



# BOTY 2015

*The 2015 Pirelli South African Bike of the Year competition last month went off without a hitch for the third year running, and with two previous years' experience for organisers Mat Durran, Harry Fisher and their helpers it was the best so far.*

The jury, made up of 13 experienced print, radio and television motorcycle journalists rode all 16 entries in and around Sabie in Mpumalanga for three days in August.

Each jurist then listed his top six machines by preference, with first place earning six points, and tapering off to a single point for sixth.

The name sponsor was Pirelli, who sent their marketing and sales guru and ex-top racer Wayne Doran along to help where necessary.

Other sponsors were TomTom, who equipped each bike with their brand new Rider motorcycle GPS system and Bandit action camera, Total, who provided the fuel, and Liqui Moly lubricants.

An event like this is expensive to organise, with air-fares for the out-of-town journalists, accommodation for two nights for the jurists, organisers and support crews, and fuel costs involved in riding 16 motorcycles hard for about 1 000 km each.

“This is our third year with the Pirelli BOTY competition, and although it took a large portion of our motorcycle marketing budget, it proved worthwhile,” says Doran. “It was the best so far, with half a dozen potential winners after the riding was done, which sparked lots of debate. It’s also good to showcase our wide range of product on the very different types of machines, and get to know the people in the industry better.”

The jurists were tasked with evaluating the bikes not directly against each other, but against the other machines in their sector of the market.

This was easy with the superbikes, with Aprilia, BMW and Yamaha all having their new models in the finals, and the large adventure bikes were also well represented with Aprilia, Ducati and KTM all having their big-bore dual-purpose machines there. Others were more difficult to evaluate in isolation – the Zero electric bike more so than the rest.

When the dust settled there was a clear winner – the supercharged Kawasaki H2 hyperbike with 76 points. Second was the Triumph Tiger middleweight adventure bike with 66 points. The Triumph was a very serious contender, with five jurists voting for it in top spot.

This was one more vote than the winner harvested, but the Kawasaki more than made up the difference by getting more second and third place votes.

Third was the new Yamaha R1 superbike with 54 points. The other top-six scorers were the Aprilia RSV4 RR superbike (42 points), the KTM Super Adventure (26) and the affordable Yamaha MT-09 Tracer (20).

*In three years the Pirelli SA Bike of the Year competition has settled down well and gone from strength to strength. Pirelli has already committed to the competition for next year, and the motorcycle manufacturers have a slew of exciting new models waiting in the wings.*

*Roll on 2016!*

