



It will handle the twisty stuff fine but it's more at home in the wider areas. Or in the air!

the bike. It gives you the confidence to attack unseen sections hard, safe in the knowledge that if you get unexpectedly launched into the air, the TM will fly flat and true with a predictable trajectory. It steers lightly but it's not flighty.

“The bike has an ‘old-skool-cool’ appeal: big engine in a double-cradle frame and enough power to wake the dead.”

This gives it a less stable feel than a slower-steering bike and means you'll have to hang on to the bars a bit firmer in the loose stuff.

Ohlins hang front and rear and complement the steel frame. At the front, the fork seems to be set right; if it was any stiffer it would

wreak havoc with the bike's quick-steering nature. The only area of concern is a slight front-wheel deflection when braking firmly over hard, slippery surfaces.

The rear shock is on the soft side, unless you happen to be a 60kg whippet. If you're 80-90kg,

it'll run quickly through the first part of the stroke and you'll lose up to a third of the travel just by sitting on her. This causes the back to track low and push the front wide into corners. It can also jar the rider on landings, although there's enough control to let the

rear hook up and drive under hard acceleration.

The Nissin masters mate with Brembo callipers and are definitely the go – fade-free, consistently powerful and never grabby, it's one-finger stopping. The rear started to squeal at the end of the test but managed to maintain its consistency.

So what does \$13,990 get you? A registrable race bike that's heading towards the dearer end of the market. But, like the old man used to say, you get what you pay for. The cockpit is minimal, with just a small digital speedo, the switchgear is compact (lights are hard-wired and on all the time) and your hands are protected by RaceTech guards. Weight's low,

RIDER FEEDBACK

PRO



DAMIAN SMITH
31, 180cm, 66kg

“This TM is a race bike that's been made road-legal, not the other way around. It looks cool and is

hand-built and the motor's a gem. There's power everywhere and it won't stall on you if you're too quick with the clutch. The bars are too high in the tight turns and that stops you getting your weight forward. The pegs are fairly low and this helps to keep your body-weight central. The suspension's suited to my weight but if you're over 80kg, the shock could start to protest – it runs quickly through the first part of the stroke. Feels good for trailriding as it's well balanced and the suspension's not too stiff or soft. I'd gear down to race it, but the weight feels good and the motor just keeps on chucking out power.”

CLUBMAN/TRAILRIDER



MARTIN CHILD
38, 188cm, 90kg

“With its retro design and all the trick ingredients, the TM looks cool in the pits and doesn't

disappoint when you get on. Engine's smooth and the spread of power is vast and easily controlled. Saying that, there's a fair amount of hanging on needed to stay with the speed of the 530. Gearing suits the wider open spaces though I reckon it'll tractor round a MX course in top! The front-end can feel slightly nervous when running, off throttle, in the deeper sand. Easy to jump as stays level. My weight compresses the rear shock and that makes it harder to plant the front in berms with full confidence. The brakes are right on the money and offered the same performance all test long.”

power's high and the grin is worth at least twice the asking price.

Racers and advancing clubmen will take to this big E3-class thumper well. The bike has an “old-skool-cool” appeal: big engine in a double-cradle frame and enough power to wake the dead. Add in quality components and the 530 starts looking trick and exotic. Are you ready to spice up your riding? ■