

Test bike courtesy of Donford BMW 021 8884200
By Richard Andrews and Vincent Conlon

So we are a whole year down the line with Donford Motorrad's BMW G450X, it's undergone quite a few changes but the biggest change has been the suspension work by Hilton Hayward. The one area that has been left untouched has been the engine itself.

A few months ago we looked at the Power Commander V that was fitted onto the Hexcode G450X. The intention was to get this bike and test ride soon after, but time never played fair with us.



Well, finally we got the chance to test it back to back with our race bike. This really turned out to be interesting.

Our Donford race bike is fitted with a 14 tooth front sprocket so it gets off the line quite quickly. The



Hex Diagnostics bike is still running a 15 front sprocket.

The first test was standing starts. With the bike set in the 30kw mode it pulled Ok off the line but was lagging a bit. Our race bike held on quite easily.

With the bike was switched to 38kw mode it really pulled and the taller gearing didn't inhibit the getaway at all. The bike just pulled through gears gaining speed extremely rapidly. Of the two tests over the start straight at Zone7 track the 450 pulled 111kmph in 'slow' mode and 120kmph in full power mode. This is quick! Considering the short distance covered. This is a real hole shot machine.

Out on the enduro loop the bike was very tame in the low mode and but very easy to ride. With the taller gearing it still pulled nicely and would work fairly well for technical stuff. The power reduction seriously saves you energy and makes it smooth. Having said this we prefer the top power mode. It's still smooth, but the extra grunt gets you where you need to be and carries the bikes weight easier when cornering. It pulls from way down low with minimal gear selection.

The Power Commander is not just a plug and play piece of kit. It essentially allows you to personalise your engine performance. Much the same as you would set up your suspensions to your own needs. But unless you have your own dyno and a wealth of knowledge about engine mapping don't try this at home. Julian from Superbike Solutions is our guru that jiggled his magic over this 450. His

understanding of the requirements and demands placed on the motor is actually quite humbling. The engine mapping was set to give the best performance running the taller gearing while aiming for maximum fuel economy. The dyno testing showed about a 30% percent saving in fuel consumption. Our track testing indicated about a 10% saving but it's not that accurate as the bikes were run separately and could well have covered different distances. None less there was definitely a saving and that's not to be sniffed at on the BMW G450X.

So without porting, grinding or really doing anything mechanical - the G450X can get a boost in power and save fuel. Who says you can't have your cake and eat it?

It doesn't stop there. Hexcode, the developers of the GS911 portable diagnostic tool, have now come up with a remote booth tooth enabled reader, that can send your mapping details to your mobile, so that you can get your track data and analyse it immediately. How's that for advanced? Another big winner for South Africa, I'm sure.

The advancement in motorcycle technology and the incorporation of funky electrictrickery into our machines is giving rise to products that would never have been considered in past but that will become essential items in all workshops in the future. Now with availability of a diagnostic kit in the palm of your hand, you can take your info to some one that can decipher it properly.