



The New Kawasaki ZX-6R *Trading in gets easier and easier ...*



I didn't go to my local Kawasaki shop expecting to trade in the 2004 636 I'd been happily riding. I honestly didn't expect there to be anything on the floor that would motivate me to bring the bike in. Some of you reading this may be able to relate to what I am saying, the day you don't look for something is the day that you find exactly what you didn't know you need. That was the day I decided I needed to take home the new ZX-6R.



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The reworking of the new ZX-6R is more than just about looking good. According to KMC the engine has been redesigned from the crankcase up for the first time in ten years.

Racing technology built into the new bike is a close-ratio cassette transmission that can be removed without the needing to split the main crankcases in case you needed to make repairs or adjustments at the track. They also tell us that the fuel injection system has shorter throttle bodies with a smaller diameter bore which claim to give this new smaller sized engine more torque in the mid-range.

It also comes with a GPS – Gear Position Sensor.

The new ZX-6R comes stock with a slipper clutch which is one difference between the 2004 and 2007. My 2004's rear wheel would hop if I geared down before a corner and my engine rpms were too high. The slipper clutch allows quicker downshifts. To experience the gains of a slipper clutch you don't have to buy a 2007 Kawasaki – it was introduced to the 636 in 2005.

A quick glance at the exhaust might leave the impression that the ZX-6R comes stock with stacked twin small diameter exhaust cans but if you look closely you will see it is a single oval pipe with a shotgun styled end cap. The titanium pipe has the pre-chamber and catalyser located below the engine to keep the weight on the bike low and centered and the temperature of the under seat silencer reduced.

Looking at the new Kawasaki with its fairing

removed, I wonder how much more it would have cost the consumer to have an exhaust system that not only works wonders but would be worth showing off?



Even if some of the systems of the new 600 look better hidden by plastic the bike does have a cohesive look and every year the fit and finish of Kawasaki's bikes seem to get better. You can look at this bike from almost any angle and nothing jumps out at you – unless you are on the right side of the bike looking at the rear brake reservoir. It seems odd to me that they would leave the rear brake reservoir exposed.



Another design feature of the smooth body of the 2007 ZX-6R is the lack of tie down points for any luggage. It can be argued that this is a bike intended for Sunday morning canyon rides or track days on weekends but if you want to take the 600 out for a weekend away then there is aftermarket solution. Ventura Racks allow you go on vacation with your bike. A Ventura Rack provides you with a frame that you attach to your bike that you can secure luggage to. There is no drilling of body work and the Ventura rack I got fit onto the bike perfectly the first try.

One of the things I really like about the Ventura Rack is that you can easily attach bags that you may already have or you have the option of buying the Ventura luggage system. Just give yourself time before a motorcycle trip to pack and secure your luggage right and you won't even notice you have luggage on your bike. If

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in doubt take a test ride before heading out on your adventure.

If you want the simplest bags to get on and off your bike – I would say that the Ventura bags are it.



A note for 2007 ZX-6R owners, careful removing the rear cowl of the bike. I found that piece of plastic on the Kawasaki difficult to get on and off.

Kawasaki's latest ZX-6R is a great bike to ride. Although I love the power of the ZX-14 when it comes to passing on the straight open roads, it's

easy to get hooked back onto the quick handling of the Kawasaki ZX-6R. It really depends on the type of roads you gear your time on the bike around. I was heading for some of my favorite tight twisty roads so I was looking forward to being back on the 600.

The new ZX-6R feels light and compact. It also felt easier to maneuver at parking lot speeds. I would like to say that my slow speed techniques had gotten mysteriously better, but that wouldn't be true, truth is that I found the 2007 ZX-6R effortless to control at slower speeds. Get out of the parking lot and speed things up and the ZX-6R is a "set it and forget it" cornering



machine. I like how I can feel the road surface through the bike enough to adjust my riding but not so much that I couldn't do a long day comfortably on the bike. Kawasaki has found a nice balance between keeping the rider comfortable and at the same time aware of what the temperament of the road surface is under the bike's tires.

Since trading my old bike in on the new 6R I almost feel guilty. I don't miss the 2004. I really can't wait to explore the full potential of Kawasaki's latest ZX-6R. I have a couple of future plans for the bike.

I would like to take the ZX-6R on a track and get the suspension set. I also plan to replace the stock exhaust canister with an aftermarket one. Maybe a Muzzy or an Area P, it is hard to

wait for new products to slowly emerge to fit a new model year.

Since I have the black bike (or as Kawasaki calls it – Ebony), I would also like to take out the silver fasteners and replace them with black ones I have replaced the windscreen with a darker one and I like how it looks.



So far with 2825 miles on the bike the only wear concern that I have is a wiggle in the tank that seems to be the result of two small rubber bumpers coming unglued and missing in action from under the tank. I have ordered the missing pieces of rubber and should get them soon and that should stop the wiggle and any other related problems from happening.

Kawasaki's all new ZX-6R is an improvement on an already bullet-proof ride and is sure to put a smile on your face.



Other colors the 2007 is available in besides "Ebony" are Lime Green, Atomic Silver and Passion Red.

MSRP - \$9099

For more details visit www.kawasaki.com

