

# Balistic

## Bayliss 1098R

Words: **Glen Williams** Pics: **Glen W/Dallas Alexander**

Its number 296 of only 500 manufactured and sports a power-to-weight ratio better than 1:1. The only Ducati 'Bayliss' 1098R in NZ gets a quick spin around the Manfield race circuit by BRM race reporter Glen Williams and makes quite an impression.

The good guys from Motomart in Wellington and the owner himself allowed BRM to test ride what Ducati purport to be the closest thing to a genuine factory world Superbike. A read of the spec sheets quickly shows that it is indeed pretty much that, and this particular Bayliss 1098R has had some extras thrown at it including a set of BST carbon fibre wheels, aftermarket triple clamps and a custom rear linkage which lightens this already light 180kg motorcycle and further improves its performance. The pedigree of the bike is clearly obvious – and it doesn't try to hide for one moment that it is truly a 'wolf in wolf's clothing'.

### Does This Wolf Bite?

"The tail section is worth ten grand alone," was the not so subtle hint combined with a cheeky smile, from Andrew Forward who is the lucky owner of this particular Ducati as he and son David (both racers themselves) watched on a little nervously as I prepared to take his \$85,000 bike out on track.

Rolling out of pit lane I managed to achieve my first of a number of missed gears during the test (sorry Andrew!). To say that the gearbox was 'tight' would be an understatement – however it would not be fair to knock any brownie points off the machine for this issue as it had very little mileage on the clock and the owner has since confirmed that this trait is now much improved as he has put a few more miles on the clock running in the bike.

Other than a few dodgy gearshifts the first few laps showed up two things (1) The engine had un-be-leeveable stonk from anywhere in the rev-range

and (2) something was up with the steering as it felt like the steering damper was locked on full or it had a flat front tyre. This in turn provided a few quirky moments on Manfeld's slower corners. Back into the pits and Robert Taylor the Ohlins guru was on hand to immediately identify the problem, it turned out that the Kyle racing aftermarket triple clamps fitted only days beforehand were nipped up over tight and having quite an effect on steering movement. Back out again and I had a much nicer beastie in my hands with a much more confident front end. Andrew Forward had in-fact just added a number of new suspension parts that week to the bike and advised me earlier in the day that they had no time at all to "set these up" and this showed. Even so, the bike was pretty responsive and willing to follow the rider's instructions. The drop dead gorgeous carbon fibre BST wheels were shod with Pirelli slicks and these added to the overall experience which is unsurprising as the companies Supercorsa road orientated rubber are used on the bike in standard trim.

Steering into the corner still required some effort though – but once the bike was on its side it held its line well. Spring rates fitted were in theory on the high side at 13kg for the rear TTX36 Ohlins and 1.1kg springs in the front. In reality though the rear felt pretty good and drove well out of corners with no discernable kick in the pants over bumps or early slides on the power, which usually indicates of an 'over-sprung' rear end. My suspicion though is that the rear rebound setting would be worth dialling back as it was a little unsettled upon entry into faster corners.

The instrument cluster has bling, but I am not a fan of LCD tachometers and found it hard to read at speed, give me an old school dial gauge and needle any day. (You old git! - Ed)

The Ducati Traction Control system was set to No6 of 8 levels (1 being the Troy Bayliss level.....) and we had a good opportunity to test this out as there was a long line of cement left on the track coming onto the front straight. Tracking deliberately through this (sorry for getting your bike dusty Andrew!) on the gas the DTC worked seamlessly by instantly adjusting the ignition curve and thus had very little impact on the attitude of the chassis. There was just a subtle feeling that the front to rear balance of the bike was changing beneath you, but other than that it carried on along its intended path without getting flustered.



### More Grunt Than A Pen Full Of Pigs

Ducati threw 2mm bigger pistons and lengthened the stroke by 3.2mm to achieve the increase in capacity of the 1098 to 1198cc; the extra capacity is clearly obvious in both the torque and power figures. The power is delivered in a totally linear fashion and the 'seat of the pants' feeling of pure thrust in any gear at any revs is captivating. Vibration was minimal and the engine is now well separated from what I like to call the slightly 'agricultural feeling' of the 998/999 Ducati era (of which I have owned both). Some might say that this is to the detriment of the Ducati's character, however the sheer power delivery of this 1198 unit more than makes up for this and it has its very own but 'different' character. Wheelies are commonplace – they just occur in the most uncommon places with this engine! As soon as you hit the gas even in the middle of fast or slow turns the front goes light and in its current set up the bike pushed a little bit in the twisty bits due to this. The other strong point of this engine is that it does not suffer at all from that "running out breath syndrome" that afflicts so many big capacity twin cylinder machines at higher revs; it simply pulls you forward in every gear at an ever increasing velocity – very impressive.

### Classic Chassis

The 330mm front Brembo monobloc radial brakes were strong and progressive; I can't say what the rear was like, as I never touched it. The slipper clutch was extremely hard to detect working, which is exactly as you want it to be and lets you get on with the business of shoving the bike into the corners as fast as you dare. The chassis itself is adjustable in so many ways it isn't funny and you could play with all the knobs and levers and eccentrics until the cows come home to find the set-up that suits you.

Owner Andrew says, "We've got quite a few parts to add to the bike

### Ducati 1098R Bayliss Replica

Price: If you need to ask – you can't afford it....

ENGINE
Type: 1198cc, L Twin 90-degree
Valve train: DOHC, desmo 8v
Bore x stroke: 106.0 x 67.9mm
Compression: 12.8:1
Fuel system: Marelli EFI
Clutch: Dry, multi-plate slipper-type
Transmission: 6-speed
PERFORMANCE (CLAIMED)
Horsepower claimed: 180 bhp @ 9500rpm
Torque claimed: 92.2 lb.-ft. @ 7750rpm
CHASSIS & RUNNING GEAR
Frame: Tubular-steel trellis with single-sided aluminum swingarm
Front suspension: 43mm Ohlins fork, Ohlins SBK pistons 1.1kg springs
Rear suspension: Ohlins TTX, Kyle racing link, CKT valving
Front brake: Dual four-piston Brembo Monobloc calipers, 330mm discs
Rear brake: Dual-piston Brembo caliper, 245mm disc
Front tyre: 120/70ZR17 Pirelli Slick, SC0 comp
Rear tyre: 195/55ZR17 Pirelli Slick, SC1 comp
DIMENSIONS
Rake/trail: 24.5/97mm
Seat height: 818mm
Wheelbase: 1420mm
Weight Dry 180kg (feels lighter)

including a set of factory race cams, ECU, and the full-monty 70mm 'drainpipe' exhaust system with carbon end cans and Corse throttle bodies, plus carbon fibre body work." This will lighten the bike and add even more horsepower – bringing it very close in specification to Mr Bayliss's world championship machine. I hungrily look forward to the already kind offer to return and report on the bike in that higher specification.

Andrew is a true enthusiast and his company Global Motorsports is busy organizing a motorcycle tour group away to the Malaysian Grand Prix at Sepang on 22-26 October this year. So if you fancy a trip away with a bunch of like-minded souls then contact him on 0800 438 688 **BRM**

