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**SHIFT**

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TEST RIDE

PHOTOS: FARHAN AHMED

# Runner KNIGHT RIDER

AKRAM HOSEN

When it comes to choosing a motorbike, there are no dearth of options in the 150cc segment. Easily one of the most competitive segments in the automotive industry, the 150cc class has formidable opponents for any newcomer, from the likes of Yamaha, Suzuki, Hero and Bajaj, to name just a few. Choosing a Bangladeshi brand over any of these requires significant thought and research, and to save you at least some of the trouble, here's our overview of the Knight Rider, Runner's 150cc contender.

**First impressions**

From certain angles, the Runner can seem a bit typical – the trapezoidal headlamps are a design we've seen on countless other bikes, and the overall shape is vaguely similar. In the KR's case, however, that can be a good thing – the design is safe and non-polarising, staying true to

the typical customer's expectations and using fairly conventional colours and decals. Our test unit got a nice blue satin finish, with nicely contrasting orange and black decals that complement the KR's slightly bulging tank and sleek rear quarters. The high-riding tail is topped off with a sporty brake light, while allowing the rear tyres plenty of room for vertical travel during dual-riding.

**The equipment**

There's plenty of modern features that have come to be considered standard for the segment – 240mm disc brake at the front (although rear gets 10mm drum brake), adjustable mono-shock suspension at the rear (with the front getting telescopic forks), the analogue/digital instruments as mentioned before and a 15 litre fuel tank. While not the meatiest tyres in this class, the 80/100-17 front and 110/80-17 rear tyres feature a

distinctive, aggressive tread pattern. The 4-stroke, 2-valve SOCH 1-cylinder produces a fairly impressive 12 HP at 7500RPM and 9 lb-ft of torque at 5500RPM.

**The ride and handling**

The KR's comfort almost matches those offered by some of its pricier opponents in the market. It explains why they are so popular among young people and beginners. What adds to its ride appeal is the adjustable rear shock, a feature missing from some of the more expensive Indian bikes.

Another reason why it deserves a double-thumbs-up is its weight of 135 kg. Although it outweighs the Yamaha FZ by a couple of kgs, it is still considerably lighter than some of the popular bikes in the 150cc segment, making its handling and response surprisingly good. The thin tyre on the 17-inch rear wheel contributes to fuel efficiency. However, slightly bigger tyres

would have come in handy in keeping traction in demanding situations.

The engine is a little loud under power, but provides more than enough thrust while keeping vibrations to a minimum. Passengers get treated to soft squishy seats and a decent ride quality, while riders can get decent acceleration from the 150cc motor.

**Verdict**

The Runner Knight Rider is a decent proposition in terms of value, overall equipment levels and daily drivability. It may not have the most powerful motor, the latest tech nor the desirability of a recognised brand name, but it's still a great attempt from a local brand, and at the end of the day the Runner Knight Rider 150 is a motorbike we can be proud of for being made in Bangladesh.

Runner Knight Rider 150cc. Price: TK 1,56,000.

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