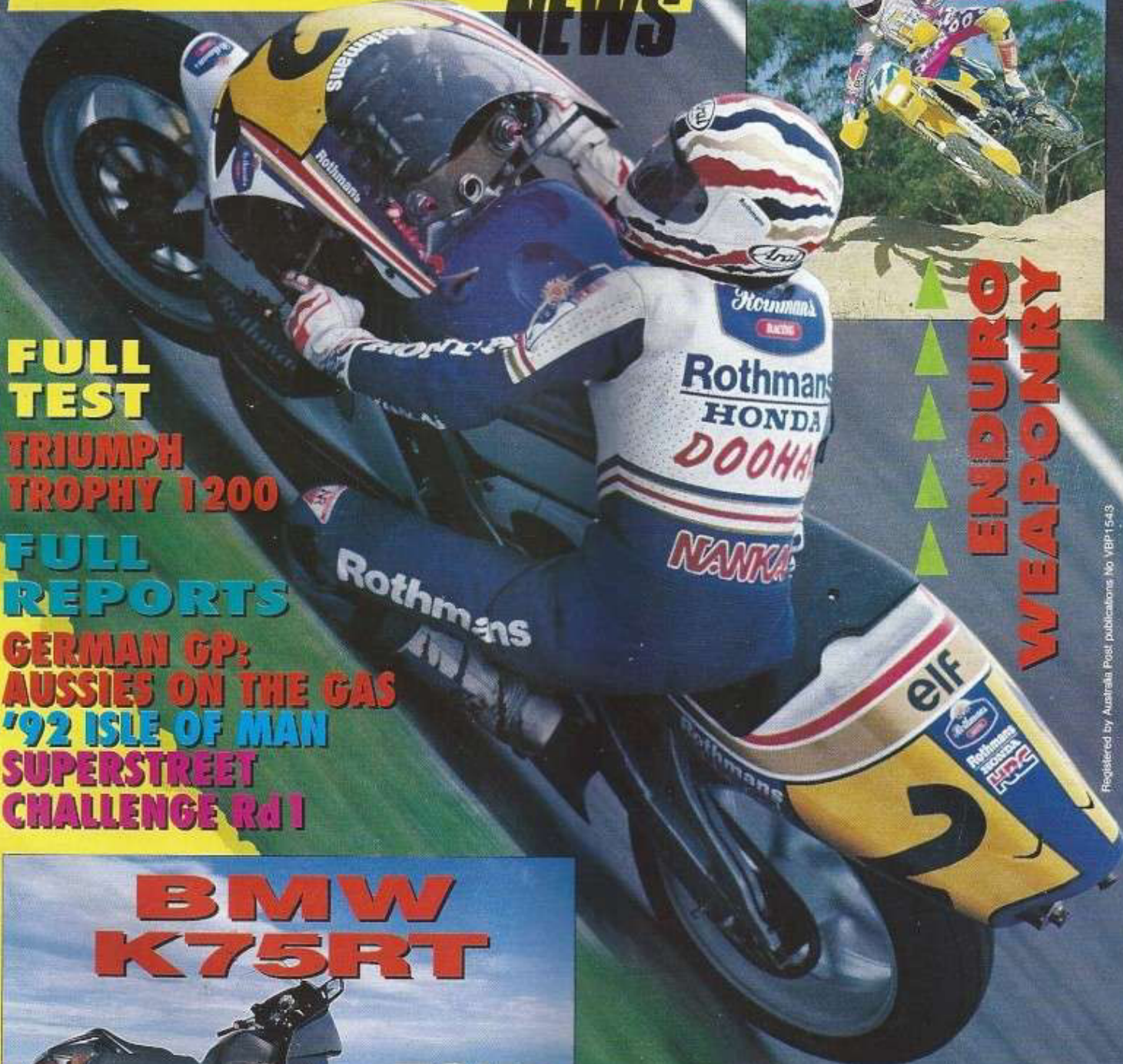
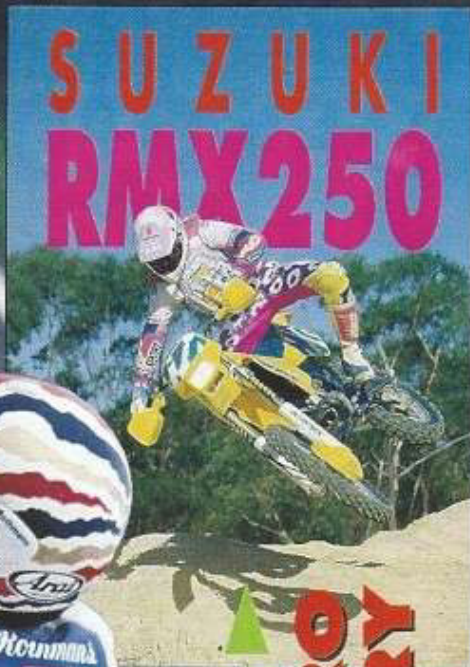


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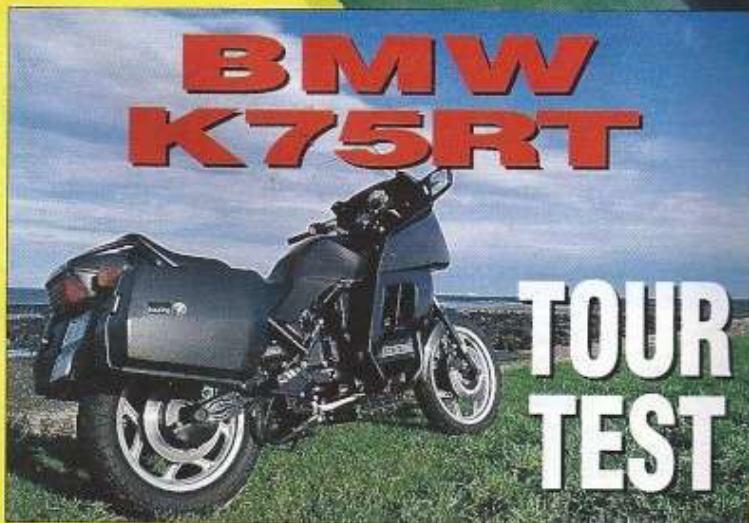
# **MOTORCYCLE NEWS**



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**TRIUMPH TROPHY 1200**

**FULL REPORTS**  
**GERMAN GP:**  
**AUSSIES ON THE GAS**  
**'92 ISLE OF MAN SUPERSTREET CHALLENGE Rd 1**

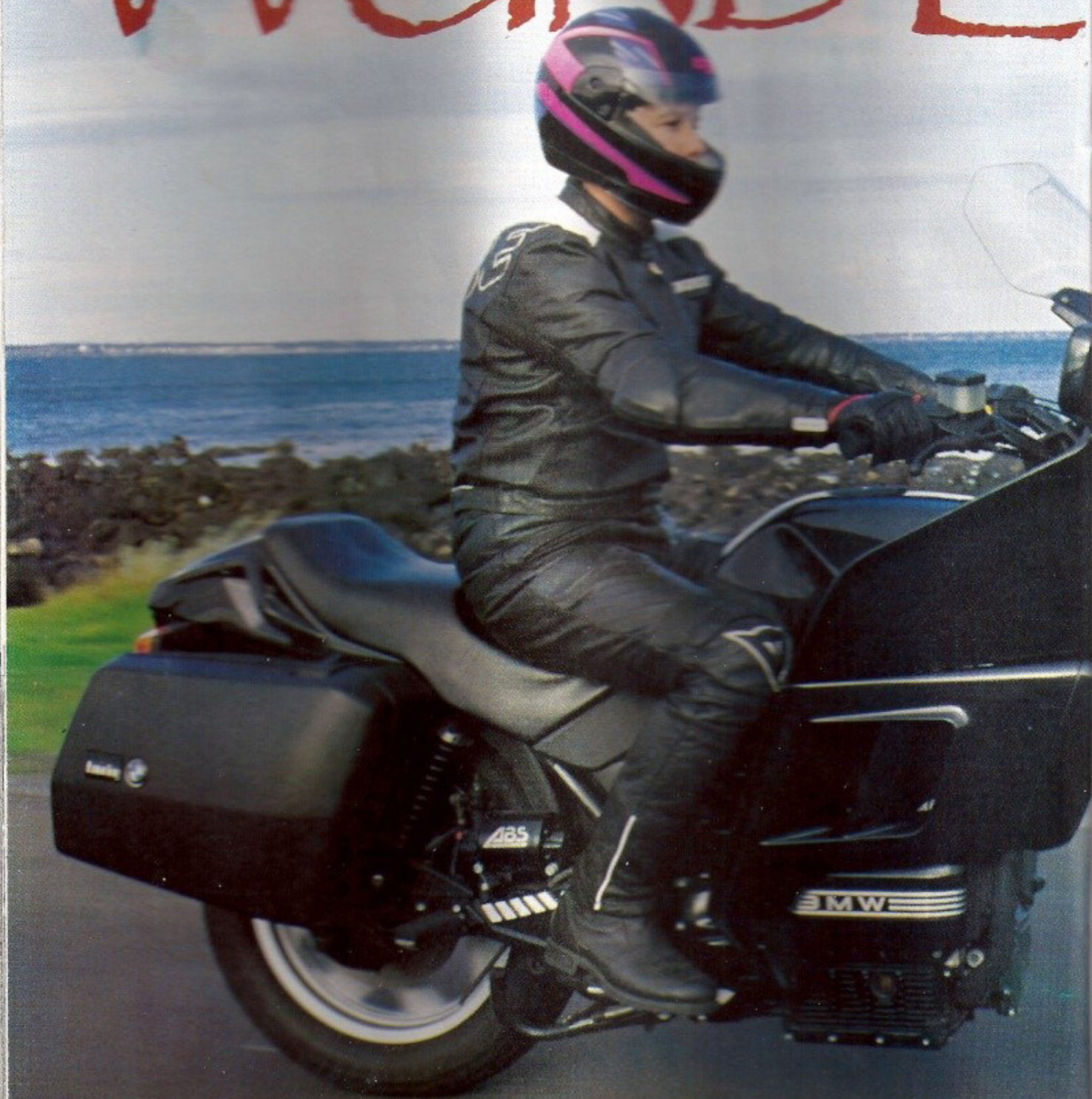
**ENDURO WEAPONRY**



**PLUS THE BALANCE OF POWER: '92 WORLD SUPERBIKE TECH REVIEW**

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# WUNDE



# ARKIND

***At last there is a middleweight alternative for serious tourers — BMW's K75RT. Pettendy unfolds the map and takes up the tale.***

The descending sun was dead ahead. After a quick stop to fill up at Lavers Hill halfway to Warrambool on the Great Ocean Road, we contemplated the daunting distance ahead, then headed back over the other side of the range toward the sea and the last glimmer of daylight.

With Sinkers up ahead setting the pace, the road opened up into some of the most consistently fast sweepers this side of the Adelaide Hills — it was time to open up the taps. The first droplet of rain hit the Beemer's screen as we rounded up the last set of bends that traced the meandering stream on the way out of Princetown.

We were just three hours into our Adelaide jaunt aboard one of BMW's finest — with a Triumph Trophy 1200 along for the ride — and already it was getting dark and beginning to rain. The usual delayed exit from Horror HQ had turned into a ridiculously late departure and what was supposed to be a leisurely road-test, taking in the coastal sights between Melbourne and

# BMW K75RT

Adelaide, was fast turning into a midnight express run in the rain...

But sitting behind the K's superb fairing, none of that mattered. By now it was raining mercilessly and pitch black – neither of which seemed to bother the big RT, whose fairing kept all but the top of my helmet and tips of my boots dry. But just as I was beginning to gloat, thinking of how uncomfortable and wet Sinkers must be aboard the less luxuriously appointed Trumpy, along came the twisties.

Back into caution mode. I tackled the bumpy 25 and 35kmh hairpins with Pirellis slithering, rear-end wallowing and the Trophy disappearing into the distance. Had Sinkers secretly popped some adrenalin pills or did the Bimmer suddenly remember it wasn't on an Autobahn? Guess who was gloating now.

## A MIDDLEWEIGHT FULL-DRESSER

BMW's K75RT hits Aussie shores as the Bavarian marque's smallest representative and the market's only fully-fledged middle-weight tourer – period. With the discontinuation of the K100RT Down Under, it's now also the only full touring alternative to the new K1100LT full-dresser in Oz.



*Above: The little RT's panniers are optional but any self-respecting tourer won't leave home without them. Left: with a fairing like this who needs wet-weather gear!*

Whichever way you look at it, the K75RT is a rare beast. Its closest relative is the K75S, which is identical except for its frame-mounted half-fairing, quarter-inch wider rear wheel (3.00 instead of the RT's 2.75), slightly different (harder) suspension, three-spoke wheels (instead of the RT's Y-spoke items) and the 50mm higher seat. And that's the significant difference – the 75RT is the low-seat touring option to the more sporty 75S.

Engines are identical. Basically a quiet K100 donk minus a cylinder, the RT's water-cooled 740cc three-cylinder mill uses long-stroke 67.0 x 70.0mm bore and stroke cylinders with two valves per horizontal cylinder. A flawless design that spells reliability, efficiency and useability but somehow lacks the inspiration and character of Triumph's new triples.

The 750's chassis is similar to all the K-model lattice-type frames, which run over the top of the single engine/gearbox/swingarm unit, using it as a stressed member rather than routing twin downtubes underneath it as on the R-model Boxers. The only variation here is that the K1100LT, K100RS and K1's trickier Paralever is skimmed in favour of BMW's tried-and-proven Monolever single-sided swingarm.



# BIKE test

That brings us to weight. At a claimed 258kg with a full tank and ready for the road (that's the only figure BMW supplies), this middleweight tourer ain't so middleweight. The K100RS is just 1kg heavier and has a whole cylinder block and almost 250 extra cubes to show for it.

And if you take the K75S's wet and dry weights of 229kg and 211kg respectively, that should put the RT's dry weight at around 240kg. That's still almost 30kg up on the S courtesy mainly of the fairing, different wheels and ABS – a heavy price to pay.

#### **BACK ON THE ROAD**

First impressions of the K75 were predictable. Yes, this is a BMW and yes, the seating position is just like sitting at home in the armchair and yes, the indicator controls are bloody weird at first until you get used to them.

It's worth mentioning all those things that BMW riders take for granted too, like the digital LCD clock, the excellent 16-piece toolkit, tyre repair kit, fold-out lever for centrestand use, hazard light, lockable fairing compartments and one of the loudest horns I've ever heard –

on anything. All motorcycles should a horn like this one ...

Firing up the RT is as easy as any K-series BMW: twist the handlebar-mounted choke around to the first of two positions, thumb the starter with a flick of the throttle and it settles into that characteristic turbine-like hum, every time. A puff of blue smoke can often still accompany this, and is nothing out of the ordinary.

So as Sinkers and I embarked on our round-trip to Adelaide along the Great Ocean Road and Princes Highway and back via the Dukes and Western Highways, he took the Triumph and I was glad to be at the helm of the 'big' Beemer. Dicing through the mid-day traffic isn't the easiest of tasks on a near-260kg fully-faired tourer, not to mention manoeuvring the beast out of the Horror HQ carpark.

No, low-speed handling isn't the RT's forte, but in true BMW tradition the 750 carries its weight well. The low seat, wide bars, good steering lock and fairly standard seating position made for carefree feet-up U-turns, but carving through the traffic even with the relatively narrow panniers was never

going to be easy.

But even in our hectic escape from the city, the Beemer's controls were always easy to locate. By now I'd got used to the painstaking three-switch indicator system, not to mention the primitive headstock-mounted steering lock and everything fell easily to hand even in the thickest of winter gloves.

Even the heavy, car-like single-plate dry clutch was progressive and predictable, making quick getaways at the lights and low-speed clutch fanning a breeze. The BMW's cockpit is up to its usual classy standard, with white-on-black speed/tacho instrument panel integrating well between the excellent mirrors.

Keeping up with Sinkers in the traffic light dash wasn't an easy task, with the 750's mild power delivery being accentuated even more by the long-travel throttle. I should have known better than try to keep up with a big-bore because the Beemer was always going to feel slow in comparison.

That long-travel twist-grip proved perfect for constant open-road cruising, but was deceptively slow around town. Deceptive because every time I looked at the speedo I realised there was no need to give my right wrist such a workout – the ergonomic nature of the RT tended to disguise the fact that we were going plenty fast enough. Besides, keeping up with Sinkers when let loose on one of Triumph's finest would have been a death wish.

#### **IN ITS ELEMENT**

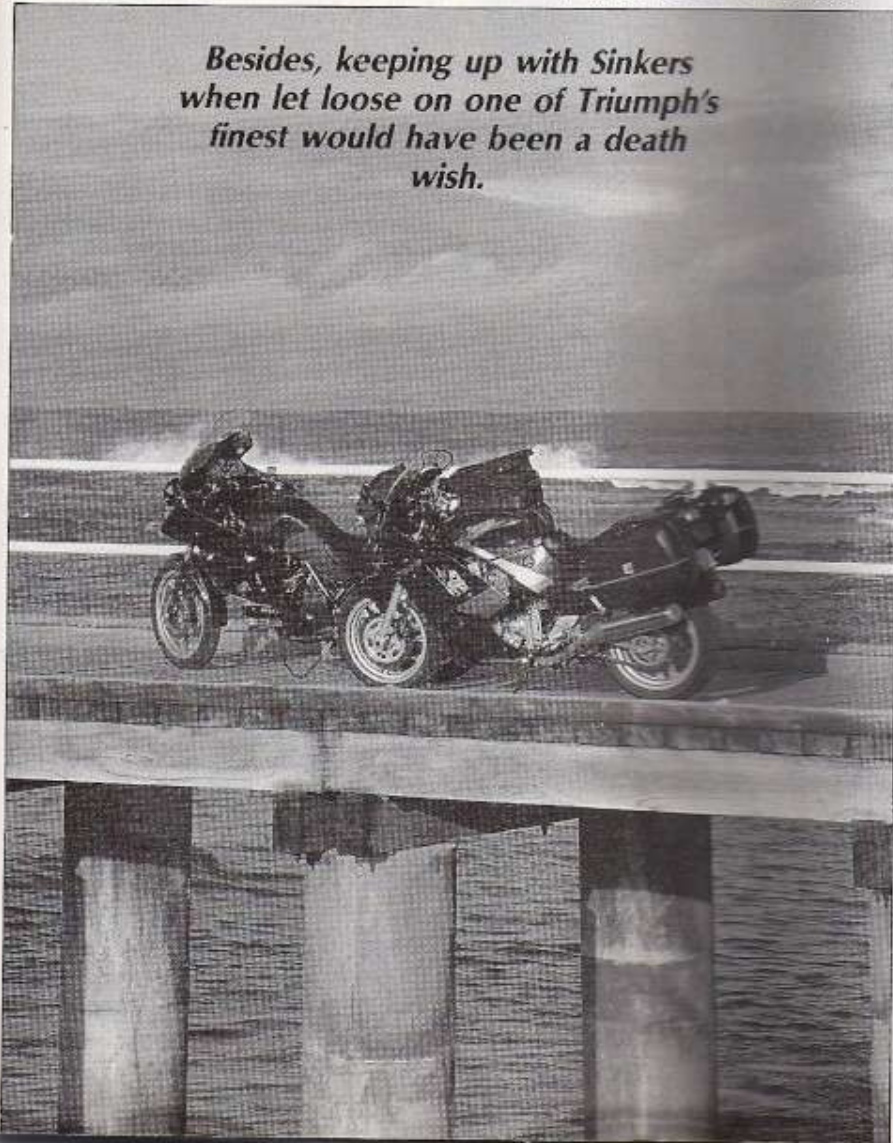
It was really only till we reached the open road that the Bimmer came into its own – I had one of the most comfortable trips down the Melbourne-Geelong Freeway grind ever – and I've had plenty. The tables were turned, the Beemer was in its element and I couldn't wipe the smile off my face.

In a straight line, the BeeEm is a dream. With what has to be one of the best touring fairings ever made, the RT allows wind to clip your boots and the top of your lid – even your hands are sheltered by the mirror/indicator pods and cross-winds were never a problem. Anyone shorter than 170cm or about five feet seven inches will be able to ride all day with their visor up comfortably.

At about 180cm, I needed to crouch a little to keep the wind at bay, but Sinkers had no complaints. One complaint he did have however, was that the edge of the screen always tended to be in his line of sight. No such problem for me and while it's definitely a horses for courses matter, the RT's fairing is up there with the best of them.

*Two of Europe's top tourers catch a few rays before the rain sets in.*

*Besides, keeping up with Sinkers when let loose on one of Triumph's finest would have been a death wish.*



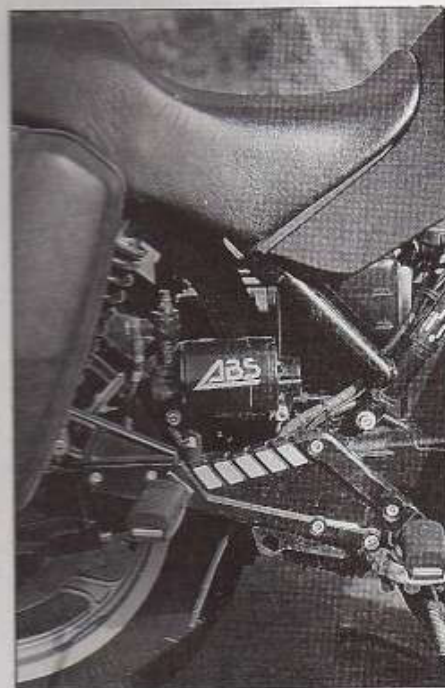
# BMW K75RT

The only other concern for the long-legged may be the legs-inside-or-out fairing edges. Tall riders may find leg-room a little restrictive – even short-arse Sinclair found his legs had to be either inside or outside the fairing, with the edge of it just clipping his knees – just something to get used to.

Nearing the outskirts of Geelong, my backside felt as fresh as it did in the well-shaped saddle when we set out an hour before. I'd initially thought it was too hard, but while the stiffness was still there, it hadn't got any worse. Yeah, maybe it could do with a little more padding, but this one's an easy four-hour seat.

With the last of the metropolis getting smaller all the time in the Beemer's wide, buzz-free (and snap-off to boot) mirrors, the fun was about to begin. At a comfortable 4400rpm in top gear at 100kmh and 4900rpm at 120kmh, the triple's broad spread of power was happy to return speeds of up to 160kmh, before vibes begin to develop – not this baby's forte anyway.

As linear as the power delivery may be, good power is made above 5000rpm or about highway pace. That leaves a useable 3500rpm before the 8500rpm redline, returning an estimated 190kmh top speed. With a



## THE NEW BMW K 75RT - MELBOURNE SUZUKI INVITE YOU TO COME AND TRY ONE FOR SIZE

With this latest BMW tourer now in our showroom, we'd like to invite you to try it for size and take it for a test ride.

Designed and engineered in the mould of the world's finest tourers, the K 75RT will take you any distance with its impressive performance and remarkable versatility.

An integrated low-seat design will keep your feet firmly on the ground when stationary. And while you're moving an Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) will also help you stay upright by preventing wheel lock-up under emergency braking.

The aerodynamic fairing is extremely efficient, and provides outstanding riding comfort as well as good looks. Power from the fuel injected, 750cc triple is responsive and exceptionally smooth.

Come and try one for yourself at Melbourne Suzuki. Once you've ridden a K 75RT, you'll want to keep riding one.

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moderate 75ps on tap at the 8500rpm redline and a maximum of 6.93kg-m of torque produced at 6750rpm, best results are obtained by keeping the tachometer needle in that 5000-7000rpm torque-zone, which equates to average touring speed anyway.

Engine speeds above that 'torque-zone' won't produce much eye-watering acceleration, nor will anything under 5000rpm. But while nature of the mill is well-suited to touring, the 75RT is still a tractable machine in the BMW tradition and will cruise at licence-losing speeds or around town at less than 60kmh in top gear if you ask it to. Remember, these figures are only a guide to where the engine works best – we reckon it's pretty close to the mark for anyone in the market for a mid-capacity tourer.

#### IN THE TWISTIES

With the twisties in sight just the other side of Anglesea, the K had done everything right. Even over smooth 65kmh-signposted bends at over double that speed, the Beemer tracked straight and confidently. Just dial in your required entry speed and tip in –

*Typically efficient BMW cockpit – the ergonomic switchgear grows on you.*

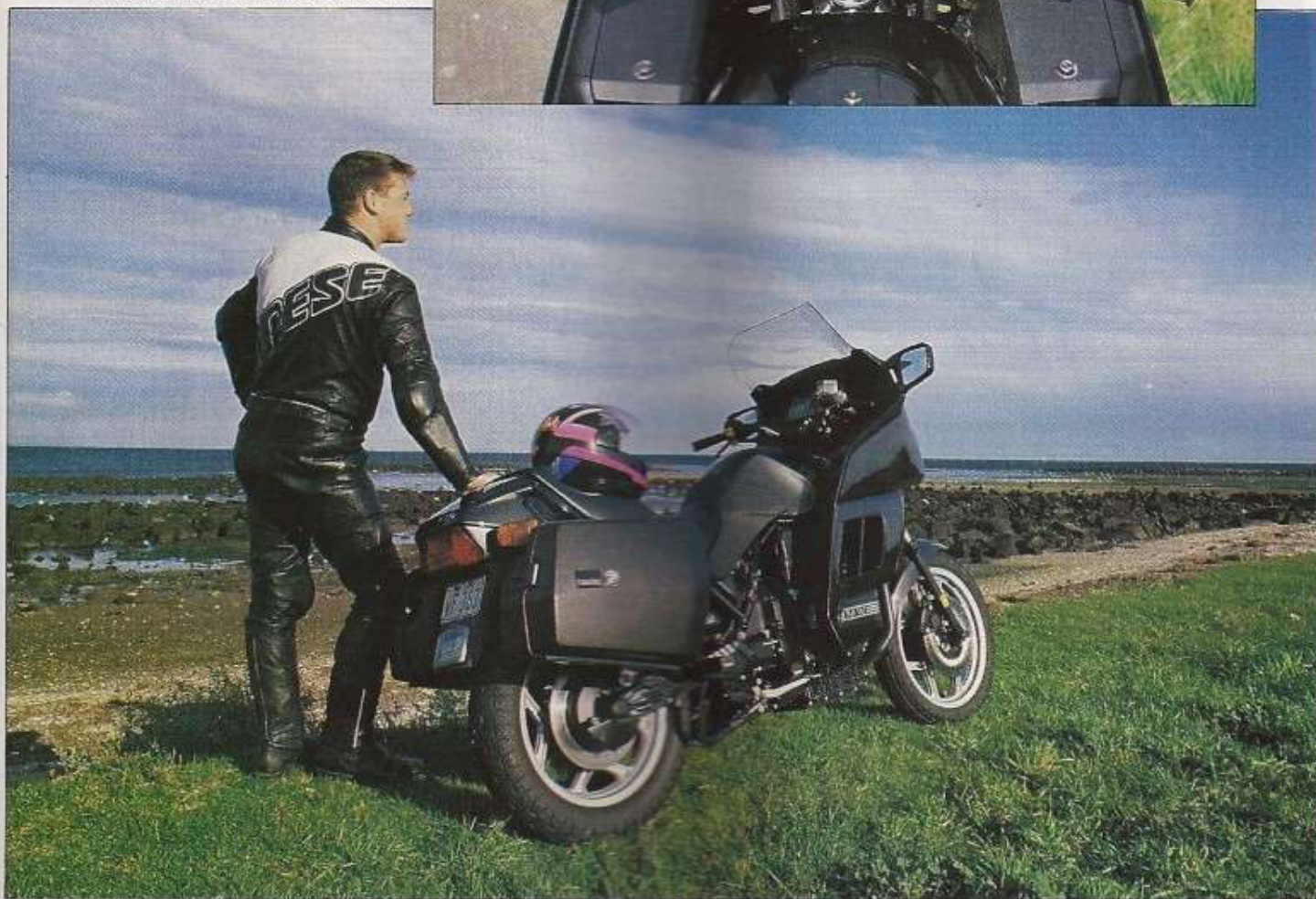
it's that simple. With a fairly long 1516mm wheelbase and quickish steering geometry (26.5 degrees rake, 101mm trail) it should offer the best of both stability and agility – for a tourer, that is.

No shifting around or wrestling the bars – just sit straight up and down in BMW mode and give the bars a nudge. The ease at which the big tourer devoured left-right flip-flops surprised us just as much as how tightly it tracked in high-speed sweepers. Disguising its weight well, changing

lines mid-corner on a 258kg machine has never been so easy – until you hit the bumps.

Obviously, tackling the Great Ocean Road at a reasonable pace isn't within the K75RT's design criteria but anyone who does a bit of touring in this big brown land of ours is bound to encounter the odd bumpy corner or two. And that's where the K75 begins to lack.

Bumpy bends at any reasonable pace saw the back-end become choppy and tend to stand the bike up in ST1100



# BMW K75RT

fashion. Of course, snapping closed or opening up the throttle accentuated the problem and set the non-adjustable Showa front-end off into a mild wallow also. A quick stop at Apollo Bay to bump the rear spring preload in fading light would have probably solved the glitch, except that it was already set on the hardest of three adjustments on BMW's Monolever single-sided shock.

As terrible as all this may sound, it's really just a matter of knowing the Beemer's limit. In its intended use — Autobahn-like smooth straights and sweepers — the Beem'er excels. It's only when the going gets bumpy and you're not ready for it, that it catches you unawares. That's just the way it happens to go round bumpy corners — nothing to worry about because you

## NEVER MIND THE FAIRING, WHAT ABOUT THE INSIDE LEG

**A**t around 170cm I've got a real soft spot for the newest touring Bimmer — and it's all to do with my inside leg.

You see we of the duck's disease brigade like to ride bikes too, and for too long BMW has been one of the manufacturers that have made things a bit hard for us. But for once here's a BMW that I can firmly plant both plates of meat on the frog and toad!

Seriously, while there's not too many bikes I feel uncomfortable on, the combination of a large fairing and high seat can be daunting to many of the less statuesque riders of either gender. And though the low-seat option has been available for some time across the K-series range, it is great to see BMW Australia sticking its neck out and putting a bike on for us shorties.

It changes one's whole outlook on a bike if you're not frenetically tippy-toeing at each set of lights or paddling through some slippery or uneven ground, and that's a big plus to the committed tourers out there. Long stretch seat comfort doesn't seem to be handicapped in the conversion either. So where's the downside?

For taller riders there is some reduction in knee room, but according to our Adelaide man (and lanky streak of pelican shit) Jeff Liebeknecht, the K75RT is no worse than his father's K100RT. Your knees are either in or out!

Seat height aside, the littlest RT is a thoroughly competent medium-duty tourist. It excels at taking you from sunrise to sundown in pouring rain and providing you with as much protection as you can expect on a motorcycle. Add in standard ABS and the prestige that goes with the BMW badge and you've got a viable alternative to the four-cylinder tourers currently available.

If I had to be in Sydney tonight — it's five degrees and pe@rking down outside — it'd be high on my pick list.

Mike Sinclair



Some riders would like to see the existing two-piston set up exchanged for the four-piston Brembos now standard on part of the BMW range.



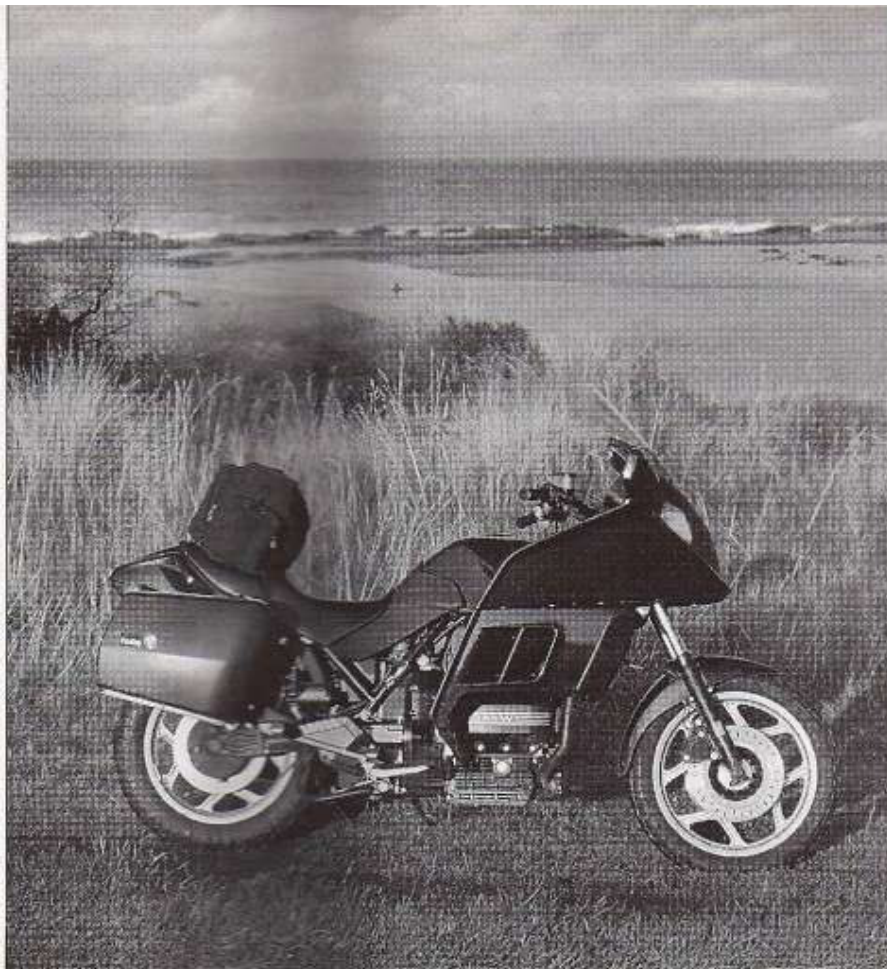


know it won't get out of hand unless you push too hard.

So we persevered into what was now a cold and wet evening, with plenty of miles to rack up before our destination that night, Robe - 140km the other side of the South Australian border. An incident with a bunch of 'roos on the side of the road coming into Millicent, just 80km from Robe, had the RT's adequate (and ABS-equipped as standard) but rather antiquated brakes working overtime.

The Bavarian sports 285mm discs with twin-opposed piston hydraulic Brembo calipers - one at the back, two up front. Kangaroos in the vicinity of Millicent will be glad to learn that they offer ample stopping power, but require plenty of lever pressure and so lack a little in the 'feel' department. Both do feel a little wooden, but still come up with the goods when required. Perhaps BMW's four-piston Brembos would have been a better choice, even for its 'baby' toure?

# BIKE *test*



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- Gearsack is pleased to announce the release of its new **Kawasaki ZZR250 Gearsack** bag and rack. The new luggage system is specifically designed to suit Kawasaki's lightweight, and features:
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130/90 x 17 ME88	\$190

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130/80 x 18 K700	\$155
130/80 x 17 K591R	\$143
150/70 x 18 Sportmax	\$230

### AVON

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120/70 x 17 ST22	\$169
190/50 x 17 ST23	\$295

### IRC

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100/90 x 18 Road	\$87
120/90 x 18 Road	\$95
140/70 x 18 Race	\$163



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# BMW K75RT

The K75RT is the sort of mount that makes any sort of weather bearable, and had it not been for our choice to take the coast road in pouring rain late at night and on less than reassuring tyres, the trip may otherwise have been enjoyable.

Running Pirelli Phantoms front (100/90-18) and rear (130/90-17), the Bimmer never really shone in the road-holding department, particularly in the wet. Our initial observations before we even left Melbourne that the Italian hoops followed road irregularities had by now been confirmed.

And after a late welcome by the Caledonian Inn's proprietor Bernie Hayman at Robe, Sinkers confessed over a couple of medicinal scotches that he was glad I was aboard the 'flat-tracker', as he put it. To be fair, the Pirelli's are quite okay in the dry at sane speeds, but as for shooting the GOR's hairpins in the wet – forget it.

## THE HOME RUN

In an early start, I pulled the clutch-operated stand retractor, selected first from the impressive notch-free gearbox and we were off on the leisurely 340km ride into Adelaide.

After completing the snail's-pace freeway run into the City of Churches from Tailm Bend we filled up, hoping to get at least one 'economy run' fuel consumption estimation. The Bimmer had returned a respectable 20.1km/lt – the best figure yet, having posted a worst of just 14.4km/lt on our high-speed run into Robe the night before, giving an average of around 18km/lt. Not bad at all, except for the pessimistic fuel warning light which is



supposed to come on with 5lt remaining but instead comes on at anything between 220 and 250km or with about 10lt remaining.

It was all too short a stay in Adelaide and before we knew it, it was back to the highway grind. With just eight hours between us and another dreaded deadline, I was glad to back at the Beemer's helm. The lights of Melbourne in our sights at the end of our 'junkie', I'd arrived almost as fresh as when we set out – having been able to notice things other than a burning backside sure makes the trip seem that much shorter.

This tourer may be 'just' a 750, but as far as purpose-built mile-eaters go

*having been able to notice things other than a burning backside sure makes the trip seem that much shorter*

these days, the K75 has to be near the top of the list, big-bore highway blasters notwithstanding. And it's good to see a tourer aimed specifically at the middleweight market – the last one was probably the Honda CX650 Silverwing which we didn't even make it Down Under.

With a superb finish, excellent panniers, options like a top box, tank bag, heated grips, comfort seat, engine bars and a first-aid kit, the BMW tourers remain some of the best integrated packages around – the K75RT is no exception.

And at \$14,950, the smallest BMW is the pick of the bunch for those that want all the luxuries of a big-bore tourer except out-and-out grunt, but don't want to fork-out big-bore biccies.

*Marion Pettendy*

*Pics: Jeff Liebeknecht and Tony Watts*



# BIKE test

## BMW K75RT

### ENGINE

Engine type	Horizontal four-stroke DOHC triple, liquid-cooled, two valves per cylinder
Bore x stroke	67 x 70mm
Displacement	740cc
Compression ratio	10.5:1
Ignition	CDI
Carburation	EFI
Starting system	Electric
Lubrication system	Wet sump

### TRANSMISSION

Type	Five-speed, constant mesh
Primary drive	Gear
Clutch	Dry, cable-operated single-plate
Final drive	BMW Monolever

### CHASSIS AND RUNNING GEAR

Frame type	Tubular space frame with engine as a stressed member
Rake	26.5 degrees
Trail	101mm
Wheelbase	1516mm
Ground clearance	175mm
Front suspension	Non-adjustable telescopic fork, 41mm stanchion diameter, 135mm travel
Rear suspension	BMW alloy Monolever with single coil-sprung, gas damped shock, three-position preload adjustment, 114mm travel
Front/rear wheels	Cast alloy Y-spoke, 2.50 x 18 front, 2.75 x 17 rear
Front/rear tyres	Pirelli Phantoms 100/90-18 front, 130/90-17 rear
Front brakes	Dual hydraulically-operated 285mm discs with twin-opposed Brembo calipers
Rear brake	Single hydraulically-operated 285mm disc with twin-opposed Brembo caliper

### DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

Dry weight (claimed)	n/a
Wet weight (with full tank)	258kg
Seat height (claimed)	760mm
Oil capacity	3.75lit
Fuel capacity	22lit

### PERFORMANCE

Maximum power (claimed)	75ps at 8500rpm
Maximum torque (claimed)	6.93kg-m at 6750rpm
Maximum speed (indicated)	195km/h
Fuel consumption	Best 20km/lit, worst 14.4km/lit, average 18km/lit

### MISCELLANEOUS

Test bike supplied by	BMW Australia, Springvale Vic
Recommended retail price	\$14,950 + ORC (ABS), \$13,750 + ORC (non-ABS)
Warranty	12 months/unlimited km
Colour options	Classic Black Metallic or Red Metallic

### SERVICE AND CRASH GUIDE

(Recommended retail prices)	
Oil filter	\$23.60
Air filter	\$44.01
Fairing screen	\$300.17
Complete fairing	Primed \$574.01, painted \$892.36
Fuel tank	Primed \$945.60, painted \$1227.29
Handlebar	\$119.35
Seat	\$346.92
Indicator (complete)	\$25.72 front/\$44.59 rear
Front mudguard	Primed \$143.89, painted \$264.29
Mirror	\$235.61
Sidecover	Primed \$57.63, painted \$94.34
Brake/clutch levers	ABS \$49.45/\$33.59
Footpeg	\$28.73
Exhaust system — headers	\$635.16
— muffler	\$443.65
Headlight	\$318.60
Brake pads (two sets)	\$130.76

### ACCESSORIES

Engine bar	\$305.62
Panniers	\$507.40

# COME AND SEE THE TWO NEWEST ENTRANTS FROM BMW - THE K 75RT AND BTX MOTORCYCLES



As BMW's newest dealer with BMW's newest touring motorcycle, we're obviously out to impress you. So you're invited to come in and see how BTX and the K 75RT measure up.

This latest BMW is the only motorcycle in its class to be fitted with Anti-lock Brakes (ABS). An invaluable safety feature that will keep the wheels from locking even under the heaviest braking.

And something else that will ensure you stay upright is the low seat design, which keeps your feet firmly on the ground when stationary.

The design of the K 75RT has been carefully integrated to make long distance touring effortless without compromising performance or manoeuvrability.

The fairing provides superb rider comfort, aerodynamic performance and stunning good looks.

And like the rest of the motorcycle, the 3 cylinder, fuel injected, 750cc engine is perfectly balanced.

So why not come in and look it over - and while you're at it, do the same to us.

## BTX Motorcycles



1029 Burwood Highway Ferntree Gully Melbourne VIC 3156  
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