



USED AND REVIEWED

SSB'S ULTIMATE USED BIKE GUIDE—WRITTEN (MOSTLY) BY YOU!

1998-2003 SUZUKI TL1000R

The year was 1998, Air Jordans were the shiz, the Nintendo 64 game console was cutting edge and the V-twin sportbike craze was in full swing. The Ducati 916 was out stomping the competition, Aprilia was about to release its new Mille and Suzuki was trying to cash in. One year after introducing the street oriented TL1000S, Suzuki introduced the hard-hitting TL1000R race replica.

A pumped-up version of the tamer S-model, the R was designed to battle in both WSB and AMA superbike series. Though the big Tiller (as they're commonly known) only garnered one checkered flag before Suzuki returned to the lighter GSX-R750 for racing, the big TLR became an instant classic.

While the R shared the same engine design with the S, it also received forged components, stronger internals and a bump in compression. The muscled-up 996cc, 90-degree V-twin was good for 135 HP and 78 LB-FT of torque at the crank. The over-square design made for an engine with the typical torque of a twin but added an unusually strong top-end more akin to an inline four.

Despite tipping the scales at a tick over 500 pounds wet, the big TL was able to devour the quarter-mile in the high 10s at 130 mph and would almost touch 170 on the top end.

Unique to say the least, the TLR's styling was muscular yet swooping, and the booming exhaust sounded like shotgun blasts at all times.

Like its distinctive styling, the Suzuki also stood alone with its unique rotary damper rear suspension. Quirky may be cool for some, but the majority found fault in the TLR's odd suspension design and overweight stature. If that wasn't bad enough, when

paired with the wrong conditions it resulted in tank-slappers and odd chassis behavior. Though most complaints stemmed from the earlier S models which had flimsier frames, sadly both TLRs got slapped with the stigma of being a widow-maker.

Aside from these gripes, the big and bad TL has earned a cult-like following amongst its fans, and owners have nothing but great things to say. Most admit the stock suspension



1998-2003

A RACE-READY VERSION OF THE TLR, THE R-MODEL SPORTED MORE POWER AND A STIFFER FRAME. POWER RANG IN AT 130 HORSES STRONG WITH ALMOST 80 LB-FT OF TORQUE TO BOOT. DESPITE WEIGHING OVER 500 POUNDS WET, THE BIG TLR WAS GOOD FOR HIGH 10s AT 130 MPH IN THE QUARTER MILE. AS QUIRKY AS IT WAS FAST, THE ROTARY REAR SUSPENSION HELPED IT EARN THE STIGMA OF BEING A WIDOW-MAKER. WITH A CULT-LIKE FOLLOWING THE TLR IS AS INFAMOUS AS IT IS LEGENDARY.



CARLOS MARTINEZ
 AGE: 43 YEAR: 2000 MILES DONE: 7000

MODS: Black heat wrapped Yoshimura slip-ons, custom paint and decals, undertail, rear hugger, Ducati-style mirrors with signals, one-off seat, grips, flat-black bolts, smoked screen, Michelin Pilot Power 2CT tires, reflective yellow rim tape, T-Rex sliders, HD lights
BEST UPGRADE: "The LED flushmounts and the Bosch HID lights. They illuminate as far as my eyes can see and I feel safe knowing everyone can see me coming and signaling."

FAVORITE ASPECT: "The torque, knowing I have the power when I need it at any speed. I have never been let down."



2002 SUZUKI TLR1000, all orig, V-win, only 7k miles, never been down, recently serv, hard to find in this cond, clean title, \$5,000, Cycles Unlimited, 00551830407 CGA91347/

isn't a strong point, but agree that upgraded fork internals and a new shock transform the beast. Equally mandatory is a good aftermarket exhaust system since most owners mark the sweet exhaust note as their favorite aspect of the TLR.

With owners racking up over 30,000 trouble-free miles on their Tillers it seems they're as reliable as they are mean. Common problems are few, but include temperamental charg-

ing systems, fouled plugs and the aforementioned suspension and weight woes. Other than that, riders seem to enjoy them for all types of riding: cruising, track days, and even custom building.

It's been over six years since the last TLR rolled off the assembly line. Some loved it, some hated it...but we all reminisce about it.



DENNIS HANS

AGE: 31 **YEAR:** 2000 **MILES DONE:** 25,000

MODS: Custom stretched swingarm with 240 rear tire, Six Shooter custom clear clutch cover and pressure plate, Sato rearsets, Öhlins shock, Traxxion Dynamics fork internals, Urban Industries radius-lipped wheels, Vortex clip-ons, NOS, Sprint steering damper, Vandriver brake reservoirs, Galfer Wave rotors, SS braided brake/clutch lines and throttle cables, custom candy paint with 50 coats of clear, mirror mounts, levers, pegs and shifter

BEST UPGRADE: "It would have to be the suspension."

FAVORITE ASPECT: "I just love the bike and always have, the sound, the power delivery, the blank stares I receive when cruising down the roads—it's all just fun."

