

# MOTORING WORLD

## VW WILL **ROC** YOU

THE BOLD NEW **T-ROC** IS KICKING ITS CAN ALL OVER THE PLACE



To subscribe send a message to 08588843437  
or visit [delhipress.in](http://delhipress.in)

Send a message to the above number to avail the next 'E-edition free'.



BMW X6

HERO XTREME 160R

VW TIGUAN ALLSPACE

LAND ROVER DISCOVERY SPORT



JAWA 250 & BAJAJ DOMINAR 250  
WHAT'S A QUARTER-LITRE BIKE TO DO?

# BUY | SELL | EXCHANGE

FEEL IT LIVE AT BIG BOY TOYZ



## Gurgaon Headquarters

Plot No. - 134, Sector 37  
Pace City - 1, Gurgaon  
Haryana - 122001

## Hyderabad Studio

Shangrila Plaza, Road No. - 2  
Banjara Hills, Hyderabad  
Telangana - 500034

## Mumbai Studio

7, Hubtown Sunmist, Solaris  
Telli Galli, Andheri East  
Mumbai, Maharashtra - 400053

[www.bigboytoyz.com](http://www.bigboytoyz.com)  
[sales@bigboytoyz.com](mailto:sales@bigboytoyz.com)  
(+91) 9999 9999 83  
(+91) 124 466 6666

21 years of Motoring fun

**Editor, Publisher & Printer**

Paresh Nath

**Executive Editor**

Pablo Chaterji

**Managing Editor**

Kartik Ware

**Associate Editor**

Aditya Upadhyaya

**Features Writer**

Janak Sorap

**Assistant Web Editor**

Saurabh Gamare

**Consultants**

Kyle Pereira

Varad More

**Contributor**

Alan Cathcart (Motorcycles)

**Assistant Designer**

Pranita N Mayekar

**Photographer**

Kaizad Adil Darukhanawala

**EDITORIAL, ADVERTISEMENT & PUBLICATION OFFICE**

**Delhi Press,**

E-8, Jhandewalan Estate, Rani Jhansi Marg,  
New Delhi-110 055,

Phone: 41398888, 23529557-62 Fax: 91-11-23625020

Email: advertising@delhipress.in

For editorial submissions and queries, write to:

**MOTORING WORLD - Delhi Press,**

A4, Shriram Estate, Wadala, Mumbai - 400031,

Phone: 65766302, 65766303,

E-mail: motoringworldmag@gmail.com

**For subscription contact:**

subscription@delhipress.in or  
visit <http://delhipress.in/subscribe>

Subscription should be remitted through money orders, cheques/ bank drafts drawn in favour of Delhi Prakashan Vitran Private Ltd., at E-8, Jhandewalan Estate, Rani Jhansi Marg, New Delhi - 110 055

**COPYRIGHT NOTICE:** © Shobhika Media Private Ltd., New Delhi-110055, India. All materials published in this magazine (including, but not limited to articles, quotations, extracts, or any parts of the article, photographs, images, illustrations also known as the "Content") are protected by copyright, and owned by Shobhika Media Private Ltd.

You may not modify, publish, transmit, participate in the transfer or sale of, reproduce create new works from, distribute, perform, display, or in any way exploit, any of the Content in whole or in part. This copy is sold on the condition that the jurisdiction for all disputes concerning sale, subscription and published matter will be settled in courts/forums/tribunals at Delhi.

Printed, Published and Edited by Paresh Nath on behalf of **Shobhika Media Private Limited**

at E-8, Jhandewala Estate, New Delhi-110055.

Printed by **PSPC PRESS PVT. LTD.**

50 DLF Industrial Area, Phase-I, Faridabad, Haryana 121003.

Follow us on



A member of



## RIGHT SAID ED



**PABLO CHATERJI**

**Executive Editor**

pablo.chaterji@delhipress.in

## What's in a number?

The figures are in. After months of despair and gloom, the sun appears to have decided to peek from behind the clouds, and the automotive industry is celebrating — well, at least some constituents of it are, anyway. Maruti Suzuki, the behemoth, said it had sold over 1 lakh units last month, a figure merely 1.1 per cent less than July 2019; sales of the Alto and S-Presso jumped considerably, as did UV sales. Hyundai was positively dancing in the aisles; it moved close to 40,000 units in the domestic market, with models like the Venue, the updated Verna and the Nios doing well, and the new Creta racing its way to the top of the charts — it sold over 20,000 units, has over 55,000 bookings and, in the dire months of May and June, was the best and 2nd-best-selling vehicle in the country respectively. Homegrown brands also had reason to smile.

The all-new models in Tata Motors' lineup have clearly helped it, and it sold 15,000 units, led by cars like the Altroz and Nexon; this number is a very healthy 43 per cent year-on-year increase. Although Mahindra's 11,025-unit sales figure was down on last year's number, it was still a huge jump over sales in June, and demand for its vehicles appears strong in semi-urban and rural areas. Kia, for its part, seems almost immune to the COVID effect. It has sold over 1 lakh vehicles in India since its debut less than a year ago, and in July it sold over 8500 units of the Seltos and Carnival, no mean feat given that neither model is exactly

entry-level. Renault registered an astronomical 75.5 per cent year-on-year leap, and the Triber continues to sell very well.

Other manufacturers — Honda, Toyota, MG, Ford et al — have done middling to good numbers, and even though not all have shown positive year-on-year growth, I'm sure they will gratefully accept pretty much any number that pops up, in the current circumstances. The two-wheeler giants aren't doing too badly for themselves either. Hero MotoCorp shipped well over 5 lakh units last month, which is only about 4 per cent off its numbers a year ago; TVS sold about 1.9 lakh units, roughly 9 per cent less than July 2019.

What does all this indicate? One view is that the market is on a path of positive course correction, and thus that the industry will only keep expanding from here. The other is that the July numbers reflect pent-up demand from April to June, and that it may be too early to take a call on whether this is a definite upward trend. I'm of the latter view, but of course I also hope I'm wrong — the health of the industry affects everything we do as automotive journalists, and it would be very nice to be able to get back to bringing you the Motoring content you're here for, full-tilt boogie. Enjoy the issue.



MORRIS GARAGES  
Since 1924

**INTRODUCING**  
**THE ALL NEW 6-SEATER**  
**HECTOR**  
**PLUS**

**WITH NEW EXTERIORS AND INTERIORS**



Contact us @ 1800-100-6464

Book your **MG HECTOR PLUS** today across our 200+ safe and sanitized centres | Log on to [www.mgmotor.co.in](http://www.mgmotor.co.in)

# IT'S A HUMAN THING TO RESPECT EACH OTHER'S PERSONAL SPACE

In a shared world, where we share moments and journeys with others, it's only human that sometimes we crave for our own space. Introducing **MG Hector Plus** that gives you the luxury of extra space, even if you are not in the driver's seat. So that while you may share the journey, you can celebrate your personal space too.

## INTRODUCING



2<sup>nd</sup> ROW CAPTAIN SEATS



SMART SWIPE - FOOT  
ACTIVATED AUTO TAILGATE



3<sup>rd</sup> ROW SEATING  
FOR CHILDREN



LATEST i-SMART  
INCLUDING CHIT-CHAT™

Starting at  
₹13,48,800 (Petrol)\* & ₹14,43,800 (Diesel)\*

Special Introductory Price Till 13<sup>th</sup> August

Post 13<sup>th</sup> August – Prices To Go Up By Upto ₹50,000

## BOOK NOW



COMPLETE OWNERSHIP  
ASSURANCE

5 Years/Unlimited km  
Warranty<sup>c</sup>

5 Years/Unlimited km  
Road Side Assistance

5 Labour Free  
Services<sup>#</sup>

- Best In Segment Cost Of Ownership<sup>o</sup> | @₹0.45/km: Petrol<sup>o</sup> | @₹0.60/km: Diesel<sup>o</sup>
- Industry Best Maintenance Plans Starting at ₹8000 for 3 years<sup>oo</sup>
- 3-60 Plan: Assured Buy Back value of 60% after 3 years at an attractive price<sup>ooo</sup>

Follow us on: [www.mgmotor.co.in](http://www.mgmotor.co.in) [f @mgmotorin](https://www.facebook.com/mgmotorin) [@mgmotorin](https://www.instagram.com/mgmotorin) [in @mgmotorindia](https://www.linkedin.com/company/mgmotorindia) [@mgmotorin](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmgmotorin) [@mgmotorin](https://www.twitter.com/mgmotorin)

<sup>o</sup>The vehicle only supports pre-defined and pre-fed commands and responses. <sup>c</sup>Ex-showroom New Delhi; <sup>e</sup>For commercial use cars, coverage upto 5 Years/1.5 Lakh km. The warranty coverage for 12V/48V battery, tyres is valid for 1 year, while for infotainment system is valid for 3 years. T&C apply <sup>#</sup>For first 5 scheduled services <sup>o</sup>Segment defined by comparable models <sup>^</sup>Above is calculated upto 1 Lakh km of preventive maintenance in Delhi-NCR and includes parts, consumables, labour, taxes <sup>oo</sup>Only for private vehicles <sup>ooo</sup>This is applicable only for private registered vehicles. Powered by **CarDekho** Contact your nearest MG dealer for specific package details and T&C. Product shown is for representation purposes only and may vary from actual product due to print paper quality. All features and specifications as shown may not be standard across all variants. Prices shown are for base variants. Variants are subject to availability.





70

**Short Shift**  
**Hero Xtreme 160**  
 Unsung Hero



76

**Tank Slapper**  
**Bajaj Dominar 250 VS**  
**Jawa 250**  
 Close Quarters



84

**Lean Angle**  
**Yamaha YZR250**  
 Smoke Signals

- 64 **Kitbag**  
Baggin' It
- 65 **Talk Wrench**  
Right 'n' Tight
- 66 **Smoking Lounge**  
Blue Smoke
- 68 **The Grapevine**  
In The News

- 82 **Short Shift**  
TVS NTorq 125  
Scoot Over
- 90 **Tank Slapper**  
HDT Customs's  
KTM 390 Adventure  
Spoke Up

**IN CONCLUSION**

- 94 **SURVIVORS**  
Garage Band
- 98 **'Bar Talk**  
Nuts And Volts

# WRITE HAND DRIVE



## Here's what our Instagram-enabled monkeys have been up to with their opposable thumbs...

### Instant Gratification

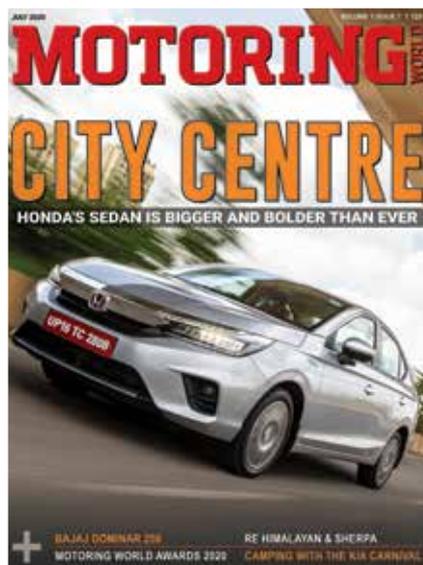
I got my July 2020 issue of *Motoring World* a little late this time, but boy was that wait worth it. Reading Alan's in-depth review of the Yamaha RZV500R alone was worth it, but little did I know there were plenty more surprises waiting in the issue.

Being an engineer by profession, I am always fascinated by heavy machinery and one of my favourite stories in this issue is the visit to the JCB factory. The way these

machines reshape all sorts of terrain is just plain impressive for me. I've read all about it when it was first published, but seeing it again in the issue takes me back! I also enjoyed the photos of the Kia Carnival doing what it does best, too. It's definitely worth keeping in mind in these times of social distancing!

**Sumit K**

*Sorry for the delay, we're back on track for this issue and we hope you enjoy the selection of stories we put together this time around.*



### City Dweller

Normally, I don't really care much for what comes in the mail. It's usually bills or more bills, but once a month, the mail carrier does bring something amazing to my doorstep. I always look forward to reading *Motoring World* in its entirety, but this time, though, I've headed straight for the Honda City story because it's most relevant to me at the moment. I promise I'll read everything else, too.

I've already read about the new City in *Motoring World* earlier, but it

always feels better to read the story when the car actually launches. I've been toying with the idea of getting myself a sedan, and till now, the Maruti Suzuki Ciaz or the Hyundai Verna were my frontrunners. With the arrival of the new City, I think I know now what I'm going to get.

**Anil M**

*This is a great time to buy a sedan, Anil. All the choices in the segment are so good that you can't go wrong with what you choose.*



**REWIND/PLAY**  
1966 FORD BRONCO/  
2021 FORD BRONCO

# HORSING AROUND

With the sixth-generation Bronco, Ford revives a classic nameplate

**FORD BRONCO**

1966

**THEN**



- To compete with off-road-ready competition from Jeep and International, Ford introduced the Bronco in 1966.
- Just like the Mustang which came a year before it, the Ford Bronco quickly became a sales success and an automotive icon.
- Ford wasn't new to the utilitarian-off-roader game and the Bronco can trace its roots back to the GPs that Ford built during World War II.
- As soon as it was launched, enterprising privateers used the Bronco as a base and built off-road racers to compete in the Baja 500 and Baja 1000. Later, dealers offered these modifications in a dealer-installed package known as the Baja Bronco.
- At a time when the rest of the American auto industry was downsizing, the second-generation Bronco grew considerably and was now a full-sized SUV. With market conditions changing, there wasn't much demand for a two-door SUV anymore and the Bronco was finally put to bed in 1996 after a five-generation and 30-year-long run.

**NOW**

- After a 25-year hiatus, Ford officially revived the Bronco name as a sub-brand with three new models. Though they are completely new vehicles, the four-door and two-door Broncos share their chassis with the Ford Endeavour that's on sale in India.
- Apart from the hardcore off-roaders, the Bronco range now also features the smaller Bronco Sport, which is a more road-biased SUV. Even though the Bronco Sport is a 'soft roader' it still comes with a built-in inverter and the ability to attach a tent to the roof. You could take it overlanding, if you so choose.
- Like the Jeep Wrangler it goes up against, the Bronco is also full of Easter eggs like the word 'Bronco' hidden throughout the interior of the car and the start/stop button mimicking the headlights.
- It takes more than just Easter eggs to dethrone the Wrangler, though, and the Bronco hopes to do that with its Sasquatch package which comes with 35-inch tyres and locking differentials, front and back, to give it some serious off-road ability.
- With the Bronco, the Jeep Wrangler finally has some formidable competition, which is better for off-road enthusiasts everywhere. ■

**FORD BRONCO**

2021



**FAST**  
**DONKERVOORT**  
**D8 GTO-JD70**

# HAPPY RETURNS

Donkervoort gives us a present on its founder's 70th birthday



For the past nine years, the Donkervoort D8 recipe has pretty much remained the same — take Colin Chapman's lightweight mantra and add more power to it. The JD70, named for its founder Joop Donkervoort's 70th birthday, takes this to the extreme. It's essentially a tubular chassis strapped to an engine, and if that wasn't lightweight enough, carbon-fibre and kevlar have been used judiciously to push the limits on adding lightness as well. You can spec the D8 GTO to weigh under 700 kg!

In a car this light, any engine would provide impressive performance, but in this particular version, Donkervoort uses a manic Audi-sourced 2.5-litre five-cylinder engine that makes 415 bhp and 53.09 kgm. For those keeping count, that's a power-to-weight ratio of 592 bhp/tonne — more than the Bugatti Veyron, the Pagani Huayra and the Porsche 918 Spyder. How fast is it? It is rear-wheel drive and a smidge limited by traction, but it manages a 2.7-second 0-100-kph run, and is almost a tenth of a second quicker than a Porsche 992 Turbo S. And

its top speed of 280 kph isn't too shabby, either.

Obviously, it's not just a straight-line missile. Cars like the Donkervoort aren't about outright speed, but about the handling and chassis balance, too. To help with this, the JD70 has electro-mechanical steering, adjustable springs and adjustable anti-roll bars on both axles. All of this kit helps it pull 2G of lateral acceleration through corners. That's certainly enough to get you your daily dose of adrenaline. Does it come with candles to blow out as well? ■

**COOL  
HOT STUFF**

# 'ROUND THE CLOCK

Casio's got a new range of watches for you

## What Are They?

Casio's new lineup of timepieces — the G-shock, Baby-G, Edifice and Sheen. One for every possible occasion.

## Why Are They Cool?

We don't have to tell you why the G-Shock is cool, but we'll try anyway. The GM-6900 series G-shock, for example, is shock-resistant and will most likely outlast all your other consumer electronics. What's more, it's available in shiny gold with red and silver colour options as well. The super-slim

series by Edifice now gets a phone finder feature along with a scratch-resistant sapphire crystal. If you'd like some more bling on your wrist, the Sheen range has Swarovski crystal-studded watches for you. There's also the G-MS by Baby-G with its sharp bezels and simple design.

## Are They Expensive?

This new range of watches from Casio starts at ₹ 8,995. For something that will last you a lifetime that's not a bad deal at all!



# TAKE AIM

These are Canon's best-ever mirrorless shooters



## What Are They?

The EOS R5 and R6 are Canon's latest mirrorless cameras that are terrific at capturing both stills and videos.

## Why Are They Cool?

We can't stress enough that the R5 shoots 30p video in 8K! And with a huge buffer size, the R5 can shoot up to 180 RAW images at 20 frames per second before it slows down! This gets Canon's 45 MP CMOS sensor with 5-axis in-body image stabilization. In addition to that, it also gets a 57.6 lakh dot electronic viewfinder and Canon's

Dual Pixel II 100 per cent coverage auto-focus system. There's plenty more specs to talk about, but if you're overwhelmed already, there is also the new EOS R6, which has a 20.1 MP sensor and can shoot in 4K.

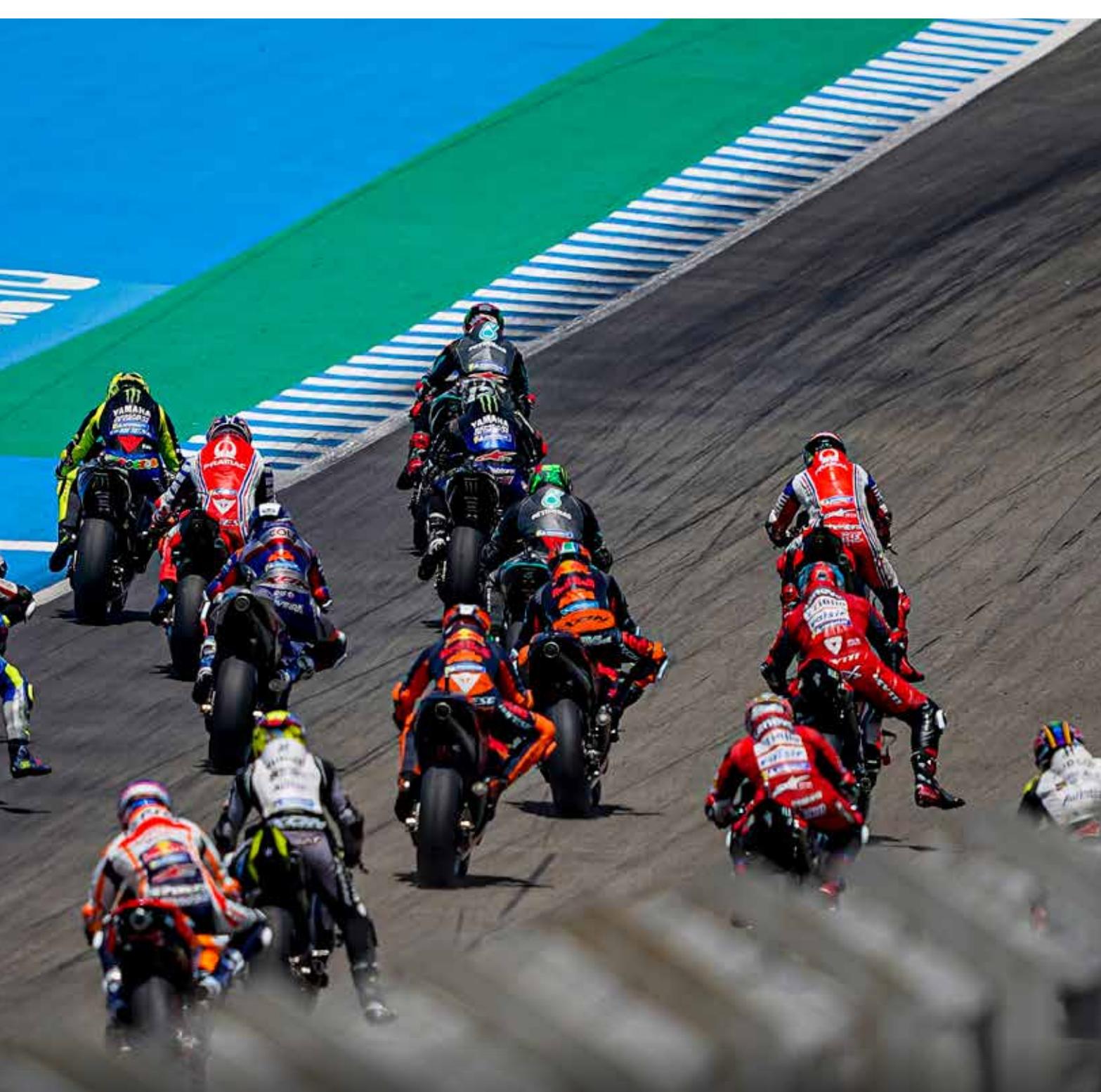
## Are They Expensive?

The EOS R5 body retails at ₹ 3.4 lakh, and the EOS R6 goes for a more reasonable ₹ 2.16 lakh, again just for the body. If you're already invested in the Canon EF ecosystem and are looking for a mirrorless option, look no further than these two! ■

**LUST**  
MOTOGP 2020



# FLYING START



Look at that sight, the best riders in the world charging towards turn 1 at Jerez de la Frontera in Spain. Even with a severely curtailed season, MotoGP dished out drama from the very first race. Marc Marquez broke his arm, scoring zero points in two races. Fabio Quartararo was hailed as the next superstar, winning both the opening races. Maverick Vinales is determined to not let his future teammate have his way, but came up short in second place twice. The KTMs are a huge improvement, Brad Binder proving his worth even if his results didn't quite reflect the promise. Suzuki is waiting to get going. Two factory Ducatis ridden by two men who know that the factory doesn't want them all that

much. The satellite Pramac Ducati team with young riders whose stock is rising fast. And, of course, the oldest dog of them all, Valentino Rossi, whom everyone else wants to be. The grandstands are empty and the season is only 13 races long, and even that might be cut short if the pandemic catches a second wind. Of course, racing motorcycles at 300 kph is the only risk worth taking. Perhaps that's why, as the red lights went out at the first race at Jerez, it already felt like a win for everyone, those on the bikes and those screaming at screens around the world. When bikes are racing, all's right with the world, masks be damned. ■

## BEHIND THE SINS THIS IS HOW WE DO IT

### BLUE PILL

How cool is this thing?! According to alarmed Internet citizens, the birth of artificial intelligence is around the corner; countries are sending better-than-ever rockets into space again; all current-day genres of music are now well past my understanding; everything that The Simpsons predicted has come to pass — and yet, here stands a brand-new moped. A good idea is hard to get rid of, even if no other manufacturer seems to want to build a rival to the TVS XL. I wonder why; just look at how cool it is!

A 21st-century moped might sound like an unlikely thing, but with fuel-injection and BS6-compliance, that's exactly what the XL is. And in that colour combination, it looks great, enough for people to stare and ask questions about it. Given the way it looks and feels, I don't think the questions will stop anytime soon. As for why I would think of asking TVS for a moped (though the XL's website doesn't call it that. It doesn't call it anything), I want to see what it's like living with a machine that's in a class of one. And find out firsthand how that tiny motor's 4.33 bhp writes the millions of everyday stories it does wherever it goes.

**Reventón**



### HINDSIGHT

It's been a few days since the Land Rover Discovery Sport went back, and I still can't get over how amazing its interior rear-view mirror is. The technology itself isn't groundbreaking, really. Some cars have already integrated screens into the rear-view mirror to display a feed from a camera at the back when reversing. And other cars can display a constant feed from the rear camera to the infotainment screen. It's the way Land Rover has packaged it so seamlessly that gets me. There is no lag from the camera feed and the display is super-high resolution. I thought this system would surely fail me under the lowlights of night, but nope, same great image quality. Now everytime I look at the rear-view mirror in another car, I'm reminded of what it could have been!

**Estoque**



## VEGA MEMORIES



While sitting around during the last four months, experiencing a real-life Groundhog Day, I've been thinking about the myriad of adventures I've had at MW since 2003. An Instagram post by a colleague at another media outlet, about a Facel Vega, put me in mind of the time I managed to snag some time in one, on a glorious autumn day in Paris. It was no ordinary car, either – it had an insanely

extra-powerful engine, and was the only one of its kind around, if I remember correctly. The way the light glinted off its stunning shape, the delicious burble from its engine and its kick-in-the-pants power are things I remember clearly to this day, and I hope I won't have to wait for too much longer to be able to have these experiences again.

**Gallardo**



## INSTANT CRUSH

It was one of those days when you forget that you have your own bike and are awestruck by another one. Only, the other one is a pristine time capsule, while you've been socially distancing from yours for a long time. This month brought a finely-restored Jawa two-stroke, and never had I ridden one so intact and original. It made an impact, reminding me of what old motorcycles can offer if given all the love and care they deserve. I think it's time to get my Jawa out of its extended hibernation soon and get around to smoking the streets again.

**Bizzarrini**

# GRINDING GEARS

ADITYA UPADHYAULA  
@heelntoe



There's no easy way to do this, so I'll just go ahead and say it — I think the days of the manual transmission are numbered. Now, before you pick up your pitchforks and come at me, I'd like to point out that this isn't exactly a new trend. Like most trends, it started at the upper echelons of the market and trickled down to the cars we buy. These days, it's a product-planning blunder if a car makes it to the showrooms without an automatic variant. And with economical automated manuals, the delta between a manual and an automatic is the lowest it's ever been. Talk about seamless shifts.

I like manual transmissions, I really do. They're engaging to drive and there's nothing like the satisfaction of a perfectly executed heel-toe downshift; I like that feeling so much, I've even made it my social media handle. However, when someone tells me that a manual transmission is the only gateway to pure driving fun, I point them towards the numerous well-tuned automatics available to us. They're quicker, more convenient and more fuel-efficient overall. At the grassroots level, driving automated-manual transmissions really opened my eyes to this reality. They're not the quickest shifting nor are they as smooth as a traditional automatic, but they're just as convenient to drive and take the pain out of rush-hour traffic. It's better to get your leg

workout at the gym instead of on the commute.

This trend is prevalent even in performance cars. Take Porsche's current lineup, for example, the latest generation of the 911 GT2. A stalwart of the manual brigade, which until the previous generation was manual-only, has done a 180 and is now available only with a dual-clutch gearbox. And the 911 GT3, which is supposed to be even more of a driver's car than the GT2,

**“I think the days of the manual transmission are numbered”**

comes standard with a PDK with a manual transmission available as an option, albeit a free one. It's not that Porsche doesn't think manual transmissions are more involving or fun — the extremely lovable 911R is manual-only — but it's just that automatic 'boxes are infinitely better at extracting lap times out of these cars. The latest Chevrolet Corvette is also automatic-only now, and the

next-generation BMW M3 and M4 will go the same way. The list goes on and on.

Closer to home, the Hyundai Venue will now come with what it calls an intelligent manual transmission. This is essentially a two-pedal manual transmission where the clutch is operated by a computer. Unlike current AMTs where the computer decides to upshift or downshift for you if the conditions demand it, even in manual mode, this system has no such option. Until you tell it to, it will not budge. This system isn't completely new, though; other manufacturers have played around with the idea of a clutchless manual decades ago.

Saab made a 900 with a Sensonic system in the early '90s. And if you're thinking why the idea flopped all those years ago, don't. The biggest difference between earlier systems and current ones is the processing power of the transmission controller. Like every other aspect of modern life, a new gearbox benefits from Moore's Law, too. It can now figure out if you're starting on a slope and apply the brakes to prevent you from rolling back. It'll also differentiate between a deliberate gearshift and an accidental bump of the lever. It promises the best of both worlds and I can't wait to drive it for myself, and see if it shifts perceptions along with its gears.

[aditya.upadhyaula@delhipress.in]



## THE GRAPEVINE IN THE NEWS



### GIANT LEAP

Nissan has unveiled its B-SUV concept dubbed the Magnite. It also showcased its first electric crossover, the Ariya, and a new logo which will be seen on its future models. The Ariya has two-wheel-drive and four-wheel-drive powertrain options, with varying battery capacities and range. Sadly, it's not coming to India anytime soon. However, we're looking forward to the upcoming Nissan Magnite which will take on the likes of the Hyundai Venue and the upcoming Kia Sonet. Nissan didn't reveal too much about the SUV, but we do know that it will sport features like cruise control, a 360-degree camera and connected tech. What we can tell you, though, is that the Magnite looks stunning in concept form and if the production variant stays true to the concept, the compact SUV segment better watch out!

### NEW LIFE

The Hyundai Tucson receives a mid-cycle update with some significant cosmetic changes. It now gets a much bigger cascading grille, new LED headlights with DRLs, new tail-lights, redesigned bumpers and twin chrome exhaust tips. Additional kit includes front parking sensors, a tyre pressure monitoring system, wireless charging for cell phones, a panoramic sunroof and an electronic parking brake. The Tucson can be had with a 2.0-litre petrol engine making 150 bhp and 19.6 kgm, paired to a 6-speed auto gearbox. There's also a 2.0-litre diesel engine which produces 182 bhp and 40.8 kgm, which is now paired to a new 8-speed auto 'box. AWD is also available as an option on the top variant. Introductory pricing of the Tucson starts at ₹ 22.3 lakh and goes all the way up to ₹ 27.03 lakh, ex-showroom, India, for the diesel all-wheel-drive variant.



### ANOTHER NOTCH

The Audi RS7 Sportback is next in Audi's barrage of launches this year. It has been launched at a starting price of ₹ 1.94 crore, ex-showroom, India. It's powered by a 4.0-litre twin-turbo engine making 591 bhp and 81.57 kgm. The sprint to 100 kph takes only 3.6 seconds and top speed is electronically limited to 250 kph. If you

equip the optional dynamic package or RS package, top speed is increased to 280 kph and 305 kph respectively. It still seats four people comfortably and has more than enough room for their luggage. You can also spec the RS7 with optional extras like Nappa or Valcona leather, a panoramic sunroof, all-wheel steering, ceramic brakes and a heads-up display.



## RIDING HIGH

The recently launched Skoda Rapid Rider may well have been the performance bargain of the year, but we think this new variant, the Rider Plus, is worth taking a look at. The Rapid Rider Plus has been launched at an introductory price of ₹ 7.99 lakh, ex-showroom, India, and offers some thoughtful extras. It gets chrome garnish on the windows, decals on its side skirts, B-pillars painted in gloss black and a trunk-lip garnish. Inside, it gets a touchscreen infotainment system with Apple CarPlay

and Android Auto compatibility, automatic climate control with dust and pollen filter, rear AC vents and adjustable headrests up front. The Rapid Rider Plus is still powered by the new 1.0-litre three-cylinder TSI engine. It produces 108 bhp and 17.84 kgm which is sent to the wheels via a 6-speed manual gearbox. For the marginal price increase over the base Rapid variant, the Rapid Plus offers a whole lot more convenience.



## CROSSING OVER



Honda has updated its WR-V crossover to comply with BS6 emissions norms, and it gets a few cosmetic tweaks, too. It now features a new wing-patterned chrome grille, new LED projector headlamps, updated tail-lamps, LED DRLs, LED fog lamps and new skid plates for the rear bumpers. It retains features like the diamond-cut alloys and shark-fin antenna from the outgoing model. Inside, it still features the same basic dashboard design now with dual front

airbags on offer. The WR-V's power figures are the same as before, just with stricter emissions control. Both the 89-bhp 1.2-litre i-VTEC petrol engine and 99-bhp 1.5-litre i-DTEC diesel engines will come paired with a 5-speed manual gearbox; there is no automatic gearbox on offer at the moment. Prices for the WR-V petrol start at ₹ 8.66 lakh, while the diesel variant starts at ₹ 9.96 lakh, all prices are ex-showroom, Mumbai.

# SHORT BURSTS

## CIVIC SENSE



The Honda Civic now gets a BS6-compliant diesel engine along with six airbags as standard. It's priced from ₹ 20.74 lakh for the VX variant to ₹ 22.34 lakh for the ZX variant, ex-showroom, India.

## LEVEL UP



The Hector Plus with two captain seats in the middle and a third row has finally been launched at an introductory price of ₹ 13.48 lakh, ex-showroom, India. Read our full review of the MG Hector Plus on page 58.

## 'NUFF SAID

You might have already read our review of the new Honda City in the July issue of *Motoring World*, now we know the prices for the Honda City. Prices for the City start at ₹ 10.90 lakh and go all the way up to ₹ 14.65 lakh, ex-showroom, Delhi, for the top variant. With pricing like that, the City sends the competition packing.



## THE GRAPEVINE



### TRIDENT TESTED

With the Ghibli Hybrid, Maserati has officially entered the electrified era. The Ghibli Hybrid looks similar to the regular sedan, but there are a few details that identify it as a hybrid car like a new front grille with blue trim detailing. Powering the Ghibli Hybrid is a 2.0-litre four-cylinder turbo-petrol engine with a 48V mild-hybrid system producing 325 bhp and 45.90 kgm, all of it sent to the rear wheels via an 8-speed ZF automatic 'box. The new powertrain makes use of a belt-driven starter generator (BSG) which recovers and stores energy

under braking and deceleration. Energy recovered by the BSG is used by an eBooster system which provides powers at lower rpm before the turbo has a chance to spool, leading to less lag and better throttle response. Even though the Ghibli Hybrid replaces the V6 diesel, Maserati claims that it is still at par with the V6 engine's performance. And with a 0-100-kph sprint time of 5.7 seconds, the Ghibli Hybrid is still decently quick. Europe and China get the car first, with other markets following soon after.

### FADE TO BLACK

This is the new barely-road-legal Mercedes-AMG GT Black Series! The folks at Affalterbach took the regular (if it can be called that) Mercedes-AMG GT and gave it a few shots of steroids. And then they gave it some more. The result is 720 bhp and 81.57 kgm from a 4.0-litre flat-plane-crank V8, and it does the 0-100-kph sprint in 3.2 seconds with a 325-kph top speed. In case you haven't noticed the massive wing on its back, the AMG GT Black Series makes liberal use of carbon-fibre in its structure. Other upgrades include a functional wing, adjustable coilover springs with adaptive damping, aluminium components, and a bunch of other equipment borrowed from AMG's motorsport programme. Naturally, the interior is swathed in carbon-fibre, from the bucket seats to the matte carbon-fibre trim. Lightweight door panels and a steering wheel trimmed in alcantara round out the interior.



## GIFT HORSE

Ford's most-talked-about nameplate, the Bronco, is finally here as a sub-brand. The Bronco lineup now consists of three models, the Bronco Sport, the Bronco 2-Door and the Bronco 4-Door. Both the Bronco 2-door and 4-door will be available with two powertrain options; a 2.3-litre four-cylinder petrol motor producing 266 bhp and 42.85 kgm, and a 2.7-litre V6 twin-turbo four-pot producing 281 bhp and 35.94 kgm. There are two transmission options as well, a 10-speed auto or a 7-speed manual gearbox. The last one is really a 6-speed manual with a dedicated crawler gear.



Of course, a 4x4 system is standard on all the Bronco models, but you can choose between a basic system or Ford's Go-Over-All-Terrain (GOAT) system which promises to get you out of the stickiest of situations. This version of the Bronco goes head-on against the

Jeep Wrangler, so you have the ability to take the roof off from both the 2-door and 4-door Broncos. The interior, too, can be hosed down in case things get too dirty. Moving on to the Bronco Sport, this one is a unibody model based on the Ford Escape platform, so it's not

nearly as capable as the Bronco, but it does come with two engine options; a 2.0-litre engine making 242 bhp and 38.02 kgm, and a 1.5-litre engine making 179 bhp and 26.26 kgm, both of them paired to an 8-speed auto gearbox. Hope they all make it to India!



## CROSSED UP

The legendary Toyota Corolla nameplate gets a new addition in the way of a crossover model, called the Corolla Cross. Based on Toyota's TNGA modular platform, the Corolla Cross will share a lot of body panels with the upcoming Suzuki ACross. The Corolla Cross does get the usual crossover treatment, meaning black cladding on the bumpers, fenders, and side skirts. Inside, the Corolla Cross features a neatly-set-up

dashboard with a bronze theme and a large infotainment system. Under the hood, the Corolla Cross gets a 138-bhp 1.8-litre petrol engine in its regular version and a 98-bhp 1.8-litre Atkinson cycle engine coupled with a 97-bhp electric motor in its hybrid variant. With how popular crossovers and SUVs are, we're hoping Toyota considers bringing the Corolla Cross to our market.



## SIÁN LATER

If you want a Lamborghini Sián roadster, you really have to commit to it. Because unlike most drop-top sports cars out there, this one doesn't have a button that covers the passenger compartment when you've decided you've had enough of the elements. Power figures are identical to the Sián, and underneath that beautiful carbon-fibre shell is a 6.5-litre naturally-aspirated V12 producing 774 bhp. It is a mild-hybrid setup, and the 48-volt e-motor contributes 33 bhp to the total system output of 807 bhp. That said, the Sián ditches traditional lithium-ion batteries in favour of lighter supercapacitors. It can do 0-100 kph in 2.9 seconds, and go on to a top speed of 350 kph. You'd better hold on to your hair.

## EYE OF THE TIGER

The Tiguan is Volkswagen's most popular SUV and it now gets a mid-cycle update to modernise its looks. It's not a radical change, but we like what we see! It gets new bumpers front and back, new LED headlight units and a slightly larger grille.

Inside, it features a digital cockpit, Volkswagen's latest MIB3 infotainment

system, 15-colour ambient lighting system, and a 480-watt Fender audio system. Alongside the regular Tiguan, Volkswagen also unveiled the sportier R-Line version. This version features wider rubber and a quad-tip Akrapovic exhaust system. Power for the Tiguan comes from a 184-bhp 2.0-litre turbo-petrol engine. Bet it sounds awesome through those Akras.



## FINE WINE

Skoda has finally unveiled the next-generation Octavia RS and this time around it's got three powertrains on offer. First up is the regular RS, which produces 242 bhp from its 2.0-litre TSI engine. It can be had with either a 6-speed manual or a 7-speed DSG. Next is the plug-in-hybrid Octavia RS, which bears the iV moniker. This version produces the same amount of power as the 2.0-litre TSI motor, but from a much more efficient 1.4-litre TSI engine coupled with an electric motor. This one is only available with a 6-speed DSG. Finally, we have a diesel RS from Skoda, powered by a 2.0-litre TDI diesel

engine producing 178 bhp, paired to a 7-speed DSG. Additionally, you can also choose between front-wheel drive and all-wheel drive, on top of engine choices. Visually, the fourth-generation Octavia RS gets additional badging on the outside and inside, and a gloss-black grille, ORVMs, window frames and rear spoiler. Overall, the new Octavia

RS is sportier than the outgoing model, and that's always a good thing.



## ELECTRIC AVENUE

Audi has unveiled the next product in its e-tron line-up, the Q4 Sportback e-tron. The Sportback is 10.16 mm longer than the regular Q4 and it's not quite as tall, either. It gets sporty bits like restyled bumpers, a rear spoiler, and 22-inch wheels as well. Inside, it still comes with all the tech you'd expect in a futuristic electric car, and in some places it sports post-consumer recycled materials to ensure sustainability. The Q4 Sportback e-tron makes 302 bhp from two electric motors powered by an 82 kWh battery. Of course, it has Audi's quattro all-wheel drive, so the sprint to 100 kph is dispatched in under 6.3 seconds. Top speed is electronically



limited to 180 kph, though, and the road-ready versions will be launched by 2021.

Alongside this, Audi has also unveiled the first go-fast versions of its e-tron electric crossover, the Audi e-tron S and the e-tron S Sportback. Underneath the menacing bodywork sit three motors, two on the rear axle and one up front, producing 496 bhp and 99.21 kgm. Compared to the standard model, the e-tron also gets proper torque-vectoring thanks to its additional motor. The sprint to 100 kph is now dispatched in a mere 4.5 seconds. Further, the e-tron S will travel up to 360 km on a full charge, while the e-tron S Sportback adds 5 km more to that.

## SHOOT FOR THE MOON



One of our favourite full-size luxury sedans, the Lexus LS gets some subtle updates. The front end gets restyled bumpers and piano-black elements on the headlights. The tail-lamps, too, get the same piano-black treatment. There's a new paint option called Gin-ei Luster that's basically a metallic-silver finish which further accentuates the LS's creases. In F-Sport trim, the LS now receives updates to its spindle grille. Also new for this generation is a set of striking 20-inch wheels. The interior creates a 'moonlight on the sea' effect that complements its new paint finish well. There is a new exclusive 'Nishijin and Haku' trim which features fabric on the door pads and other touch surfaces that is produced with a blend of traditional Japanese techniques and modern platinum leaf to match the exterior. And finally, the LS gets a touchscreen infotainment system that supports Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

## MPOWERED

BMW teased the camouflaged M4 Coupe and M3 prototypes along with snippets of their specs. Under the hood of the upcoming M3 and M4 Coupe will be a new twin-turbo 3.0-litre inline-six-cylinder petrol engine with 473 bhp and a 6-speed manual gearbox in its base variant, and

a 503-bhp version of the same engine mated to an 8-speed M Steptronic auto box in the Competition version. Both the M3 and M4 Coupe will be rear-wheel driven in their base forms, though xDrive all-wheel drive is available in the Competition trim. Enough M for you?



# COVER STORY

VOLKSWAGEN T-ROC



# ROC THE PARTY

The T-Roc is the guest who arrives late but brings a pizza

By Aditya Upadhyaula Photographs Kaizad Adil Darukhanawala

SUVs sell. This is a fact we've established many times over, and frankly it's a surprise it took Volkswagen this long to launch a product in this particular SUV segment. The T-Roc is finally here, though, and it looks like it has its work cut out for it. The T-Roc represents a playful take on Volkswagen's current design language. All the hallmarks of the clean Volkswagen design are present, of course, including exceptionally sharp creases and crisp body lines. Look at the details and you'll see where the designers had fun with it. Up front, you have a pair of LED headlamp units which merge seamlessly into the grille and below which sit the large DRLs. Though the brochure doesn't explicitly mention the roofline, I think the designers were going for an SUV-coupé look. At its four corners, 17-inch diamond-cut alloy wheels fill out the wheel

arches well and give it a good stance. It's a great-looking car and the colour choices on offer complement it nicely.

Since it's brought in as a Completely Built Unit, there's only one fully-loaded variant available. Inside, you get dual-tone leather seats, a digital instrument cluster, a tyre pressure monitoring system, six airbags, and a large touchscreen infotainment system as standard. The layout of the climate controls is familiar and intuitive, as are the rest of the controls, except one. Now, a power-adjustable driver's seat might be too much to ask for at this price point for a CBU, but a regular lever to adjust the reclining angle of the seat would have been nice.

I'll admit that the rotary knob to adjust the recline is great if you absolutely need your seat at a 103-degree angle or something equally specific, but I'll take the

simplicity of a regular lever over the knob any day. The T-Roc is about the same overall length as the Hyundai Creta and the Kia Seltos, but the rear seat passenger room is slightly compromised because of its shorter wheelbase in comparison. There's still adequate room for two people to sit comfortably, but three will be a squeeze.

The T-Roc is powered by a 1.5-litre TSI Evo engine which makes 148 bhp and 25.5 kgm. Refinement levels of this engine are exceptional; you can barely hear it at idle and only as you near the redline is the exhaust note noticeable inside the cabin. Like the Polo and Vento TSI models, this turbo-petrol loves to be revved out, too, and makes most of its power higher in the rev range. There is mild turbo lag, but it's quickly overcome. There are no drive modes available, but the transmission does have a sport mode that'll hold onto gears for longer.

There are also paddle shifters on

the steering wheel for full manual control, but the paddles themselves are too small and placed too far inside at the back of the wheel. It's a bit of a reach to use them and you'll have an awkward grip on the wheel while doing so. Oddly, the transmission falls somewhere between the Seltos's and Creta's dual-clutch transmissions in terms of response and initial acceleration; it's not so harsh that driving in start-stop traffic is a pain, but at the same time, it's not so smooth that you'll mistake it for a torque-converter automatic.

Fuel efficiency is the name of the game for this engine, though, and to that end it features Active Cylinder Technology which shuts off two of the four cylinders under low-load conditions. The only indication of that is the lighting up of the 'eco' light on the dash, and the transition to two cylinders and back to four is otherwise unnoticeable. Volkswagen also equips the car with something

it calls the ThinkBlue trainer; it monitors your driving over a period of time and gives you a score out of 100, urging you to drive more economically to boost your score. Instructions are easy to follow and you do notice how certain habits adversely affect your economy. After maxing out the scoreboard, though, I went back to ignoring its existence and the car still maintained respectable fuel efficiency.

Because the T-Roc is imported as a CBU, it also doesn't have the speed-warning chimes at 80 kph and 120 kph that all new cars built in India do. After a few minutes behind the wheel of the T-Roc, you'll realise just how much you don't miss them. Right by the inside rear-view mirror sits a camera unit which spots the lane markings ahead and tries to keep you within the confines of your lane. When the markings are clear, the system works well, even guiding the car around gentle curves without much driver input. It's not





*Dashboard looks like its larger siblings'. Not a bad thing at all, that*



*The 7-speed DSG is quick and smooth*

**“This turbo-petrol loves to be revved out and makes most of its power higher in the rev range”**



**“When it comes to handling, the T-Roc most certainly holds its own”**

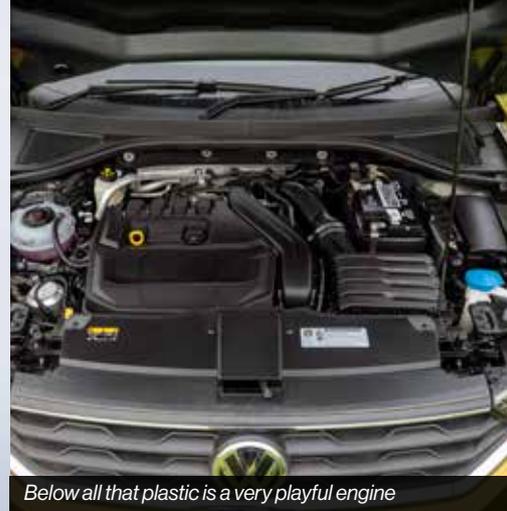




Great lines and lights on the T-Roc



And that's true for both ends of the car



Below all that plastic is a very playful engine



a lane-centering system, though, so you tend to bounce from one side of your lane to the other if you let the system take over the wheel. However, as with other similar systems which tend to violently jerk the steering wheel if it thinks you're drifting out of your lane, this one very gently corrects you, with the feeling of bumping against an air cushion. As our lane markings get better, I think systems like this will see more use to reduce fatigue over longer drives.

When it comes to handling, the T-Roc most certainly holds its own. It's not exceptionally light or agile, but it does offer great high-speed stability. The steering itself could do with a little more feel and feedback; the car responds well to inputs, it's just that you don't know what the front wheels are up to. The suspension is set up on the firmer side and it is slightly harsh over low-speed bumps. However, the ride gets

smoother as the speeds increase.

Throughout this article, I've compared the T-Roc to cars like the Seltos and the Creta, but that is just to put the T-Roc in perspective. It doesn't actually compete with these two cars. Yet. The upcoming Volkswagen Taigun will take the fight straight to those two Koreans, and until that goes on sale, the T-Roc is here to fill the gap and have some fun while at it. What I can tell you, though, is that the T-Roc is an extremely competent SUV that will put a smile on your face every time you look at it and cement that smile after a drive. Before I even got the test car, I saw a few customer cars out on the roads and thought that Volkswagen has a hit on its hands. With localisation and the associated savings, I think the T-Roc could take home a much bigger chunk of the market. ■

# AUTODATA

## VOLKSWAGEN T-ROC

|                   |                                     |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>POWERTRAIN</b> |                                     |
| Displacement      | 1498cc, I-4, turbo-petrol           |
| Max power         | 148 bhp@5000-6000 rpm               |
| Max torque        | 25.5 kgm@1500-3500 rpm              |
| Transmission      | 7-speed, DSG                        |
| <b>TYRES</b>      |                                     |
| F/R               | 215/55 R17                          |
| <b>DIMENSIONS</b> |                                     |
| L/W/H (mm)        | 4234/1819/1573                      |
| Wheelbase         | 2590 mm                             |
| Ground clearance  | 149 mm                              |
| Kerb weight       | 1350 kg                             |
| Fuel capacity     | 59 litres                           |
| <b>PRICE</b>      |                                     |
|                   | ₹ 19.19 LAKH<br>(ex-showroom India) |

# MISSED THE RS?

**Fret not, Skoda has a more comfortable backup plan for you**

*By Aditya Upadhyaula Photographs Kaizad Adil Darukhanawala*

The Skoda Octavia RS needs no introduction. It was one of the first 'hot hatches' to grace our shores, and in its current RS 245 form, it's one of the rare performance cars available to us. The car you see here isn't the Octavia RS, of course, but if you missed buying one of the 200 limited-edition Octavias, the new Skoda Superb is your ticket to performance. It gets a mid-cycle update with updated looks, a new base Sportline trim

and, most significantly, a new power plant as well. The facelifted Superb comes with a larger grille, slimmer headlights and a reprofiled bumper.

In the more luxurious L&K trim, you get a lot of chrome detailing, but on our Sportline version, it's all been replaced by gloss black. There's not a hint of chrome anywhere on the outside of this car. Out back, the Skoda emblem has been replaced by wide-spaced Skoda lettering which is also blacked out. A subtle lip-spoiler

finished in gloss black rounds out the appearance package. Even the wheels on this version are finished in gunmetal. There might have been a slight risk of all these changes looking tacky, but the car's Race Blue exterior colour complements these bits perfectly to give it an aggressive stance.

Inside, not a lot has changed in the L&K variant, but the Sportline model gets an RS-inspired all-black interior complete with alcantara-clad



“...once the turbo is fully spooled, you’re treated to a very strong mid-range”



seats, a flat-bottomed steering wheel and a digital instrument cluster. These changes transform the Superb into a sports sedan. It's slightly odd that this more driver-focussed version doesn't get ventilated seats or drive modes — these are reserved for the L&K variant — but overall, it's a nice place to be. The Superb is roomy enough on the inside that the all-black motif doesn't get claustrophobic, and in case it does get a little stuffy, you can always make use of the not-so-panoramic sunroof.

My biggest gripe with the Superb's interior is that the rear seat isn't comfortable for three-abreast seating. For a car whose primary purpose is the rear-seat experience, the enormous center tunnel takes away valuable leg-room from the middle passenger. With just two people, it's extremely comfortable, as you'd expect. You get a separate climate control zone to yourself in the back plus acres of leg-room and a good view outside as well.

Okay, enough faffing about, let's get to the most significant update

on the Superb — the engine. The 1.8-litre engine has been replaced by a 2.0-litre turbocharged-petrol engine making 187 bhp and a healthy 32 kgm. If you were wondering why I was pushing the Superb as a replacement for the high-performance Octavia, hopefully it'll make sense now. This is the same engine you'll find in the Octavia RS, albeit in a lower state of tune, paired to a brilliant 7-speed DSG. It's about 55 bhp down on the Octavia and has to lug around a little more weight, but once you're



behind the wheel, you'd be hard-pressed to tell the difference in the way the engine pulls. Initial throttle response is good, but once the turbo is fully spooled, you're treated to a very strong mid-range. And just as you leave the engine's wide powerband, the transmission slots into another cog and you're back in the meat of the revs again.

There are no drive modes in this variant, but the transmission does get a Drive mode and a Sport mode. Leaving it in Sport ensures that the transmission is always



All-black interior looks sporty and feels high-quality



Seats are very grippy



Rolls-Royce who?



All-digital cluster is pretty cool

in the right gear, but you can also take over shifting with paddles on the back of the wheel. The paddles are smaller than I like, but they make up for that with their quick response. To use an overused cliché, the transmission metes out lightning fast upshifts and perfectly rev-matched downshifts. In fact, I'm quite convinced it can actually read my mind, because by the time my fingers moved the paddles, the car was already in the gear I wanted.

The only downers in this whole experience are the brakes, which give you a great initial bite, but the brake force seems to taper off. Not exactly what you want when the engine and transmission egg you on to greater speeds. It gets stopped, no doubt, but not without a few code-brown moments. While I'm complaining, I'd also like to mention that the exhaust note is too subtle. It might suit the L&K version, but this menacing blue car could do with a throatier note.

In the past, the Superb has gotten complaints for its harsh ride and Skoda's fixed that by making it a tad softer. It doesn't crash over rough roads as much, but the handling is still very good. On a twisty road, you might even forget that you've got

more room behind you than most SUVs. Prices for the Skoda Superb Sportline start at ₹ 29.99 lakh, ex-showroom, India. Even if you could still get the Octavia RS245, which you can't, you'd have to shell out an additional ₹ 6 lakh for it. Now that's a lot of money left over for go-fast goodies! ■

## AUTODATA

### SKODA SUPERB SPORTLINE

|                   |                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>POWERTRAIN</b> |                                  |
| Displacement      | 1984cc, I-4, turbo-petrol        |
| Max power         | 187.4 bhp@4200-6000 rpm          |
| Max torque        | 32.6 kgm@1450-4200 rpm           |
| Transmission      | 7-speed, DSG                     |
| <b>TYRES</b>      |                                  |
| F/R               | 215/55 R17                       |
| <b>DIMENSIONS</b> |                                  |
| L/W/H (mm)        | 4869/1864/1469                   |
| Wheelbase         | 2841 mm                          |
| Ground clearance  | 156 mm                           |
| Kerb weight       | 1562 kg                          |
| Fuel capacity     | 66 litres                        |
| <b>PRICE</b>      | ₹ 29.9 LAKH (ex-showroom, India) |

**SHORT SHIFT**

**2020 BMW X6**

# STYLE



**The BMW X6's third generation is here.  
Yes, it still divides opinion**

*By Anubhav Sharma Photographs Aniruddh Kaushal*

# SUBSTANCE



I am not sure whether it is my age or this pandemic that has blurred weeks, months and even years. It doesn't feel like 12 years ago when the BMW X6 first came out and certainly the debates on how it looked don't feel like they happened that long ago. Whether you loved it or hated it, you were certainly talking about it. BMW has sold over 440,000 of them till now and almost every other competitor has a similar coupé-shaped SUV. Yeah, it is a little mind bending to believe, but BMW carved a niche out for everyone with the X6. Considering that the new X6 shares a lot with its sibling, the new X5, I guess it is the design which works in the former's favour. Yeah, even I read the last sentence twice after I wrote it.

Most of my conversations around the first-generation X6 have been about two things – how unsightly it looked and the lovely V8 it had. Looking at the X6 then, one felt like there were two teams of designers, one working on a coupé and the other on an SUV. Midway, they got bored and the X6 was born. But the engineers did not get bored and you got a car (or an SUV, your call) which performed like a BMW should. With the latest X6, the designers were not bored at all; if anything, they tried to make up for the last two times.

The 2020 X6 is longer, lower, and wider than before, with a sharper nose and a larger, bolder kidney grille that is as in your face as it can be. As if that weren't enough, the

grille lights up, too, but thankfully it's an optional extra. I have been on the side which isn't happy with BMW's ever-increasing grille sizes, but I admit it does look good on the X6. Maybe it's because there are other elements on the X6 which take the attention away from the grille. The X6 doesn't deviate from its original formula, but now the sharper body lines give it a more futuristic look, I think, especially at the rear. From certain angles, it does remind you of the X4, where the familial design language is more visible.

As expected, on the inside the X6 looks and feels like most other new BMWs. We all know what that means — luxurious and high-quality materials all around, with



the latest tech on offer. The X6 gets two large 12.3-inch digital displays which dominate the dashboard, while the rest of the switchgear is well laid out and everything is where it should be. If buttons are passé for you, the X6 gets BMW's gesture controls to enable you to control certain functions like volume, but I feel that party trick is old now. The latest version of BMW's iDrive system is loaded on the center screen, and it's quite good even though it still has menus and options tucked away in various corners. I guess you get used to it with time.

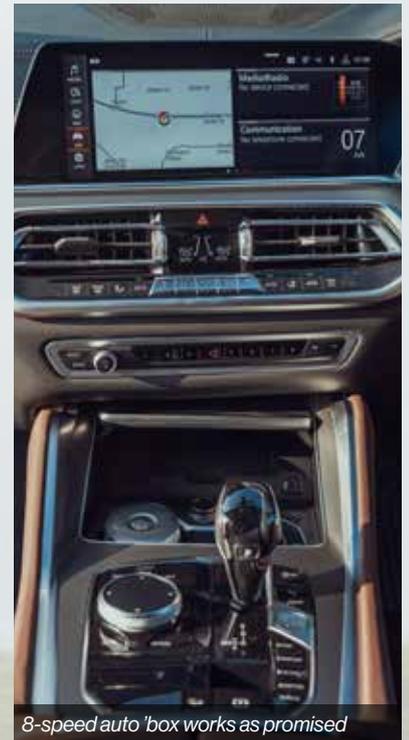
India gets the new X6 in two trim levels, xLine and M Sport. The M Sport variant you see here gets gloss-back bits, with the front



*Every feature you need to make the cabin comfortable and interesting is present*



*Three most certainly will be a crowd*



*8-speed auto 'box works as promised*



*Analogue bits are missed, but this works, too*



*The sloping roofline does not compromise the boot space by much*



**“Under the new hood  
lies BMW’s answer to  
all those who criticised  
how the X6 looked”**

apron, side skirts and wheel-arch trims finished in body colour along with a host of M stuff like the M Sport brakes with blue calipers, adaptive M suspension, an M Sport exhaust system with M Sport-specific tailpipes, illuminated M door sills, an M leather steering wheel, a rear apron with a diffuser insert, and M-specific pedals. As you can see, you will never forget which variant you are in/near.

Both variants are loaded, though, with features like laser LED headlights with LED DRLs, panoramic sunroof, full-leather upholstery, ambient lighting, heads-up display, and a tyre pressure monitoring system. Safety gets the priority it is due as well, with eight airbags, ABS with EBD, traction control, electronic stability control,

and front/rear parking sensors. The back seat is comfortable for two adults, even if the ride is a bit stiff. However, its leg-room and head-room are not as bad as one would assume after looking at the roofline. I am almost 6 feet tall, and I had a little head-room to spare. But the major point of interest is up front.

Under the new hood lies BMW's answer to all those who criticised how the X6 looked. Well, that has changed, too, and the X6 is available in India only with a 3.0-litre inline-six-cylinder petrol engine which makes 335 bhp and 45.88 kgm. It may not sound like a lot for a car like this, but it is actually quite nice to drive. The car does not feel as heavy as it is, is decently agile, and a lot sharper than the previous generations.

Despite the weight, body roll is under control, though let's be clear, at no point do you forget that you're in an SUV. The lower ride height, lower centre of gravity and an accurate steering make the new X6 feel lighter than it is.

At an ex-showroom price of ₹ 95 lakh, the X6 is priced well for what it offers — luxury, technology and performance which one expects in a BMW. The glitch, I see, is that the X6 is not the only BMW to offer all these things; you don't have to necessarily buy the X6 to enjoy this engine or the features, you could buy the X5 and be equally happy. Unless, that is, you want a car that stands out and you value style over mere substance. In that case, the X6 is quite an easy choice to make. ■

# AUTODATA

## BMW X6 XDRIVE 40i M SPORT

|                         |                                   |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>POWERTRAIN</b>       |                                   |
| <b>Displacement</b>     | 2998cc, in-line six, Petrol       |
| <b>Max power</b>        | 335 bhp@5500-6500 rpm             |
| <b>Max torque</b>       | 45.8 kgm@1500-5200 rpm            |
| <b>Transmission</b>     | 8-speed, AT                       |
| <b>TYRES</b>            |                                   |
| <b>F/R</b>              | 275/45 R20 / 305/40 R20           |
| <b>DIMENSIONS</b>       |                                   |
| <b>L/W/H (mm)</b>       | 4935 / 2004 / 1696                |
| <b>Wheelbase</b>        | 2975 mm                           |
| <b>Ground clearance</b> | 216 mm                            |
| <b>Kerb Weight</b>      | 2,310 kgs                         |
| <b>Fuel capacity</b>    | 83 litres                         |
| <b>PRICE</b>            |                                   |
|                         | ₹ 95 lakh<br>(ex-showroom, Delhi) |



# SPACE CADET

**Do more seats make a car better?  
Well, a new motor certainly does**

*By Aditya Upadhyaula Photographs Kaizad Adil Darukhanawala*

**T**he absence of diesel engines in a carmaker's lineup would've spelt disaster a couple of years ago, but things have changed. As the stringent BS6 norms are implemented, a lot of manufacturers are forced to ditch these torque monsters we love for petrol alternatives. This is basically the story of Volkswagen's Indian range of cars. One model, however, took advantage of this situation as a chance to reinvent itself — the new Tiguan Allspace. Volkswagen discontinued the diesel-powered short-wheelbase Tiguan and replaced it with this three-row

long-wheelbase version which is an important part of Volkswagen's SUVW plan for India.

Apart from an additional 215 mm added to its overall length, the dimensions of the Tiguan remain more or less the same, with identical widths and heights between the two models. Visually, you can tell the Tiguan Allspace apart by its new LED DRLs, lack of plastic cladding on the sides and, of course, its longer side profile. Another differentiator is the colour schemes; the Tiguan Allspace is available in seven colours including the bright and vibrant Habanero Orange and







*The familiar dashboard is a welcome sight*



*Digital instrument cluster is easy to read*



*All-black interior is brightened up by the large sunroof*



*Driver-assistance button enables lane-keep system*



*Look at all that extra knee-room in the second row*

Ruby Red. It'll be easy to find your car in a crowd with these paint schemes.

The biggest change in the car, apart from the third row of seats, is the new 2.0-litre TSI engine with 187 bhp. It sounds familiar, because it's the same engine that's found in the Skoda Superb and various other Volkswagen-group vehicles. The only difference here is that this time, power is sent to all four wheels through the 7-speed DSG. Floor the throttle from a standstill and the four 235-section 18-inch wheels hook up immediately and propel you forward. Even though the engine is down on torque compared to the old oil burner, it accelerates

quicker, both from a standstill as well as in roll-ons. You will only really miss the low-end response of the diesel; everywhere else in the rev range, the new petrol has got it beat. All this performance comes at the cost of fuel efficiency, of course. It's not going to be anywhere near the efficiency of the diesel; in regular driving, I managed numbers as high as 14 kpl on the highway, but they immediately dropped to around 9 kpl in the city. I'll admit, the urban number is with sport mode engaged, but it's hard to stay off the boost with this engine.

You also have drive modes at your disposal to tweak throttle response, and putting it in sport mode gets

you the most performance out of this package, though you can also choose off-road and wet-weather modes to set up the car according to conditions. However, to be honest, you won't be doing much off-roading in this one. Yes, it has all-wheel drive, but it's a Haldex system that gives the Tiguan excellent traction out of tarmac corners, and not much in the way of off-road prowess.

For a large-ish SUV, the Tiguan handles decently. Initial turn-in is a little slow, but once you get it turned in, the all-wheel-drive traction really pulls the car out of corners, especially low-speed ones. The steering wheel weighs up nicely in sport mode, but there's not much

“The steering weighs up nicely in sport mode, but there’s not much feedback or feel”





feedback or feel. The ride quality, too, is good but not great; it's set up is on the stiffer side and harsh bumps make their way into the cabin. Inside the cabin, the Tiguan's dash is unchanged, save for the new digital instrument cluster, which is not necessarily a bad thing. The layout is simple and very easy to get comfortable with.

Yes, you also get a third row of seating now, but if it were up to me, I'd leave those folded down all the time. Leg-room is not great back there, and neither is head-room. Maybe children with enough distractions could ride back there, but an adult will start a revolt before you can say, 'Cramp.' Nevertheless, having those seats and never using them is better than needing them and not having them. The Tiguan Allspace's wheelbase has gone up

by 110 mm and the second row of seats gets the most benefit from it, now that it's on rails to allow access to the third row. In addition to the extra row of seating, you also get a panoramic sunroof, three-zone climate control, and leather upholstery as standard. Unless you're in the driver's seat, the second row is the place to be in the Tiguan Allspace. You get airline-style tray tables as well, to eat on the go or to get work done.

The Tiguan Allspace is available in only one variant; it's pretty feature-packed and built really well. I wouldn't suggest you buy one purely for its third row, but it's the perfect option if you want a great all-rounder. It's a car that looks good, has great performance, and a third row that you can occasionally use. What's not to like? ■

## AUTODATA

### VOLKSWAGEN TIGUAN ALLSPACE

|                   |                                     |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>POWERTRAIN</b> |                                     |
| Displacement      | 1984cc, I-4, turbo-petrol           |
| Max power         | 187.4 bhp@4200-6000 rpm             |
| Max torque        | 32.6 kgm@1450-4200 rpm              |
| Transmission      | 7-speed, DSG                        |
| <b>TYRES</b>      |                                     |
| F/R               | 235/55 R18                          |
| <b>DIMENSIONS</b> |                                     |
| L/W/H (mm)        | 4701/1839/1674                      |
| Wheelbase         | 2787 mm                             |
| Ground clearance  | 167 mm                              |
| Kerb weight       | 1780 kg                             |
| Fuel capacity     | 60 litres                           |
| <b>PRICE</b>      |                                     |
|                   | ₹ 33.12 LAKH<br>(ex-showroom India) |

**SHORT SHIFT**  
**LAND ROVER**  
**DISCOVERY SPORT**



# BACK TO BASICS

Is there such a thing as a perfect SUV?

By Aditya Upadhyaula Photographs Kaizad Adil Darukhanawala

I've long maintained that the Land Rover Freelander 2 was all the SUV you'd ever need, and ever since it was replaced by the Discovery Sport, I've been meaning to find out if it can take on the mantle. Now that the Discovery Sport has been thoroughly updated, it's the perfect time to find out.

Outside, the Discovery Sport now gets new LED headlights that bear a resemblance to the larger Discovery, reprofiled bumpers with smaller air intakes, and as always, a skid plate. From the sides, you'll be hard-pressed to notice differences from the outgoing model. The wheels are new and are wrapped in tall-aspect-ratio 18-inch tyres. Moving to the rear of the vehicle, the Discovery Sport gets new LED tail-lamps and new bumpers as well. Overall, the new design is much cleaner and more mature than the outgoing

model. However, although it might look like a minor facelift, it's an all-new model; it is made around a different platform altogether. The Discovery Sport now sits on Land Rover's Premium Transverse Architecture that also underpins the new Range Rover Evoque. The main advantage of the platform change is that it now supports mild electrification, but we won't be seeing these hybrid powertrains in India just yet.

Inside, the differences are much more readily apparent. The R Dynamic SE variant I drove had open-pore wood trim which felt great as did the soft-touch dashboard. The combination of leather, metal and wood does well to spruce up the interior. This version also gets a digital gauge cluster which offers plenty of customisation, and a new infotainment interface that is much



Powering this Discovery Sport is a 2.0-litre 177-bhp diesel engine from Land Rover's Ingenium family



*The view ahead is not bad at all, but check out the rear view!*



*Instrument cluster is clean and legible*



*Steering wheel buttons are contextual*



easier to use as well. Android Auto and Apple CarPlay are included, of course. The rotary gear knob is also gone, making way for a more traditional joystick.

Unlike the more expensive Land Rovers, this one doesn't have a second screen to control the HVAC system and the Terrain Response 2 system; instead it makes do with a fingerprint magnet of a gloss black panel with rotary knobs. The knobs double up as temperature control and Terrain Response 2 mode selectors as well. Some functions like the all-terrain progress control have been relegated to touch buttons. The buttons offer no haptic feedback, which means lots of accidental presses. It would have been nice to have real tactile buttons here instead of this touch panel. The Discovery Sport does come with a panoramic glass panel on the roof, but it doesn't open at all. On one hand, it gives you an unobstructed view outside, but it would have been nice to let in some of that outside world as well.

Now, speaking of unobstructed views, the Disco Sport SE also comes with a ClearSight interior rear-view mirror. To say that it's my most favourite feature in any car ever is an understatement! It's

a regular mirror until you flip the dimmer switch and realise you can now see what's behind you in incredible detail. A small camera placed at the back on the roof near the radio antennas sends a crystal-clear feed to the display hidden in the mirror. For a seven-seater with two rows of passengers blocking the rear view, this camera system allows you to forget the rear seats even exist and carry on driving.

The last row of seating is quite usable, really. You might not like being there for a really long drive, but over shorter stints it's comfortable enough. The second row of seats slide forward, so leg-room isn't much of an issue, and the large glass panel on the roof gets rid of any claustrophobic tendencies. Surprisingly, there's room for a few bags behind the third row of seating. With the second and third row of seats folding flat, you end up with a pretty flexible cargo area.

Powering this Discovery Sport is a 2.0-litre 177-bhp diesel engine from Land Rover's Ingenium family which is noticeably more refined than the outgoing model. Engine noise is pronounced when you're standing outside the car, but it's much more muted inside. The engine isn't one for top-end performance, though,



Wood, metal and leather make for a great combo



Getting into the last row takes effort, but you'll be comfortable once you're there

**“The only things stopping it from taking over the countryside are its road-biased tyres, I reckon”**





it's much happier operating in the middle of its rev range, just munching the kilometres with ease. The 9-speed transmission is smooth and helps immensely in extracting great fuel economy from the diesel engine. It offers paddle shifters and a sport mode, but you're best served by leaving it in drive.

Handling is surprisingly neutral for something so tall. There's minimal body roll and lots and lots of grip. I'm not suggesting you find the nearest racetrack, but if you were to come up to a twisty section on a road trip, you'll most certainly enjoy yourself. Bad roads don't unsettle the car, either; it's a car that's absolutely made for our roads. It smooths out rough roads like no other vehicle, and I'm sure the tyres' tall sidewalls help here. Potholes and unexpected speed breakers are dealt with without so much as a flinch.

Land Rover's Terrain Response 2 system is what differentiates the Discovery Sport from the rest of the competition. With decent approach and departure angles, and a torque-vectoring system which works by applying the brakes, the Discovery Sport trundles over difficult terrain with confidence. The system works well enough in auto mode, but other options are available if you want finer control. The only things stopping it from taking over the countryside are its road-biased tyres, I reckon.

After spending a couple of days with it, I've come to the conclusion that it is all you need in an SUV and then some. It has comfortable seating for five people and the option of squeezing a couple more in a pinch, the ability to cover vast areas without any fatigue, and the ability to get you out of sticky situations as well. These are things that the Discovery Sport has always had, but with this iteration it adds a formidable tech package and interior quality befitting a vehicle in its class. ■

## AUTODATA

### LAND ROVER DISCOVERY SPORT D180 R DYNAMIC SE

|                   |                                      |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>POWERTRAIN</b> |                                      |
| Displacement      | 1999cc, I-4, turbo-diesel            |
| Max power         | 177 bhp@4000 rpm                     |
| Max torque        | 43.8 kgm@1750-2500 rpm               |
| Transmission      | 9-speed, automatic                   |
| <b>TYRES</b>      |                                      |
| F/R               | 235/60 R18                           |
| <b>DIMENSIONS</b> |                                      |
| L/W/H (mm)        | 4720/1835/1760                       |
| Wheelbase         | 2600 mm                              |
| Ground clearance  | 167 mm                               |
| Kerb weight       | 2087 kg                              |
| Fuel capacity     | 70 litres                            |
| <b>PRICE</b>      | ₹ 62.11 LAKH<br>(ex-showroom, India) |



# BETTER THAN THE REST

The new Hyundai Verna gives you everything  
you could possibly want, and then some

**W**e've all been at a point where we've had to come to a compromise on something. But when it comes to your car, you don't have to compromise at all. The new Hyundai Verna is a car that offers you class-leading features and excellent performance in a package that just got a whole lot better!

In a sea of SUVs, a well-proportioned sedan is always easy on the eye, and the first thing you'll notice about the new Verna is the new and imposing chrome grille and headlights up front. The large swathes of dark chrome really work on the Verna to give it an elegant stance. If you choose the turbo variant of the Verna, you're treated to a blacked-out grille which gives it a slightly more aggressive front end. From

the side, you'll see the new diamond-cut alloy wheels shod in 16-inch rubber. And out back, Hyundai chose to retain one of the best rear ends in its segment, and updated it with a reprofiled rear bumper. The turbo variants also get an alternative bumper design and twin-tip mufflers to fill out the rear section.

Inside, you're greeted by a 20.32-cm AVNT touchscreen which now sits smack dab in the middle of the dashboard, keeping all infotainment functions within easy reach. The driver also gets a new digital instrument cluster as well which presents information in a large easy-to-read format. Other highlights of the interior include the addition of a convenient wireless charger in the centre console and the new six-speaker Arkamys premium

sound system envelops the cabin in your favourite music. The car also comes with a dual-tone interior and features like cooled seats, a multi-function wheel with cruise control, a sunroof and a sliding armrest.

In its no-compromise approach, the Verna also takes care of the rear-seat passengers with a wide and comfortable bench, ample head-room, and great leg-room as well — sitting three abreast is very comfortable. The seat-back angle is perfect and under-thigh support is also good. Overall, the back seat of the Verna is a good place to be. In the turbo variants, you'll get an all-black interior with red accents for that sporty feel. Another really convenient feature is the smart trunk which pops open when you approach the car's rear with the key in your pocket;



20.32-cm touchscreen is very high definition



This is one of four transmissions on offer



The dashboard layout is intuitive and all the controls fall to hand easily



**“ In its no-compromise approach,  
the Verna also takes care of  
the rear-seat passengers... ”**

**“With the Verna, you'll never have to worry about bad roads ruining your drive”**





really handy when you literally have your hands full. The Verna is full of convenient features like this.

Under the hood of the new Verna live a trio of BS6-compliant engine choices that are sure to impress you. First up is a silky smooth 1.5-litre 113-bhp petrol engine. Prod the starter button and it quickly comes to life, settles into a quiet idle, and gets the Verna moving effortlessly. Next is a 1.5-litre diesel engine which makes 113 bhp and a healthy 25.5 kgm of torque at its peak. This one is also quiet in its operation, but never misses an opportunity to show its might when you prod the throttle. Strong mid-range torque of the diesel engine gives you brisk in-gear acceleration and lets you drive without quite as many gear shifts. It's the best of both worlds, this engine.

And finally, there is the option of the 117-bhp 1.0-litre turbo-petrol wunderkind of an engine. Paired with the 7-speed DCT, this engine will satisfy all your performance

needs. The turbocharger is quick to spool up and delivers on its power early in the rev range, and the quick-shifting dual-clutch gearbox makes sure to keep the engine on the boil when you need it. Speaking of gearboxes, the Verna's got you covered with multiple engine and transmission combos to suit your needs — you can have it with a petrol engine and a manual or CVT, diesel and manual or torque-converter automatic, and turbo-petrol and DCT. No compromises, as always.

With the Verna, you'll never have to worry about bad roads ruining your drive. The suspension soaks up the bumps with incredible confidence and delivers a smooth ride. Both slow and high-speed bumps are taken care of. Yes, even the ones that sneak up on you aren't a problem for the Verna. The Verna handles equally well; it's agile at low speeds and sure-footed as the speeds rise. This leads to an overall enjoyable driving experience.

On the safety front, the Verna comes with a whole host of safety features. Starting with the six-airbag system which protects occupants from all angles, the Verna also comes with Electronic Stability Control to keep you facing the right direction on slippery roads. A tyre-pressure-monitoring system lets you keep an eye on individual tyre pressures, ensuring a safe journey, always. When you come to an emergency stop, the rear lights flash to allow for a faster reaction time to the following cars. It's these thoughtful touches that make the Verna better than the rest.

As with all new Hyundai cars, the Verna also comes standard with three years of roadside assistance and Hyundai's Wonder Warranty which lets you choose the mileage and duration of your warranty to suit your needs. With the Verna, Hyundai has made a sedan that truly makes no compromises and the worry-free ownership experience that comes with it is the cherry on top.

# SHORT SHIFT

MG HECTOR PLUS



# PLUS POINTS

## The MG Hector Plus gets three-row seating for six, and some cosmetic upgrades

By Saurabh Gamare *Photographs* Kaizad Adil Darukhanawala

While I was driving the Hector Plus around, I noticed that it was getting a lot of attention, and I couldn't quite figure out why. At first glance, it just looks like an oversized Hector, right? I guessed it had to be either of two things: people had recognised that I was driving a Chinese-owned company's car (which, in today's political climate, can cause anxiety) or they were impressed by its road presence. I'd like to believe it was the latter.

First things first — the Plus is 45 mm longer than the regular Hector to accommodate the third row. Other than that, its dimensions remain unchanged. When you look at it head on, thankfully, there's no more unnecessary bling as seen on the Hector; MG has removed all the chrome that surrounded the grille and the LED headlights. The only exception is the silver skid plate that sits right under the air vents at

the front. Move around to the side and the chrome strip underlines the window, ending right before the D-pillar ends; the strip matches the silver roof rails and the side cladding. And, yet again, the Hector Plus has skipped leg day, by retaining its skinny 215/60 R17 tyres.

What's to like about its redesigned rear end? You guessed it — less bling here, too. It's now trying to strike a balance between minimalistic and extravagant. The tail-light unibrow gets plucked out; they never seemed happy together, best for them to go their separate ways. Besides their removal, the rear bumper has been restyled with bits of plastic. Ultimately, it all depends on whether you prefer the Hector's flashy appeal or the more subtle touches on the Hector Plus. Overall, I think the Plus looks more grown up. Oh, and did I mention that this new starry sky blue shade

looks magnificent in person?

The cabin remains a reasonably pleasant place to be. Its interior now gets a new shade of brown for the seats and the dash. The highlight is still the huge infotainment screen with no physical buttons, and the same instrument cluster, although it does take a while to get used to the counterclockwise tachometer. The driver's seat gets electrically-adjustable controls, and most of the time you'll be satisfied with your seating position; the seats are quite comfortable in the front row. If you are shorter than Kevin Hart, then the static front armrest might seem a bit far away from the gear lever.

Ergonomically, everything sits in its place quite well, but one thing I still don't understand is the placement of the ESP button towards the passenger's side. Nobody wants the passenger accidentally touching the ESP

# “If you drive this thing sanely, there isn’t much to complain about, honestly”

button while they’re innocently trying to figure out the infotainment system, do they? The fact that there are dedicated buttons to access the 360-degree camera and the parking sensor is a pleasing sight, considering there are very few physical buttons around. The touchscreen is now more responsive and doesn’t lag as much as it used to earlier. Future software updates should iron out any niggles, too.

The second row now has captain seats on offer and not the bench that we see in the Hector; they’re reclinable and can be adjusted back and forth. Even with the driver’s seat fully extended backwards, there’s enough leg-room. My only gripe with these seats is their lack of

under-thigh support. Ignore this fact and you can stretch back and relax, as there are adjustable headrests on each seat. For long journeys, the flat floor can come in handy to place a backpack, as there’s enough space between the seats — but not quite enough for you to pass through to the third row of seats, which is frankly best left to children. To adjust the AC’s fan speed for the third row, you get a dedicated button, and of course, the AC’s main controls still lie at the front. You can get the voice assistant to change the temperature for you; just say, ‘Hello, MG,’ and ask it to set a specific temperature, which it does quite quickly. The large windows and the panoramic sunroof ensure that the passengers

are getting their daily dose of vitamin D, and there are enough sockets to charge a multitude of phones.

I drove the Hector Plus with the 1.5-litre turbo-petrol engine with a 48V mild-hybrid system, which only comes with a 6-speed manual gearbox (there are a total of eight versions, with four trims/engine-gearbox combinations). For the purpose it is built for, the 141-bhp engine is adequate and picks up quite well off the line, too. However, power delivery beyond 80 kph does tail off, and there were times when I had to downshift to overtake slow-moving trucks. Around corners, it continues to exhibit roll, and at triple-digit speeds without passengers and luggage on board, it





A mix of brown and black does look classy



Let the kids take the third row, silly

does feel a bit skittish. The steering wheel is light and easy to use, but it doesn't feel very accurate, although the brakes are on point. If you drive this thing sanely, there isn't much to complain about, honestly.

In the past, people have been very generous towards MG as a brand; at one point, it had to stop

taking bookings for the Hector to meet existing demand. Since then, a lot has changed (Galwan, anyone?), and the Hector Plus does feel like an upgraded version of the Hector, albeit a minor one. The introductory prices for the Hector Plus range between ₹ 13.49 lakh to ₹ 18.54 lakh (ex-showroom, to

increase by roughly ₹ 50,000 from 13th August), and taking all the changes into account along with the features on offer, it has very little competition. Could we see another Hector-like response for the Plus? Well, that depends on how mature the buyer has become and what the competition can come up with. ■

## AUTODATA

### MG HECTOR PLUS

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>POWERTRAIN</b> |   |
| Displacement      | 1.5-litre turbo petrol/<br>48V mild-hybrid system |
| Max power         | 141 bhp@5000 rpm                                  |
| Max torque        | 25.49 kgm@3600 rpm                                |
| Transmission      | 6-speed, manual                                   |
| <b>TYRES</b>      |   |
| F/R               | 215/60 R17  |
| <b>DIMENSIONS</b> |   |
| L/W/H (mm)        | 4720/1835/1760                                    |
| Wheelbase         | 2600 mm   |
| <b>PRICE</b>      | ₹ <b>17.29</b> LAKH (ex-showroom)                 |

True media needs true allies.

India needs bold, fair journalism more than ever.  
We need allies like **YOU**.

# THE CARAVAN

## DIGITAL PLANS



+ Unlimited access to all stories on *The Caravan* website (including archives)

RECOMMENDED

- ANNUAL**  
at just ₹3.28/day. **ONLY ₹1200**  
₹1800

---

- 2 YEARS**  
at just ₹3.08/day. **ONLY ₹2250**  
₹3600

---

- 3 YEARS**  
at just ₹2.74/day. **ONLY ₹3000**  
₹5400

Please fill in this order form and mail it with your remittance to Delhi Prakashan Vitran Pvt. Ltd., E-8, Jhandewalan Estate, Rani Jhansi Marg, New Delhi-110055

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Mode:

Paytm (Transaction ID: \_\_\_\_\_)

Cheque/DD (Cheque/DD No.: \_\_\_\_\_)

\*Favouring DELHI PRAKSHAN VITRAN PVT. LTD payable at par

## DIGITAL + PRINT PLANS



NOW ASSURED DELIVERY BY REGISTERED POST

+ Unlimited access to all stories on *The Caravan* website (including archives)

+ Home delivery of monthly print issues

- ANNUAL**  
at just ₹4.93/day. **ONLY ₹1800**  
₹3600

---

- 3 YEARS**  
at just ₹4.11/day. **ONLY ₹4500**  
₹10800

---

- ANNUAL OVERSEAS PACKAGE**  
at just \$0.32/day. **ONLY \$115**

---

- 3 YEAR OVERSEAS PACKAGE**  
at just \$0.27/day. **ONLY \$295**

### Please Note:

- It will take 5-7 working days to process your subscription.
- You will receive an email and SMS on your registered e-mail ID and mobile number, respectively. Kindly ensure that you have entered your primary correspondence.
- For further information, please contact our subscription department. Phone (Toll free number) : 1800 103 880. Landline: 011 41398888 (extn: 119/221/264) Mobile/SMS/WhatsApp: 08588843408. Email: subscription@delhipress.in. You can also subscribe online at www.delhipress.in.subscribe
- \*For Speed Post, kindly pay an additional sum of ₹70, per edition for less than 1000 kms and ₹100, per edition for beyond 1000 kms. (For subscription in India only)



SCAN FOR PAYTM

# MOTOFOCUS

HALF THE WHEELS. TWO MUCH FUN!



## HERO EXTREME 160R

**JUST ANOTHER PRETENDER?  
NAH, IT'S THE REAL DEAL!**



YAMAHA YZR250 | TVS NTOBQ 125 BS6 |  
JAWA 250 & BAJAJ DOMINAR 250 | HDT CUSTOMS KTM 390 ADVENTURE

# GOT GRIP?

**Time for a tyre change?  
Here's something grippy and  
performance-oriented**

**T**yres, the bits that connect a motorcycle to the road. The sooner you realise the full import of that, the better it is. As you move to more performance-oriented motorcycles, tyres make all the difference. And it's not just about grip, but also about the mind. If you trust your tyres, you will be riding faster and safer. On that note, we've been using the TVS Remora/Protoraq Sport SR tyres on the Apache RTR 200 4V for little over six months now. In this time, we've ridden in different weather conditions, toured on highways, and attacked a fair number of twisties, too. The front tyre (90/90-R17 M/C 49P) has a rounded profile that makes tipping the bike into corners a smooth and willing affair. Meanwhile, the rear tyre (130/70-R17 M/C 62P) has a radial construction with textile plies laid across, affording less rolling resistance with a wider contact patch.

The tyres take a little time to warm up, so it's important to go easy for the first few kilometres. But once up to temperature, they offer an ample amount of grip to exploit. Even in the wet, the grooves perform a fantastic job at channelling out water, keeping the motorcycle planted even through downpours. For the 4000 km clocked on them, these sport-oriented medium-compound tyres have shown a great lifespan with no sign of squaring off their middles. A set of these tyres will cost you ₹ 3900 (₹ 1500 for the front, ₹ 2400 for the rear). At that price, they are light on the pocket, but heavy on grip and performance. ■



## TALK WRENCH STEERING HEAD BEARING MAINTENANCE

# SMOOTH AS GREASE

Steering-head bearings make your bike do your bidding. And they need love, too

Steering-head bearings play a very important function in your motorcycle. Without them, you wouldn't be able to use your bike's handlebars, making steering the bike impossible. And what good is a motorcycle if it doesn't go where you want it to, right? The sad part is that these bearings get the least attention, simply because of their location. Only on some motorcycles is there a provision to grease them in situ. On the majority of motorcycles, gaining access requires dismounting the front end of the motorcycle and since this seems like an intimidating task, the bearings get looked at only when they're worn out and need to be replaced. With a bit of maintenance, these bearings will last much longer. Here's how you can prolong their life.

### Tools needed

Box spanner set containing sockets of applicable size, a mallet, a screw

driver, drift, kerosene, clean cotton rags, and bearing grease.

### Procedure:

- Park the bike on its main stand in such a way that it is stable and the front wheel can be lifted off the ground.
- Remove the front wheel. Make note of the arrangement of the spacers, if any. Remove the front mudguard. Disconnect the drum brake cable or dismount the front caliper off the fork.
- Remove the top nut of the fork, loosen the pinch bolts on the triple clamp and slide out the forks. Some motorcycles do not have a top nut that needs to be removed to remove the forks and so check accordingly.
- Using the appropriate socket, open the big central nut on the top clamp of the triple tree. On some motorcycles, to get



## WATER YOU UP TO?

My Royal Enfield Classic 350 has been acting up all of a sudden. The bike has developed a misfire and the engine keeps cutting off. I got the battery fully charged, but this problem continues. Unfortunately, I do not have covered parking where I stay and a neighbour told me that this could be the reason. What do I do?

Hi there!

Change the spark plugs and start the bike. If the problem persists, then I think your neighbour is right as it would seem like water has entered the petrol tank. Drain the tank dry and check the fuel for water. Remember, water sinks to the bottom. Drain out the carburettor float bowl. Refill with clean petrol and try again. This should solve the issue. And don't forget to thank the neighbour with a box of laddus!

access to this nut, the handle needs to be removed, while on others it doesn't. Spread the rags below the front end of the bike and have a friend hold the bottom clamp in place. Once the top clamp is removed, open the lock nut on the stem of the triple clamp stem. Then, open the top race of the bearing. You should be able to see the balls below. Pull out the bottom clamp slowly, making sure that none of the balls fall off and disappear into an alternate dimension. For bikes fitted with taper bearings, simply drop out the bottom clamp and the bottom bearing should come out with it.

- Clean everything thoroughly with kerosene. Inspect the races for pitting, ruts and corrosion. Replace if found. If not, dry off everything with a clean rag and re-lubricate. For bikes fitted the loose balls, generously smear grease on the lower races and put the balls back in. The grease will hold them in place.
- Refit everything in the opposite order of the disassembly. ■

# BLACK OUT

**Excessive carbon deposits rob significant power from your two-stroke. Here's how to get rid of them**

**T**he two-stroke engine is a wonderful piece of engineering. With fewer parts than an equivalent four-stroke, it goes on to generate much more power and torque. But it isn't without any flaws; by virtue of their design, two-strokes admit air, fuel and oil into the combustion chamber. Although the oil is utilised for lubricating the big end and the cylinder walls, most of the lubricant is burned in the combustion chamber while some of it exits through the exhaust.

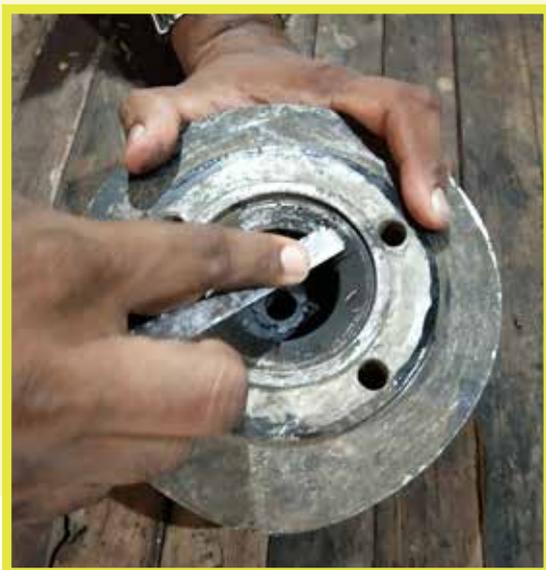
Burning oil causes a substantially higher amount of carbon which begins to collect on the piston crown and on the roof of the combustion chamber. If this carbon

continues to collect, it causes hot spots within the combustion chamber that could lead to detonation, head gasket failure and other problems.

The quality of lubricant used, along with its quantity, contributes significantly to the amount of carbon that deposits within your engine. Make sure that the lubricant you use is a good brand and is genuine. There are plenty of fakes out there, so you really have to procure oil from authorised resellers. That being said, you will need to get decarbonising done at some point. Most manufacturers specify when you should do this in the owner's manual.

Unlike most OHV four-strokes, the construction of the two-stroke engine is such that with just a couple of hand tools, you can gain access to the piston crown and the innards of the head in no time. Before you set out to do it, make sure you have the appropriate spanners, a rubber mallet, a brand-new head gasket, a hacksaw blade, clean rags and some kerosene.

Take off the fuel tank to get better access to the head nuts. Open the nuts and gently tap off the head with the rubber mallet. Make sure you keep tapping it on opposite sides. Once the head is off, using the kick lever, gently take the piston up to the top-dead centre. Scrape off the carbon from the piston crown and the head. Be careful and make sure you don't scour the piston or the head with the hacksaw blade. Clean everything off with a rag soaked in kerosene, and refit the gasket and re-torque the nuts in a crisscross pattern. Put the tank back on and you're ready to roll! ■





**WE SPEAK  
IN  
30  
DIFFERENT  
CONSUMER  
VOICES.  
BECAUSE  
EVERY BRAND  
IS UNIQUE.**

With virtually every age group, income segment and language covering 30 million Indians, we are the most diverse magazine group in India. So next time you want to address anyone in India, you are better off speaking to the Delhi Press Group today.

**DELHI PRESS**

To subscribe to our magazines Call/SMS/WhatsApp: 08588843408,  
E-mail: [subscription@delhipress.in](mailto:subscription@delhipress.in), You can also subscribe online at [www.delhipress.in/subscribe](http://www.delhipress.in/subscribe)

THE CARAVAN CHAMPAK सरिता गृहशोभा चंपक मुक्ता सरस सलिल फार्मफूड सत्यकथा मनोहर  
कहानियाँ  
वृहत्काला चंपक सरस सलिल गृहशोभा चंपक सरस सलिल गृहशोभा देशीया कम्पक सागरल गृहशोभा र्कंपर  
गृहशोभा गृहशोभा शोभाक नैली चंपक Highlights CHAMPS Highlights Genies MOTORING

## THE GRAPEVINE



### POWER XTREME

Opening a new chapter in the Xtreme story, Hero MotoCorp has launched the all-new Xtreme 160R. With an aggressive street-fighter stance, the motorcycle is powered by a 163cc unit that pumps out 15 bhp and 1.42 kgm, mated to a 5-speed box. Hero claims 0-60 kph in 4.7 seconds which is quick for its segment. The bike comes with LED lights, inverted display for the instrumentation, single-channel ABS, and a stubby exhaust completing the package. You can have the single-disc version which is priced at ₹ 99,950 or pay ₹ 3000 more for the twin-disc variant. Take your pick!

### BLADE RUNNER

The X-Blade is Honda's stylish commuter aimed at the youngsters, striking a sweet balance between sportiness and practicality. And with the BS6 update, the company has updated the bike with a fuel-injection, while also addressing some features it lacked earlier. The bike is now offered with the option of a rear disc brake, something that was dearly missed. Other bits include new decals that give the X-Blade a fresh appeal. With four colours to choose from and two variants on offer, prices start from ₹ 1.05 lakh, ex-showroom.



### CANYON CARVING

An adventure tourer with the heart of a litre-class superbike is what the all-new BMW S 1000 XR is about, and a lot more. Available only in the top-spec Pro version here, the bike carries a premium sticker tag of ₹ 20.90 lakh, ex-showroom, India. The motorcycle features a new look, complete with all-LED lighting and a tech-savvy Bluetooth-enabled 6.5-inch colour screen. Powering it is a modern 999cc inline-four unit that packs 162 bhp and 11.62 kgm ready to attack the twisties. It's German engineering on two wheels at its best.





## RETRO-BLING

Easily recognisable for their retro appeal, Piaggio India has introduced the 2020 models of the Vespa VXL and SXL scooters. While both scooters continue to be offered with two engine options — 125cc and 150cc — they now feature fuel-injection complying with the new BS6 emissions norms. Although the company is calling the 2020 models as

facelifts, compared to their predecessors the changes are nominal. The only changes include LED headlamps with DRLs and a USB charging port. Besides that, the mechanicals remain the same. Piaggio is retailing the scooters with prices starting at ₹ 1.10 lakh which goes up to ₹ 1.27 lakh depending on the model and displacement.

## SCOOT OVER

After unveiling two new electric scooters last month, BGauss has now announced the prices of its introductory products. The entry-level A2 scooter has been priced at ₹ 52,499 for the lead-acid variant and ₹ 67,999 for the lithium-ion one. Meanwhile, the premium B8 model is available in three versions with prices ranging from ₹ 62,999 to ₹ 88,999. Both vehicles are packed with features like a removable battery, keyless start, reverse assist, riding modes, anti-theft locking and an AI system linked to a smartphone. Fancy owning a futuristic electric scooter yet?



## LIVING IT UP



Honda, a leader of the commuter segment, has launched the BS6 version of its stylish commuter, the Livo. Besides featuring an updated fuel-injected 110cc unit, the Livo also gets Honda's ACG (AC Generator) tech that cranks the motor without any jolts or gear meshing noises. Other updates include updated switchgear, longer seat, semi-digital instrumentation, blacked-out visor and fresh decals. Meanwhile, the bike continues to sport stylish five-spoke alloys, tank extensions and body-coloured mirrors.

# SHORT BURST

AT LAST



Jawa Motorcycles has finally commenced deliveries of the much-awaited Perak. The bobber-style motorcycle features chopped fenders, slash-cut exhausts and a matte-black livery that looks very appealing. We hope to see these on the streets soon.

PRICE RISE



The retro-classic Benelli Imperiale 400 has just got dearer by a hefty ₹ 20,000. The motorcycle now retails at ₹ 1.99 lakh, ex-showroom. According to the brand, the reason behind the hike is associated with the cost involved in the transition to BS6 and also owing to currency exchange rates.

BRAKE IT DOWN



Aprilia's most affordable product, the Storm 125, has received the BS6 update and two new feature additions. It now gets a semi-digital instrument console as standard and is being offered with the option of a disc brake up front. The updates have resulted in a premium of almost ₹ 23,000, taking the sticker tag to ₹ 91,321 ex-Pune.

# SHORT SHIFT

HERO MOTOCORP XTREME 160R



# BANG ON!

Finally, there's a Hero for us to desire!

*By Janak Sorap Photographs Kartik Ware*





Let me be honest here. In all my recent memories of riding Hero's motorcycles, none have really made me want them. As rude as that may sound, there's a reason why I stand by it. Motorcycles are supposed to fill your heart with joy, not leave you with a rather incomplete feeling. Given my previous encounters, I had prepared myself for a similar experience on my way to the Hero dealership to collect the new Xtreme 160R. The previous examples bearing

the Xtreme tag didn't do anything for me, so why would this be any different? However, as I walked up to the Xtreme 160R for the first time, all my mind said was, 'Damn, Hero, you've caught me by surprise here.'

The Xtreme 160R looked modern and contemporary; the dual-tone colour scheme, especially in the red-and-grey combination, clearly giving out the message that you don't want to take it lightly. The front face has a droid-looking all-LED

headlamp which is captivating and is followed by smooth flowing lines running along the bike's length to finish in a stubby tail section. On the whole, the Xtreme 160R has its mass concentrated between its axles, making it look balanced and complete, I'd say.

As I started to get going, I was surprised yet again by how welcoming the motorcycle was. I was sitting in the motorcycle rather than on it; the saddle height is set



*Inverted display is clean and easy to read*



*H-shaped tail-lamp looks super cool!*



*Refinement and punch equals fun times*

at 790 mm which is a sweet spot for 5-foot-7-inch me. The handlebar is wide and the footpegs are slightly rearset, and lock-to-lock manoeuvres are easy. The motorcycle had only clocked a single digit on the odometer, so it needed some running in before I could understand its true character. However, right from the time I had thumbed the starter, there was nothing but refinement from the motor, a far cry from my previous Heroic experiences. The engine note

and the tune emitted by the stubby exhaust felt crisp, with a raspy tone as the revs went up.

On the early morning of the shoot, I had nothing but empty roads leading all the way to South Bombay (Mumbai, if you prefer), the right opportunity to run the bike through its gears at different rpms. There is a good lump of torque from the bottom end right through the midrange of the rev band. Meanwhile, gear shifts needed a bit of effort due to the

bike's newness, though the gearbox felt positive in every shift, with clutch action being light and smooth at all times. And it quickly became amply clear that the Xtreme 160R loves city roads.

As I was riding, it was evident that Hero's return to the drawing board for this motorcycle and development of a new frame and motor was a great idea. Everything, from chassis geometry to the choice and quality of materials used, has a positive impact

# Empty corners meant nothing but riding through with complete confidence...

on how the bike feels and responds to rider inputs. The bike tips the scales at 138.5 kg and makes 15 bhp, offering an engaging power-to-weight ratio to exploit. And I could feel it every time I dumped the clutch from a standstill or dropped gears to carve around corners and got back on the throttle for a quick exit.

Empty corners meant nothing but riding through with complete confidence, courtesy of the Showa-sourced fork and the 7-step-adjustable monoshock that kept the Xtreme 160R planted at all times. One crucial aspect was how well the Xtreme 160R communicates about the amount of grip available at the tyres, and how much the suspension is compressed during braking or acceleration. That essential feel was seamlessly conveyed through the handlebar, seat and 'pegs, keeping me in charge all the time. And while all of that was happening, I was sitting at ease, with no need to shift my weight to compensate for the lean angle. Speaking of the seat, I cannot help but highlight how the raised seat hump kept me in place all the time. It also aids in supporting the lower back during commuting, making saddle time a lot more enjoyable.

Now, though the engine was still new, it eventually started to feel more relaxed, which meant that I could give it the beans and see what exactly it had up its sleeves. And I can happily inform you that crossing the triple-digit mark didn't take much effort at all. Also, though there were vibrations at higher rpm at the 'bar and 'pegs, they weren't very

intrusive. I'd say the motor plays its part perfectly in the fun show that is the Xtreme 160R.

Also, the brakes and tyres deserve a special mention; the petal discs at both ends (top-spec variant) and the ample grip from the MRF Revz S tyres are a match made in heaven, leaving you to ride with complete peace of mind. I could accurately feel the force of the brake pads on the disc, and how much remained available in reserve. However, you only get single-channel ABS, and that's a bit of a cheap trick for a bike as nice as the Xtreme 160R.

Speaking of niggles, there's also the LED headlamp, practically useless under streetlights and against oncoming traffic. The only area where it manages to throw any light is when riding on a completely dark road. I fail to understand why manufacturers provide these lights that are seen by everyone but don't let the rider see anything. Also, the digital instrument cluster tends to vibrate at high speeds; it's not a distraction, really, but comes across as a strike against the otherwise great fit and finish of the motorcycle.

However, nothing changes the fact that the Xtreme 160R has truly turned out to be an engaging motorcycle, an absolute hoot, and something that has been missing in the Hero lineup. I strongly hope the Xtreme 160R is a turning point for the largest two-wheeler manufacturer in the world, that it has found the missing piece of the puzzle to make its motorcycles fun to ride again and again. The competition should be worried. ■

## MOTODATA

### HERO MOTOCORP XTREME 160R

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>POWERTRAIN</b> |   |
| Displacement      | 163cc, single                           |
| Max power         | 15 bhp@8500 rpm                         |
| Max torque        | 1.42 kgm@6500 rpm                       |
| Transmission      | 5-speed                                 |
| <b>CHASSIS</b>    |   |
| Type              | Tubular Diamond                         |
| <b>BRAKES</b>     |   |
| F/R               | 276 mm single disc / 220 mm single disc |
| <b>TYRES</b>      |   |
| F/R               | 100/80 R17 / 130/70 R17                 |
| <b>DIMENSIONS</b> |   |
| L/W/H (mm)        | 2029/793/1052                           |
| Wheelbase         | 1327 mm                                 |
| Ground clearance  | 167 mm                                  |
| Seat height       | 790 mm                                  |
| Dry weight        | 139.5 kg                                |
| Fuel capacity     | 12 litres                               |
| <b>PRICE</b>      | ₹ 1.03 LAKH<br>(ex-showroom, Delhi)     |



## TANK SLAPPER

BAJAJ DOMINAR 250 VS  
JAWA 250 TYPE 353/04

# EVOLUTION CALL

Past or present? Emotion or tech? Riding the  
250 spectrum across decades

*By* Janak Sorap *Photographs* Kaizad Adil Darukhanawala



**MHH-1058**



What is evolution? In this context, it's the century-long process that has brought us today's motorcycles. And throughout that period, there have been landmarks that signified a new beginning. One such event occurred in 1960 when Ideal Jawa, under licence from the Czech marque, came into existence. Its debut motorcycle was the 250cc Type 353/04 that went on to become the icon we know today. Fast-forward to current times, the 250cc motorcycle segment has sprouted several branches, from

streetbikes to faired ones, the newest being the Bajaj Dominar 250, a sports tourer. Six decades separate these two motorcycles. Comparing what the 250cc class meant back then to what it means now is a stark contrast. Or is it still the same in spirit?

The Jawa 250 was a motorcycle that brought with it a strong motocross lineage with recognition from across the world for its simplicity and robust construction. It soon became a cult among bikers across the nation, an example for

expression of freedom, the iconic 'ding ding' exhaust note becoming a favourite of riders. The smooth, flowing body along with the discreet cabling appealed to a lot of buyers back then and still does in old-bike circles. The motorcycle made 13.2 bhp and 2.14 kgm from its 249cc 2-stroke motor which, combined with its agile and stable handling, made it an absolute hoot to ride.

The Dominar 250, besides the similar cubic capacity, may as well be from another universe. While the Jawa exhibits its twin-exhaust



That's exactly what 60 years of motorcycle evolution looks like!



From needles to what needles?



Simple, sweet and compact, ain't it?



LEDs are the present and future

**“ The smooth, flowing body along with the discreet cabling appealed to a lot of buyers ”**

idealism, the Dominar 250 goes for muscular aggression and a slash-cut double-barrel exhaust. The main difference, however, lies in the riding experiences that these motorcycles offer (*Captain Obvious at your service!* — Kartik).

The Dominar 250 is the picture of modern silence, a motorcycle that keeps on chugging without breaking a sweat. The motor has a good bank of seamless torque to ride in a smooth and confident manner. Even the sporty riding position is comfortable for a full day of riding.



**“Every shift up its gearbox is an emotional experience that compels you to ride ever further...”**



The Jawa 250, on the other hand, is very much a representation of its era, a proper flashback to the times when exhausts weren't designed to keep matters silent. Ride quality is stiff compared to today's standards, but once it gets rolling, there's a sensation of aliveness that only gets stronger. Every shift up its gearbox is an emotional experience that compels you to ride ever further. It's a feeling that is absent in today's motorcycles, no matter how capable they are.

This particular Jawa was in such spectacular condition, it felt like it had rolled off Ideal Jawa's assembly not too long ago. It would start up with half a kick and shifting through the gears had a distinct click. Its power may not have been anywhere close to the modern-day Dominar's, but it made up for it with its sense of occasion. Another aspect to be

considered is that despite its age, the Jawa tracked fantastically through corners, sticking to the intended lines. No wonder it was marketed as the 'Forever Bike'; it very much lives up to it. As for the Dominar, it has technological advances and refinement beyond the Jawa's wildest dreams.

And yet, I have to say, the Jawa is hands down the more soulful of the two. And it's not just that; considering the period it belongs to, there is a lot of tech and thought that signifies how well designed it is, like its auto-clutch system. The Jawa was ahead of its times even though its foundation firmly stands on simplicity and toughness. Parked beside the Jawa, the Dominar 250 comes across as what today's generation demands, from LED lights to flashy instrumentation to a chiselled-out stance.

In the end, despite all the years between them, and the different mindsets they create, they are motorcycles that are meant to be ridden. The space between the two traces the history of quarter-litre streetbikes, each standing guard over the values that created it. However, in a world where more is always better, does the quintessential 250 make sense anymore? At one point, a 250 was necessary; today, it fights against more economical 200s and more capable 300-400s. But it's almost as if the Jawa reassures the Dominar, even if its own direct descendants are now 300s. In a motorcycle, 250 is not just a number, it's a tradition that will continue as long as people ride. And with evolution chipping away in the background, it makes me wonder what's in store for the 250 in the decades to come. ■



**SHORT SHIFT**

**BS6 TVS NTORQ 125**

# TALK THE TORQ

**Kinder to Mother Nature and still a lot of fun!**

*By Varad More Photographs Kaizad Adil Darukhanawala*



**S**coters have been game changers for many two-wheeler makers in India, but game-changing scooters have been few and far between. And that's something challenged by the TVS NTorq 125 since its inception in 2018. The moment TVS entered the 125cc scooter segment with the NTorq, it gave the fast-fashion generation something more to aspire for than the rather run-of-the-mill choices available in the Indian market. With the new BS6 norms coming in, the NTorq gets an upgrade with 'race tuned fuel injection (RTFi)' technology primarily for cleaner emissions. There's a paradox in there somewhere. Anyway, while most new BS6 vehicles have been forced to compromise on performance, it is commendable that TVS has managed to retain the original power output while delivering a cleaner engine to comply with the new regulations.

However, although the power and torque outputs remain unchanged, the feel from the throttle is crisper and smoother than before. The peculiar jerky throttle response found on CVTs off standstill has been reduced noticeably and power delivery feels seamless. The 124.8cc air-cooled single-cylinder engine delivers the same 9.4 bhp of power but lower in the rev-range at 7000 rpm as against the BS4 model where it was delivered at 7500 rpm; torque output of 1.07 kgm at 5500 rpm remains unchanged. The rest of the cycle parts and components remain more or less the same except that the BS6 variant now gets a bigger fuel tank measuring 5.8 litres (0.8 litres more than the previous model). Overall, the new Ntorq has

also gained some bulk and is now heavier by 2 kg.

The NTorq's futuristic and funky design was always striking and it remains largely untouched except for the top-spec Race Edition variant that gets new graphics, hazard lights and an LED headlight. The NTorq has always been one of the most feature-rich products in the segment and the BS6 upgrade continues the theme. There is 22 litres of under-seat storage that houses a USB charging port and a boot light. A striking improvement is seen in the new updated TVS SmartXConnect. bluetooth connectivity system that is bug-free and easier to connect to the phone. The system shows message and call notifications on the multifunction LCD display and offers well-calibrated turn-by-turn navigation as well.

Since its introduction as the most powerful scooter from the TVS lineup, the NTorq 125 has garnered a strong following, particularly within its target group of young collegegoers as well as appealing to customers looking for a stylish and feature-rich 125cc scooter. The new updated version looks ready to continue this trend albeit with some premium over the BS4 models. As with all new updated BS6 vehicles, the new BS6 TVS NTorq 125 also gets a price hike with a starting price point of Rs 66,885 (ex-showroom, Delhi) for the drum-brake variant going up to ₹ 73,365 (ex-showroom, Delhi) for the top-spec Race Edition. In its segment today, we have the Suzuki Burgman 125 and the Aprilia SR125 which are also competent and world-class products, but the NTorq, with its all-round performance, ride quality, handling, equipment and established service network, sure wins its spurs. ■



The SmartXConnect system is now bug-free



Racy graphics on the top-spec NTorq

## MOTODATA

### 2020 TVS NTorq 125

|                   |                               |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>POWERTRAIN</b> |                               |
| Displacement      | 1124.8cc, single              |
| Max power         | 9.1bhp@7000 rpm               |
| Max torque        | 1.07 kgm@5500 rpm             |
| Transmission      | CVT                           |
| <b>CHASSIS</b>    |                               |
| Type              | Tubular                       |
| <b>SUSPENSION</b> |                               |
| F/R               | Telescopic/Monoshock          |
| <b>BRAKES</b>     |                               |
| F/R               | 220mm disc / 130mm drum       |
| <b>TYRES</b>      |                               |
| F/R               | 100/80-R12 / 110/80-R12       |
| <b>DIMENSIONS</b> |                               |
| L/W/H (mm)        | 1861/710/1164                 |
| Wheelbase         | 1285 mm                       |
| Ground clearance  | 155 mm                        |
| Seat height       | 770 mm                        |
| Kerb weight       | 118 kg                        |
| Fuel capacity     | 5.8 litres                    |
| <b>PRICE</b>      |                               |
|                   | ₹ 71,885 (ex-showroom, Delhi) |

# OK FOR OJ

An aching beautiful blast from the fast!

By Alan Cathcart *Photographs Gold And Goose*

Exactly 20 years ago in 2000, Yamaha enjoyed a specially stellar race season — one that was equally forgettable, though, for its Honda rival. Yamaha blitzed the 250GP world series in a 2000 season dominated by their two riders, Japan's Shinya Nakano and Frenchman Olivier Jacque aboard a bike that was clearly the class of the field — the Chesterfield-sponsored YZR250 V-twin. However, the outcome of their fight to be crowned world champion was in doubt until the last ten metres of the final lap in the concluding race of the season, in Australia. It was winner take all — whoever won the race also took the title, and after Nakano grabbed the lead from the start at Phillip Island, he was closely shadowed for the entire race by his French teammate, as the duo distanced themselves from Honda's lead rider, Daijiro Katoh.

It was a risky business, though — had the Yamaha duo wiped each other out in vying for the title, it would have been Katoh and Honda, not Yamaha, who won it. Nakano

led this nail-biting two-wheeled game of poker until the two of them exited the last top-gear corner leading onto the Gardner Straight on the final lap, with the chequered flag awaiting them. Then, in a brilliantly judged slipstreaming manoeuvre, Olivier Jacque wafted past his fellow Yamaha rider to lead across the line by just 0.014sec, to snatch the world title from his teammate after a season in which the two of them had dominated the standings, with eight victories in the sixteen races (three for Jacque, five for Nakano), eight pole positions, 23 visits to the podium and first and second in the championship. Can't ask for much more, can you?

Indeed, few world titles had yet been won with as much finesse as Olivier Jacque's aboard the Tech 3 Yamaha YZR250 OWL5 — the factory designation for this unique machine. No wonder Tech 3 boss Herve Poncharal sat drained of emotion in the press room after the race, when I congratulated him on a mission accomplished in full. 'I don't want to have to go through that again!'

he said ruefully. 'Winning the title is great, but knowing that the slightest slip could have lost everything meant we were living on the edge. I feel relief as much as exaltation that it all turned out OK.' Well, OK for OJ, anyway — and Yamaha, too, of course!

The chance to ride the Chesterfield-sponsored Jacque YZR250 at Jerez a month later, just a couple of weeks after I tested Katoh's third-place NSR250 Honda in Japan, uncovered the secrets of Yamaha's success. First, though, while Tech 3 mechanic Josian Rustique prepared the bike for me, there was the chance to feast my eyes on the myriad impressive details of what, thanks to its voluptuous and effective streamlining, was surely the most distinctive looking bike on the Grand Prix grids in any class of the Y2K season. It was a reliable one, too, with zero mechanical DNFs all year on a bike which was apparently easier to work on than the NSR250, with everything more accessible, and engine setup far less critical — just put gas in, pump up the tyres — and







go! Of course, Tech 3 and OJ were in the Honda camp till the 1999 season, so they had the basis for a valid comparison.

The YZR250 could have been Italian, it was so beautifully detailed and distinctively designed. It was a bike which you could gaze at for ten minutes, and every ten seconds see something else to admire. One example was the exquisitely-made large curved radiator whose volume gave some idea of the heat which must be dissipated thanks to the power output of 97 bhp at 12,800 rpm; not as much as the rival Honda, but delivered as part of a more effective overall package. But it was soon time to stop stargazing and hop aboard, to find out for myself how OJ and Yamaha did it.

Jacque's OWL5 YZR250 Yamaha had what was surely the most distinctive cockpit in GP racing back then, with the narrow, bulbous screen perfectly shaped to deflect air off your helmet, while the broad flanks of the nose of the 'cowling' (in fact, for once, the Janglish word is the right one!) took care of protecting your shoulders. Rather unexpectedly, despite the narrow, steeply dropped clip-ons, the riding position was

actually relatively spacious, even for a 1.80-metre rider like me who was therefore able to make a pretence of making like OJ and moulding myself to the bike along the short Jerez straights, tucked down behind the all-enveloping streamlining.

OJ's first words after sitting on the Yamaha for the first time back in 1999 were that 'I feel like I'm sitting in an armchair!' — and indeed it was a long time since I too had felt so much at home aboard a 250GP racer. But though less toy-like than the notably smaller, narrower-seeming NSR250 Honda, which seemed in comparison more like a jumped-up 125, the physically bigger Yamaha still felt agile and nimble, despite the bulky bodywork, which didn't detract from the ease with which you could position the bike in a turn — it steered beautifully, with very little steering damper needed to keep it on the straight and narrow, underlined by the fact that this was unusually mounted on the right side of the cockpit, so would be impossible to adjust while on the move without taking your hand off the throttle!

The engine was slightly less explosive by 250 standards than the Honda, but it felt strong and willing,

and above all usable — although to get good drive out of a turn you needed to get it revving above the mark OJ had painted on the tachometer at 8800 rpm, where the power came in strongly — it pulled OK lower down, but not as hard, and the fat part of the powerband was between 11,000-13,000 rpm. A little more power low down would have been good, but working the foolproof race-pattern gear shift with its perfectly set up wide-open powershifter allowed you to take advantage of what was on offer — and although the shifter light on the dash began flashing at the 13,000-rpm mark, thanks to a very gradual fall-off in power you could hold a gear as high as 13,800 rpm.

It even kept pulling as high as 14,400 rpm if you really insisted, though since the side-loading cassette gearbox was so easily extractable in order to change internal ratios, there should have been no real need to do this. But this extra overrev which Yamaha's engineers delivered for the 2000 season was a crucial element in OJ's title success, said Josian Rustique, because it made the Yamaha easier to ride in the close quarters combat of 250GP racing, allowing you to



The mid-range is where the Yamaha excels



The view on the way to the 2000 250GP title



The Kayaba suspension is pretty compliant

## Momentum is everything on the Jacque Yamaha, which rewarded the use of wide, sweeping trajectories...

hold a gear when necessary. But ride the torque curve lower down, and get ready for this 97-kg quarter-litre crown jewel to pick up the front wheel on you exiting the Dry Sack hairpin or the final turn at Jerez leading on to the pit straight — it definitely had stronger mid-range power, and thus better drive out of a slower turn than the Honda.

However, that wasn't such a key element in the YZR250's success as the refined handling which allowed you to keep up what seemed an improbable degree of corner speed in turns, while remaining pretty stable even when you hit a rough patch of tarmac, like exiting the Curva Pons fast sweeper onto the main straight at Jerez, where the Kayaba suspension had to soak up some bumps while you're cranked hard over while still on the gas, with the rear end compressed and the front light. It does repay a more polished, precise riding style, though — this wasn't a bike which would have liked being ridden too aggressively — just

hard, but with a delicate touch. Momentum is everything on the Jacque Yamaha, which rewarded the use of wide, sweeping trajectories, so was entirely in keeping with OJ's liking for high turn speeds.

One strange thing it took me a while to get used to, though, was the soft, very squidgy brake lever which OJ apparently insisted on. First time I squeezed it accelerating out of the pits, in order to get the carbon discs warmed up in time for the first turn, I thought there must be air in the system — but then I realised it actually works pretty well, because you end up with a more progressive feel and improved sensitivity with the black brakes than if you had a more all-or-nothing hard lever. And, needless to say, on such a small, light bike that's only 2 kg over the 250GP minimum weight, the radial monoblock Nissins' stopping power is simply awesome, and thanks to those shrouds the 273-mm carbon discs retained the heat well, so even at the end of the straight response

was instant when I squeezed the soggy lever really hard.

When that happened, the Yamaha was pretty stable when stopping hard, despite the weight transfer occasioned by the forward weight bias, which had the back wheel lifting and street-sweeping the tarmac if I didn't take care to use the rear brake first to counter this transfer. Interestingly, the exact weight distribution was the one piece of data about the bike that was 'unavailable' from Moto 3, but it presumably was a key factor in making the front tyre stick to the ground so well in turns, allowing you to trail brake deep into the apex of a turn, without worrying too much about washing out the front wheel, or tucking it under. This was a beautifully balanced and neutral-handling package, so whatever 'corrections' Yamaha did to make it handle properly that championship season, definitely worked.

However, it was still rather embarrassing that I managed to lap



faster on the YZR250 at Jerez than I did on Carlos Checa's YZR500 I rode the same day — though I was quicker on Nori Haga's R7 Superbike than on either of the GP racers, which must say something! But that's all down to the comparative controllability of the two bikes, for during the many years I tested two-stroke factory 500GP bikes, I'll happily admit that it was the bike which was in charge, not me — and the secret of my survival was to accept that, and ride it the way it tells you it's prepared to let you do so.

On a 250, it was the other way round: I'm in charge, not the bike — but the problem was that, because of my Superbike-sized build, I couldn't usually ride them as hard as they asked to be ridden, for the simple reason I was too big for them. Well, OJ's 2000 world champion Yamaha was the dream 250 for anyone of normal build — and the fact that I had to be dragged off it at the end of the final day of testing at Jerez underlined how great such a refined and effective package felt to ride,

the product of a four-year effort by Yamaha's engineers in fighting against the odds. Respect.

Sadly, having accomplished its world-championship mission, Yamaha officially pulled out of the 250GP class at the end of 2000 to focus on developing its new four-stroke MotoGP contender for 2002 and beyond. This made OJ's 2000 world crown the last of 14 250GP titles which Yamaha had won since Phil Read earned the first of these in 1964. I'm fortunate to have ridden each different type of bike that the Japanese company used to achieve these crowns, except for the V4 RD05A with which Read and Bill Ivy registered another Yamaha 1-2 in the points table in 1968. That apart, within the context of their time, Olivier Jacque's 2000 YZR250 OWL5 was undoubtedly the pick of the crop, and most assuredly one of the finest 250GP motorcycles ever raced. That's why it spent the 2000 GP season at the front of the field, where it belonged. ■

## MOTODATA

### YAMAHA YZR250 OWL5

|                   |                                   |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>POWERTRAIN</b> |                                   |
| Displacement      | 249cc, V-twin                     |
| Max power         | 97 bhp@12,800 rpm                 |
| Max torque        | NA                                |
| Transmission      | 6-speed                           |
| <b>CHASSIS</b>    |                                   |
| Type              | Aluminium twin-spar frame         |
| <b>BRAKES</b>     |                                   |
| F/R               | 273-mm twin discs/<br>200-mm disc |
| <b>TYRES</b>      |                                   |
| F/R               | 120/60 R17 / 165/55 R17           |
| <b>DIMENSIONS</b> |                                   |
| L/W/H (mm)        | NA/NA/NA                          |
| Wheelbase         | 1330 mm                           |
| Ground clearance  | NA                                |
| Seat height       | NA                                |
| Kerb weight       | 97 kg (without fuel)              |
| Fuel capacity     | NA                                |
| <b>TOP SPEED</b>  | 268 kph (Mugello, 2000)           |
| <b>OWNER</b>      | Yamaha Motor Co., Iwata, Japan    |

## TANK SLAPPER

HDT CUSTOMS'S KTM 390  
ADVENTURE

# SPOKING FUN

Cool custom jobs aren't always flashy. Here's proof

By Kartik Ware **Photographs** Kaizad Adil Darukhanawala



**D**o you need to modify a stock bike? Yes and no, and both answers are equally correct. It depends on where you come from. Not your address, I mean, the mindset with which you approach motorcycles. The various compromises of planning and production leave manufacturers' hands tied when it comes to details, even on the most focussed of machines meant for large audiences, so most motorcycles are not perfect, if there is such a thing as a perfect motorcycle. And outside all motorcycle factory gates, there exists a need to personalise a machine, to elevate it to a level that is both personal and separate from the madding crowd.

What we have here is a KTM 390 Adventure that in one spoked-wheel flourish silences the loud complaints that foghorned all over the Internet the day the bike was launched in India. Now, the 390 Adventure is one of the most versatile bikes you can buy under ₹ 5 lakh in India, and this job by HDT Customs from Mumbai improves the off-road/long distance capability of the bike via some simple and effective mods, not least of which are the spoked wheel rims. I and my 390 Adventure joined Hemant Darbar of HDT Customs on his bike on an early morning ride to check out his bike. But the wheels were not the first thing that grabbed my attention.

A thumbing of the starter on the white bike let forth a lovely sound from its high-mounted exhaust which, as it turned out, was a used unit from a KTM EXC, one from KTM's line of enduro bikes, complete with 'KTM Racing' engraved on it. It's not obnoxiously loud nor does it sound tinny; it's a sound that suits both the bike and my ears, and those of the noise police, too. Needless to say, I immediately wanted it, and I will find one as soon as I can. In addition to the motor's liberated voice, the rerouted piping also reduces quite a lot of weight. Which means I can indulge in my twice-a-week pizza sprees.





The spokes-vs-alloys brigade can now eat its heart out



Guess which one won't worry in a stream?



Forget Snell, this helmet is Smell-certified



Fuel can goes onto the black screw-on thingy



Wrapped around the exhaust and the tail section of the custom bike was a lovely luggage rack finished in silver. It was reminiscent of the ones you see on those jumbo-sized adventure bikes, but scaled down to fit the 390 Adventure's more reasonable dimensions, and both rack and the top plate are made out of 304 stainless steel. In all, the mounting and quality of the tubes and welding seemed to be great, and every long-distance rider understands and will appreciate the extra luggage-carrying capacity the rack offers. What's more, the top

plate holds a robust 5-litre can with a screw-on system, and that means two things: less hunting for petrol pumps as well as riding longer into the wilderness without the fear of taking increasingly desperate selfies with a motorcycle that's run out of fuel.

Then there's a new front mudguard, too, one that fits higher up, and relocates the number plate to the 390 Adventure's gawky forehead. The mudguard itself is off the Bajaj Boxer's export version, though I imagine finding another suitable candidate

shouldn't be too much of a problem between the Impulse, the Xpulse and the Himalayan, or many of the aftermarket ones that you see online. I'd prefer a KTM one if I could find one, though at least Darbar has kept things in the Chakan family by opting for a Bajaj part. However, the deployment of a raised mudguard comes down to the most important change to the modded bike, one that sees no familial parts, though it does take help from dual-purpose bikes that came before it.

The spoked wheel rims and the proper dual-sport Continental TKC



## “With the HDT bike, the 390 Adventure is that much closer to being a 390 Enduro”

80 Twinduro tyres are the biggest and most important changes on the bike, and what a lot of punters were baying for. The tyres are highly rated by dual-sport riders, including Darbar who has them on all his bikes. I do hope they're all dual-sport bikes; imagine a scooter with these. Anyway, Darbar achieved this holy grail of wheels by employing a Himalayan hub at the front and an Impulse hub at the back, and lacing them to wheels acquired from the shop called the Internet. The wheels are of the stock size, so the KTM's electronics won't kamikaze

themselves into idiot-light oblivion.

Overall, I'd say the modded bike looks far more purposeful than the stock one, and that's because it is. There's more grip for tricky situations, more practicality via the luggage space, and more feel-good sounds from that exhaust that only get better the more you ride. I'm no off-roader, but it was fun watching Darbar do things on his bike, things that my decidedly single-purpose self would rather not attempt. The modded bike slid, jumped and landed hard enough to show that the bike is a tough build; it has to

be, since all those custom bits have to live with the motor's 150-kph capability. With the HDT bike, the 390 Adventure is that much closer to being a 390 Enduro. I don't covet most of the mods myself, except for that exhaust, but I am most certainly thinking of how to go about converting my bike into a 390 supermoto. Stock is for suckers and all that. ■

*If you want to enduro-fy your motorcycle, give HDT Customs a call at +91 9819184823. And then drop us a line to go for a ride!*

# SURVIVORS »»»»

COCOONED AND SHELTERED, THIS IS THE FOUR-WHEELED DEAL

## BACK IN ACTION

AFTER A SERVICE, THE S-PRESSO IS BACK TO BEING ITS CHEERFUL SELF



This bright little hatchback was starting to get a little grumpy last month. The engine took on a more gruff note and it had a few electronic niggles as well. The left tail-light cluster stopped working, which I thought was a blown bulb, but it turns out the connectors had worked themselves loose. And try as I might, the infotainment system's Android Auto and Apple CarPlay wouldn't connect. After getting some much needed TLC, the S-Presso is a happy camper once again. The engine sings its three-cylinder symphony with joy now, and all the electronic problems have been taken care of.

After driving all the SUVs we've featured in this month's issue, it actually felt freeing to get back into the S-Presso, if I'm completely honest. I didn't have to worry about finding parking or



Everything is in working order again

going down the narrow roads that Google Maps inevitably took me through. The AMT gearbox is slower than any of the other automatics I've tested this month, but if you can anticipate the shift and let off the throttle, it ends up being pretty smooth. It's much better when you're in manual mode, too. There's still a

delay between pulling the lever and the gearbox responding, but it'll only take you a few tries to adjust your technique to suit it. Once you figure that out, you can continue living out your rally driver fantasies. Now, we've already proved that the S-Presso can take dirt like a champ, but since it is the monsoon season, maybe it's time we subject it to some slush?

### LOGGING IT OUT

#### MARUTI SUZUKI S-PRESSO

- > Lightens you by ₹ 5.48 LAKH (on-road, Mumbai)
- > Lived with Aditya
- > Odometer reads 7824 km
- > Drinking habits 16 kpl

@MSArenaOfficial #MotoringSPresso



## PARK VIEW

LIVING LIFE IN SHORT BURSTS,  
ONE WEEK AT A TIME

The tyre pressures are low. It still sorely needs a service, the helpful Hyundai chaps said they'll let me know when it can be scheduled. The Venue stands still for long periods of time, longer than

any machine should be unoperational. And it rains non-stop. Make no mistake, these circumstances are torture, too, even if they're diametrically opposite to the normal full-throttle hard-braking

monsoon that the Venue saw last year. At least the water still stays outside the car. Don't worry, it's probably this extended isolation talking.

But when the Venue does get out and about, it takes off like a bat out of its belfry. I do try to take it easy, what with it needing a service and all, but fluid levels are fine and they drown all my restraint. This is suitably aided by the fact that, as I mention in every report, the Venue is fun to drive no matter what its condition. I mean, who thinks about an empty windshield-wiper reservoir when that engine's hitting the redline, right?

### LOGGING IT OUT

#### HYUNDAI VENUE

- > Lightens you by ₹ 12.48 LAKH (on-road, Mumbai)
  - > Lived with Kartik
  - > Odometer reads 13,926 km
  - > Drinking habits 15 kpl
- @HyundaiIndia #MotoringVenue



## SETTLING IN

GETTING USED TO  
AN UPGRADE IS EASY  
FOR OUR RESIDENT  
SHUTTERBUG

About a month and a half ago, I had to bid farewell to my long-term Maruti Suzuki S-Presso, but lo and behold, a larger set of wheels came to me in the form of the Hyundai Aura. I had fallen in love with the S-Presso and was wondering how I would cope with its loss, but the Aura put these worries to rest. And how! I had some initial trepidation about its 5-speed manual transmission, after the Maruti's AMT gearbox,

but with a very light clutch action and a decent gear shift actuation, the Hyundai admirably takes care of the convenience angle. If I have to report a negative, then it has to be a slight turbo lag I feel sometimes in slow-moving traffic, especially the transition from second to third gear. At around 14 kpl, the Aura is easy on my pocket and is not going to drown my accountant in despair. I have completed about 1500 km to date and I can say that I have forgotten my first ride. That's how good this upgrade has been!

### LOGGING IT OUT

#### HYUNDAI AURA

- > Lightens you by ₹ 9.92 LAKH (on-road, Mumbai)
  - > Lived with Kaizad
  - > Odometer reads 4712 km
  - > Drinking habits 14 kpl
- @HyundaiIndia #MotoringAura

# SURVIVORS >>>>>

LIVING LIFE ON TWO WHEELS, MONTH AFTER MONTH. AFTER MONTH

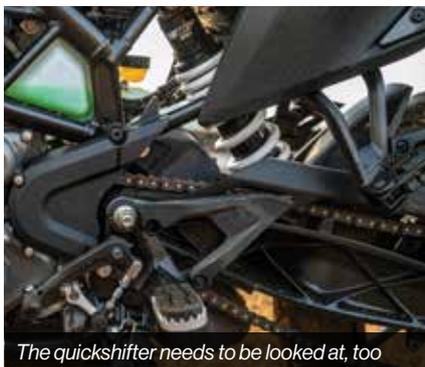
## MIXED SIGNALS

GOOD AND WEIRD THINGS  
HAPPENED TO MY MOTORCYCLE



Interesting thing happened a couple of days ago. We were out for the HDT Customs shoot, which you've hopefully read before reaching this page, and both our bikes displayed some peculiar signs. To begin with, both bikes were woken up after a long time and their motors were a bit jerky in operation. And then both the bikes' console screens went weird, the modded bike showing an 'ECU failure' warning, and my bike's idiot lights staying on until I switched the bike off and on again. These are probably down to fuel lines and software glitches, and I have to take the bike to the service centre to find out.

Another weird thing happened, though this one was the nice kind. As soon as the bike crossed 1000 km on the odometer, it became a whole lot smoother and freer overall. I remember



The quickshifter needs to be looked at, too

another 390 Adventure owner telling me the same thing. I don't know if KTM programs the ECU to run a bit richer for the first 1000 km or if there's a secret compartment in the motor that explodes Stefan Pierer's blessings all over its internals, but there was a definite change in its nature. It should also

explain why, after a tankful of gentle running, the bike returned only 22 kpl, certainly not what I expected. The next tankful should indicate if fuelling has indeed changed, and I expect to find out the reason at the bike's next service, too. I also removed the saree guard, so anytime now I expect the bike to get a Gulf Racing paint job and 17-inch wheels and tyres. Fingers crossed.

### LOGGING IT OUT

#### KTM 390 ADVENTURE

- > Lightens you by ₹ 3.63 LAKH (on-road, Mumbai)
  - > Lived with Kartik
  - > Odometer reads 1058 km
  - > Drinking habits 22 kpl
- @ktm\_india #Motoring390Adventure

# ENDURO-ING TORTURE

**A NEWLY-OPENED ENDURO TRAINING SCHOOL IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD? OFF WE GO!**



Pune has always been blessed with some amazing roads and countless trails to go riding on. And recently, it became home to an enduro zone called 21 Enduro Park. Ready with a fresh tube in the front tyre and desperate from weeks of no riding, I was more than ready to take the XPulse for a good bout of enduro training. The park is still being developed, but even the basic course laid out had enough challenges that were quite intimidating at first. But after a full morning training spent on the basics of enduro riding, I was able to complete the entire course astride the XPulse. And when I got back home, for the rest of the day, I could not help but ponder over how competent and capable the XPulse is for slow-paced technical riding.

Be it drawing tightening-radius



*This is how we break in the front tyre*

figures of 8 or steep incline and decline exercises, the chassis balance and ergonomics allow the rider to develop the enduro skill set in a hand-holding manner. The suspension is set up perfectly to clear obstacles that sit almost 18 inches high. And the big 21-inch

front wheel made it feel like a walk in the park, while other bikes with smaller wheels struggled to make it through half the enduro course. I am raring to go back again for some more enduro fun and in the process discover what more tricks and talents the XPulse has up its sleeve. Of course, if the rally kit arrives by then, it's going to be double the fun!

## LOGGING IT OUT

### HERO MOTOCORP XPULSE 200

- > Lightens you by ₹ 1.28 LAKH (on-road, Mumbai)
  - > Lived with Varad
  - > Odometer reads 3601 km
  - > Drinking habits 38 kpl
- @heromotocorp #MotoringXPulse

# PRESS CHARGES

KARTIK WARE  
@kartik46



I started reading on a Kindle recently, after years spent lampooning the device. I realised it made sense to cover a lot of reading ground on the Kindle, and then buy physical copies of only those books that I really like and will read more times than just once, instead of spending a significant portion of my salary on books that will only end up used as paperweights (hehe). Today, all our lives crawl along tangled webs of charger cables, and when I look at the socket board in the corner of the room, a Medusa of recharging connected to eight essential devices, I wonder how long it'll be before I plug a two-wheeler into it.

Note that I said 'two-wheeler', not motorcycle. The reason for that is something I wrote in January this year: 'Electric motors make more sense in scooters. An electric scooter looks the same as a petrol one. An electric motorcycle, unless it has a fairing, looks like a disaster. A motorcycle is a far more emotional subject than a scooter, and I doubt any electric motor can capture that dimension of riding. An e-bike might be fun, sure, but I expect the charm will run out faster than its charge.' And I still stand by it, of course. But if a Kindle can supplement books, I suppose it's possible that an electric two-wheeler of some kind might one

day add some sense to my highly irrational garage.

However, before that happens, EV manufacturers have a lot to figure out, range and recharging aside. With EVs, I think that traditional formats — motorcycles and scooters — may not necessarily be the best idea. Yes, they're universally accepted, but EVs should be allowed to find their own expressions. I

“... EVs should be allowed to find their own expressions”

myself am looking forward to seeing a cool hybrid between an electric bicycle and a trials bike, something that's fun to ride. Why? Because the idea of an electric scooter or motorcycle seems a bit uninspired; a unique and intriguing electric two-wheeler does not. And there's no reason why it can't be fun, right?

The Internet shows me many such projects, mostly abroad, and it looks like people are having fun with the idea of electric two-wheelers. I hope

that idea soon finds a foothold in India. Think of it as original electric visions that appeal to those who buy the KTMs and Royal Enfields of the world, and I bet there's a big enough market to justify the case. I imagine such EVs shouldn't be 'premium' just for the heck of it, but instead show innovation that goes beyond offering an instrument console that connects to your phone in 314 different ways. Perhaps then, we can one day have an electric motorcycle that somehow manages to recreate the feeling of a normal one.

Electric/electronic devices are mostly designed to be efficient and to melt into the background of your life, to be as inconspicuous as possible. Except for my Xbox, of course. And that's what EV manufacturers need to focus on; the loss of aural and tactile sensations of an internal-combustion motor has to be replaced with something. What exactly that may be, I can only imagine. Haptic panels on the bike and speakers inside the helmet that mimic the throbs and thrums of different types of engines? Maybe, maybe not. But I do hope they do find something because, for some reason, I can never stay awake while reading on the Kindle. No book ever did that.

[kartik.ware@delhipress.in]

**TVS** *Racing*



www.tvsapache.com

**BS-VI**

**RTR 200 4V**

**TVS**

Turn-by-Turn  
Navigation

Race  
telemetry

Call/SMS alert

Low fuel  
warning  
and assist

Lean angle  
mode

Crash alert

SMART **X**CONNECT

# All New 2020 TVS Apache RTR 200 4V

## PERFORMANCE EVOLUTION #RTRevolution

20.5 PS | 0 to 60km/h in 3.9s | New LED Headlamp | RT Slipper Clutch | Radial Tyre | New Race Graphics

Bluetooth Enabled | Available in



# Apache

## RTR 200 4V

**RACING DNA UNLEASHED**

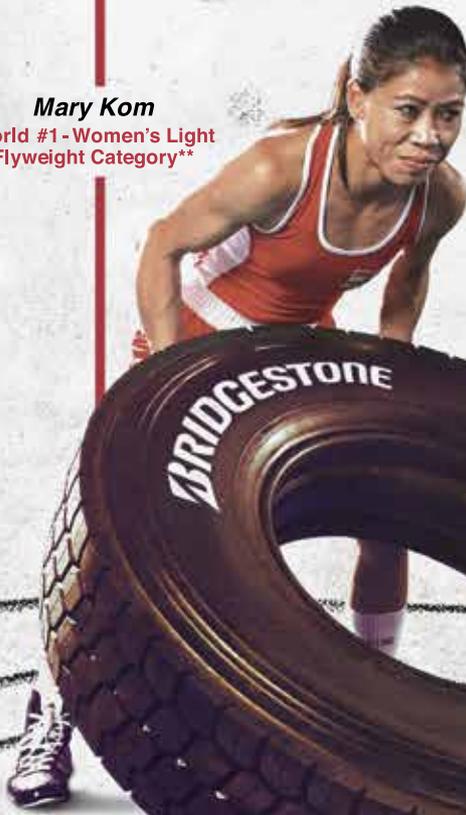


**BRIDGESTONE**

**THE BEST WAY TO EARN  
THE TRUST OF A BILLION  
PEOPLE IS THROUGH  
UNMATCHED PERFORMANCE!**

# **BRIDGESTONE, THE WORLD'S #1\* TYRE #1 CELEBRATES THE WORLD'S #1\* BOXER.**

**Mary Kom**  
World #1 - Women's Light  
Flyweight Category\*\*



Source: 2019 Global Tyre Rankings by Tire Business Magazine based on 2018 tyre sales \*As per AIBA 2019 Rankings.

**EXTENSIVE RANGE OF BRIDGESTONE TYRES FOR CARS & SUVs TO MEET ALL YOUR NEEDS.**



### **B-SERIES**

**DESIGNED FOR LONGER TYRE LIFE**  
FLAT CONTACT PATCH (FCP) PROVIDES A BETTER CONTACT AREA  
& GRIP BEST SUITED FOR INDIAN ROAD CONDITIONS.



### **DUELER**

**TAILOR MADE FOR SUVs**  
DESIGNED WITH DEEPER TREAD GROOVES FOR EXTRA  
TYRE LIFE AND STRONG GRIP.



### **ECOPIA**

**INDIA'S MOST FUEL EFFICIENT TYRE**  
LOW ROLLING RESISTANCE TYRES ARE ENGINEERED  
TO MAKE ANY CAR MORE FUEL EFFICIENT



### **TURANZA**

**TYRES WITH COMFORT & LUXURY**  
NANO PRO TECH POLYMER PROVIDES LOW ROLLING  
RESISTANCE FOR A SILENT RIDE.



### **POTENZA**

**SPORTY TYRES FOR SUPERIOR  
PERFORMANCE**  
BLOCK AND SLICK COMBINATION PROVIDES  
PERFECTLY BALANCED WET AND DRY PERFORMANCE.

To know more visit: [www.bridgestone.co.in](http://www.bridgestone.co.in) or call toll-free: 1800 222 088 | | | |