



JAWA Motorcyclist

JAWA 250cc Travel *The first 1000k*

28/4/2010

As I drove out to collect my 250 travel I realized that the only new bikes I have ever owned have been CZ or Jawa. And it is the good experiences I had on those machines that was driving me to part with my trusty ER500 and drop 250cc for the 250 Travel. The sort of driving I do now is mainly commuting and the 250cc being lighter and more manoeuvrable in traffic was a large carrot. Even so I was a little apprehensive as to how I would settle back to a smaller machine.



I reached Jawa Ireland and Pavel had the bike gleaming out front, *(it was bucketing on the test drive, the bike I had brought back was pretty dirty)*. Paper work was sorted and being only on an late lunch break, I mounted promptly and headed back on the M50 to work. Keeping the revs below 5000 I ambled along at 80k wondering was I cracked. At the job they all thought I must have won the lotto being mounted on such a shiny 2010 machine.

For the rest of the week I drove my usual routes with some slightly longer detours over the mountains. The lighter bike was brilliant in traffic. The riding position is almost Trials the bars wide and the turning circle tight. The gear change is smooth and the engine silent.

Saturday I had the whole afternoon to myself so with Eamon riding support on his 125 Yamaha we filled up our tanks and went rambling. We headed straight up the mountains over the military road to Laragh. This is a pretty uneven twisty road build on bog. The Bike climbed the hills well without needing exhausting amounts of gear changes. The suspension is a little on the soft side *(or I am a little on the heavy side at 15 stone)*. Laragh came up too quickly, touching 80k on those roads would be speeding, so we headed on towards Avoca and Aughrim. The surface of the road improves here but there are challenging turns on the dips and crests of the hills. I felt we were travelling at 80k on these roads when 3 FXR's passed us as though we were stopped *(As Eamon said, they were lucky we were running in)*. In Aughrim we stretched our legs. We were having the perfect day, the bikes going fantastic and the only thing brighter than the sun was the grin on our faces. Heading off again we passed through Carnew to Gorey and on to Ballyedmond. All smaller roads but with some straight bits where I let the bike drift up over the 80k for short stretches. As it would be dark by the time we reached home we took slightly better roads home through Gorey and Carnew to Baltinglass and Blessington. This gave me a further chance to go to 90k. As darkness fell the lights got their chance to illuminate Wexford, Wicklow and Dublin. The front headlight proved excellent.

I now had 500k on the clock so I booked the bike in for its first service with Jawa Ireland. We decided that I would call out on the Friday to get the work done and all head to Clogheen together. Then on Thursday disaster, on a sharp bend in the Kilcullen road I came cropper. A car and two horses blocked my way coming out of a U bend, I was travelling slowly but applied too much front brake and down she came. The crash bar saved the bike all but a scratch to the screen, front mudguard, and Headlamp. My ego however may never recover. Arriving in Jawa Ireland the next day I could see the disappointment on Pavel's face to see what I had

done to the virginity of his machine. But on closer inspection it is all superficial and I am sure in time he will forgive me (*if I buy him enough drink*).

An oil change, nuts and bolt check, then off I went to get petrol. Worked out I was getting around 34k to the litre. A convoy of bikes headed out for Clogheen. Pavel on the 650 Style outfit with his kids, Jana on a 125 Dakar, her first long trip and me on the 250 travel, all assured that we kept a steady pace between 80 and 90k, which must have been hard for the 9 or so other bikes which were all much larger. We took the Carlow Kilkenny Clonmel route so that it was not all dual carriage way. We arrived in good time at the campsite. (*traffic leaving Dublin was heavy but Pavel was very imaginative in the outfit and made short work of it*).

I will leave someone else to spill the beans on Clongheen but there was a lovely ride out to Lismore, over the V with more than 30 bikes. On Sunday I had to get back early so I took to the road travelling alone with the intention of going back through Cahir and Portlaoise. In Cahir with the mileage now at 900k I filled the tank, 9 litres for 300k. The road were turning out not to be as wet as I thought, so I changed route and headed Clonmel Kilkenny, Carlow again. I met Martin and Michelle in Grangemockler on their 350 Jawa and we travelled together to Kilkenny where we parted company. On the Carlow by pass I let the bike travel along at 100k most of the way to Naas. From Naas to Dublin I brought the speed back to between 80 and 90k.

Conclusion:

Advantages: The bike is as it looks an ideal commuting bike. Very easy to handle in town traffic and country roads. Very good on petrol. The lights are very good. The brakes are excellent, I know Ger thought the back brake too soft but I liked it that way. The mirrors do not vibrate. Gear change is smooth and power delivery relaxing.

Wish list: Where is the Jawa fully enclosed chain? Exposed chains are just hard work. I would like larger tyres with a softer profile. I think this would add stability. It lacks a little in power for motorway driving. The suspension is a little soft for my 15 stone and my 6ft height makes it more comfortable for me to use up most of the seat. There is little documentation in English although an English owners manual is now available on this site. A workshop manual with the valve settings and other maintenance details would be nice, although I am sure Jawa Ireland will be to the rescue whenever needed. The toolkit could be more generous.

Below are pictures of the Bike back from its first Jawa Cz Club Rally, with over the 1000k on the clock

