



Below: Like the Ducati 999, the Mille now features a winded upper triple clamp. Its new instrumentation is much easier to use and highly readable.



Bottom center: New dual mufflers use a "double banana" swingarm for clearance, and more volume = more power.

Above: It was hard to look at the Mille's new fairing without thinking of the movie "Predator." Do you see little mandibles in the air scoop?

Above: The Mille's new shape is much narrower between the legs, and lower, too. Note new dual exhausts, integrated turnsignals and narrow mirrors.

Right: Footpegs are now lower for a less extreme body position. Note the eccentric on the shifter pedal for more precise positioning.



Above: Although not Aprilia's best, the "triple-bridge" Brembos and Showa fork were hard to fault. But its Michelin Pilots caused standup under braking.



Below: The latest "radial pump" master cylinders are used on the clutch and brake for improved action.



TESTERS' LOG

As a motorcycle tester, I have the opportunity to ride many different machines, and although some seem familiar, each one is new and somehow different. The Mille was not familiar to me, but on our first ride, it answered all of my commands with familiar and immediate responses. When the machine you are riding does exactly what you ask and seemingly asks for more, it inspires confidence and can even push a rider to explore even greater limits within. For me, this is the true reward, functioning in unison and as one, the result is a sensation unlike any other. The Mille has very high limits as do most new pure sporting machines. For me, it did everything well without exception, requiring no serious fiddling with suspension or geometry to make it work. It did arrive with stiff damping, adjusted to the limits of Aprilia's recommended settings. Even so, it worked very well when cornering but the damping over-controlled the springs and travel, making for a harsh ride, especially around town. But once the damping rates were reduced, the Mille was impressive. Perhaps this ride is not for everyone, but for my favorite type of outings, I must admit that this one is really good!

—Danny Coe

The obvious comparison is between the Ducati 999 and the new Mille R. Both Italian machines simply reek of the passionate dedication to performance and style that sets them apart from the Japanese competition.

The Mille now has all the trick bits and then some of the 999, like the windowed triple clamp, fancy CAN-line electronics, and visual pyrotechnics. Also, its four-bulb headlights are much better than the Ducati's tiny shrouded projectors, and its old-fashioned side-mounted mufflers are better looking, in my book, than the 999's automotive-like under-seat muffler—from the sexiest silencers in the business on the 916/998 series to the homeliest, *ouch!* The price difference is also a huge plus in the Aprilia's favor. Nearly four thousand cheaper than the base 999, you could choose the "Factory" model's extra goodies at the standard 999's price. But the 999 still has the best riding position, as far as I'm concerned, and its power delivery is noticeably superior, more linear and stronger down low. How you weigh these factors in your riding should determine your decision. I'm kinda glad I can't afford to choose either one.

—Dave Searle

2004 Aprilia Mille RSV1000R

SPECIFICATIONS AND PERFORMANCE DATA

ENGINE

Type:60°, DOHC V-twin
 Valvetrain:four valves per cyl., shim under bucket adjustment
 Size:997.62cc
 Bore/stroke:97.0 x 67.5mm
 Comp. ratio:11.8:1
 Carburetion: Marelli integrated engine management, 2 x 57mm throttle bodies
 Exhaust:2 into 2

DRIVE TRAIN

Transmission:6-speed
 Final drive:chain
 RPM @ 65 mph/redline ..3975/10,500

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase:55.7"
 Rake/trail24.8°/4.00"
 Ground clearance:4.8"
 Seat height:31.5"
 GVWR:884 lbs.
 Wet weight:471.5 lbs.
 Carrying capacity:412.5 lbs.

SUSPENSION

Front: Showa 43mm inverted cartridge forks, stepless adjustment for comp., rebound, and preload, 4.72" travel
 Rear: ..Sachs monoshock, adjustable for comp., rebound, preload and ride height, 5.24" travel

BRAKES

Front:Two Brembo "Triple Bridge" 4-piston, 4-pad calipers, steel braided lines w/20 320mm floating discs
 Rear: ..Brembo twin-piston, dbl-action caliper, braided line, w/220mm disc

TIRES & WHEELS

Front:120/70ZR17 Michelin Pilot Sport on 3.50" x 17" wheel
 Rear:190/50ZR17 Michelin Pilot Sport on 6.00" x 17" wheel

ELECTRICS

Battery:12V, 10AH
 Ignition:Integrated digital ignition
 Headlight:4 x 55W

FUEL

Tank capacity:4.76 gal.
 Recommended octane.....95 RON
 High/low/avg.mpg:39.5/28.7/31.4



PERFORMANCE

Measured top speed173.3 mph
 0-1/4 mile10.43 sec.
 @ 135.44 mph
 0-60 mph3.09 sec.
 0-100 mph6.27 sec.
 60-0 mph119.3'
 Power to Weight Ratio1:4.14
 Speed @ 65 mph indicated61.6

M/C RATING SYSTEM

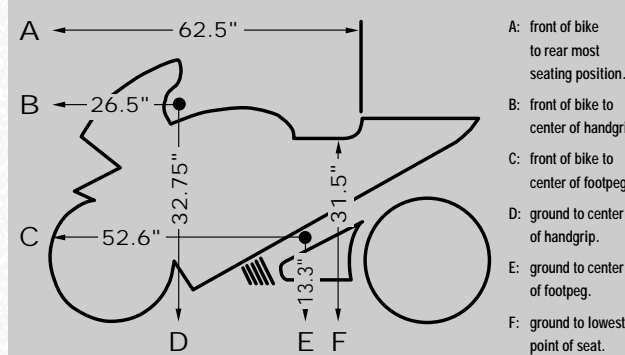
EXCELLENT
 VERY GOOD
 GOOD
 FAIR
 POOR

-----Open Sportbike-----

| | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Engine | ●●●●○ |
| Transmission | ●●●●● |
| Suspension | ●●●●● |
| Brakes | ●●●●○ |
| Handling | ●●●●● |
| Styling | ●●●●● |
| Riding Impression | ●●●●● |
| Instruments/Controls | ●●●●● |
| Attention to Detail | ●●●●● |
| Value | ●●●●○ |
| OVERALL RATING | ●●●●● |



ERGONOMICS TEMPLATE



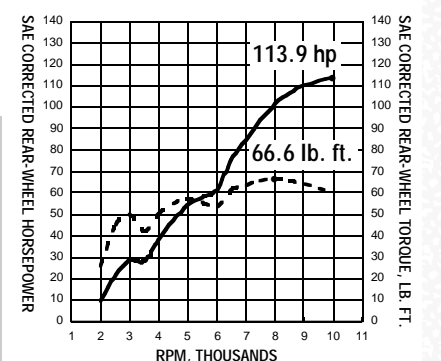
Instruments:.....Speedo, tach, clock, odometer, coolant temp., Tripometer (max. and ave. speed), battery voltage, 40-lap timer

Indicators:high beam, turnsignal, adjustable shift light, low oil, low fuel sidestand, neutral, ECU fault
 MSRP:\$13,899
 Routine service interval:.....5100 mi.
 Valve adj. interval:5100 mi.
 Warranty:.....24 mo., unlimited miles.
 Colors: LeadGrey/Magnet Grey, Aprilia Back/Diablo Black, Fluro Red/Lead Grey

DYNAMOMETER DATA

Low end ●●●●○
 Mid-range ●●●●●
 Top end ●●●●○

Despite all the retuning on the new "Magnesium" engine, we found a noticeable decrease in midrange that was barely offset in the 1/4-mile by a slight increase at peak rpm and a 500-rpm greater rev range. Still, it is a very satisfying powerplant to ride.



TEST NOTES

PICKS

- Exotic styling that is arguably the best in the class
- Improved rider compartment that feels much better
- A bargain price for an Italian superbike

PANS

- The engine's 'improvements' cost midrange performance
- Comfort is a relative term, it's still mediocre
- Sidestand touches down too easily in hard cornering

STANDARD MAINTENANCE

| Item | Time | Parts | Labor |
|----------------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Oil & Filter | 0.4 | \$14.62 + \$25 | \$24.00 |
| Air Filter | 0.5 | \$25.00 | \$30.00 |
| Valve Adjust | 4.0 | \$60.68 | \$240.00 |
| Battery Access | 0.3 | MF | \$18.00 |
| Final Drive | 0.3 | | \$18.00 |
| R/R Rear Whl. | 0.4 | | \$24.00 |
| Change Plugs | 1.0 | \$7.00 | \$60.00 |
| Synch EFI | 1.0 | | \$60.00 |
| Totals | 7.9 | \$132.30 | \$474.00 |

Note: MCN Labor rate changed to \$60/hr. from \$54/hr. in May 2002