

**AUGUST**  
GSX1400 AT ROCKINGHAM



BIG and burly Hoare loved the big and burly GSX

# & wrecked

we've been riding in the last year

**JULY**  
KX AND POTTER GET AIR



KX250F was the perfect novice dirt tool

**AUGUST**  
CBR600F TOURS IRELAND



OUR 2001 CBR600F wasn't as reliable as Hondas are meant to be

## EXPERT GUIDE TO...

# Aprilia RS250

The last of the 250GP replica two-strokes – so good and so addictive they banned it...

### 1995-2003 APRILIA RS250

★★★★★

**COST:** £1595-£3350  
**POWER:** 70bhp  
**WEIGHT:** 141kg  
**TORQUE:** 28ftlb

**FUEL:** 19 litres/32mpg/134-mile range

**RAKE:** 25.5°  
**TRAIL:** 102mm

**SEAT HEIGHT:** 810mm

**Model changes:**  
**1995:** RS250 introduced in red/silver/purple only  
**May 1995:** Chesterfield replica colourscheme available  
**1996:** Detail changes only. Now silver or Chesterfield replica  
**1998:** Complete model update. Adjustable rear shock, Showa USD forks, inclined double beam alloy frame, new styling and better performance  
**2000:** New colours  
**2003:** Discontinued

**TECHNICAL SPEC**  
**Engine:** Liquid-cooled, 249cc (56mm x 50.6mm) 90° V-twin two-stroke  
**Top speed:** 137mph  
**Seat height:** 810mm  
**Insurance:** Group 12 (of 17)



WHEELBASE: 1370mm

**B**IKES this much fun had to be banned eventually, and the Aprilia RS250 duly was – the environmentally unfriendly two-stroke GP replica was finally killed off by emissions regulations in 2003.

If you're looking for practicality, avoid the RS – the riding position is likely to get you on first name terms with your chiropractor.

However, everything's forgotten after you've kicked it into life and snuggled into its racing crouch.

The little Aprilia makes a GP hero of

anyone who rides it. Get the V-twin screaming and nothing short of massive coronary failure through over-excitement will get you out of the saddle again.

Based on the '93 Suzuki RG250 motor, the engine is a peach. There is reasonable torque, but tractable grunt isn't what this bike is about.

Bang it down three gears into a bend; hook up the powerband and scream off into the distance, trailing a beautiful, blue-hued two-stroke perfume behind you. Poetry.

### MCN SAYS

#### IT'S BEST AT...

✓ **Cornering**  
Nothing this side of a full-on 250GP bike slices through curves with such ease.

✓ **Trackdays**  
The best way to enjoy the RS, the only place to use its abilities to the full and the easiest way to line up bigger bikes to embarrass.

✓ **Braking**  
Two big Brembo calipers up front and the all-up weight of a Jacobs Cream Cracker makes this the most astonishing road bike braking experience around.

✓ **Smelling and sounding good**  
Bring-a-ding-ding soundtrack, plumes of blue smoke and a powerband to die for. Enjoy the pinnacle of two-stroke road bikes while there are still some examples around.

#### IT'S NOT SO GOOD AT...

✗ **Comfort**  
It's a 250 GP replica, right down to its micro-jockey riding position – so you'll either need to be under 25, have the flexibility of a limbo dancer or be married to a masseuse.

✗ **Fuel economy**  
Every 100 miles it smokes its 19-litre tank and burns half a bottle of two-stroke oil. Green it isn't.

✗ **Long distances**  
The RS is small on comfort, small on fuel range, and small on engine flexibility. But that's not really why you buy one, is it?

### OWNERS' SECRETS

#### HOME SERVICING

Reliability is not really a problem and seeing as I've had problems finding an Aprilia garage to service it reliably, if you've got mechanical competence you're better off doing it yourself.

**Dave M, 1997 RS owner**

#### FRONT BRAKE DRAG

Quite a few RS250s have excessive front brake drag. To check, place the bike on a front stand and spin the wheel. Some will not even spin for two revolutions – a correct one will spin at least 10 to 15 times. Possible sources include bent rotors, wheels, improper caliper alignment, dirty caliper pistons, bent pad retaining pins, or incorrect axle alignment.

**Steve Foster, RS owner**

#### GO-FASTER TWEAKS

Tuning with a set of good pipes and jetting is an option, but I wouldn't recommend going any further than that. A slightly shorter final gear ratio will improve performance.

**Dave Miles, RS owner**

#### LOOK AFTER YOUR CHAIN

Clean, lube and replace (if necessary) chains and sprockets often – I've seen as much as a 2-3hp power loss due to a bad chain. Use a good chain lube – Castrol's is very good. It makes sense to use aluminium rear sprockets. They wear faster, but are much lighter.

**Chris D, RS owner**



#### AIR FILTER

If you do a lot of trackdays wash or replace your air filter often. There is a lot of dust kicked up by other riders and this all gets stuck on the air filter. I recommend using a low-restriction foam air filter. When oiling it, use as little as possible, but ensure adequate coverage.

**Tim Dale, RS owner**

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