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XJR1300 ST3 OUTFIT

IS THERE EVER AN EXCUSE FOR HAVING THREE WHEELS ON YOUR MOTORCYCLE?

Sidecar outfits used to be a perfectly normal mode of transport for thousands. Nowadays they seem to be reserved for small old men with arms like Popeye, or for plasticine models to go window cleaning on. It's an unfair image, which belies the enjoyment and amusement you can get out of riding a decent outfit.

Yamaha's XJR1300 is our favourite muscle bike here at FB, so when sidecar experts Watsonian Squire bolted their ST3 chair to one, we just had to have a go. They've even given the 'car a matching paintjob, complete with numberboard.

We've ridden a few outfits over the years, but this one opened our eyes like none of the others could. This is partly because of the inherent excellence of the XJR, but the ST3 really isn't the hindrance you'd expect. Hustle it hard, and you'll be amazed by the stability, poise and

handling of the whole package. It ain't slow either, as the bloke in the Jetta VR6 found out when he tried to show us a clean pair of heels, and couldn't.

Up to 100mph the outfit is still quicker than nearly all cars – and rock solid, too. If you ride a straight road for more than a few minutes, the chair melts away from your consciousness, and you forget about it entirely until you touch the brakes or go to make a turn.

Having no drive or braking to the third wheel means that throttle and brake inputs pull the outfit right or left, but you soon learn to correct this with a bit of counter pressure on the bars, and after a couple of hours you even remember not to gutter your passenger down every pothole.

The malice with which you can bury it into rights defies belief, but left handers can be a bit unnerving. At the point when the chair lifts, the intuitive reaction is to steer away

from the tilt, but doing that will see you careering across the carriageway. Instead, you have to muscle into the turn more, and let it defy physics – which it does.

Muscle is the word, too. How little old men ride these is beyond me. You need some serious upper body strength to manhandle these round corners at anything above walking pace, as the tyre and steering head angle fight your every input. Beware the 20mph tank slapper too, it can get nasty by all accounts – although I never had one on test.

This is the closest thing to biking for those who can't, and addictively entertaining to ride. If you never thought you could – this one might just turn you.

Verdict **8/10**

If this is the sort of wheels you need, it really is remarkably good – and not at all Wallace & Gromit

- ➕ STABILITY, HANDLING, COMFORT, QUALITY
- ➖ YOU GET STUCK IN TRAFFIC, LEFT HAND CORNERS ARE A BIT GNARLY, CARS SEEM TO WANT TO RACE YOU



Highlights

- ▷ XJR1300 is ideal partner
- ▷ Fibreglass body
- ▷ No rattles or squeaks
- ▷ Luggage rack
- ▷ Big lockable boot
- ▷ 91kg (plus bike)

Price £3,495 (ST3 only)

TRACK	2
<i>Great on a right-hand track</i>	
FAST ROAD	4
<i>You'd be amazed</i>	
HOOLIGAN	3
<i>Slides and lifts the chair easily</i>	
NEW RIDER	5
<i>Takes a bit of experience to ride</i>	
DESIRABILITY	7
<i>High, if you want three wheels</i>	

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