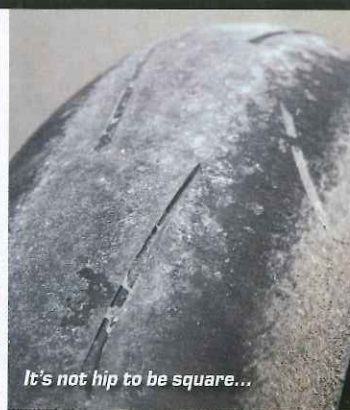




The Wheelhouse boys house new wheels...



It's not hip to be square...



Ready for ripping!

## CHARLIE KAWASAKI NINJA ZX-10R ABS

TIME ON TEST:  
6 MONTHS

04170 ODOMETER  
MILES

BHP: 175  
GAIN: 5

NEXT AIM:  
WINTER MILES

THIS MONTH I HAVE MOSTLY BEEN... "Feeling the benefit of fresh tyres..."

The ZX-10R finally broke the 4,000 miles mark this month which, given that the majority of these were done on the Portimao run in the summer, shows that even though the bike has been in constant use, most trips have been short bursts of excitement – as opposed to the hard yards abroad.

To change this I had a few meetings in the middle of England to attend in mild mid December, and thus the Kawasaki and I finally managed to spend time together that warranted more than one fuel fill. This gave me the chance to look at the range I could get out of the green machine and its 17-litre tank. Rootsy had boasted an extraordinary distance on one tank on the ZX-6R last year – hitting 200 miles before needing a fill – and I

thought it would be interesting to compare the two Ninjas.

The result was impressive. From topped-to-the-brim to the fuel light flashing I had travelled 134 local and motorway miles using 13.28 litres. Some basic maths meant that had I totally rinsed the tank, fumes and all, I could have expected just over 170 miles out of the big Ten. It also suggests that the fuel light will come on when you still have 30 miles in the tank, some improvement to the previous model we had in 2011 that halted just 17 miles into the light.

To these figures you also need to consider that the ZX-10R is running with a new Akrapovic without the cat or baffle plugged in. The tyres were also well past their sell by date; the Bridgestones R10's had been on the bike since the SportsBike of the Year and were far better suited to the Portimao circuit than the extended journey back from Portugal. A couple of aggressive dyno runs also haven't helped.

This situation was resolved within 30 minutes at Wheelhouse Tyres in Birmingham, where a set of Bridgestone's brand new Battlax Hypersport S21's were waiting. This is quite a coup, the UK journalists have not even attended the official launch of this rubber yet, so I had little idea what to expect. However, knowing that Bridgestone has positioned this new tyre in the same family as the S20 and BT-016 gave high expectations.

As I pulled out of Wheelhouse Tyres the steady scrubbing in period began, but it was not too long before I was confidently sweeping along the Fosseyway back to base. The S21's blurb boasts 'superb stability, handling, and cornering performance on dry and wet




Price from new: £12,199  
Insurance group: 17

Modifications	Price
LighTech rearsets	£369.99
LighTech levers	£163.50
R&G generator case	£65.99
R&G clutch case cover	£72.99
R&G starter motor case	£51.99
R&G fork protectors	£30.99
R&G tail tidy	£89.99
Akrapovic Ti silencer	£648.00
<b>RUNNING TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,493.44</b>

without compromise' and in this initial trip there is nothing to suggest this is not the case. The fact that they are also reputed to last a massive 35 per cent longer than the S20s will take many more miles to test – and will probably have to involve them being refitted to my next staffer as the Kawasaki's return is sadly imminent.

Until that point, I've asked the chaps to give their more learned impression of the ZX-10's new shoes, and so far my question has met with a big thumbs up.

By the time you read this I may have had a lonely old Christmas bereft of Kawasaki, your hearts are bleeding, I'm sure. The policy of sticking my fingers in my ears and going la-la-la whenever the phone rings will surely only last so long... 

Thanks to:

Gary at Bridgestone for the S21s ([www.bridgestone.co.uk/moto/](http://www.bridgestone.co.uk/moto/))  
Craig and the chaps at Wheelhouse Tyres ([www.wheelhousetyres.co.uk](http://www.wheelhousetyres.co.uk))



The Ten needed a clean to dignify the new tyres...