

# QUICK KIT TESTS

## Arai's sleek new range topper

RX-7V aims to be more comfortable and safer than GP

**Arai RX-7V £599.99**

[www.whyarai.co.uk](http://www.whyarai.co.uk)

**ARAI'S NEW TOP-OF-THE-RANGE** RX-7V is not an update of the RX-7 GP - it's a new helmet with the Japanese firm's first all-new shell in 18 years. It has a new shape, new vents and a new visor system. It's stronger and quieter than the old model.

The V will be available in the UK towards the end of the year. Arai's MotoGP riders have not yet got theirs, but we tested it on the Jurby Airfield circuit on the Isle of Man just before TT fortnight kicked off and discovered there's a lot to be excited about.

The visor change system has always a weak point with Arais. The bad news is that it's still complex and fiddly. Other manufacturers offer easy pushbutton systems but Arai have no plans to follow suit. They don't want to make large recesses in the shell, which could harm the helmet's structural strength, so they continue to fit the visor on the outside.

One big improvement is that two levers now release the side pods, which remain attached by a short cord so they don't ping off. With the pods out of the way, you can then see exactly what you're doing as you try to fit the visor.

The other main issue with the RX-7 was that it was noisy compared to much of the competition. They've succeeded in making the V quieter, through the use of a bigger chin curtain, re-designed diffusers and the new sliding gates on the re-designed vents (see panel, right).

The new RX-7V shell - which will also be used in other Arais - comes in five different sizes. There are six different helmet sizes, with only the medium and large sizes sharing a shell, with the padding making up the difference.



**SIDE PODS**

Visor replacement is still fiddly, but at least you can see what you're doing thanks to new side pod design.

**"It's smoother, rounder and their strongest ever"**

This shell is claimed to be the strongest Arai have ever built, as well as smoother and rounder. The smoothness of a helmet plays a big part in helping it to 'glance off' impacts so the helmet doesn't have to absorb the massive amounts of energy created in a crash. A helmet's 'roundness' helps to stop it getting hooked on objects such as kerbs in the event of a crash. For that same reason, all external parts on Arais - vents and diffusers - are glued on and designed to snap off immediately upon impact so the helmet is not snagged and twisted round.

At 1620g, the V is a similar weight to

the old model (even though the shell itself is 30 per cent lighter) but the padding can now be adjusted even more to fit every head shape.

There's now 3mm more space built into the chin bar as some riders felt their chins were too close to it on the old model and felt claustrophobic. This extra space is immediately noticeable when riding, if it bothered you in the first place.

Plain colours will cost £599.99 with graphics options expected to be around £100 more. Confirmed race replicas so far include Dani Pedrosa (pictured), Maverick Vinales, Freddie Spencer and Nicky Hayden. **STUART BARKER**