



# Changing Perceptions

We had our misgivings about CFMoto's 650NK with its made-in-China badge and rock-bottom price tag. But try as we might, the mid-sized naked never put a foot wrong

**WE'RE ON THE** cusp of returning our long-term CFMoto 650NK to the importer who kindly let us thrash every single 650cc out of its best-selling bike in the CFMoto range.

Considering the level of nonchalance we had toward the LAMS-approved bike when we first took delivery a year ago, it's humbling how every single one of us will mourn its absence.

The 650NK has been through thick and thin and has lived up to all challenges without missing a beat. Some of the highlights? We took it to a trackday at the State Motorcycle Sports Complex at Broadford and despite only having 38kW of

**Main:** The CFMoto has been fettled and taken to the max over the past year. Impressively, nothing's gone wrong

1. The CFMoto handles wet camping trips with aplomb
2. The LAMS bike was only three seconds slower than a ZX-14R at the drag strip!
3. Getting back to basics on a trackday is huge fun

power, we had as much fun as a hungry kid being let loose in a candy store. The 650NK started out in the slow group but soon proved delightfully capable and had me giggling like a lunatic as we overtook more powerful machinery, including a BMW HP4, on the sweeping corners. The bike's light, nimble and basic – which is endearing when compared to much more expensive machinery festooned with electronic aids and fripperies.

Michelin Pilot Power 3 tyres were fitted for the full-throttle trackday and they gave me so much confidence it wasn't hard to imagine what a beast of a bike the CFMoto could be, in unrestricted

On the clock

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form, at the Isle of Man TT – where it made history last year by being the first Chinese bike to finish the event.

We also took the 650NK to the Calder Park Raceway for a night of drag racing – where it ended up being matched up against a Kawasaki ZX-14R. That beast clawed itself to the quarter-mile speed trap in 9.8 seconds, whereas the CFMoto took 13.3. The 3.5-second deficit didn't dampen our spirits. The clutch took all the ham-fisted abuse in its stride – and with a bit of practice, we're confident we could have broken the 12-second barrier.

The CFMoto also lapped up daily commutes, in the pissing rain and on boiling-hot days, and has even stood up to the rigours of being taken on inappropriate unsealed roads for camping trips. It's cost us bugger all, both the 1000km and 6000km services were under \$235. The valve clearances don't need to be checked until 42,000km – impressive – and surpasses many other bikes' intervals.

By adding a Two Brothers Racing slip-on silencer (which weighs a considerable 5.5kg less than the standard item), we boosted its power and torque outputs by over five percent (from

Hyundai iLoad



## VAN GO!

After a few false starts (due to stock availability), our very own Hyundai iLoad has finally lobbied at Gassit HQ.

It's powered by an inline four-cylinder 2497cc deisel engine and has more punch than any of us gave it credit for. It's roomy, it's relatively quiet and can just squeeze a couple of small-ish roadbikes in the back at the same time.

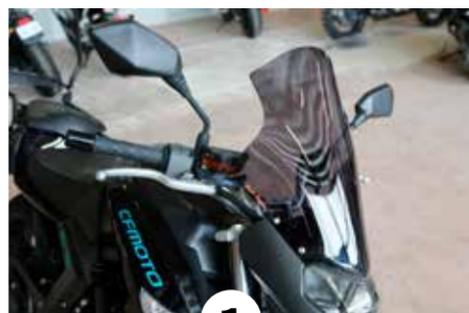
From stock, it came with a rubber mat over the cargo area's floor and 10 tie-down points bolted to the floor.

We had a couple of Sharp Racing wheel chocks rattling around the office from our previous van affair so Kel got a little inventive and has come up with a versatile solution allowing us to convert it from a one or two-bike set-up without the need for tools.

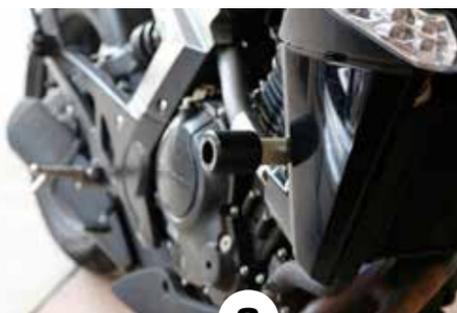
A piece of angle bolted to the floor using the existing tie-down points and three extra pieces bolted at 400mm intervals means the chocks can be situated at either end for a two-bike set-up or in the middle for one.

The three pieces of angle will stop the chocks moving from side to side and, Kel's theory is, once the bike is in place and tied down (with the force of the tie-downs pulling forward), the chocks themselves won't need to be bolted to the floor, with the weight of the secured bike doing the work for us. Is she right? It works for her trials bike, time will tell if it's secure enough for bigger roadbikes.

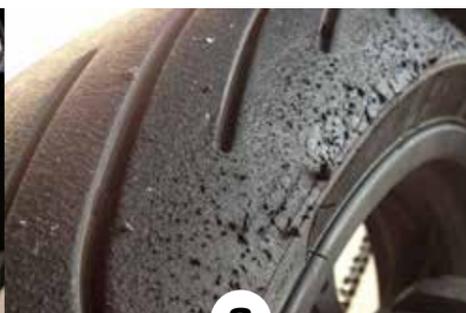




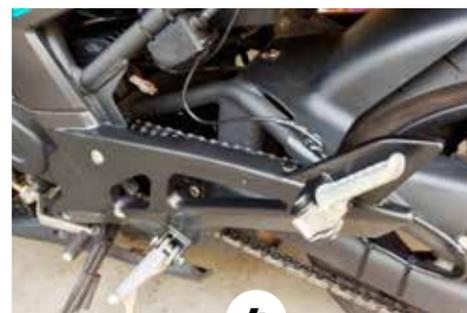
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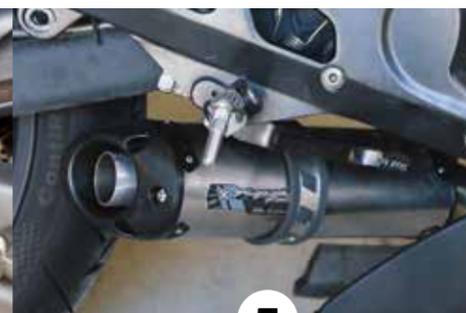
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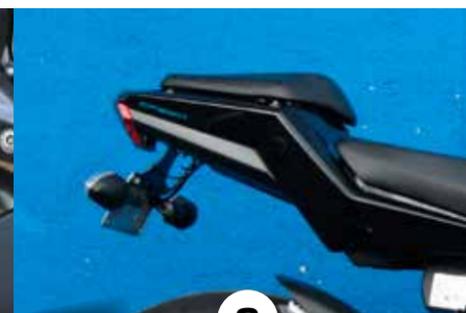
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36kW to 38kW at 7500rpm and from 48 to 52Nm at 6000rpm). As an added aural bonus, the aftermarket exhaust turned out to be five decibels louder than the standard item. At 99db, it's loud enough to turn most heads and the crackles and pops it produces – at around 3000rpm and when throttling off – is addictive.

The bike also breathes easier, thanks to an aftermarket air filter. Sticking the CFMoto back on the dyno, we discovered it pumped out an extra 0.53kW and 0.64Nm with a \$10.90 Uni Filter (or an extra 1.04kW and 1.43Nm with the \$109 DNA Filter). And further gains could have been had by fitting an aftermarket fuelling module, too.

Items fitted which have made the bike more practical include a touring screen, Oggy knobs, a Ventura gear rack and bag, a Cameleon chain oiler and an R&G tail tidy.

The 650NK has more than 7000km on the clock and it still looks almost as new as when it left the factory floor.

The chain has no signs of excessive wear or stretch, the paint's spot-on, the engine runs smooth and quiet, the brakes are strong, the fork tubes have no pitting marks or surface rust and the fork seals are still perfect.

No wonder more than 300 of these nakedbikes were sold during 2014 across the country.

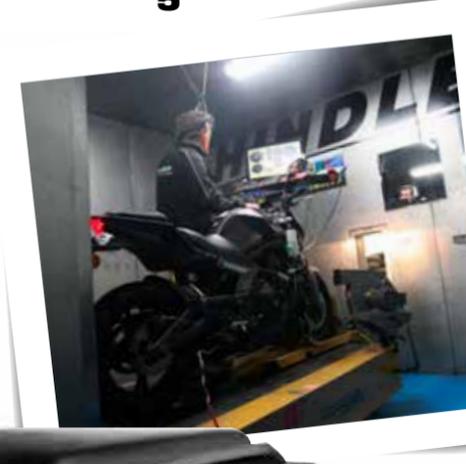
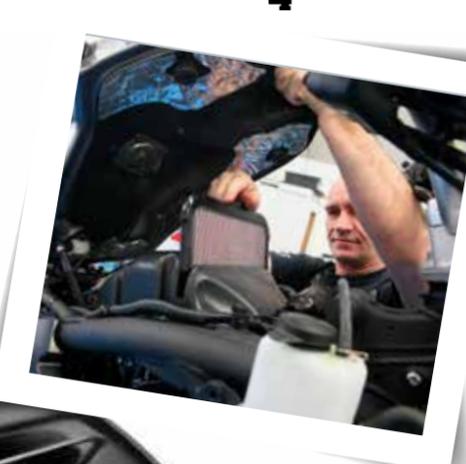
The negative points? None! Okay, there's a little bit of surface rust on the handlebar, the switchblocks have suffered slight premature fading, the headlight's beam is prone to vibrating on the vertical axis due to less-than-perfect mounting. But I've seen bikes with double the price tag with more than double the wear at 7000km.

There will be a few moist eyes when our CFMoto is put on the back of a truck for its ride back to its supplier. It's genuinely floored us with its character and ruggedness. We've tried to kill it in every way possible and it's withstood our racial slurs and full-throttle floggings. If you're after an affordable mid-sized nakedbike, leave your misconceptions by the door and give the Chinese champion a go.

**OSCAR KORNYEI**



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