

Road Race  
Newsflash

## Sykes And His Official Ninja ZX-10R Lead Aragon Test Times

**KRT Superbike World Championship riders Tom Sykes and Loris Baz got their 2013 testing plans underway early with a three day session at the Motorland Aragon circuit in sunny but often windy conditions**

The primary reasons for the test, held between 15 and 17 October, was to try out the 17-inch aluminium wheels and new Pirelli control tyres that will be the regulations sizes for the 2013 season, which gets underway in Australia at the end of February next. The new season effectively began during this Aragon test, however, with the team running special winter test logos and all-black bodywork.

Sykes was quickest of all the riders on show, with Max Biaggi 0.2 seconds behind. Were it not for high winds down the main straight on the final day, Sykes would probably have improved on his best time of the test, a 1'57.6.

For Baz, Aragon has never ranked as one of his favourite circuits, but this time around he unlocked a few secrets about how to set a strong lap around the undulating circuit, build to on grand scale. Loris set a best lap time of 1'58.5 despite having suffered a heavy crash at the final round of the 2012 championship, on October 7.

The next test for the team is once more in Spain, in Valencia, at the end of October.

Tom Sykes: "Fastest again and that is all well and good but that is not the aim at the moment. Our aim is to improve on what we have done with the bike this year, and we have done that here, so overall I am happy. The 17 inch tyres seem to work well for me and the Ninja ZX-10R, so that is positive. We have a lot of information and we have more tests planned, so we will keep working in a good direction. We used race tyres to set our fastest times and we tried both the SC1 and SC2 compounds, on the front and the rear. The track was a bit greasy this afternoon but we were still able to do nice lap times with the softer tyres. It looks like Pirelli have done a good job with the 17-inch tyres so we are definitely at a good starting point."

Loris Baz: "In the end it was a good test and I set a 1'58.5 lap. I could not improve on that because this afternoon the track was slower, and the winds had picked up, and I was also very tired. When I came here I was still not 100% after my big crash at Magny-Cours, but I was OK. We did a lot of laps, something like 60 on the first day, 70 on the second day and 70 today. We tried a lot of things and I really like the 17-inch tyres, which is the most important thing we tried out for our preparation for next year. I am really happy after this test."

Guim Roda, Team Manager, Kawasaki Racing Team: "Thanks again for a big effort from the team and from everybody involved. To start working towards 2013 just one week or so after the end of the previous season shows the commitment of everyone. We received some new parts from Japan for this test so they are working hard there too. The important idea that we are trying to explain to everyone is that we have finished with the 2012 season already and we have created a new livery on the bike to show that we are now working for 2013. So for us 2013 has already started. We are 100% focused on the new year of racing. As well as this, I would like to say thanks for a good job from the riders, Tom and Loris, who have been testing parts and developing their bikes with their crew chiefs Marcel and Pere. We will be out to improve the bikes again at the next tests in Valencia, at the end of October."

High resolution images are free to download at [press.kawasaki.eu](http://press.kawasaki.eu).