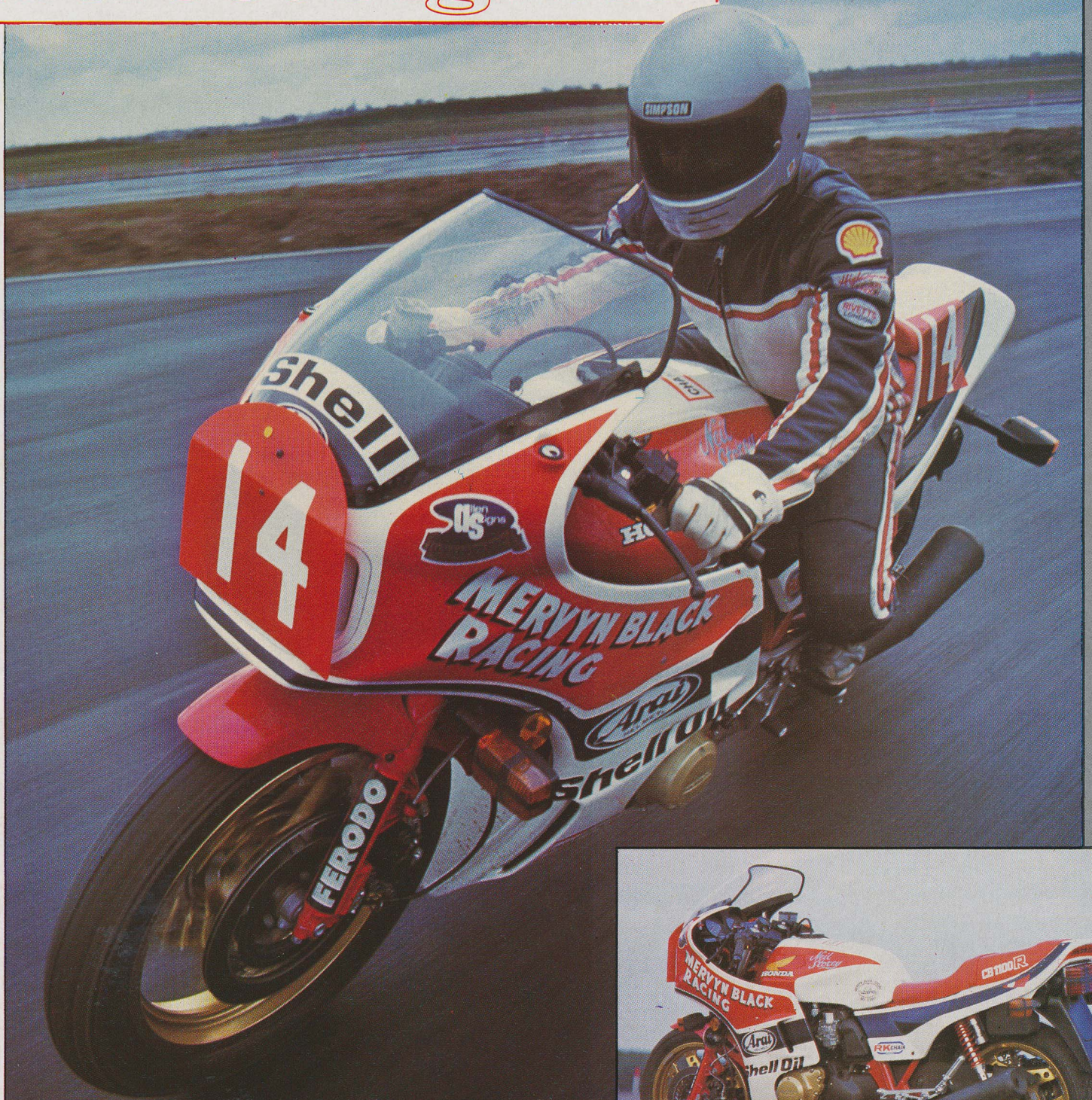
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# The Ultimate Street Fighter



# 144.9mph ... 11.09 standing quarter ... Brian Crichton gets his socks blown off by Honda's '82 CB1100R-C — the fastest factory roadster The Biker has ever tested

**Y**OU won't see many CB1100R race ... er road bikes on public tarmac because (a) they are expensive at £4,250 and (b) they whizz by too fast!

This latest top of the range machine from the world's biggest motorcycle manufacturer looks as though it just rode off the speed bowl at Daytona.

Finished in Honda's red, white and blue race colours it's such a statement of speed that it's hard to think of it primarily as a street bike.

Maybe it's not. Honda may well have conceived it as a race bike first, and a road bike second.

It's certainly proved itself; the '81 version won every round of the new Streetbike series. Perhaps it would have won the Castrol Six-Hour in Australia had it not been banned.

Reason for the ban was because it did not have a pillion seat. Honda have taken a leaf out of MV's book to beat the regulation this year by having a removeable tail section.

This and the new full fairing really cut a styling dash. It broke our hearts not being able to exploit its power and looks to turn heads in public places.

We were stymied because the bike was not registered or taxed. This one is purely used for racing by big bike expert Neil Storey. As you can see

from photos Neil is sponsored by Mervyn Black, a car dealer in Lincoln.

Neil won first time out on the Honda at Mallory's national season opener in March and finished third in the first Streetbike round. The machine is a prime candidate for the '82 Streetbike series in which Neil is hoping to give current champion Ron Haslam and the works Honda a hard time.

A full-time racer, Neil is over the moon with the Honda, rating it much higher than the Kawasaki Z1000J and Suzuki Katanas he rode in production and Streetbike races last year.

## BRAKES

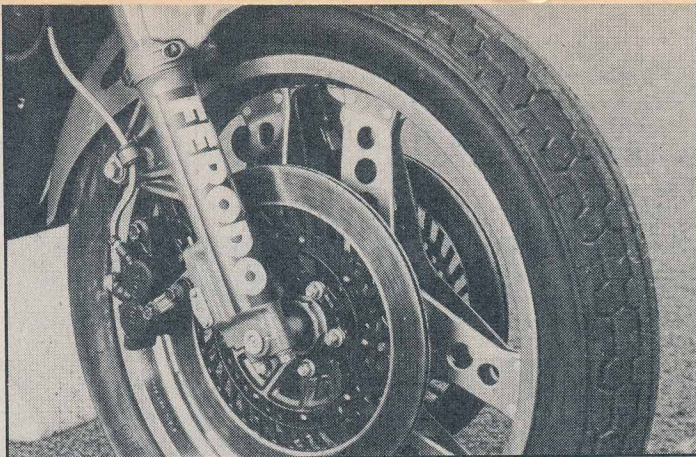
'The handling is fantastic and so are the brakes. After a couple of laps at Mallory the lever pulled into the bar but the brakes were still working hard and it was possible to outrake the Katanas.

'There's no way that Honda can make one of these bikes at £4,250 and sell it for a profit,' declared the Lincolnshire Honda convert.

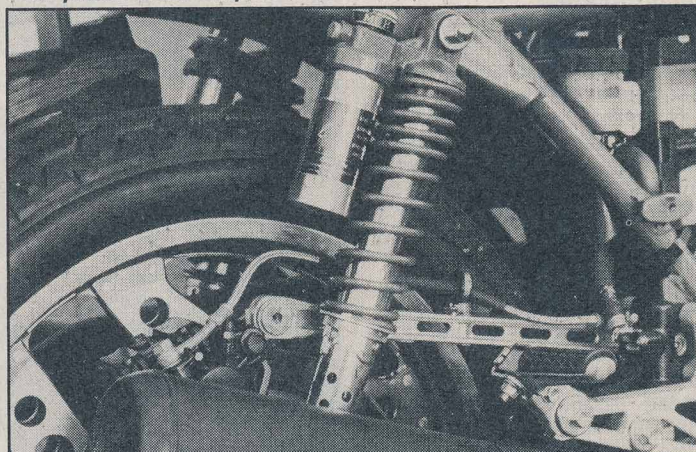
We sampled the Honda's winning ways at the Motor Industries Research Association (MIRA) proving ground near Nuneaton, Warwickshire.

The 1062cc engine fired readily and the choke is handlebar mounted so that you can't miss it.

With its four-into-two matt



Twin piston brake calipers were developed on NR500 GP racer



Progressive spring shocks are drilled for lightness and cooling

black street silencers the machine is very quiet and it ticks over without fuss.

Moving off steadily brought a low speed meander to light. Thinking a steering damper might be the culprit, I searched for one in vain. Later, Neil explained that he liked the head bearings fairly tight and this causes the gentle low speed weave.

At high speeds the machine runs straight and true with a rock-steady, confidence-inspiring feel. The forward-leaning riding attitude suits riders of all sizes. It's also easy to slide from side to

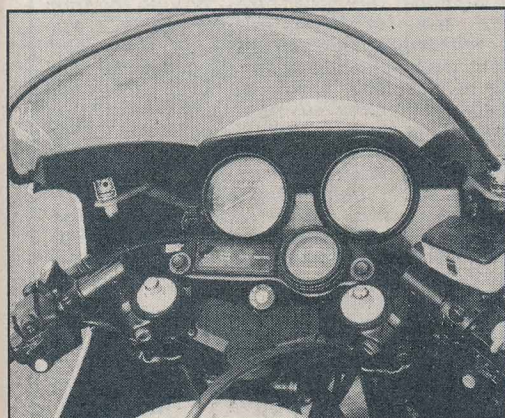
side, duck behind the screen, and generally feel comfortable.

The forks feature four anti-dive settings. They were set on the hardest, proof of the usual pilot's hard braking technique.

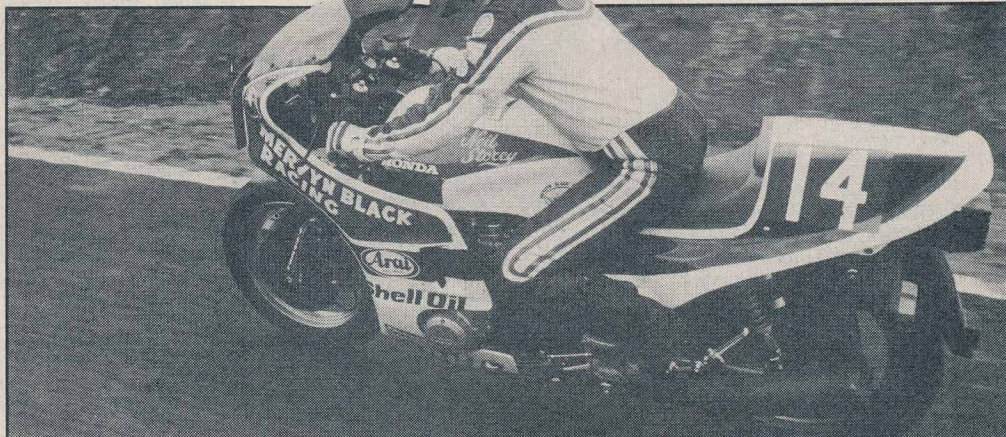
Honda's trick piston calipers grab two ventilated discs at the front and really slow things down. Lack of fork dive under heavy braking gives a remarkable feeling of stability.

To use the brakes really effectively would, I imagine, require a period of adjustment on the part of the rider. Neil confirmed this was the case.

Even with the anti-dive forks the rear wheel, slowed by a single disc, could be



Bars are adjustable, rev counter electronic



# The Ultimate Street Fighter

made to hop. But it stayed in a straight line.

The Honda braking effort is further aided by the use of stainless steel braided Teflon lines rather than the usual rubber type which expand under pressure.

Front wheel for 1982 is a restyled 18in unit which is both smaller and lighter than last year's 19in wheel.

In theory this smaller wheel should make the bike easier to flick in and out of corners, and the front tyre is slightly wider than last year's putting more rubber on the road to increase braking efficiency.

In their quest for the best, Honda have fitted European tyres as standard equipment — Michelin A48 100/90V18 front and M48 130/80V18 rear. These tubeless covers look the part and give excellent high speed stability and cornering.

For the Mallory race Neil tried Dunlop tyres which were slightly wider. Evidence of this was the holed plastic toolbox sited next to the back wheel!

New gas shocks feature four rebound and three compression settings, plus five preload adjustment points. This gives a total of 60 possible settings!

## SPECIFICATION

**ENGINE:** 1062cc dohc 16-valve across the frame four-stroke four with four Keihin CV carburettors. Five speed gearbox, transistor ignition. Claimed power: 115PS at 9000rpm. Claimed torque: 10kg-m at 7500rpm.

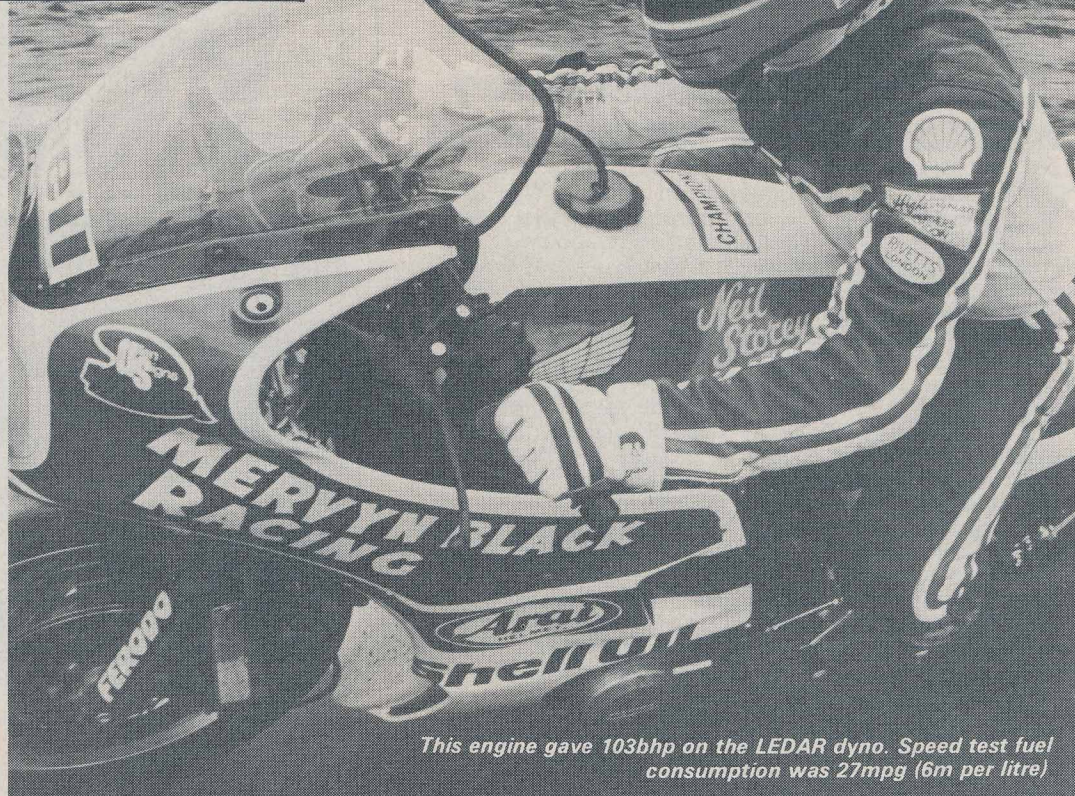
**CHASSIS:** Twin downtube cradle with swinging arm controlled by remote reservoir gas shocks with 4 rebound, 3 compression, 5 preload adjustments. Air assisted 39mm forks with 'Pro Trac' four point anti-dive.

**BRAKES:** two twin piston calipers acting on vented discs front, one twin piston caliper rear. Claimed dry weight 233kg (514lb).

**PRICE:** £4250 inc VAT and car tax. PDI and number plate extra. Warranty: 12 months' unlimited mileage for road use only.

**COLOURS:** Red/white/blue combination only.

**IMPORTER:** Honda (UK) Ltd, Power Road, Chiswick, London W4 5YT.



*This engine gave 103bhp on the LEDAR dyno. Speed test fuel consumption was 27mpg (6m per litre)*

Sturdy 39mm forks have air caps, but surprisingly no link tube. Neil was using 14psi per leg.

## SPEED RUNS

The first run through the timing straight speed trap at MIRA yielded 143.59mph. This machine really is bullet fast.

There was quite a strong tail/side wind which required cranking into the wind to hold it in a straight line.

I saw the needle creep past the 140 mph mark and almost missed the lights as the Honda swallowed the strip in record time as far as The Biker road test machinery goes.

The second run gave 144.90mph. Going that sort of speed on a road bike stimulates the brain cells into a kind of buzz. This machine was so quietly efficient in terms of speed it was awesome.

Mat Oxley couldn't top the timing straight figure, but went out onto MIRA's banked circuit getting a 150mph reading at the end of the longest straight.

Neil went one better by telling us that during some airfield tests he had seen the needle go off the 160mph

clock!

Speedo accuracy was checked at 60mph giving a timed speed of 55.78mph. Accuracy appeared to improve with speed. So with favourable conditions it seems you can expect true speeds over 150mph.

As responsive as a two-stroke the CV carburetted dohc 16-valve engine then showed it could comfortably scorch off consistent low 11-second quarters.

A best of 11.09 seconds showed that it was within a hair of being a 10-second street burner.

Worries over possibly frying the clutch meant a limit on the number of runs. But the temptation to go for a ten was very great.

So was the temptation to find a way to legally get it on the road. Even supposing we could have beaten that legal hurdle, could our licences stand it? Could yours?

## Second Thoughts

When Honda decided to produce the original CB1100R they annoyed a lot of people. Without a doubt the machine went against the whole spirit of production racing but in the long run I feel that they have made the right decision.

Already some of the features to be found on the new CB1100R-C are finding their way onto other bikes in Honda's range. It will take a while longer for the competition to catch up but so long as all the manufacturers are fighting to stay on top it must be good for the average biker.

In many ways that top speed figure is dwarfed by the total excellence of the machine. We've

had other bikes through the trap at speeds nearing the RC's top whack but none of them had braking or handling to match. On the MIRA banking the bike behaved impeccably at the sort of speed that would have other machinery breaking into nasty weaves.

Detail finish is superb. The fairing, footrest brackets, and disc carriers all show the sort of attention to detail that is usually only found on Bimotas and other exotica.

On paper the price may seem to be a little too much but the CB1100R-C is definitely worth every penny. Buy one before they're all gone. **Mat Oxley**