

World premiere GS steals the show at Intermot

It was one of the most eagerly anticipated launches in recent years, but as the covers were lifted and the all-new R 1200 GS was unveiled on Tuesday 2 October at the Intermot motorcycle show in Cologne, everybody agreed that it had been well worth the wait.



Attracting one of the biggest crowds in recent memory, the BMW Motorrad stand was packed full of journalists and enthusiasts keen to get a first look at the new air/water-cooled boxer that promises to keep the legendary marque at the top of the game for the foreseeable future.

The fifth generation of this motorcycling legend was introduced by BMW Motorrad boss Stephan Schaller, who explained that the current model would always be a hard act to follow, especially as around 25,000 units (including the 'Adventure' variant) would be delivered to customers this year alone – even though the existing model is in its ninth year of production!

Before unveiling the new model, Schaller took a few minutes to remind the gathered press of some of the other success stories within the BMW Group during 2012. These included the S 1000 RR's continued dominance of the sport segment and its excellent year in the Superbike World Championship, as well as other important national racing series such as the IDM German International Superbike Championship, which was completely dominated by RR riders.

Schaller also talked about the excitement surrounding the imminent launch of the HP4 – the lightest, most technologically advanced sports bike available to buy 'over the counter', before underlining BMW Motorrad's commitment to safety by the standard fitment of ABS brakes across its entire product range from 2013.

Husqvarna Motorcycles' new TR650 Terra and TR650 Strada models were also highlighted, as were the ABS versions of the NUDA 900 and NUDA 900 R.

But focus soon returned to the R 1200 GS, as Schaller explained the great challenge that the company set itself to improve on the existing GS in all areas, despite the fact that it is still winning all the comparative tests in the specialist press. With the focus on showing a fresh, new, but typical GS design, increasing overall performance in all areas, improving handling and traction, as well as improving both touring and off-road suitability, the new contender would have to be something special.



With more power, improved fuel economy, semi-active suspension, auto stability control (ASC) and five intuitive riding modes, the new BMW is the most advanced GS ever, offering riders the chance to experience the best of all worlds. From a dynamic, high-performance road bike, capable of serious long-distance touring, to an even more effective off-road machine, the GS will allow riders to find the perfect bike set-up, altering engine mapping, suspension and ASC at the touch of a button.

Schaller then handed over to Edgar Heinrich, head of BMW Motorrad design, to explain the thinking behind the look and feel of the new GS. Heinrich explained how the design team had arrived at a machine that was every bit a GS, but the most dynamic one of all time. Heinrich, who has worked on three generations of GS, talked about what makes a GS unique, the unbelievable history of the GS legend, the design language of shapes, the robustness of materials used, and the synergy with specially developed rider equipment and accessories.

Then it was time for the action to begin, as the giant TV screens beamed images and film of the new GS in its natural environment, both on and off-road out in Africa, while the booming drums of a live band sounded out high up in the BMW Motorrad stand, to finally signal the arrival of the new R 1200 GS.

Making an entrance from three separate areas of the stand, the GS machines were ridden onto a special stage area by a trio of riders. Enduro specialist Dirk Thelen was the first to appear, riding down a steep slope onto the stage, saying that the new GS is a “quantum leap over the old one”. Dakar racer Tina Meier was up next, describing the new GS as “much easier to ride than its predecessor, and suitable for women riders too”. Finally, taking the quickest route straight down the stairs and onto the stage was freestyle legend Chris Pfeiffer, who said that “first impressions are really strong. It feels very different from its predecessor – everything fits, it's slender, slim and I'm really looking forward to riding it extensively”.



With the formalities over, it was time for journalists and photographers to go to work, taking pictures, asking questions and getting their first chance to see the new GS up close. Expect the new generation GS to continue to draw the crowds when it appears at various national motorcycle shows in the build up to its launch early in 2013.

For more information, visit www.bmw-motorrad.com/gs



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