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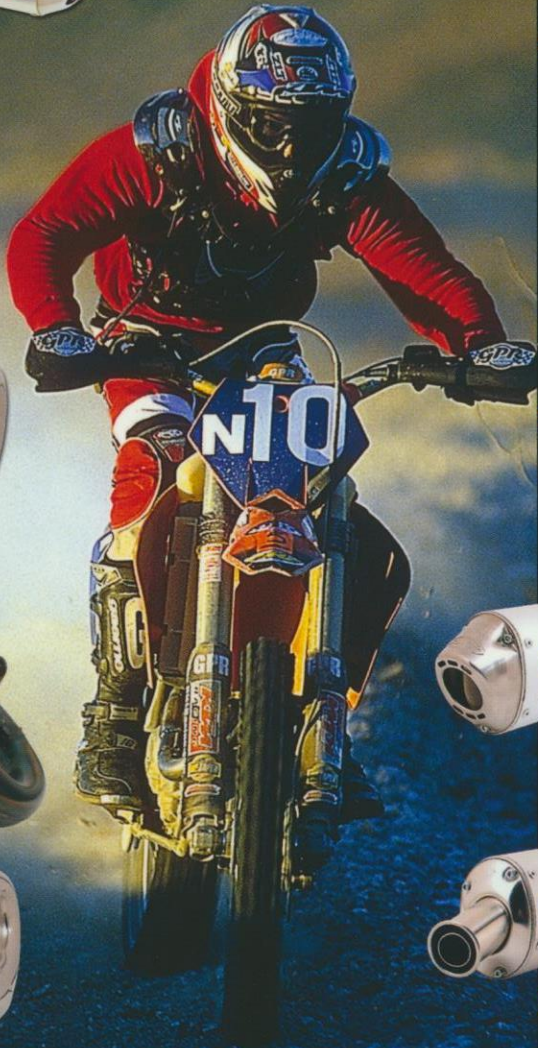
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EDITORIAL

Give it the Berries, Fred...

Some people have an unhealthy obsession with power, and I'm not just talking about politicians here. You see it all the time: WR450 owners who reckon they need just a little bit more top-end so they bung on an open pipe and a jetting kit, and then wonder why there isn't anywhere left to ride. And R1 sportsbike owners who go so slowly around corners you end up overtaking them on your dirt bike, only to have 'em rip past you at the first sign of a straight. How brave they look, those guys.

So just how much power do you actually need? Well the bike sales figures are an interesting way of analysing this question. Recently the only proper dirt bikes to make an impact on the monthly (registration) sales figures were KTM's thundering 450 and a hatful of 400s (XRs, DR-Zs, CCMs etc). But this has all changed this month as Honda's new CRF250X has started putting in an appearance at the lower end of the top five. Will it eventually overhaul the KTM 450 as the best-selling dirt bike? Who knows, but what I do know is that the message is getting across to people that you don't need to have big power in order to have big fun.

Not that you'd necessarily believe this from speaking to the TBM staff of course. Deputy Editor JB for instance, reckons that you can never have enough power and his weapon of choice (when he's not trundling around in a 5.7 litre V8 Chevy) is a Honda CR500. But only because Honda haven't got around to making a CR590 yet!

And then there's Mel (the latest recruit to the TBM Harem), who's also a fan of big power (she rides a 600 Yam, and used to race Japanese hot hatches). As far as she's concerned if your car stereo isn't packing at least 1500 Watts of kickin' bass sub-woofer crossover mega amp, you ain't worth talkin' to. 'Narwhatimean?' I imagine the inhabitants of Rickmansworth breathed a collective sigh of relief once she and her car stereo moved here to West London.

On the other hand, consider myself a purist - putting handling above performance every time. Perhaps the fact that I'm ten years older than both of them has something to do with it. My body (and my bank account) bear the scars of years of thinking like they did. And now I can barely bend down to buckle my boots without my back making a sound like ripping nylon. Both my knees click, my right shoulder clonks and I can tap out the rhythm of 'Countdown' on one of my elbows.

And former TBM contributor Clive Garnham is in worse shape than me. His body looks for all the world like it was used for medical experimentation in his sleep. He's got more scars than a careless piranha feeder. So when we decided to go car racing recently (just for a laugh) there was really only one formula we'd consider sticking our butts into. Dodge Vipers, Porsche 911s, Caterhams? No way mate. Gimme a Citroen 2CV for 24hr racing. Ahh the fun you can have with 37hp. Mind you once or twice when I got to the end of Snetterton's Revett straight, I did yearn for something with a little more oomph. You know something really vicious like a head-bangin' 250 four-stroke...!

SI MELBER

Edited & produced by: **Si Melber**
Deputy Editor: **James Barnicoat**
Staff Writer: **Mel Falconer**
Contributors: **Mark Williams, Chris Evans, Dave Cornish, Jonty Edmunds, Paul Biezard, David Knight**

Designed by: **Caleb Mason**



Editorial Address:
TBM PO Box 9845
London W13 9WP
Tel/Fax (10am-6pm Mon-Fri):
020 8840 4760/5066
Subscriptions:
020 7903 3993

Advertising Manager:
Natalie Watson
01225 786815

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YAM-TASTIC!

2005 WRFS REVEALED



As predicted in last month's TBM, Yamaha's engineering gurus have redoubled their efforts and made a host of changes to the WR450 and 250F for 2005. According to the design team, modified chassis dimensions will give both models greater manoeuvrability and a reduced weight, making them easier to ride.

One of the biggest alterations is a 20mm drop in seat height, achieved by relocating the frame's head tube, reducing the rear shock stroke by 3mm and fitting a new seat to provide a

lower centre of gravity.

An aggressive-looking slim-line eight-litre tank, YZ-type radiators and shrouds will help riders shift their weight forward, providing improved handling.

Larger 48mm forks are now the order of the day, replacing last year's 46mm units and are shielded by new wrap-around self-supporting fork protectors.

The front brake hose has been re-routed to run directly to the top of the caliper (a la Honda), rather than the old, convoluted route under the fork leg. This should enable quicker wheel changes and

make for easier maintenance.

Following Honda's lead, the range now comes with Renthal alloy bars as standard. Additional modifications include a removable fuel pipe joint on the carburettor and a lighter (by 500g) swingarm. Expect a test to grace these pages very soon...

BIRTHDAY BASH

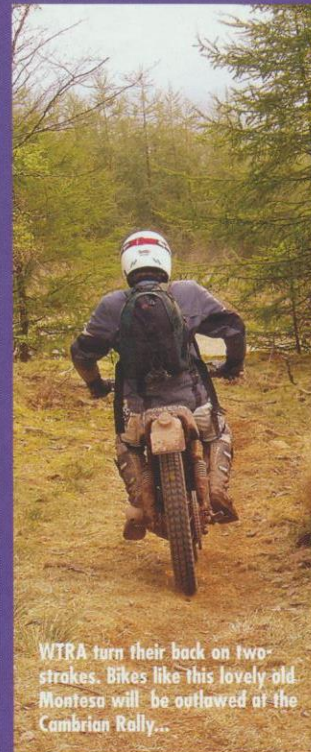
This year the Cambrian Rally is ten years old and to celebrate the event will be run over two days on 23-24 October.

Featuring an all-new course, the rally is aimed specifically at big four-stroke and multi-cylinder trail bikes.

However, organisers have just announced that anybody wanting to enter aboard a two-stroke machine won't be allowed to take part. Sorry folks.

The course has been laid out by Bob Perring on a KTM950 and Bob Jeffries on a BMW1150 - the big change being a single, 120-mile loop each day instead of three smaller laps as in previous years. There are also two special stages, one of which is over 20 miles long!

Off-road adventure company n-tec racing is this year's sponsor and regs will be published in August. Pre-registration is a must as there's an entry limit of 180 riders, with priority given to large capacity trail bikes. Send an SAE to Mandy Bartlett, 14 Stratton Heights, Cirencester, Gloucester GL7 2RH.



WTRA turn their back on two-strokes. Bikes like this lovely old Montesa will be outlawed at the Cambrian Rally...

TRF GET TOUGH

The TRF has challenged the Motorcycle Industry Association to 'get sensitive' to noise before it's too late. In a strong message to the MCIA, the TRF claims the future of its sport and recreation is in danger due to industry insensitivity.

With noise being identified as off-road's biggest threat, the TRF is encouraging the MCIA to help provide solutions to counter those who claim that trail riding is no longer compatible with Britain's countryside. In the past however, the MCIA has maintained the problem is not theirs to worry about and that everybody else is 'just too sensitive'.

Geoff Wilson, Chairman of the TRF, said, 'Motorcycling and the needs of the countryside have been on a diverging course and it is time to bring them back together again. The MCIA has a key role to play in convincing the government that the biking world is sensitive and accepts that there are problems in some parts of the countryside that it is actively working to solve.'

The TRF also feel the MCIA should help by 'making bikes quieter and less aggressive in character' along with a focus on customer education at the point of sale and to steer riders who wish to compete towards the appropriate events...

SNIPPETS

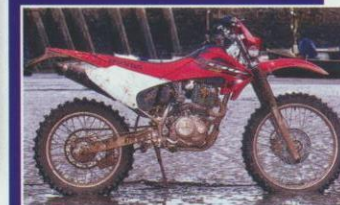
COOPERMAN

Oops! Apologies to Dave Cooper Trailers for printing their phone number incorrectly back in issue 105's 'Carry On'. Just to clear things up, these purveyors of high quality bike carrying devices can be contacted on 01732 820082.

And apologies to the poor old dear who had to change her phone number after receiving hundreds of calls from big burly dirt bikers...

HONDA HIRE

Fancy trying out the new Honda CRF230 whilst taking in some great trails? West Country Trail Bike Tours are now hiring out the diminutive CRFs on their guided tours for £100 per day and the price also includes all fuel and full insurance. For more information and to book places phone 01460 281173 or check out trailbiketours.co.uk.



BACK ON TRACK

Organised track days are big business in the world of sportsbikes, but now event organisers Track n Trail are bringing the idea to the dirt. With brand new venues across the south, the company is offering timed practice alongside regular training and 'leisure riding', whilst also catering for the youth enduro market with track time for under 16s.

TnT will also be holding hare and hounds events throughout the year, with the next race at Two Valleys near Dorchester on 18 July. For entry forms and details on all events phone Mike Grounds on 01202 600675 or try trackntrail.biz



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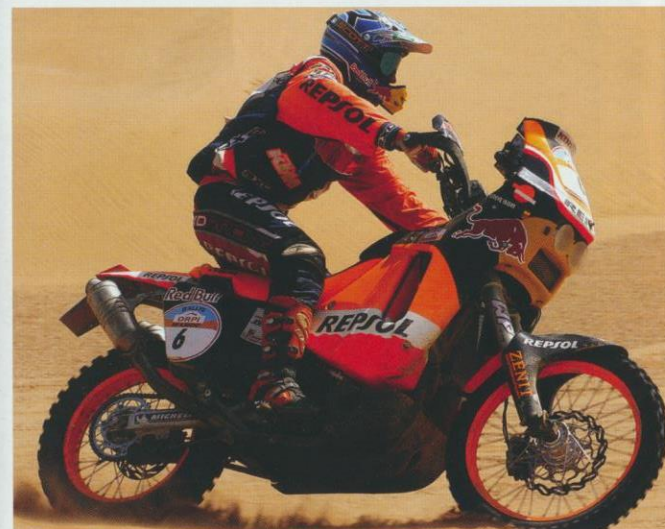
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NEWS



Spanish In Position



Morocco was the setting for the second round of the FIM Rallye Raid World Championships at the start of June and was a thoroughly Spanish affair, with KTM Repsol rider Esteve Pujol claiming victory ahead of team mate Marc Coma.

The fifth ORPI Rallye Maroc wasn't as kind to reigning World Champion Cyril Despres. In the lead until a melted bib-mousse cost him 17 minutes, he finally finished third in front of Fabrizio Meoni - the only KTM factory rider entered on the big LC8 V-twin.

Fifth was another one time leader, Richard Sainct, who was also forced out of contention with mousse trouble. Coming in sixth on the first 450 across the line was Chilean KTM rider Carlo De Gavardo. Despite his third place, Despres still retains his championship lead by just one point over Coma.

The two UK entrants, Ray De Haan and Tony McColley, also experienced mixed fortunes. Dakar finisher De Haan's rallye got off to a bad start when his luggage failed to follow him on his flight from London to Paris, forcing him to ride in borrowed gear. He then retired after the first day with heat exhaustion.

Tony McColley also had his share of misadventures, including a cracked engine casing, but nevertheless managed to get his 450EXC KTM to the finish in a highly creditable 23rd position. Commented the Medway builder and previous Optic 2000 finisher just after the prize giving, 'So much happened to me on this rallye I could write a book about it but right now I'm off to bed - I'm knackered!'

The next round of the World Championship is the Rallye D'Orient in Turkey at the beginning of August...

SNIPPETS

MONKS MISERY

The famous Monk's Trod trail in Wales has had its TRO extended for another six months until 30 November 2004. The restriction order applies to the Powys section of the trail.

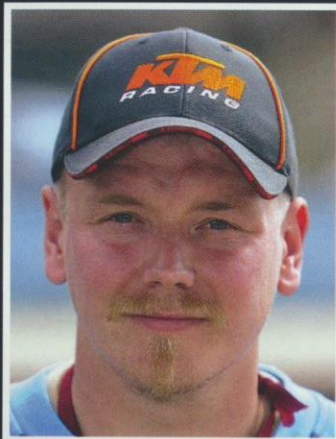


THAT'S ALL FOLKS!

The TBM sponsored Dawn to Dusk 12hr enduro is now officially full, although there are still some places up for grabs for the accompanying youth event. Log onto downtodusk.info for details.

WELSH WANDER

Looking to get away from it all on your bike this summer? Well, n-tec racing could have the answer. Taking place on 27-30 August, the Coast to Coast is a four-day, multi-location trail ride covering 350 miles and taking in many of the best RoWs Wales has to offer. Starting and finishing near Chepstow, the route will head up into Wales with stop-overs in Llandovery, Machynlleth and Builth Wells. Support and accommodation are included. For more info, call Nick Philpott on 01594 861131 or email nick@ntecracing.com



5 MINUTES WITH...

KTM RIDER SAMULI ARO IS CURRENTLY LEADING THE WEC ENDURO 3 CLASS...

WHAT WAS THE FIRST ENDURO BIKE YOU OWNED?

My first enduro bike was a 1992 Husqvarna 350cc four-stroke. I borrowed it from my father's shop and did two races on it. The first enduro bike that I actually owned was a '98 125cc Yamaha. I entered a couple of Finnish championship races and the WEC round in Finland.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST ENDURO?

The first enduro I rode was in October 1994. I had to enter the race because in December that year I was due to compete in a three-man team enduro, which I rode with Jani Laaksonen (Gas Gas WEC rider) and his brother Sami. To enter the race in December I needed to move from a C- to a B-class rider, which I did, and I won my class by a couple of minutes. It was a nice race, and with the temperature at about minus 10 degrees we were able to use spiked tyres!

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE ENDURO?

It is hard to choose one race in particular. When you have a good result it feels like a good race.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE HARDEST ENDURO YOU'VE EVER RACED?

I don't know. I think it would have to be in Spain in 2002. It was the first race of the season and I was so nervous I forgot to eat. By the end of the day I was really tired. I was still tired on the Sunday morning, but I recovered a little and finished second to David Knight in the 250cc two-stroke class.

WHAT RIDER HAS HAD THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR CAREER?

Before I started enduro, when I was racing GP motocross, I would have to say that it was Talon Vohland who I looked up to. But there weren't any big heroes for me in GP motocross. My biggest hero is US rider Ricky Johnson. In enduro it has been Kari Tiainen, Petteri Silvan and Juha Salminen who have had the biggest influence on my career.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR BEST EVER PERFORMANCE?

I've had many good races, but nothing really special. I remember that I was very happy with the way I rode in Sweden in '02. I'd already won the 250cc world title in Finland and there was no pressure on me. I won my class by about two minutes on day one and I also won the overall. The win wasn't so important as I had already clinched the title, but I rode well.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST DISAPPOINTING RESULT?

In 1995 I was really disappointed because I broke my leg. At the start of the year I was training in Belgium and Holland before the

250cc motocross GP in Holland. After that we had a couple of weeks off. I went to Finland for a race and won the first moto really easily. I was leading the second heat when I hit something, crashed and broke my leg. It took eight months to recover from! 2000 was my first year as a factory enduro rider. I just wanted to be really fast, pushed too hard and broke my wrist. That was very disappointing, and also quite stupid.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CRASH?

When I was racing motocross there were many big crashes. Normally in enduro you aren't going quite as fast when you crash. In motocross I had many fourth or fifth gear crashes, usually going over the handlebars. I try not to remember my crashes any more, but in 2001, at the WEC race in Italy, I had a really big crash.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED ENDURO MEMORY?

I have many good memories. Like in '99 when I was the reserve rider for the Finnish ISDE Trophy team. When I got the place I was really happy. Then I won the 125cc class and finished second overall! The sweetest memory was from 2002. The first race of the season was in Spain and after it I was really tired. I said to my girlfriend that I was going to win the world championship that year... and I did. I will remember that for the rest of my life.

WHAT BIKE HAVE YOU ENJOYED OWNING/RIDING THE MOST?

My first 50cc Italjet, when I was four [laughs]. The big four-stroke KTM is a bike that I really like. The 250cc Husqvarna that I rode in '01 and '02 was also a great bike. I had some good bikes when I was a privateer motocrosser, but now I'm a factory rider everything is so much better.

SPECTATOR DEATH

A 79-year-old man died in hospital after a rider collided with him during a Northern Enduro Club event on Sunday 6 June. Horst Weinhardt was seriously injured when a competitor left the course at Thorp Perrow, near Bedale, North Yorks. He was airlifted to Friarage Hospital in Northallerton where he later died. The rider sustained only minor injuries.

WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED TERRAIN?

I like hard terrain with good grip. When you have good grip you can feel the power of the engine. I've ridden in sand so much that I don't really like it now.

WHAT DOES ENDURO SPORT NEED MORE OF?

I think it's a little strange that we have to fight about the same problems that we fought about last year, two and even three years ago. Things like dangerous special tests. When you are pushing 100 percent the tests are very different to when you ride them slowly - like the organisers do when they are setting them out. I realise that the tests often have to be in places specified by the environmentalists, and that the organisers don't always want them in these locations, but some of them need to be safer. I don't want to complain about the organisers, because I know how hard they work, but they must consider just how fast the top riders in WEC races are.

WHAT DOES ENDURO SPORT NEED LESS OF?

Extreme tests. Extreme races are extreme races and enduro races are enduro races. It is stupid to race trials on enduro bikes and that is what we are being asked to do. If you want to be fast in an extreme test the bike needs to be completely different. You can lose the day, the race or even the championship, as well as injuring yourself or damaging your bike.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE SPORT OF ENDURO WILL BE LIKE IN FIVE YEARS TIME?

I don't know. I might be a 'factory spectator' by then [laughs]. I would like it to be like it was two, three or four years ago. Now the sport is a little bit better for spectators but in my opinion isn't as good as it was a few years ago. The atmosphere was more relaxed, and we came to the races to have fun. Now it's a much more serious sport than when I started.

I decided to race enduro because it was fun, and to make something more professional will always make it more serious.

WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE IN ENDUROS?

I just want to have fun. When I'm having fun I can win races and hopefully also titles. If I am having fun, everything else normally falls into place.



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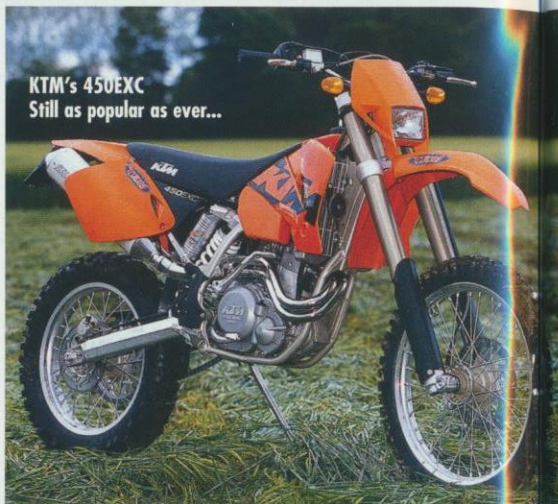
NUMBERS GAME

Good news for dirt bike sales, despite the current cloud hanging over the motorcycle marketplace. Even though total bike sales (registrations) are down 17percent, sales of 'Adventure Sport' models have increased five percent, with the Honda XL125V still heading the class and CCM's R30 supermoto replacing the Honda XL1000V in fourth place.

Topping the 'Trail/Enduro' category again is the pint-sized Honda XR125L, with sales up another 297 units, although overall class figures are down slightly.

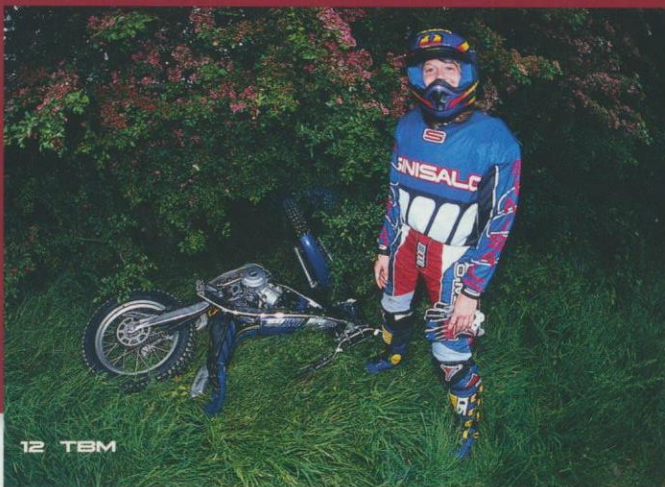
Interestingly the first full size off-roader in the group is the ubiquitous KTM 450EXC in third place, followed by the ever popular Suzuki DR-Z400S, with the new Honda CFR250X sneaking into fifth. The complete figures are as follows:

ADVENTURE SPORT		TRAIL/ENDURO	
1 Honda XL125V	380	1 Honda XR125L	672
2 BMW R1200GS	377	2 Suzuki RV125	233
3 Triumph 995 Tiger	230	3 KTM 450EXC	212
4 CCM R30 supermoto	219	4 Suzuki DRZ400S	210
5 BMW F650GS	214	5 Honda CRF250X	205



KTM's 450EXC
Still as popular as ever...

NEW HACK ON THE BLOCK



Say hello to the latest member of the TBM team: Mel Falconer. 27 yr old Mel's a fully trained journalist (or so she claims!), and joins us as staff writer. As you can see from the picture she's fitting in nicely, having already crashed the Ed's trials bike and tipped off a mini-motard we were testing!

Despite being no stranger to quick bikes (she owns a 'blinged-up' Yamaha R6), Mel's off-road experience is limited, so we're obviously-looking forward to teaching her a few dirty tricks..!

ALL GASSED UP

Next year's Gas Gas EC two-strokes have undergone a range of practical modifications, continuing the Spanish manufacturer's trend of gradual evolution rather than a complete transformation.

The bikes will come with revised front suspension and altered frame geometry to improve the handling, whilst plastic frameguards should help their longevity.

Improving their looks, the ECs will sport new front fenders, headlights and graphics and although the slim-line tank remains, the trials-style filler cap is replaced with a larger item.

The EC200 will feature the same roller-bearing crankshaft as the 250 and 300 bikes, alongside lighter crankcases.

Next month we'll be bringing you more pictures of the new models, including all the details of the new EC450FSE.

Watch this space...



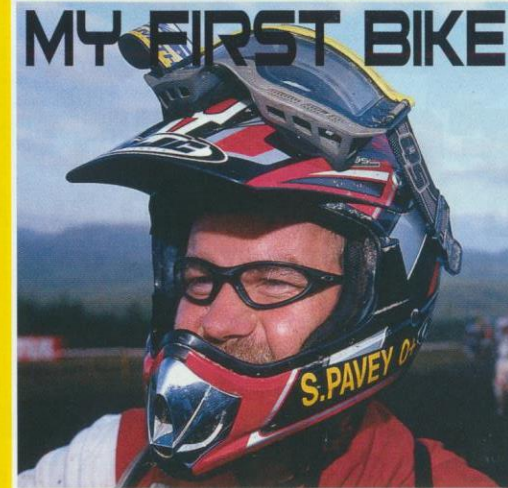
DESERT STORM

As the old saying goes, 'sun, sand, sea and...' Well, sun and sand are definitely on the agenda for the Qatar Baja this year. A new event on the FIA calendar, the route is two laps of 260km long over hard packed sand, gravel and desert dunes.

Taking place on 25-27 November, the Baja is ideal for anybody new to the desert game, and best of all costs just £600 all-in. For your shekles, you get bike shipping, air fares, accommodation and entry fees all included, plus there's the opportunity for a couple of extra days playtime or holiday afterwards.

Entries are limited to the first 40 riders who send in a deposit of £100. Cheques should be made payable to Team Desert Rose organisers. To book, call Clive on 07803 623573 or 01435 866860. And tell him TBM sent you...

MY FIRST BIKE



BMW OFF-ROAD INSTRUCTOR SI PAVEY RECALLS THE FUN OF HIS FIRST EVER DIRT BIKE...

If only my parents had warned me. It was my first year of high school, the beginnings of puberty and all that involves... I was drawn by all the usual lures and peer pressures that parents worry about and they gave me nearly all the lectures. Safe sex, drink in moderation and beware the evils of drugs. Little did they know I was to get into dirt bikes!

It was actually the nice young man from the middle class family across the road that gave me the first evil hit, hooking me for life. One run around his back garden on that mad Victa lawnmower-powered machine with no brakes and I didn't stand a chance. Mind you, neither did his back fence. (To think we now complain if bikes don't have electric start - that thing had a pull cord).

He then told me about a dealer (another kid) aptly named Spiv who lived nearby and could supply me with a 1975 XR75 for \$260. Out came the piggy bank and the readies were handed over with the promise of an introduction to the local riding area. Even now, having ridden all over the world I realise how amazing this was.

I lived in Caringbah, a southern suburb of Sydney and we had thousands of acres of huge sand dunes on our doorstep, so for the next year the XR was thrashed up and down the beaches and dunes before I'd even heard of Malcolm Smith. That little bike was typically XR indestructible apart from a tendency to shear fly-wheel keys, so I never left the house for a day's adventure without a few in my pocket.

My XR affair ended after a year when the evil four-stroke crushed me into a dune, burning a big hole in my leg, so it was sold for \$280 and a shiny new two-stroke found its way into my garage.

Little did me or my parents realise then how big an effect that Victa lawnmower would have on my life, for I am now a dealer - feeding on innocent victims and turning them into hardened dirt junkies...

SI PAVEY

FOREST GUMPTION

Round three of the ACU British championship will be the Crychan Enduro on 7-8 August.

As a replacement for the Eppynt Enduro, the course uses the Glyn Saer and Crychan forests and includes a challenging lap of around 35 miles.

The special test will be on ground used for the 1999 World Enduro Championship round and is being laid out (along with a cross-country test) by event sponsors Steve Plain (Steve Plain Motorcycles) and Talon Engineering's Rob Sartin.

Regs are available shortly but anybody wanting to pre-register should send an SAE to Mandy Bartlett, 14 Stratton Heights, Cirencester, Gloucester GL7 2RH.

ON A MOUNTAIN HIGH

Entry for the Mountain Top Enduro in Wales on the 25 July is now open. Held in the Towi forest, the competition will take place over several laps, each about 25 miles long. Entry costs £35 and forms (available to download on endurouk.com) must be received by 18 July.

The event is a round of the Welsh Four Stroke Championship and all riders must be members of the Mid Wales Centre.

ONE FOR THE LADIES

Ladies tired of getting dirty with the boys can go on a female only 'Improve Your Riding Skills' weekend on 10-11 July at the Mid Wales Activity Centre.

The Diamonds Motorcycle Club, in conjunction with 'Trail Rides and Try-Outs', will be running the event and although there is a short beginner's session, the emphasis will be on learning more advanced off-road skills.

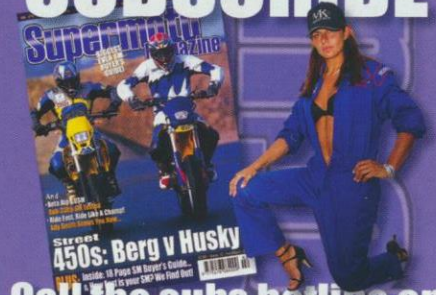
Prices are £10 for a beginner, £20 for a one-hour improver session and the more advanced two-hour session is £35. Booking is essential as places are limited. Phone Marianne on 07703 721739 or for more details check out trailrides-wales.com

Supermoto Magazine

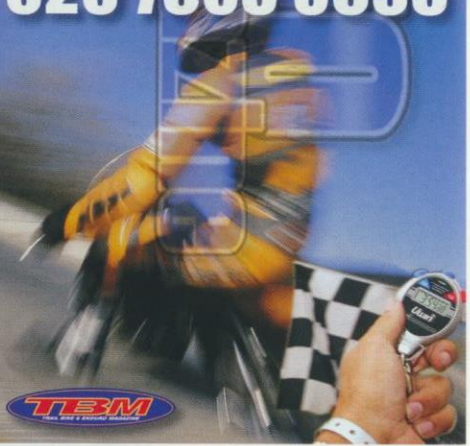
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Dirty Play

Portugal isn't just the venue for the Euro 2004 Championship, it's also the country of origin of the latest little AJP trailie, the 200cc PR4. TBM tracked one down for a kickabout...

As a bunch of adrenaline-fuelled dirt junkies you'd think that our works van would be the latest hot-poop, 200bhp, bike-hauling missile, conveying us around the country (and the continent) at Mach IV. But you'd be wrong. Because the infamous TBM Transporter is Vee-Dub's cooking model, an unassuming little van which whilst undoubtedly competent, is hardly super quick (a bit like the Ed, really). So in many ways, it makes a good analogy with AJP's latest dirt thumper, the PR4 200.

Yep, a 200cc air-cooled four-stroke is never going to prove the last word in performance, but as a trailie, and to some extent a mild-mannered enduro iron, the PR4 is amazingly competent. Which is not too surprising really, as the 200 is based on the 125 we tested back in April last year, and found to be pretty handy. In fact, the chassis is essentially the same as that of its smaller stable-mate. This means you get a well-finished steel double-cradle frame, with Paioli 41mm forks up front, and a large Paioli shock mounted to the HUGE alloy swingarm at the rear. Brakes come courtesy of AJP (somewhat confusingly a separate company), with a two-pot caliper and 255mm disc up front, and bizarrely a four-pot caliper (with 210mm disc) on the rear. The fuel tank lives under the flat seat (though the filler cap is in the regular position), requiring a fuel pump to feed the motor's 30mm Walbro carb. All of this



is dressed in UFO plastics, though our pre-production bike was wearing last year's decals. Production models, we're told, will come in black and red.

Whilst the rolling chassis is almost identical to that of the 125, the motor is very different. Rather than being a bored-out version of the smaller motor, the 200 is essentially a Taiwanese copy of Honda's electric start SL/CRF230 lump, albeit with less displacement and one less cog in the gearbox. However, the bike is very different to the big H's offering, coming better specced and with a far higher (910mm) seat height.



Man On

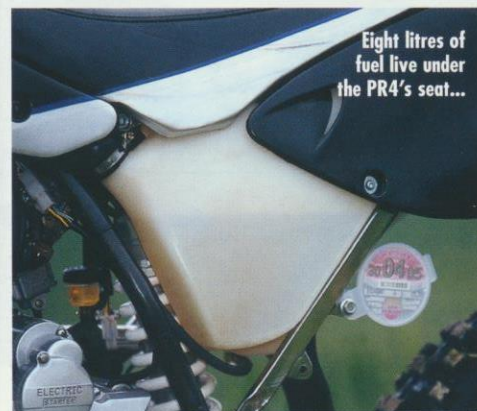
Unlike many other low capacity off-rollers, aboard the AJP you get the feeling that you're on a proper, full-size dirt bike. The Reikon alloy bars are well positioned, and come with wraparound handguards fitted as standard. The relationship twist pegs and bars is just about spot-on, and without radiators the bike is particularly slim at the front-end, allowing you to slide right forward on the seat.

The motor fires easily into life with a prod of the starter button, and without even a sniff of choke. Unlike the 125, there's no kick-start

backing-up the starter motor on the 200.

Once underway, the AJP seems particularly loud. At first you wonder how such a long silencer can produce such a raucous noise, until you realise that it isn't exhaust noise at all - it's induction roar. This is all down to the location of the airfilter, mounted high up on the side of the frame's backbone, slurping air like a deep-sea diver (and well out of the way for stream crossings and deep water). Thankfully, the AJP's exhaust is fairly quiet, with just the kind of subdued bark you'd expect from an enduro thumper, and easily within acceptable 'trail limits'.

Dirty Play



Eight litres of fuel live under the PR4's seat...



200 motor is quite a torquey little lump...

Picking up speed, the PR4 continues to impress. We were initially slightly concerned about the rear shock, due to an excess of rebound damping. Push down on the rear-end and you could nip off for a cup of tea and a sarnie before the shock has settled back to its original position. And short of having the unit rebuilt, there's very little you can do about it, as the only adjustment available is for pre-load. But, as we found when we tested the 125, the shock somehow seems to work fine like this. You'd expect the rear-end to pack down over bumps until you ran out of travel and it bottomed-out... but this didn't seem to be the case. Flying down a wooped-out farm track, the rear tracked straight and seemed to be working well, likewise when we treated the undulations as braking-bumps, hard on those AJP stoppers. Strange, but very encouraging.

The Paioli forks are set up nicely supple, with

a quality feeling often lacking from 'budget' dirt-bikes' suspension. At trail speeds the damping seems just about perfect, though if you're really shifting (which is a relative thing, considering the bike's top speed) they do start feeling a little on the soft side.

In the Box

Out on the lanes, it's easy to carry speed on the PR4. Obviously, the suspension helps here, but the gearbox also contributes to this easy-going feel. It's not that the action is particularly slick (which it isn't), but the spacing between gears is nigh on perfect. Crucially on a small capacity bike there's no gap in the ratios while you wait for the motor to rev back into the sweet-spot. Instead, the close-ratio 'box keeps you moving forwards all the time.

Unfortunately, on the road the lack of a sixth



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FIRST CHECK

Dirty Play



Purposeful looks match the
AJP's off-road abilities...

gear is a real hindrance. Wind-on the throttle, bang through the gears, and before long you're maxed-out... with just 90km/h showing on the tiny speedo. Yep, on the road the AJP was singing its little heart out at just about 54mph. Which is a real shame, because this lack of speed lets the bike down as a trailie. We're not obsessed with top speed, and you could always gear the thing up a bit, but then you'd end up compromising those perfect off-road ratios.

We finished the day's testing with a spin around a closed-course track, with some fast sweeping corners, tighter wooded sections and a couple of climbs. By now it had started raining (well it was summer) and the ground was becoming a little greasy.

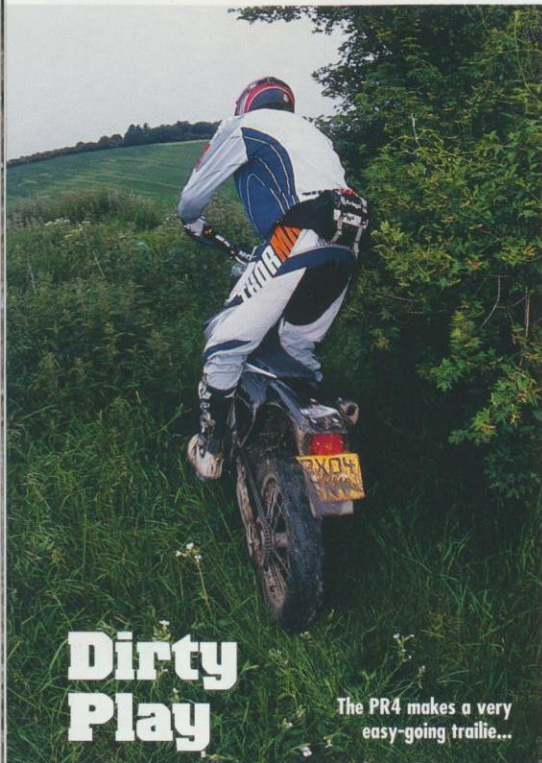
Banging down through the gears into grassy turns, the rear-end constantly tried to overtake the front. This is predominantly down to the underseat fuel tank adding weight at the rear of the bike and can either be slightly un-nerving

or make you feel like a complete hero, depending on your speed and disposition. Getting back on the gas, the back-end would again step-out (again, thanks to that pendulum effect) but because of the low, linear power it always felt perfectly controllable. Almost.

Thanks to its light weight and easy-going power, the PR4 can be chucked around with ease. Through the woods, the bike turns reasonably quickly, yet remains stable and predictable. The biggest problem comes with the lack of steering lock. There's nothing you can do about this as the lock-stops aren't adjustable and if you're used to other low-capacity dirt bikes like Beta's Alp or the Gas Gas Pampera you'll be startled to find that there's nothing like the 'lock afforded by such machines and probably less than on a regular enduro machine. However, unless the going is really nadgery (or you compete in long distance trials) you'll soon get used to this.

Tackling a couple of climbs showed the motor

FIRST CHECK



Dirty Play

The PR4 makes a very easy-going trailie...

to be pretty torquey, but being a stone-age 200 thumper you still need to attack steep ascents with the motor spinning and, ideally, some momentum. Otherwise, just like the TBM Transporter, you find yourself running out of steam on the inclines. Thankfully, the motor is happy to be laboured, and unlike some modern four-strokes, doesn't have that propensity to snuff itself out at the most inopportune moments.

With the rain getting heavier, things started getting particularly slippery, not least the PR4's slick seat cover. However, this was a pre-production bike, and the importers assure us that the bike will come with a proper gripper seat. Likewise, many of our other 'complaints' about the bike are likely to be sorted before production models hit the showrooms. So here goes: The bike is crying out for a bashplate to protect that sticky-out motor and its delicate oil lines. So it's going to get one; The rear brake lever sits too far under the motor and is hard to get at with your clumping great MX boots. So it'll come with a slight bend for easier access; And the speedo

will come reading in miles per hour. Good stuff. Only the lack of steering lock remains...

With links to Suzuki, AJP will soon be producing both 450 and 250 enduro bikes using RM-Z motors (though with a frame of their own design). But their 'bread and butter' bikes will remain the low capacity, low cost dirt bikes like the PR4. On sale in the UK sometime in August, the 200 should be wearing a price tag just a smidgen under three grand. Which seems just about right for a bike of this spec.

So, by all accounts, we quite liked the new 200. In a similar vein to Alfer's VR125 (though perhaps not quite as well specced), it's a full-on, small-bore off-roader which is undoubtedly a handy (if not exactly exhilarating) trail/enduro tool. And if you're looking for a mellow, robust (well, nothing fell off it - not even the rider), full-sized dirt bike it might just be the machine for you. Likewise, it would probably make a good introduction to the world of off-road for those who already have a full (or 33bhp restricted) licence before they trade up to something with a little more performance.

Hmm, more performance? Maybe it's time for a quicker van after all...

Thanks to Steve Pucci at Adly Moto (01543 466789) for the loan of the AJP. And huge thanks to Richard Bott for his help with this test...

AJP PR4 200

Price:	TBA (approx £3000)
Engine:	Air-cooled, SOHC, two-valve, electric start single
Displacement:	198cc
Bore & stroke:	69 x 53mm
Carburation:	Walbro 30mm
Transmission:	5-speed
Frame:	Steel double-cradle, removable steel sub-frame
Forks:	Paioli conventional 41mm, 260mm travel
Shock:	Paioli shock with linkage, 260mm travel
Front brake:	AJP twin-piston caliper, 255mm disc
Rear brake:	AJP four-pot caliper, 210mm disc
Fuel capacity:	8L
Seat height:	910mm
Wheelbase:	1410mm
Dry weight:	105kg (claimed)
Contact:	Adly Moto: 01543 466789



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Country 'n' Western

Summer is finally here, so Blez returned to the KTM Adventure trail park down in deepest Devon to take up their outdoor circuit challenge...

After my previous visit to the Savery brothers' superb indoor trail and enduro park at Wheeldon Farm down in the West Country, I vowed I'd be back in the summer to try out their outdoor circuit facilities and a few leafy lanes into the bargain.

Since last winter, the link-up with Jeff Philp

and KTM UK has enabled all of them to take the Adventure Tours experience to a higher level, and it's still evolving, with new tracks and more land soon to be developed.

The Adventure Tours weekends now start Friday lunchtimes, so the instructors can give their punters a decent briefing, some basic train-

ing and skill assessment before having the whole weekend to ride.

Andrew told me that they'd been really glad to have the indoor facility at the beginning of the year because the weather had been so terrible.

'It's okay trail riding in the rain, but when you're trying to give people basic instruction on a muddy field, it's not much fun and the bikes get really clagged up'.

However, on the Friday afternoon in May that we were there the weather was perfect; sunny but breezy, not too hot, with the ground mostly dry but pleasantly soft and not at all dusty.

After getting fully kitted out from head to toe in the excellent gear provided, we had a quick run-through of the KTM 250 four-strokes we would be using, including how to find the well-hidden choke lever and a warning to beware of the sometimes dodgy side-stand.

Novices and Experts

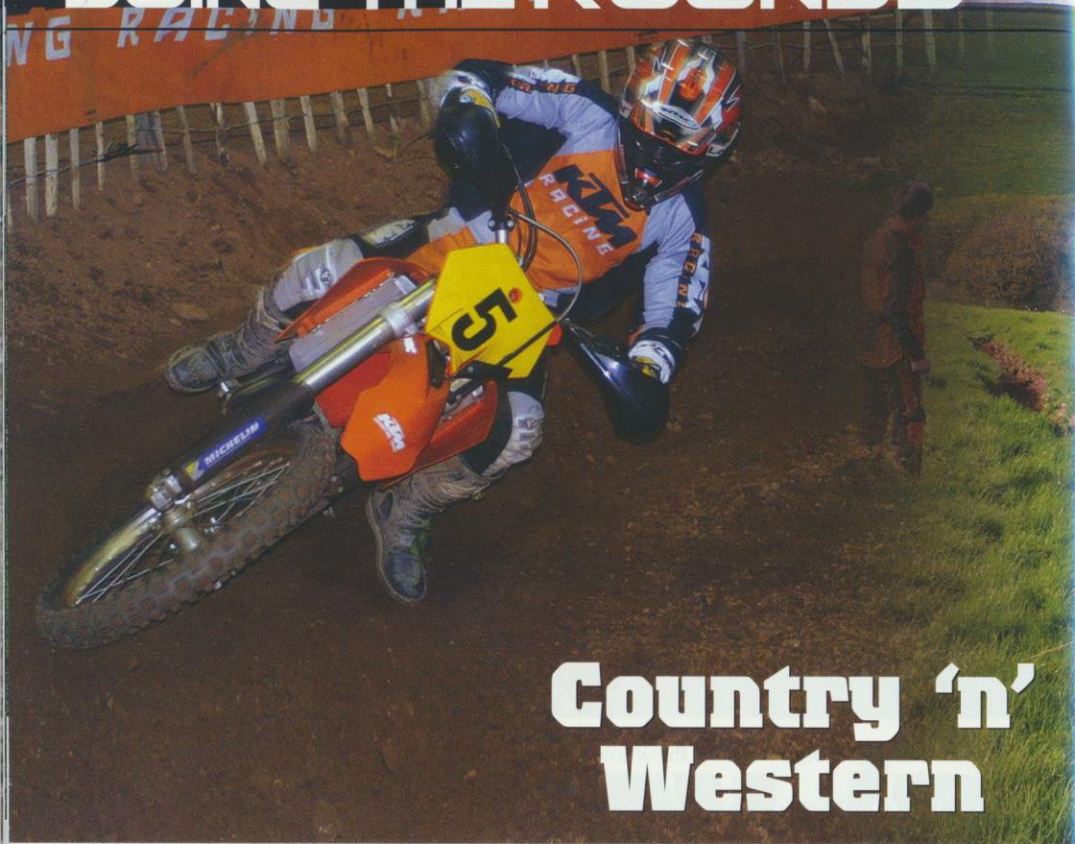
The novice track is just a simple oval a couple of hundred metres long set out in long grass. This not only gave everybody a chance to get used to the bikes but also enabled the instructors to assess the levels of riding ability. We practiced standing up on the straights, then sitting down

for the flat turns, but it was immediately apparent who had done this sort of thing before and who was a complete novice on the dirty stuff.

Road bike riders have a tendency to sit far too far back in the saddle which encourages the front to wash out in turns, as one of our number soon discovered. After a few laps of the basic oval it was time to move on to something a bit more challenging in the same vast hillside field. The main outdoor track at Wheeldon is like a simple motocross circuit, but without the fencing or any really intimidating obstacles such as whoops or double jumps. However it must be a good half mile lap, with plenty of twists and turns, berms, a few ruts, some opposite cambers, a couple of small jumps on the flat and a more challenging uphill section where it's possible to get 'big air' if you have the skill and inclination.

It just so happened that on the same afternoon top motocross riders Tyla Rattray and Christian Burnham were putting in a bit of practice on Wheeldon 250s prior to racing nearby at the weekend, so we had the chance to see just how quickly the circuit could be ridden and just how horizontal you can get a bike over a jump!

In stark contrast, Andrew led the first of our three small groups around the track at a gentle



Country 'n' Western

jogging pace, standing up all the way, before pulling off to observe.

It wasn't long before people were toppling off in the trickier rutted berms and in the one muddy section at the bottom of the hill - including me! The berms were trickier to ride than they looked from a distance, but I made myself ride them all because I needed the practice, even though there was plenty of space to take alternative lines and to overtake. Ten minutes and we all needed a breather before having another go at the track, riding in two wide ruts, one straight, the other with a gentle curve in it. These were a good 18 inches wide and dead easy for me, so it was interesting to see just how much trouble the novices had doing it feet-up, especially the curved rut. One poor bloke fell off about three times while I was snapping pictures, and reckoned I'd put the hex on him.

Indeed, it was a bit of revelation for me to see just how incompetent some of the guys were even at such simple exercises as doing a hill-start.

One bloke tried and failed three times before the instructors pushed his bike round the uphill corner for him, so that he could re-start on a downhill!

Back on the main track, Andrew Savery soon came whistling past and I was particularly impressed by the distance he managed to clear coming up the hill with seemingly half the effort that it took me to jump several feet less.

Eat, Drink and be Merry

It was soon time to get showered and changed in the superb scenic stone cottages that are built around a lawn courtyard in the centre of the farm. There's even an indoor swimming pool discreetly tucked away on one side. We took a short minibus ride to the nearby Avon Inn for a convivial and top-notch meal during which I consumed far too much red wine.

Fortunately I recovered in time to eat a hearty breakfast the next morning after which we were divided into just two groups (according to ability)



for the trail riding part of the weekend. In the early days of Adventure Tours everybody was given rally-style roadbooks to follow which was great if you wanted to prepare for a competition rally, but could also result in people getting lost and riding around in circles all over Devon and Cornwall.

Nowadays Adventure Tours stick to the much simpler and undemanding system of having a run leader showing the way and a 'sweeper' bringing up the rear, with each rider being responsible for making sure that the person behind them knows which way to go at any turning between lanes.

Happy Trails

After a quick briefing explaining the guidance system we were off on the first lane, which runs right through the middle of the farm itself!

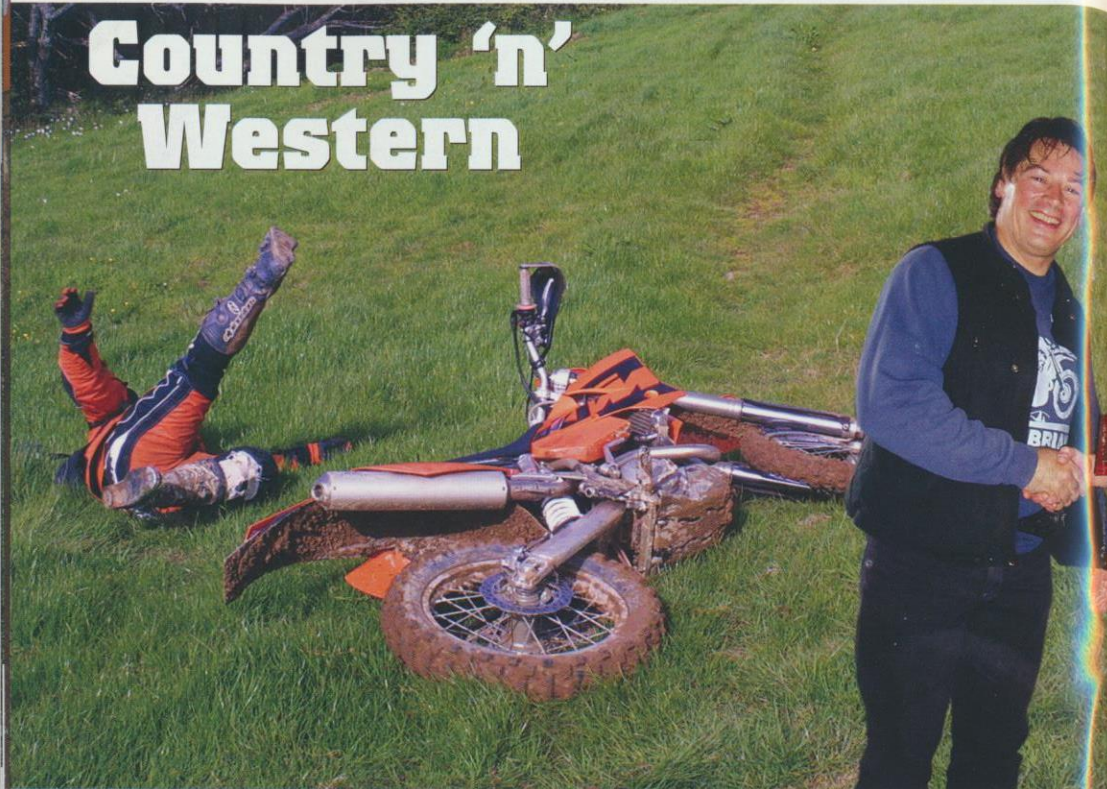
A few easy trails later Jeff stopped at the bottom of a more demanding climb, which we were invited to inspect on foot. This was the first

trials-style 'test' of the day that added an enjoyable element of competition into the proceedings. It would have been damn tricky in the wet, but since it was dry, the steep stone going was not too demanding for an experienced rider, but still a good challenge for the 'experienced novices' who made up most of our group. Going one at a time, most of the lads got up with just the odd dab but one of them managed to ride straight into a tree!

Coming back round to the bottom of the hill on tarmac a long black streak of rubber served as a timely reminder that you have to concentrate just as much on the narrow roads as the trails in those parts. Mind you, there were some tricky trails too. In fact, the one my girlfriend Elspeth struggled with more than any other all weekend was full of cut branches from the hedges on both sides which had just been left in the lane. She got a branch jammed in her footrest and found the whole thing very disconcerting.

After some more excellent trails to the North of

Country 'n' Western



Totnes, including one which came out in the grounds of Her Majesty's Prison, Channings Wood, we stopped for lunch at Clemo's all-purpose craft centre/restaurant/filling station at Ipplepen to swap tales of near disaster and derring do.

Puncture Repairs

About an hour after lunch we rode a trail that gave great views across the countryside with an old windmill in the distance, although the lane exits rather dangerously up a steep straight onto a tarmac road. It was here that we copped our only puncture of the weekend, caused by a thorn piercing a front tyre. Elspeth was glad of the chance to have a little lie down, while Andrew and Jeff put on an exemplary display of spanner work.

The lanes in South Devon are actually well marked with a fascinating variety of signs and descriptions. There are 'unmetalled roads', 'public byways' and that old favourite, 'unsuitable for

vehicles'. This does make them easier to find on the ground than they are on the OS map, since many of them, despite having full vehicular rights, appear as nothing more than black dotted lines on OS No 202.

We were about halfway through the afternoon when I started to recognise some of the lanes from previous visits to the area - there were a couple with memorably long deep ruts and others with distinctive red clay.

Although it was a lovely sunny day there had been plenty of recent rain so there were some lanes that were good and muddy and plenty of deep puddles.

I felt bad when Elspeth rode perfectly through one of them, only to fall over as she emerged because I got in the way with my camera!

I did the last few lanes of the day on Andrew's 450 and thoroughly enjoyed the extra oomph. That night we went into the Smugglers Inn in Totnes, where I made the mistake of drinking too much gaseous real ale...



Sunday, Sunny Sunday

Our first lane of the day was another cracker, starting less than a quarter of a mile from the farm and ending in somebody's garden, where we were greeted by the extraordinary sight of a bird of paradise strutting its stuff for us.

Realising that I'd come out without my camera, I came closer to crashing than I had all weekend as I dashed back up the lane. Rejoining the group at the petrol station I was reminded that the little KTM four-bangers are pretty frugal on fuel, with barely a tenner's worth required for the whole weekend.

This time we headed southwest from Wheeldon and were soon riding the notoriously rutted Blackberry Lane, near St Anne's Chapel, which proved less tricky than usual, according to some of the Adventure Tour regulars in our group.

After a coffee stop in St Anne's I swapped to a KTM 400, finding it the most relaxing of the three models I rode on both road and trail.

Rocky Climb

One of the best lanes of the morning was a long rocky climb, reminiscent of some of the best in the Peak District. I fully expected some of the other riders to struggle, but was delighted to discover that they'd all got up under their own steam and that, to Andrew's amazement, Elspeth had 'cleaned' the climb without a single dab.

I'd already been impressed by the way she'd come down an earlier rocky descent; she was clearly feeling a lot more confident than she had the day before, and she wasn't the only one.

At one point we stopped to regroup at a scenic stone bridge on the road where we were questioned by some curious and friendly walkers - on hearing that the bikes were all hired out, one of them wanted to know if his under-age teenage son could be catered for in any way, to which the answer was 'not yet, but hopefully, soon'.

Shortly before lunch Andrew Savery stopped to point out to me a whole new patch of land near South Milton on which he soon hopes to

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**Country 'n'
Western**

have new enduro-style tracks laid out.

Even if the dastardly plans of Alun Michael and DEFRA to drastically reduce the amount of vehicular rights of way come to fruition, KTM Adventure Tours and the Savery's are making sure that they'll still have plenty of private land available for off-road fun and games.

Camping it up Chez Rocky

Sunday lunch was a whole experience in itself thanks to the picturesque location at South Milton sands combined with the larger than life owner of the Café, Rocky Massie.

An outrageously camp Scot, he regaled us with a non-stop flow of wit, sarcasm, innuendo and barefaced misogyny. When he said to Elspeth

'I'm afraid ladies always get served last here'

I thought she was going to give him a slap, but she somehow managed to restrain herself. Sadly, he's planning to retire at the end of the season but he's well worth a visit if you're anywhere near the area. Rocky's enigmatic sign outside the cafe reads: 'If you think you're god's gift to the world, I hope you kept your receipt!'

After lunch we did a great trail that starts in a sort of foliage tunnel with a steep climb up from a road. There were a few frantic dabs from some, and Elspeth needed Andrew's assistance to get up the steepest bit, but it was worth the effort.

The final test on the trails was probably the trickiest of the weekend and only five of us attempted it. It was long, rocky, and deceptively slippery early on, but the 400 just purred up it.

Back Indoors

Back at Wheeldon Farm we had tea and cake before the final test of the weekend - the indoor circuit. This was exactly the same as on my last visit except as promised at the time, an easy path had been made through the whoops on one side and the double jump was filled in, making it a much more innocuous table-top.

I fear that I'm too old a dog ever to master the technique to ride whoops properly, but I did manage to get my lap time down by about three seconds before I wore myself out. I was a good few seconds slower than Andrew, as you might expect, and he could, er... keep it up for a lot longer too, but I was pleased to beat Jeff's best time by a fraction of a second.

On the other hand I was impressed that Martin Cray, another 40-plus old fart who doesn't even own a 'proper' trail bike, was only a second or so slower. He has had some practice though, as he told me:

'I've got a BMW R1150GS and a FireBlade for track days. I've only ever been trail riding with KTM Adventure Tours, but I've been doing it right from the very start, back in 1997. I come two or three times per year with my mates; the most was four times in one year. It's always fantastic fun. I only crashed twice all weekend!'

It was a good illustration of the fact that, if you don't want to trail ride more than a few times a year, and you're happy to stick to the same area, the Adventure Tours experience provides an affordable alternative to splashing out on your

DOING THE ROUNDS



Country 'n' Western

own bike, riding gear and transport.

The other thing that struck me was most of the punters were well over 30, yet many of them had only been riding road bikes for a few years. It seems more and more 30 and 40-somethings are taking up motorcycling for the first time.

All those that I spoke to seemed delighted with their weekend, whether first timers or not. I certainly had a good time, and I can't wait to go back with a 950 - now riding those trails with a big twin would be a good challenge! You'd better believe it...

KTM ADVENTURE TOURS: WHAT'S NEXT?

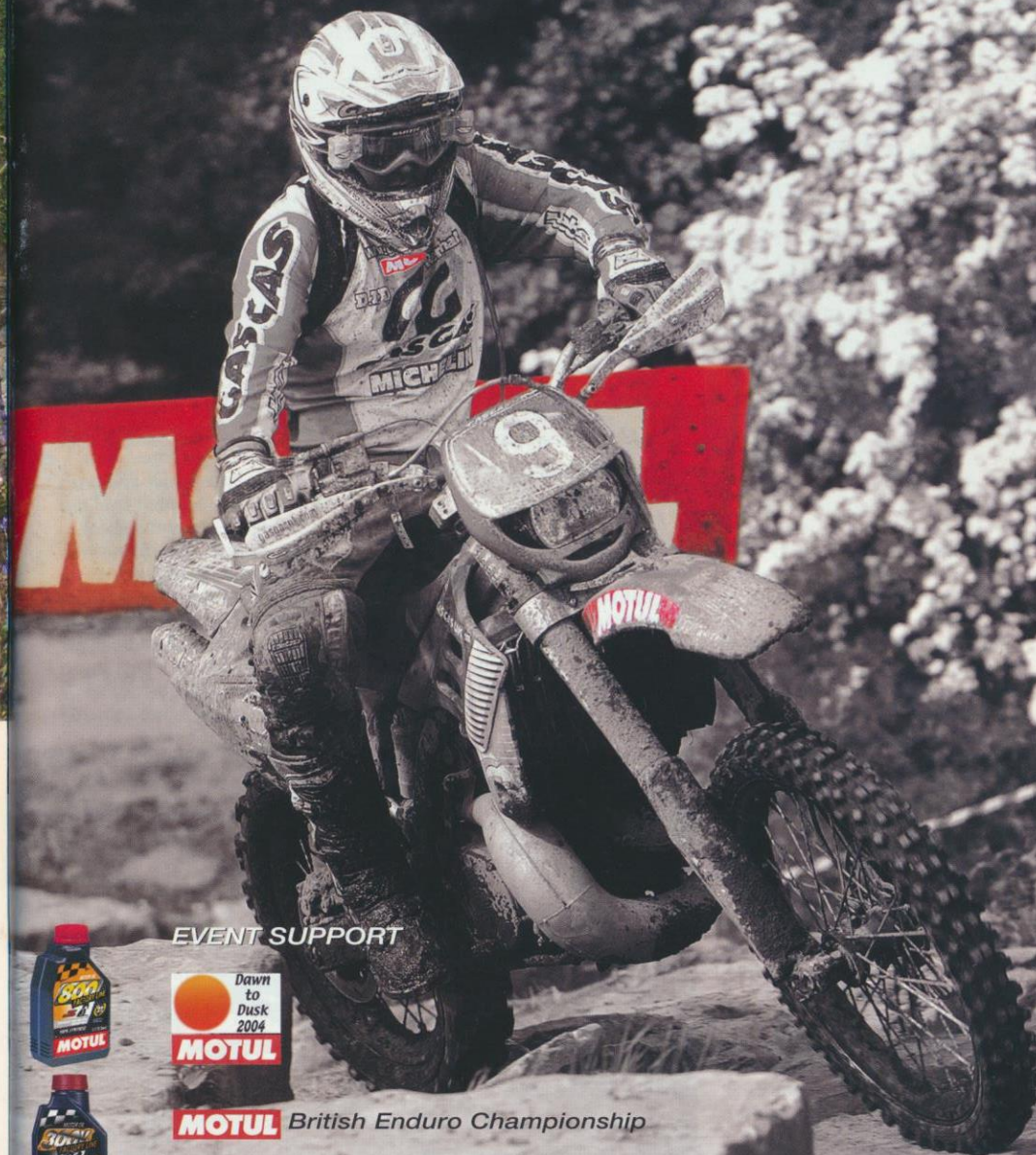
For the future, Jeff and the Saverys are planning to increase the emphasis on tuition and skills training on their own land, so the whole experience will give riders a more measurable improvement in their skills. They're planning to insert an 'intermediate' track between the basic oval and the motocross practice track and also have a long enduro circuit that can start and finish in the barn, so the transponders and timing equipment can be used. They also want to cater for under 16's (their own teenagers can already embarrass

most of the punters) and as mentioned, add more land and more tracks elsewhere. Additional ideas include the possible use of a video to show people what they're doing right and wrong, which can be bought as a souvenir DVD. They are also going to be running more road-oriented tours for KTM 950s from Wheeldon Farm, plus trips abroad in Spain and elsewhere. Watch this space...

For more details of all KTM Adventure Tours events and prices, call 01752 840831 or go to www.ktmadventuretours.co.uk

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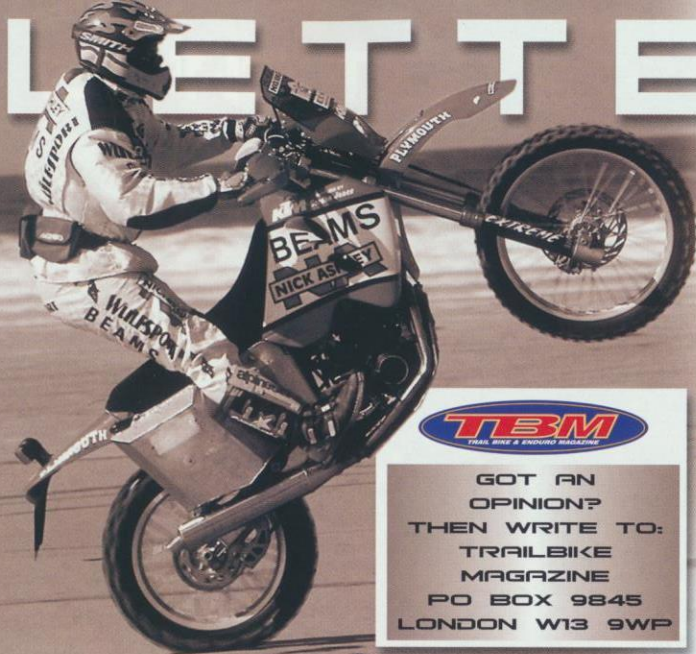
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LETTERS



TBM
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built. That said, these days the 'Z's chassis feels distinctly average compared with more modern tackle - stable but slow turning. And the suspension (particularly the forks) just feel a bit wooden. But the engine is still sublime. What you've done is to build one of my ultimate enduro bikes. I only wish Yamaha could've done the same...

Just Williams

Dear Mr Melber

I have been riding green lanes on motorcycles for the last 25 years and, like everyone, I am upset by the current DEFRA proposals being debated in Mark Williams' column. However I think it is disgraceful that your magazine prints Mark's anti 4x4 views, especially at this time when all motorised user groups should be united to the same cause - keeping the lanes open. His attitude reminds me of the same selfish

Z Not Dead!

Dear TBM

I've owned a Yamaha WR250Z for several years now and am very pleased with it. Nevertheless, this hasn't changed the fact that the chassis is becoming increasingly dated. I've tried to better it with the purchase of more modern machinery but have been unsuccessful. (More colourful comments described the general appearance of the bike by my fellow competitors when it was surrounded by an array of 2004 machines in the paddock.)

The solution was to slot the old WR-Z engine into a 2004 YZ250 chassis - the resulting machine you see before you. Your magazine rightly considers the WR250Z as some type of benchmark and a more modern version is sorely missed. Here you have it!

You are welcome to test it if you so wish.

Roger Worsley
 St Helen's, Merseyside



Is Mark Williams wrong for having a dig at 4x4 owners? G Davies thinks so...

ramblers' viewpoint of wanting the lanes to themselves.

Research with most local authorities will tell you that more damage is done by agricultural and forestry traffic than any leisure activity. Obviously there are cowboys within every user group but on various occasions when I read your magazine, Mark is usually having a 'dig' at the 4x4 fraternity. There are far more problems caused by those within our own group (motorcyclists) - the difference is that they are harder to catch.

Besides the TRF, the Land Rover boys do a whole lot more to protect the lanes than the trail riders, many of which will move onto the next craze in a couple of years once the damage has been done. It's easy to buy a bike and go for a thrash round the lanes on a Sunday, good fun too while it lasts.

G Davies
 North Devon

Call me Lucky

Dear TBM

I first discovered your mag three years ago and subscribed

last year, but was disappointed compared with earlier issues.

However, the recent return of Doing the Rounds and Mr Williams' doom-mongering has helped make it as compelling a read as ever. Can't comment on the World Enduro stuff 'cos I've never read it, a fact unlikely to surprise anybody making it to the end of this letter. Here's my biography:

- Winter 1989: 20 and skint, riding my road-tyred KLR600, I'm taken green laning on the North Yorkshire Moors. Resolve to buy a more suitable (second) bike once circumstances allow.
- Autumn 1999: Tiring of thrashing my TDM everywhere but suddenly relatively minted I hastily buy an XT350 - in the dark. Undeterred by a totally rotted exhaust, I seek out cheap off-road gear at the BMF... only to come back with one-piece leathers. Almost inevitably an early FireBlade followed, the rusty XT forgotten like a broken toy at Christmas.
- Autumn 2000: The Honda sold, I set about fixing the XT. A £120 MIG welder is surely better value than a £160 Micron exhaust - until I try using it.
- Spring 2002: Welding night-

classes and new downpipes later, I admit defeat. Relief from a quick sale turns into a slight sense of loss, so I buy a DR350 Enduro.

- Summer 2002: Fired up from green laning but struggling to fire up the DR, a 350SE the obvious answer. Eventually find a pristine 1999 example. My most immaculate bike ever, convince myself I'll destroy it off-road, so reluctantly sell it on by winter.
- Spring 2003: The 350 Enduro gets a platinum plug and I get a bike I can (usually) start.
- Summer 2003: Back from touring Scotland on my GS, discover E-bay and a whole new motorcycling addiction. The DR's ignored while I buy a bike a month till November.
- Winter 2003: Finally sorting the DR for an MOT, when a very cheap MOT'd 350SE turns up locally. The straight through exhaust and top-end rattle minor concerns at this money.
- At the fourth attempt in as many years, convinced now I have my ideal green-laner, only to learn Mr Alun Michael doesn't want me to actually use it - time to join the TRF. My first issue of TRAIL has barely hit the mat and I'm writing a cheque



for the 2004 Coast to Coast.

- Spring 2004: Wait until the week before, then: change oil/filter/tyres/silencer/chain and sprockets, clean oil strainer and air filter, adjust tappets, lube cables, etc. Finally happy at 10.30pm Friday. On the road 5.40am Saturday, 130 miles later arrive York 7.25am, dump trailer and car, load up bike. Due to meet 8.30am, leave York 7.50am, nail bike at 70mph to the outskirts of Scarborough, piston hits plug, try new plug, phone for breakdown truck.
- Despite being three times slacker than spec, adjusting the valve clearances barely quietened the motor - so you could say I'd had fair warning. Oh well, there's always next year?

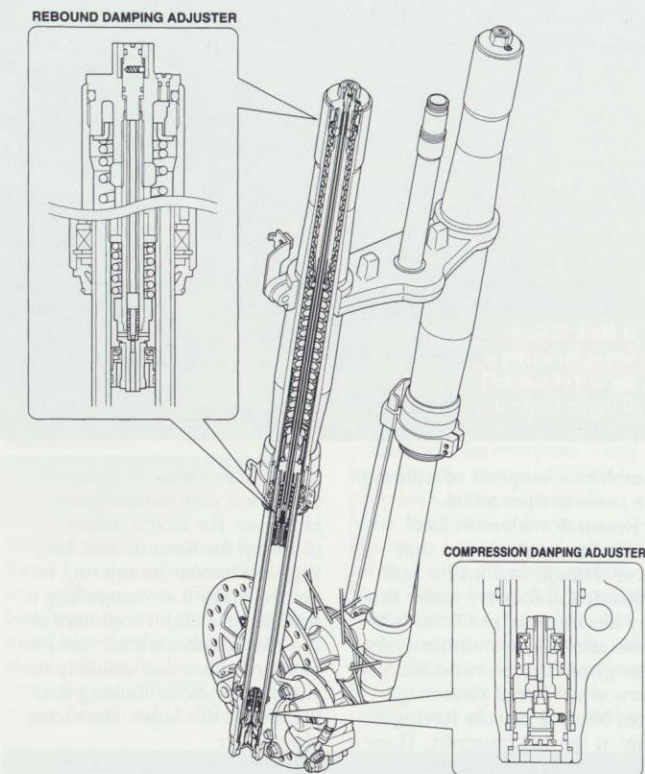
Alan Boulton
Polesworth, Warwickshire

Tip Top

Dear TBM

Hope you like the following tips on Suzuki fork maintenance. When replacing the seals on my RM250 (conventional forks fitted with an internal damping cylinder/cartridge), the manual says you require special Suzuki tools that not everyone owns, so here are some tips I worked out for some extremely cheap methods to disassemble/reassemble without damage.

1. A stopper plate to hold the exposed damper rod to enable loosening the lock nut at the bottom was simply a piece of 50 x 75 x 3mm steel plate with a nice groove cut into it 0.5mm larger than the rod so the lock-nut rests squarely and can't dis-



appear back up the fork leg.

2. To get the new seals in (which have to be pressed in with the fork stanchion in the cylinder) the book shows a sort of felt lined slide hammer. I determined that with 49mm fork legs, if I got a length of 50mm bore durapipe (either ABS or PVC) and lined it with cloth, then I can drift the seal in. However, the outside diameter of the pipe is too large to pass into the fork cylinder so I got one of the old fork seals, carefully trimmed the outside diameter down with a Stanley knife then used the piece of pipe to carefully tap the new seal in. I used a rubber mallet and it only took a couple of sharp taps to

seat the seal perfectly square.

To retrieve the old seal you simply pull the fork stanchion up slightly until you can see the seal to pull it off - it can't get stuck because the rubber has been trimmed off. You can then fit the retaining clip and dust seal and it's job done!

3. The next bit on this type of fork is to fill the inner damping cylinder with oil then pull it up and down with a 'special tool' to expel the air bubbles. This tool is required because the inner cylinder is approximately 200mm down inside the stanchion. So having previously measured the end of the tube I made a 20mm plastic conduit pipe with a short piece of sili-

cone tube cable-tied to the end. This was then inserted down the stanchion until the silicone tube slid snugly over the end of the cylinder and it grips it enough so it can be pulled slowly up and down as required. It also works when the inner cylinder needs to be pulled up ready for the spring and top cap to be fitted.

4. The final tool is simply a large syringe with a pipe long enough to insert into the fork stanchion and marked with graduations to enable the oil level to be accurately set. Easy enough to make. I don't know how much money I saved but the only expenditure I had was the cost of the seals and the oil, plus my time, which was about three hours (including making the tools.)

The bits for making the tools were lying around in my garage or out of a scrap bin, but they would only cost a few quid.

Obviously not all forks are the same but I have done CRM seals (USD) plus these RM ones as well as lots of road/trail bike seals in the past, and it doesn't take much to adapt something to make a tool and save money. Most forks will only require a tube to drift the seals in.

Hope this letter helps some people. If you decide to publish it, I sometimes race an RM250 and I wear XL T-shirts, just in case you feel compelled to reward me for my ingenuity with liquid or clothing! (Cheeky bleeder aren't I?)

Paul Salisbury
Burton on Trent, Staffs

Husky Help

Dear TBM

Please help. I've just treated myself to a lovely 1998 Husky TE410. Now, being my new toy, I would like to know a bit more about it, but can't find much info on it. Are there any workshop manuals I could buy and if so, where from? Has your mag

ever tested it and if yes, what issue was it in? Finally, could you tell me my nearest main dealer that I can get spares etc from? Many thanks...

Shane
Hucknall, Nottingham

Shane, workshop manuals are available direct from Husky Sport (01962 771122) they'll cost you about £40 I'm afraid, but they're very comprehensive. Likewise that's where we suggest you go for your spares as it's quite an old model now. We last tested the TE410 in issue 61 - back issues are available at £4.50 inc. p&p, please call our subscription hotline (020 7903 3993).

Act Now

Dear TBM

While we await Alun Michael's announcement, perhaps TBM could continue to inform readers of some basic facts.

'It's too late to do anything' is a negative view of the situation by people too lazy to get involved, or selfish morons (SMs) who are riding illegally anyway. A more positive view would be to carry on enjoying green lanes in a responsible way. Research your route; it may mean joining a local TRF group or a club that engages in off-road riding. If you think that owning an off-road bike, together with an Ordnance Survey map is enough, just remember the current or real status of a highway or public right of way it may show is not guaranteed.

If anybody at the mag would like to give a history lesson on highways and right of ways together with an explanation of the difference between a UCR, Byway, RuPP or other route, this would make an interesting article.

Meanwhile, act responsibly, even if you don't want to tackle one of these selfish morons because 'it's not my problem'. At least point out to a local resi-

dent or landowner who is concerned, that the SM has nothing to do with your legal motorcycling leisure pursuit.

Unfortunately the PR work is an endless daily battle against a growing number of SMs everywhere. One current example is the Monks' Trod trail in Wales. It only highlights the problems that can face any green lane. In my opinion, [the temporary closure of] this came about from SMs using the first mile from the Rhydyer/Aberystwyth road, leaving the track rutted for 40 yards either side of the right of way. When it reaches the challenging part, the SMs simply turn around and rip up a new piece of ground all the way back to their parked vans.

Additionally, the [Monks' Trod] TRO has been extended until 30 November 2004 on the Powys section. There is currently no continuous legal link from Ffair Rhos to the Claerwen dam.

Act responsibly; get involved, we do have a sustainable future.

Chow!

Taff, WTRA

Thanks for that Taff, we agree with you. 'Ciao'!!

At Risk

Dear TBM

I feel I should bring to your attention the following. I have recently made enquiries with regards to European trail riding holidays with two companies who advertise in TBM. Neither company could provide proof of road risk insurance for their customers [on hire bikes]. One even openly admitted having none and that as such were operating illegally, but assured me all would be sorted soon.

Please advise readers to make sure whoever they use for their trail riding holiday has adequate cover for road risks.

Name and address supplied

LETTERS



Sounding off: Nigel Vincent thinks we neglect noise issues...

Yamaha YZ400F and later WR400F four-strokes were first launched and thinking that here was finally a major players' solution to noisy two-strokes. How wrong I was.

The Japanese, later along with the Europeans, have hoodwinked a buying public into parting with their hard earned to satisfy the latest American exhaust emission standards. And being the biggest market along with the biggest mouth has meant that the rest of the dirt bike world has had to follow. It would appear that as long as emission standards were being adhered to noise could remain as before.

Can noise be contained? Noise travels through the air as a pressure disturbance. Moving further away from the source, the noise level generally decreases because the sound energy is distributed over a larger area. In a simple case, the sound level reduces by 6dB each time the distance from the source is doubled.

Decibels are logarithmic units, meaning the normal arithmetic rules of addition and subtraction do not apply. A noise reduction of 10dB means the original sound energy has been reduced by a factor of 10. A reduction of 20dB means a reduction by a factor of 100, and for 30dB, by a factor of 1000. If current motorcycle noise is taken at between 85-95 dB (A), and that noise levels commonplace in residential areas are close to 55-65 dB (A), then motorcycle noise is looking to be reduced by something close to a factor of 1000 for a 30dB reduction. Not an easy solution to find, given the current methods of exhaust gas removal, silencing and construction materials.

And so I return to what inspired this piece of dross, namely the April editorial.

Why has TBM waited until their 104th issue to question the degree of noise emittance from the currently available choice of dirt bikes?

To even consider that Joe Public would want or even afford another bike just to enable him to participate in a few more enduros is, I would have thought, simply not an option. Just ask his better half. We simply need quieter bikes and the sooner the manufacturers, along with the after-market exhaust manufacturers of this world, realise this and not performance will sell their products then so much the better.

Nigel Vincent
Bordesholm, Germany

Nigel, quite apart from mentioning noise in practically all of the bike tests we do, a quick flick through our back issues reveals that the subject of noise cropped up in TBM26 (Sept 1997), TBM52 (December 1997), TBM52 (November 1999), TBM60 (August 2000), TBM62 (October 2000), TBM69 (May 2001), TBM86 (October 2002), TBM87 (November 2002), TBM88 (December 2002), TBM95 (July 2003), TBM97 (September 2003), TBM98 (October 2003), and of course TBM104 (April 2004) so I think it's a little unfair of you to accuse us of waiting until issue 104 to mention the subject. You're absolutely right in one respect though, manufacturers and aftermarket suppliers need to do more, and I can tell you that high level meetings are currently going on among the British importers and other members of the Motorcycle Industry Association to try and look at noise levels on bikes from 2006 onwards. But at the end of the day it's in the individual owners' hands. Only when riders accept that they

Noise Annoys

Dear TBM

Having read the April (issue 104) editorial and the current threat of legislation against the majority of legal trail riding, I felt I had to write.

I last wrote to a motorcycle journal in 1988 (pre TBM you understand) and the subject then was as it is now that of motorcycle acceptance. To be fair, the letter did refer to the shortly to be introduced FIM new noise regulations for closed-course off-road motorcycles, and it asked whether this was significant enough.

I remember when the

play a significant part in reducing noise will things get any better...

Dundywhat?

Dear TBM

Would the 'dundyheads' who are riding up and down a 30-foot grass bank beside the trail between Monsal Head and Brushfield in Derbyshire please stop. Apart from the farmer getting rightfully peed off with the damage to his field, loads of walkers go right past that spot. Not a great move in the current climate!

On a slightly lighter note, I had to laugh recently as I passed a rider with a pair of horns on his helmet travelling in the opposite direction to us along the Midshires Way. I wonder if the 'horned one' had frightened any rambblers? Now where's my wimple..?

Boyd Emmerich
Overlander Trail Tours Ltd (OTT)

Lookin' Good

Dear TBM

No, this isn't a diverted letter from the Cosmopolitan magazine's problem page, although I do have a problem!

I own a Honda XR250R, which you all know is looking very dated now. But I have seen pictures of a 2004 XR250 electric start, which appears to have the same frame and seat as mine but with a more up-to-date tank with radiator shrouds.

Can anybody tell me if I can give my bike a facelift by fitting the tank from this 2004 bike? Or will I have to go for the full plastic surgery of fitting an 'A-loop' tank and seat to get the modern look I'm after?

Unfortunately, I can't afford to divorce my XR, and run off with the younger and more attractive looking CRF250X.

Paul Cottrell
Holmes Chapel, Cheshire

Good idea Paul, unfortunately you didn't say how old your bike is. But if it's a 1996 model or younger there should be no problem in changing plastics with a 2004 model XR since the bike hasn't changed fundamentally since its last redesign eight years ago. One thing though, the electric-start model is a Japanese import and as such is likely to have a steel tank rather than a plastic one. And anyway Honda originals are likely to be fairly pricey compared with the aftermarket stuff. Having tried an A-Loop tank and seat I can vouch for their fit and build quality. If it was my bike, that's the way I'd go mate...

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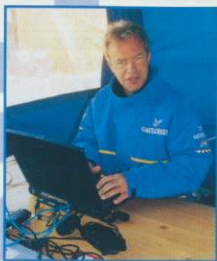


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DIRTY

THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS - MAKE SURE YOU TIGHTEN THE FRONT SPROCKET BOLT PROPERLY, AND ADD A GOOD DOLLOP OF LOCTITE, JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE...

Despite sporting an editorially-damaged toe following my recent trip down to the Lozere (see last month's Talking Dirty), the following weekend I decided to go ahead and race in a two day enduro in Normandie - and almost immediately wished I hadn't.

CHRIS EVANS IS LOOKING FORWARD TO SUMMER...

Scrutineering was held in balmy sunshine, but as soon as I had wheeled my bike out of parc ferme the heavens opened and turned what should have been relatively easy tracks into raging torrents of mud. To make matters worse I was on the same minute as my bus-pass-eligible mate, Mad Tone, and having not raced since last year, struggled (and failed miserably) to maintain his suicidal pace.

Eventually, after about 100 clicks of marvelling at the Mad One's complete disregard for life and artificial hip, I'd more or less managed to raise my rhythm to something approaching race pace when my KTM's back wheel locked solid, sending me into a lurid slide. This was followed a split second later by an enormous bang and a total absence of drive. I freewheeled to a stop, got off the bike and glanced down to see my brand new chain wrapped around the swing-arm. My first thought was to get on the blower and get the 'van bunny' to swing discreetly by with a replacement, but as I bent down to have

a closer look, hot engine oil started drizzling out through the mud covering the area around the front sprocket - game over.

Convinced that the engine casing was cracked I immediately plunged into deep depression and despondently chucked the bike into the back of the Vito, while at the same time trying to calculate exactly how much it was going to cost to repair my barely used 450EXC. The fact that the damage inflicted was entirely due to me not properly tightening the front sprocket bolt did nothing to ease the pain.

In the end things turned out better than I dared hope. The next day I carefully cleared all the muck off the engine to find that the case saver I'd fitted last winter had protected the motor and that the oil leak was caused by the oil seal behind the countershaft sprocket having been ripped off by the chain as it whizzed by. The moral of this story - make sure you tighten the front sprocket bolt and add a dollop of Loctite just to be on the safe side.

I just had time to drop the Katoche off at my favourite Parisian bike dealers before I was off to London for stress of a completely different kind... organising the UK launch of the 2005 Dakar press conference.

What was mainly stressing me out was the thought that nobody would actually come. And there followed a few sleepless nights as I ran through the nightmare scenario of me and Etienne Lavigne (the new Dakar Rallye boss) watching Paul Bleazard

devour a mountain of breaded chicken wings all on his own. As it turned out the only one who was disappointed was Blez - forced as he was to share the finger buffet with the other 90 or so participants who had taken time off work to come and find out about next year's edition. Better still, among the inevitable dreamers, BMW GS1100 owners and assorted psychos was a high proportion of serious potential punters.

While it might be something of an exaggeration to say that after years of indifference the Dakar has finally taken off in the UK, I think it reasonable to assume that 2005 will see a record Brit entry. As far as I can tell, and you never really know until you get to scrutineering, all the usual suspects - Si Pavey, Nicky Plumb, Mick Extance, Patsy Quick, Clive Town, Tim Sommers - are planning on heading down to Barcelona to take the start, accompanied by a number of new faces, including a team of six quad riders! Just between you are me they are all completely bonkers, but it would nevertheless seem that in these days of nanny states and risk assessment there is a growing number of people who are saying 'sod that, I'm off to sign up for the maddest race I can possibly find'.

Having breathed a huge sigh of relief that the Dakar launch wasn't a complete fiasco I was off again - this time to Morocco for the second round of the FIM Rallye Raid World Championships. Although inexplicably nowhere near as popular as the Dak', the UK was nevertheless represented by two Brits - Messers De Haan and McColley, in the company of all the continental front-runners. I hadn't worked on this event since a rival company ran it six years ago and had forgotten just how beautiful Morocco can be. The Rallye ORPI Maroc (to give it its full title) also has another huge plus point for all those working for the organisation - it only lasts for five days - meaning that I arrived back in Europe the freshest I have ever been after an African rallye. Better still, with summer here and my trail riding holidays on hold until September, I have unprecedented amounts of free time stretching out in front of me. In fact I might even find the time to give the 450 a good going over with some Loctite...



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COMPLETELY RUTTED



W

hat sort of a crass hypocrisy would it be if I admitted that I rode a load of illegal trails last month, especially given the high moral ground I've been occupying elsewhere in this issue? Well I did, and it was fantastic and what's more if things get much worse for us normally law-abiding dirtbikers, then I earnestly urge you lot to go and do the same.

IT'S IMMORAL, ILLEGAL AND A TON OF FUN. SO MARK WILLIAMS TRIES IT OUT...

There is of course a catch. I had dispensation to ride on land that was either privately owned or normally subject to Bridleway status but which for one day only, I was welcome to ride simply because I'm a very nice guy. Such a nice guy in fact, that I'd agreed to be a travelling marshal for the annual Marin Rough Ride, a mountain bike event run from the nearby town of Kington, and for which the organisers - Phil & Jerry's Awfully Big Adventures - had clearance for a pair of off-road bikes to zip hither and yon along the 70km course.

Although 'Jerry' is a friend of mine and also a trailrider, and despite my natural munificence, I was initially a little reluctant to assist. This was because he told me that there'd be over 800 - that's EIGHT HUNDRED - spandex-clad bicyclists partaking in the event, and I frankly feared I'd get inextricably caught up in a clutter of slow moving traffic that would take

any fun out of the proceedings. But the alternative to this particular Sunday was to recce a bunch of overly familiar tracks for an impending Mid-Wales Group TRF ride-out, and as several even worthier (and more capable) souls than me were willing to do the job, I decided to join the pedallers.

Now I don't know about you, but the idea of riding a pushbike up and down - particularly up - the type of terrain even some trailbikes might find irksome seems deeply masochistic to me. I believe that God gave us feet for changing gear and stamping on the rear brake pedal, and whenever I see some poor sap risking cardiac arrest huffing 'n' puffing up a hill (which is usually covered in tarmac, by the way) on their mountain bikes, I can only assume they're doing so simply because they failed to qualify for a motorcycle licence. And with the exception of the aforementioned Jerry, who I could excuse precisely because he also rides a proper, motorised 'bike, I've always regarded bicyclists as rather po-faced, joyless individuals who seek inner peace from physical suffering.

And indeed when I pitched up at the school gymnasium that served as HQ for the event, the assembled spandex-clad throng with their wrap-round sunglasses and metalflake origami helmets seemed a particularly cheerless lot. (Mind you, if I was a sexist pig, I might perhaps observe that spandex-cladding does quite suit the female of the species, but since of course I'm not, I won't). Maybe they looked so gloomy because the kit most of them were rid-

MARK WILLIAMS

ing was heavy enough to house a small 2-stroke engine: massive tubular frames with trick-looking suspension and disc brakes at both ends. When I asked Jerry what these bicycles cost, he casually replied 'Ooh a thousand, fifteen hundred quid.' Blimey I thought, that's twice what I paid for my last trailbike.

My instructions were to act as a 'sweeper' as well as an 'outrider', which meant I should wait until 15 minutes after the last rider left the massed start, check that any stragglers or casualties were dealt with and inform the marshals at each checkpoint when the last rider had passed through so that they could nip off to the pub. But as an outrider I could also overtake whole chunks of the field and check for mishaps between each stage and report back to HQ if help was needed. And then ride back against the flow of riders to check on the stragglers. All of which requires pretty good judgement if you don't want to knock 'em off their bikes, or scare them out of their spandex-clad skins by blaring your horn at them. Bearing in mind that my TT-R250 is so spookily quiet that most people can't hear it until it's in the bathroom with them.

Actually what it really requires is the judgement to anticipate what lines they're taking and steer as far abreast of them as the narrowness of the track allows. And when someone's wobbling with difficulty up a severe, rock-strewn hill, they might suddenly decide to change their trajectory just to make life easier on their leg muscles, which is why I got sworn at quite a lot.

But as I said at the start, what I also got was the opportunity to ride on prohibited paths, chief amongst these being Hergest Ridge (a name familiar to ancient hippies who bought the follow-up album to Mike Oldfield's Tubular Bells). Offa's Dyke Path is actually the ancient track that rises some 420 metres along Hergest from Kington before descending into the hamlet of Gladestry, with spectacular views north, south and west. When I were a lad, this bit of Offa's

Dyke was technically still a RuPP, but since it was downgraded I've walked the four-odd mile route many times, and scampering along it aboard a 'bike after a two decade hiatus was just fabulous. In fact such were the realities of a massed start and the steady incline that immediately followed it, duty obliged me to elbow my way through the pack before half of 'em had breeched the gateway to the Ridge and ride on to Gladestry. And then of course I just had to re-trace my tracks. Several times in fact.

Being unfamiliar with the trails in this area, and as this is not Doing the Rounds, I won't bore you with details of where else I was temporarily allowed to ride, but suffice it to say that I saw scenery hitherto denied any legal trailrider, and many miles of quite exhilarating upland tracks. Of course I also assiduously stuck to my brief, racing after two teenagers who'd taken wrong

WHEN I ASKED HIM WHAT THESE BICYCLES COST, HE CASUALLY REPLIED 'OOH A THOUSAND, FIFTEEN HUNDRED QUID'. BLIMEY I THOUGHT, THAT'S TWICE WHAT I PAID FOR MY LAST TRAILBIKE...

turnings and dozens of riders who'd fallen foul of a mischievously misplaced day-glo marker which'd sent them half a klick up a very steep hill. And then there was the marker that had completely

disappeared from a split in the track, obliging me to race ahead and fetch Jeremy so's to determine the true course, then follow him back on his ancient DR370 rat-bike (a task which ruefully reminded me why he managed to beat me in last year's Hafren). But then he is ten year's younger than me (I think).

Somewhat miraculously, the first man got home in just 3 hours 30 minutes, which I'd have been hard put to manage even on a motorcycle, and which rather changed my view on how tough these mountain bikers really are. Should you want to debunk your own myths, contact the British Cycling Federation via www.bcf.uk.com for details of clubs and events in your area. Alternatively, TRF members can provide similar assistance at horsey events, details of which are available from their Equestrian Co-ordinator, Mark Holland. You'll be doing them a favour, as well as treating yourself to what is normally forbidden fruit.

2-TRAC MIND

How much difference does two-wheel-drive make to a dirt bike? The only way to find out was to take the standard weapon and compare it with the AWD version.

So armed with two WR450Fs we headed to mid Wales to take on the 'widowmaker...'

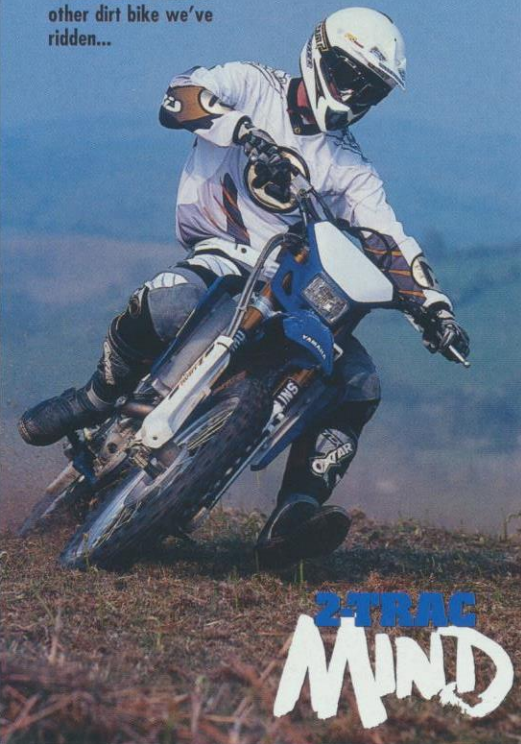


STORY: SI MELBER; PICS: JB It was the sort of hill that gives you recurring nightmares. Forget turning up at school and realising to your horror you've got an exam in ten minutes time... and you've forgotten to wear any trousers. This was one of those inclines that can make your teeth break into a sweat just by looking at it. Short run-up, loose-surfaced, bumpy and steep. Very steep. In fact so steep the sheep were holding hands coming down. And it was lined with prickly gorse bushes, so that any

mistake (and believe me there would turn out to be plenty of 'em), was penalised with an unhealthy degree of pain. This was a hill with attitude. A hill that revelled in its invincibility.

But it wasn't invincible. Not when you're armed with a two-wheel drive dirt bike powered by the mother of all 450 engines. This small part of mid Wales was about to meet its nemesis in the shape of Yamaha's all-wheel-drive 2-Trac WR450F. Game on...

2-Trac corners like no other dirt bike we've ridden...



2-TRAC
MIND

The Animals went in 2x2

Why would you bother owning a two-wheel-drive dirt bike, except perhaps out of curiosity? This seemed to be the general consensus of opinion among the people we spoke to who hadn't ridden it - which is to say virtually everyone. Fair comment I s'pose. The Yamaha 2-Trac is expensive, slightly heavier than a stock WR-F (by approx eight kilos) and obviously boasts a level of complexity which a competition machine can do without. I remember they said exactly the same thing about Hannu Mikkola's Audi Quattro before it burst onto the rallying scene in the early Eighties and roosted everything in sight. And now you try finding a top-level WRC rally car which isn't all-wheel-drive. Some people hate the inevitability of progress.

But this bike isn't about to revolutionise bike sport - not yet anyway - though it does (in my opinion) mark a significant step towards the future. Spectacular bursts of technology have a habit of gaining widespread acceptance amongst mainstream users, particularly if manufacturers rush to embrace that expertise for fear of being left out of the game. Think Sony Walkman, mobile phones, CD and DVD players, PCs and



Bulky front hub is a 2WD giveaway...

latterly the iPod. If the technology becomes cheap enough, the question isn't so much why you'd bother having one, as why you wouldn't?

Let me tell you straight, this bike doesn't yet offer advantages in every sphere of riding, but in some areas it is mind-numbingly, jaw-droppingly, significantly better.

Stock V AWD

The standard Yamaha WR450F is regarded by most off-road riders (particularly those who race enduro) as a bit of a beast. It's the Jonah Lomu of dirt bikes - fast and powerful with an absurdly stocky and thick-necked chassis. In perfect conditions (dry with plenty of grip), it's a truly awesome dirt bike, one which will you'll never tire of wheelieing between corners as you exit every turn crossed up. It's strong, well made and very capable. Unfortunately most riders aren't quite so well specified.

And in the wet it's another story altogether. The combination of a muscle-laden motor and a bulky chassis make for a cumbersome and frankly scary ride. If you want a similar sort of experience try finding your nearest nightclub bouncer and then tip your pint over his head.

Two-wheel-drive system doesn't detract from the WR-F's average looks..!



Fluid drive goes up and over the tank, but never seems to get in the way. Steering damper is essential on the AWD bike because of the effect of engine braking from the front end!
Right: Fluid pump bolts onto the outside of the WR's output shaft, but isn't obtrusive...



You'd imagine therefore, that the addition of several kilos of bulky 2WD kit probably wouldn't do a whole lot for the standard WR-F's chassis dynamics. I wondered this myself as I took a look over the bikes at Yamaha's Off-Road school in mid Wales. In terms of extra equipment, there's that chunky pump mechanism which drives the whole kit and caboodle and which itself is driven off the countershaft sprocket; those two large 'send and return' pipes which arc their way up over the steering head, not to mention that enor-

mous front hub. But strangest of all was the addition of an Ohlins steering damper just above the braceless bars. The WR450F may have many handling traits associated with its testosterone-fuelled obesity, but head-shake isn't one of them. The whole 2-Trac package is finished off by the addition of Ohlins suspension front and rear. I doubt very much whether that's any heavier than stock, but since the AWD system was developed by the Swedish suspension specialists Ohlins (now a wholly owned part of the gigantic Yamaha Corp), they plumped for their own gold suspenders front and rear.

2-TRAC MIND



Whassitlike Mister?

You may have read various reports in the press (in TBM even) about how well the AWD system performs in the desert. When Yamaha first showcased the bike they chose a dramatic and quite unique backdrop - the Sahara Desert - one which would doubtless display the all-wheel-drive aspect of the bike to its greatest effect. But how relevant, we wondered, would a bike like this be in the UK? Would it work as well in Wales as it does in Ouarzazate? I asked a few people at Yamaha what they thought of the 2-Trac to ride and was surprised when most of them confessed that they hadn't actually ridden it. Was it because they weren't interested, or simply couldn't see the point in it I wondered?

For certain, the relevance of any appliance (be it dishwasher or dirt bike) is inversely proportional to its cost and availability. In other words, it doesn't matter how useful something is, if nobody can afford to use it in the first place - or you can't get your hands on one. And certainly at over eight grand the 2-Trac is (we reckon) the second most expensive dirt bike on sale in the UK today (second only to the Husky Centennial TE510). And although the numbers produced have been exceptionally small (less than 30 have come to the UK), take-up has been fairly slow but steady.

Personally I feel that cost is a side issue here, and for a number of reasons. Firstly it's not like there's a whole load of 2WD bikes out there to choose from - this is the only AWD dirt bike currently on sale anywhere in the world (discounting the weird and suspensionless Rokon loggers' bike). Think about that for a moment: a two-wheel drive dirtbike, not only is it absolutely unique it's the ultimate solution, and a huge talking point among riders you'd meet out on the trail. And we're talking eight grand here, not eighty grand - people already spend that sort of wedge on sportsbikes, why not a unique dirt bike?

Secondly because costs will inevitably start to fall as production increases, that figure is likely to come down considerably. And thirdly (and this is perhaps the most relevant), once sales of the current batch of 2-Tracs are completed, we have it on good authority that Yamaha is going to be offering the 2WD technology in the form of a bolt-on kit for your dirtbike. That's any modern dirtbike by the way, not just the WR Yams. And you're unlikely to specify Ohlins suspension front and rear as part of the package so you can probably take a grand off the asking price straight away.

By the time it becomes an off-the shelf conversion capable of being fitted by any common-garden Barry Bolt-on, I reckon we'll be talking about £1500 for the whole kit. Doesn't that sound

SECOND OPINION

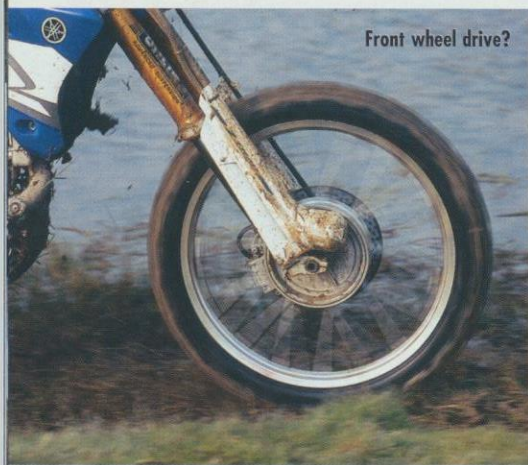
This might sound a bit over the top but if I had the money I'd buy half a dozen WR450F 2-Trac Yamahas and start a new sport named Motorcycling Swamp Racing, or something like that. It would be a simple sport allowing myself and five mates to spend warm summer evenings racing around a 30-second long, heavily watered, special test showering each other in mud while enjoying the benefits of all-wheel-drive motorcycles.

The idea for Short Circuit Motorcycle Swamp Racing, or SCMSR for short, came to me while putting Yamaha's two-wheel drive 450F through its paces. Having tried the bike 'on the trail', up the side of a small Welsh mountain and around a mock special test it wasn't until I rode the bike in mud, slippery, smelly, greasy Welsh mud, that it really impressed me.

When I first jumped on the 2-Trac, blasting off along third and fourth gear trails, I'll be perfectly honest and say that the bike felt anything but impressive. In fact the effect of the two-wheel drive was hardly noticeable and the bike felt very much like a standard WR450F, only with mildly heavier steering. However, when we decided to 'hit the hill' and later play in the mud, the two-wheel drive really started to show its true colours.

If you get the chance to ride Yamaha's all-wheel-drive bike don't think twice - take it. Until you do you'll never be able to appreciate just how much a 'normal' bike is pushed from the rear. Now I know that might sound a little obvious, after all everyone knows that accelerating pushes a regular bike forward because the driving wheel is at the rear. But until you jump on a bike that is both pulled forward by a driving front wheel, while at the same time being pushed forward by the rear wheel, it is hard to appreciate just how much work the rear wheel does on a regular one-wheel drive bike and how clever the men at Ohlins have been.

When climbing 'the hill', or on the occasions where I rode on loose surfaces where traction was easily broken, the driving/pulling effect of the front wheel on the 2-Trac was impressive. Very impressive. What it equated to in real money though was increased confidence. Instead of feeling the need to hurriedly gain speed at the base of the climb, like I did on the stock WR450, the 2-Trac simply got on with the job of driving me forward. Giving me more time



Front wheel drive?



like a mouthwatering prospect for your CRF250X or DR-Z400E?

Hill Billys

So the original idea of this test was to get the standard WR-F and the AWD 2-Trac and try blasting them up the same hill, allowing ourselves less and less run-up at it each time. That way we could measure how far each bike got and then form some sort of conclusion about the true benefit of all wheel drive based on their respec-

tive levels of grip. And for this particular test we'd enlisted the help of star contributor Jonty Edmunds. Because not only does his family own the hill in question, but his superior bike riding skills ought to have ensured that both machines got a fair crack of the whip.

Nice idea anyway. In practice, once you get three dirt junkies together (on two dirt bikes) and start pointing a camera at them, all hell breaks loose. First of all the b+llsh! starts, then it becomes a sort of free-for-all with everyone simply desperate to get to the top of the hill, then comes the mess-around, elbow-banging racing and crashes (well we're only boys on toys after all), and finally the pathetic excuses.

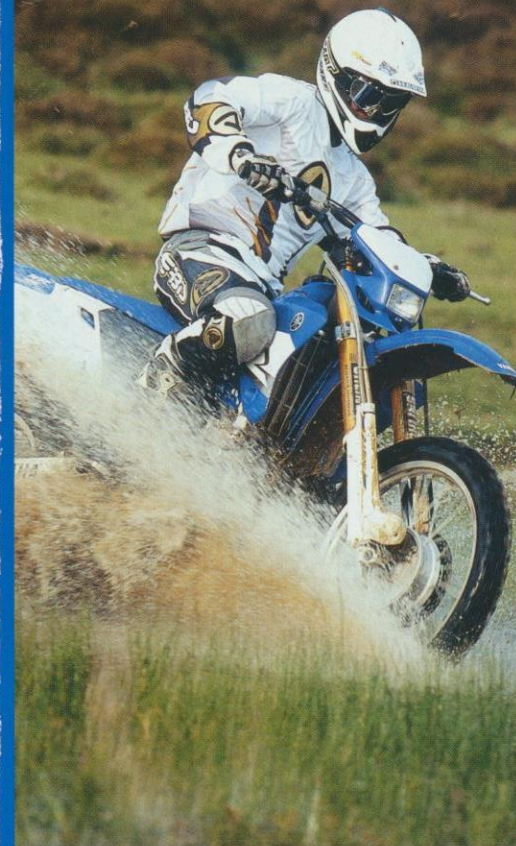
Jonty went and scuppered our (non scientific) test by managing to get both bikes to the top of the big hill in fairly short order while we were still finding out just how prickly the gorse bushes are at this time of year (aw shucks). Though at least he had the good grace to confess that it was a hell of a lot easier on the 2-Trac (gee, thanks mate). Meanwhile we were still struggling to get either machine past the halfway point without spearing off into the Boonies. Thus far I'd managed to get the 2-Trac about one gorse bush further up the hill than the other - hardly worth paying an extra three grand for, is it?

Then I did something I'm not renowned for doing - I took some advice. Jonty reckoned I was charging too fast at the hill and that I should concentrate more on my line and less on the attack speed. Suddenly it all clicked into place. The 2WD bike gripped, scabbled and clawed its way to a point twice as high as I'd reached before. It wasn't the top, mind, but this was definitely progress.

One thing which this procedure did highlight however was the WR450 engine's reluctance to labour at very low revs. Okay we were pointing the thing straight up the side of a mountain and asking it to chug to the top, but the age-old problem of the WR-F's 'cough-stall' was always the limiting factor in how far we got (for all the riders). In all other respects the WR-F motor will impress you with its flexibility, its verve, its smoothness and particularly its top-end power. But top-end power was no use because the hill was so goddamn steep that the bike simply looped if you got the motor into its sweet-spot (trust me on this one).

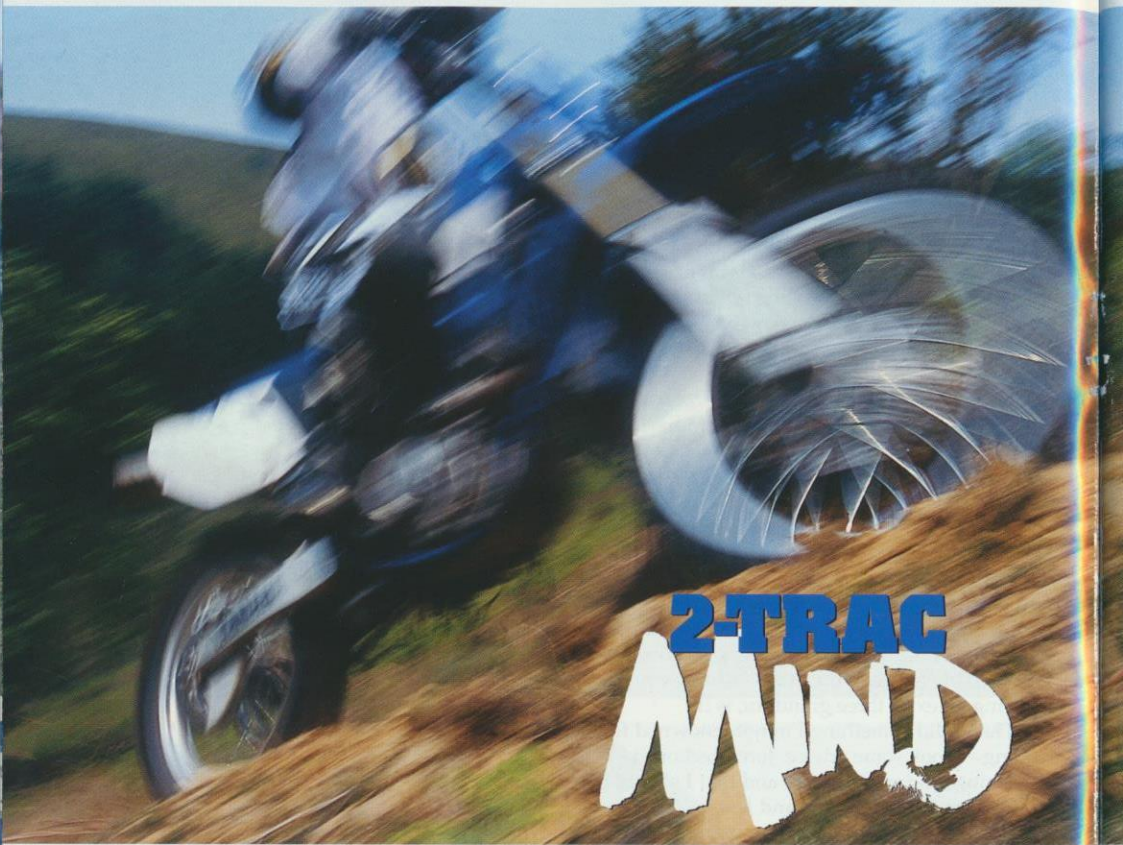
Okay, so how much difference did the two-wheel-drive kit actually make? Well, at its steepest section we reckon the hill must be nearly 50 degrees from the horizontal, and most of it is between 30-45 degrees. Which means that you end up attacking it with your head and shoulders so far forward of the bars you could kiss the front

Jonty loved it...



to focus on the line that I wanted, when on the slope the front wheel not only noticeably pulled me up the hill but also made sure that it was firmly planted on the ground. Attacking the climb over and over again the increased grip, coupled with my boosted confidence, meant that I was able to crawl up it in first gear - something I never would have attempted on the WR450.

Around the mock special test three things quickly became clear about the 2WD Yam. Firstly, the bike doesn't build revs as quickly as a standard WR450. Secondly, its front wheel sticks to the ground like chewy to a blanket when accelerating out of corners. And thirdly, the bike is noticeably less manoeuvrable than its



fender - on the underside. If you let your weight drift towards the centre of the bike even for a split second then the front wheel lifts and effectively you've lost all the benefit of a two wheel drive bike. In other words you've got to keep the front wheel on the ground doing some of the driving in order for it to be an advantage. Stands to reason, I s'pose.

But there were a couple of other minor advantages of the AWD bike. First of all it doesn't feel quite as powerful as the stocker - or at least the power seems slightly tamer. Obviously there has to be a slight power loss through the fluid drive transmission, but I don't think that's the cause. No I reckon it's the fact that power is being divided (albeit not evenly) between the driven wheels.

The net result of all that was (for me at least), that the AWD bike felt not only much more planted on the climb but that it made things easier and gave you greater options when your line wasn't perfect. It wasn't the out-and-out whitewash I was expecting, but each time I swapped between the two bikes, I felt more comfortable and got higher up the hill on the AWD bike.

Eventually I did make the summit (gorse bushes) on the 2-Trac, but I wasn't that far behind on the standard one either...

Slippery When Wet

So far the conditions had been dry and dusty (though still quite slippery on the loose-surfaced climb), but the next thing we tried on the bike just blew me away. Sitting in the soft 'n' sticky mud on the edge of a lake, I selected second gear, gassed it hard and nearly disappeared off the back, so instant was the forward drive. This was astonishing. No bike I have ever ridden (including trials bikes) has managed to find that sort of grip in those conditions. All the time your brain is telling you this can't be happening, but it is, and you'd better hang on because this thing shifts dirt quicker than all of Snow White's dwarves put together.

One little bit of weirdness though, when we tried the same trick again and again, a couple of ruts developed and the 2-Trac's front wheel dropped into one of them. And unlike with a normal bike it keeps driving - hard - but in the

parallel rut, so you get this sort of crossed-up pulling effect on the bars. Very disconcerting.

Two Wheel Drift

But my favourite effect of the whole two-wheel drive experience without a shadow of a doubt was the way this thing takes flat turns. It's absolutely barking. First of all you can crank it over way further than you'd expect on those tyres. Then when you open the throttle mid-corner, the front end hooks up and pulls you out of the turn. Alternatively if you go in too hot it'll slide and slide and slide without letting go, so that with a bit of practice you can execute perfect two wheel drifts. Then finally when the rear end does break traction (the front never lets go first), it sorts of snaps into oversteer before pulling itself straight again. Wicked fun.

This last effect was perfectly demonstrated during our photo-shoot when we were attempting to get both bikes into a cornering photo. I was on the outside of the turn riding the 2-Trac, and Jonty was on the conventional WR just inside the best line. After numerous attempts and near misses we decided to just go for it and race for the corner. But at the critical moment the rear end of the 2WD broke traction sending it into a lurid slide. It snapped into vicious oversteer before the front end gathered it all together and pulled the bike straight again. Unfortunately for Jonty, 'straight' actually meant straight across his path.

I only felt the gentlest of taps, but looked over my shoulder to see Jonty's bike about three foot in the air and nose down. Jonty was slightly in front of it at that stage, although not for long. He'd connected with the rear end of my bike and it had simply stopped him dead. Well, momentarily anyway. That'll teach the blighter to get further up the big hill than the editor.

Anyway the point of all this is that (from our tests at least) the 2-Trac appears to be virtually impossible to lose in a turn (unless you're doing something really stupid!) First of all it slips, then it drifts, then it slides, but all the time the front end's attempting to pull it straight again.

Ultimate Handling?

If you take a look at the front tyre of the 2-Trac you'll find that it's kinda' weird - well kinda' weird for a front tyre at least. It looks like a (hard compound) rear tyre only with slightly smaller knobs. This is because a standard front enduro tyre isn't designed to cope with power being applied through it - it would simply shred the knobs. But the trouble is that a tyre of this size and profile is never going to be as grippy in the turns as a regular 'pointy' enduro hoop. Nevertheless it clings bloody well, considering.

one-wheel drive cousin - something I only really spotted when jumping straight off the 2-Trac onto the WR450.

The fact that the bike doesn't build revs quite as quickly as the WR450 wasn't a problem during most of the day. Not until I tried to lift the front wheel into the air and over a ledge while climbing a hill that is. With the front wheel seemingly grabbing hold of every available blade of grass as it pulled me up the hill, a quick dip of the clutch didn't result in a surge of power enough to lift the front wheel. Which meant that on that occasion at least, the bike was telling *me* how we were gonna' get to the top of the climb and not the other way around.

The way the bike drove out of flat corners was a major plus point for 2WD. Instead of the front wheel lifting into the air as I revved out, it simply remained planted on the ground and pulled me forward. The gluing of the front wheel to the deck wasn't something that was noticeable all of the time, but when riding the two bikes back-to-back it became clear just how effective the system really is.

But it wasn't until I got the bike dirty that I really started having fun. Deciding to see how well the bike would deal with a standing start in about two inches of slop, it was then that I realised I wanted a 2-Trac. I now have an idea of what it must be like to drop the clutch and accelerate away in a fully prepped WRC rally car. In second gear in sloppy mud the bike shot forward, seemingly gaining speed better than a WR450 does on dry land. It was simply breathtaking how much speed it gathered without squirreling or weaving.

Deciding after about two dozen starts that as the bike was already dirty I might as well put it through its paces and see how it dealt with being thrown into flat, slippery, muddy corners, the smile on my face increased tenfold. Enabling me to drift out of turns with new levels of confidence, to have attempted the same thing on a one-wheel drive bike would have seen me end up on my butt a lot earlier than I eventually did!

The only thing that took some getting used to was the fact that instead of understeer, I found myself riding a bike that was seriously oversteering all the time. As I broke traction with the rear wheel the front, no matter what direction I was pointing it in, was also driving me forward. Taking a little while to adjust to the new sensation I realised that while on dry, grippy terrain the bike was at times nothing special, on loose surfaces it was a completely different animal. It was about then that I got the idea for Short Circuit Motorcycle Swamp Racing...

JONTY EDMUNDS



Head to head you can easily spot the difference...

We'd set up a little grassy special test - only short, probably 600m or so - and at first when the grass was still green and very slippery, the 2-Trac could do enough to stay ahead of the stock bike. However once the ground started to roughen up a bit, the stock bike came into its own. It was lighter, considerably more flickable, and I suppose more predictable in its handling traits. And ultimately it was faster - quite a bit faster. And a good rider can exploit that extra potential.

Different Strings

Okay, so what are the down-sides (beside the price etc), there must be some negative aspects? Of course there are. For a start the bike feels heavier - not massively, but you do notice it. And I quickly discovered why the steering damper's there - because the bloody thing tries to shake its head. But not like a KTM for instance (whenever there are bumps). It only happens in one particular set of circumstances: when you chop the throttle at the end of a fast straight. I can only assume that because the front wheel is 'driven', the change from *power-on* to *power-off* has a momentary effect on its ability to free-wheel - almost like engine braking from the front end. That's what it feels like, anyway.

Other aspects you notice are the bike's tendency to pull all the time. You can feel it through the bars though it's not necessarily unpleasant - that feeling - merely different. And the 2-Trac tends to follow its own line: it's not so easy to dive deep into a corner, square it off and then power out the other side because it tends to drive all the way through the turn. And anyway it's not quite as flickable as a conventional dirt bike.

But hey! What do you want, blood? It's two-wheel-drive, it's awesome and it's more or less unique. And it's the next obvious step. Would I have one - of course I would. Not for racing (I'm not even sure it's allowed), but for trail riding, play riding and generally hooning about on. Off-road, or on it, I'm convinced that 2WD is the future - especially in the wet.

And while we were packing up at the end of the day Jonty's dad mentioned to me: 'if you've got the fluid drive pump for the front wheel, why not go the whole hog and power the rear wheel that way as well?' Think about it, no more derailed chains or messing around with chain lube. Much safer, more ground clearance, and no need to mount the pump on the outside of the countershaft sprocket either. You could build it inside the crankcases instead, and then run the



fluid hoses inside the swingarm.

Yamaha should be applauded for daring to build a production bike as innovative as this. It tears up the rulebook and sets in motion the next step for dirtbike development over the coming years. It's brilliantly executed, unique in its marketplace, strong and reliable in usage, and I urge you to try one if you get half a chance. Because take my word for it... any bike which can get me to the top of Jonty's killer hill, just has to be worth a punt...

Thanks to: Geraint Jones, Harley Stephens and particularly the family Edmunds for all their help with this feature. Cheers guys...



WHO ELSE IS MAKING ONE?

Yamaha aren't the only ones experimenting with two-wheel-drive trickery - KTM Motorsport's Kurt Nicoll first tested their prototype all-wheel-drive set-up at the Austrian Erzberg Rodeo in May using the self-same Ohlins system fitted to a 450EXC.

According to KTM's project leader Wolfgang Felber, the system is fairly well developed but can definitely be improved upon. 'In the current phase, KTM just want to be one of the first companies to test the suitability of two-wheel-drive under various different conditions,' he said.

The big drawback, according to Kurt, is the weight: 'The system is heavy, we must get the weight down. When we've managed to do that, so that it only adds a couple of additional kilos, then it has the potential to trigger a similar revolution to that of the Audi Quattro.'

Kurt reckons a two-wheel-drive system enjoys two major advantages over a standard set-up: better out-of-corner acceleration, and improved traction on the rough stuff. 'You notice that it's so much better when accelerating out of corners, but with two driven wheels it's more difficult to take the inner line around a curve [because] the bike tends to want to straighten itself.'

Kurt believes the enhanced grip is a big benefit for the average weekend warrior, especially in rainy, challenging conditions. 'When it's wet, and it doesn't matter whether it's wet sand or asphalt, two-wheel-drive makes riding much easier. If someone has problems with steep climbs or often gets bogged down, then I think two-wheel-drive will yield great rewards.'

If the prototypes are successful, KTM will consider producing a limited batch of AWD bikes. Watch this space...

UNHAPPY TRAILS



Police swoop on nuisance bikers

Weekend blitz brings arrests and penalties

A POLICE blitz on illegal off-road bikers on Sunday was a big success in Medway.

The blitz was part of Operation Freedom, a campaign to crack down on off-road bikers who have been causing damage to the countryside by hundreds of thousands of illegal off-road bikers.

The operation, which started on Saturday, was aimed at responding to a 50 per cent increase in the number of incidents reported to Kent Police between April and August this year compared to the same period in 2002.

Most of the damage is due to illegal riding and widely on common land areas, including school and sports fields, or on public rights of way.

In Medway, police targeted three 'hubs' - Charlton, Temple Meads, and Broad and used their specialist units to search for illegal off-road bikers.

They arrested three bikers, seized their machines and issued three fixed penalty notices and 10 caution notices.

Eight people were reported for assistance for riding on land rather than on a road, and a contravention of statutory requirements.

Other charges included Access Rent, to public officers work part in Operation Freedom of various illegal off-road bikers were used.



MAJOR BLITZ: Kent Police officers swoop on nuisance bikers during Operation Freedom at the weekend.

absolutely delighted with the results of Operation Freedom. The operation was backed by local authorities. The Kent county-wide blitz was a success.

Warnings to 120 motorcyclists and quad-bike riders.

Nine amateur riders were arrested.

Eight people arrested.

Three machines seized.

Three fixed penalty notices issued.

10 caution notices issued.

Operation Freedom is a campaign to crack down on off-road bikers who have been causing damage to the countryside by hundreds of thousands of illegal off-road bikers.

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STORY: MARK WILLIAMS; PICS: VARIOUS

The future of dirtbiking starts, and perhaps ends, here...

Be honest, most of us have done a doughnut power-turn, pulled an unnecessary wheelie to impress our mates or, and this is certainly true for we of less developed skill-levels, relentlessly dug our spinning back wheel into a muddy hole we've got stuck in. It's not something I'd given much thought to until recently, but now I find myself wincing whenever I see, or at least in the latter case, find it happening... Because suddenly the rules have changed.

And yet one of the appeals of off-road riding is undoubtedly the sense of freedom we enjoy when we're miles from anywhere, razzing through the greenery, enjoying that visceral rapport between man and machine that's unique to

our sport. And with the relentless upsurge of legislative and economic obstacles, it's therefore little wonder that legions of road-riders are deserting the tarmac in favour of the dirt. But the knock-on effect of this upsurge of off-roading paradoxically threatens to bring the party to an gloomy end.

Our little game has, in short, become a victim of its own popularity. There are just too many dirtbikers using a relatively small amount of land, land that must be shared with other recreational interest groups (who are also growing in number). And land that is not only diminishing in its availability, but in many cases is being damaged...

For many of us, particularly those living and riding in more remote rural areas - which includes myself - the inevitability of all this caus-

ing problems only hit home when Alun Michael and DEFRA planted their time-bomb last December.

Sure, we knew the TRF had long fought to upgrade or keep open trails that were under threat, a tedious business trawling through ancient archives that they were frankly welcome to, but an annual subscription and an occasional donation to their fighting fund somehow salvaged our collective conscience.

Indeed at an early meeting of my local TRF group, one guy crassly claimed that we should leave it to the TRF to keep the byways open, 'because that's what we pay them for'.

But then I got peripherally involved in the battle to save a famous local RoW, the Monk's Trod, which a combination of ongoing political skulduggery and irresponsible misuse now threaten to keep closed to trailriders forever. And that was a wake-up call greatly amplified by the Rt Hon Alun Michael's recent pronouncements, and one even now it may be too late to heed. Because

if bureaucracy and quangos and submitting to outside organisers whenever you want to indulge your personal passions are anathema to you, then maybe you'd better take up stamp collecting.

So if you're not quite ready for that yet, the time has come to face up to the uneasy reality that if we don't take action now, then someone else will do it for us, and we won't like the outcome one little bit.

As TRF Chairman Geoff Wilson, commented after meeting Alun Michael, 'One of the biggest problems is that our adversaries (and the Minister) are sure that we need teaching a strong lesson because they reckon that many riders don't accept that are any problems, and many said so in their responses to the recent DEFRA consultation.'

And broadly speaking, our continuing freedom to ride off-road is dependent on addressing and solving a few key problems.

You Can't Ride Here

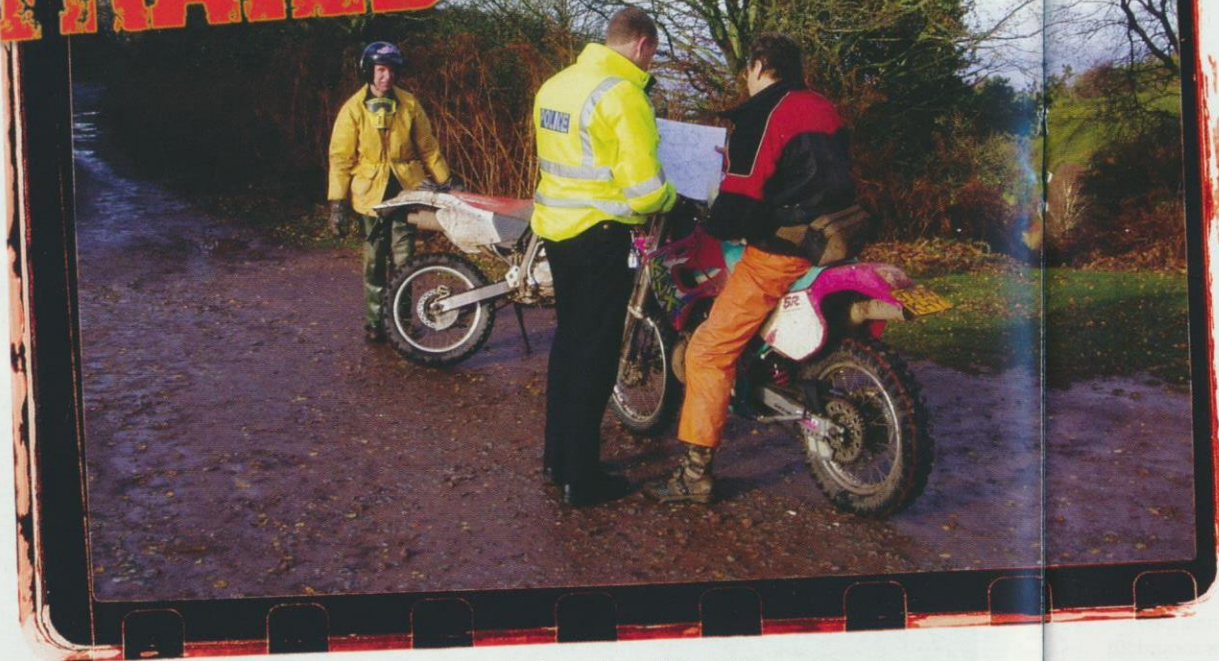
Illegal use is basically - knowingly or otherwise - riding trails that are not BOATs, RuPPs or dual status UCRs (see Glossary). Unfortunately Ordnance Survey are not always accurate as to the legal status of many of the tracks that appear on their maps, so to be absolutely sure that you're riding legally, you need either to research this using the

master maps held by the relevant county council - which is time consuming and tricky because they usually make it very difficult - or to join the TRF group whose Maps Officer has almost certainly done the work for you. This sounds like a pain, and indeed is a pain if you want to ride in areas other than your own, but that way you can at least be confident if and when challenged.

And challenged you will surely be - sooner or later. For example, the last issue of the TRF's newsletter 'Trail' reported police 'interviewing' trailriders who were using a perfectly legal RuPP in Somerset's Quantock Hills, an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. 'The implication is clear... (they are) motorcyclists, ergo they must be doing something wrong.' But the police were backed up by a public survey which drew an 83 percent response in favour of 'stronger restriction or a complete ban of off-road driving in the Quantocks'. And with similar police activity - some might call it intimidation - in Northumberland, the Lake District and the Dales to name just three more areas - trailriders as a breed are becoming vilified if not actually criminalised.

Be under no illusions about this, because in January 2003, Sections 59 and 60 of the Police

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Reform Act 2002 came into force. They allow for vehicles to be seized by police where they are being used off-road without lawful authority, and are 'causing alarm, distress or annoyance to members of the public'. You can almost hear the collective cackle of GLEAM and the Ramblers Associations as they rub their hands together, can't you?

Bikes That Don't Belong

But beyond deliberate or inadvertent use of prohibited tracks, there is the problem of unlicensed bikes. Sadly, the prevalence of rent-a-vans turning up on a Saturday or Sunday morning in Wales, the Dales or other more remote rural areas and disgorging a couple of moto-cross bikes and their pilots is reaching epidemic proportions. To anybody else using the trails they subsequently tear loudly and aggressively along, we're all tarred with the same anti-social brush, providing heavy ammunition to those who want to ban all MPVs, eg the Ramblers Association and GLEAM whose well publicised protests are echoed by, if not the motives behind Alun Michael's utterances.

And even law-abiding TRF members with properly silenced bikes sometimes pull a joyous wheelie just as a bunch of rambblers are rounding the next corner.

In some parts of the country, particularly where mining or steel production invaded the rural milieu, generations of teenagers traditionally indulged in their escapades aboard ratty and generally unlicensed 'field bikes'. But as unemployment followed those industries into decline such activity increased much of it on stolen machines, and in an increasingly intolerant society what was once considered harmless fun now compounds the chorus of disapproval directed against us. And such public indignation is further fuelled by newspaper reports of serious, sometimes fatal accidents befalling kids who've been out riding without helmets and/or effective brakes. For example, in Tredegar (South Wales) last summer, bunches of bored and unemployed teenagers could be seen brazenly riding around the town centre aboard full-on moto-crossers.

As a consequence of increasing levels of public complaint, Dyfed-Powys police have been regularly stopping and inspecting machines coming

off the Strata Florida trail in Ceredigion this spring and likewise in Rhayader, a mid-Wales mecca for trailriders, before they've even left the town and issuing tickets for improper number plates or noisy silencers.

And both Wales and Kent police forces have in recent months undertaken more comprehensive blitzes designed to further deter illegal off-roading. Operation Cassowray brought together landowners, the Forestry Commission and the Gwent Police to seize machines (many of them stolen) and issue warnings for 'unlawful use of Rights of Way', whilst Kent police (some themselves on trailbikes) arrested eight riders, seized nine machines and issued 189 written warnings to people riding in the Marlway area on just one Sunday last September.

More recently, PC Graeme Woodman of the Cumbria Constabulary put dirtbike riders on notice that they are stepping up their efforts to 'use the powers provided under the Police Reform Act to seize the vehicles of people breaking the law.'

Which they apparently define as 'motorcyclists and drivers of 4x4 vehicles' (exhibiting) 'anti-social or dangerous off-road driving in areas of South Lakeland.'

We may dismiss all of this as marginalising by stealth, but the message is clear: get legal or get off the trail.

Digging it Up

In some parts of the country illegal and anti-social riding aren't what's causing the major aggro, it's the degradation of the terrain that threatens its future use. In recent columns and Doing the Rounds I've reported examples of intensive and reckless use of sensitive land that's turned once easily navigable tracks into multi-and deeply-rutted quagmires that walkers, horse-riders and mountain bikers could (and do) justifiably claim to've been made virtually impassable - though not necessarily always by motorised use.

And in a recent issue of Land Rover Owner magazine, the editor actually called for more green-lane 4WD enthusiasts to 'wipe the smiles' from rambblers' faces, adding that 'You can't beat a wheel-deep wade for generating big smiles'.

Such sentiments, irresponsible and ill-advised though they obviously are whilst the dark cloud of DEFRA hangs over us (and they were indeed cited in April's parliamentary debate on the subject), tacitly acknowledges that some of this damage has been done by 4WD vehicles, and once again we trailriders have been co-opted as villains of the piece. But as in the case of Longcliffe Lane in the Peak District (DTR, issue #104), or in a section of the Monk's Trod (see above) which is actually a Site of Special Scientific Interest and the examples illustrating this feature, overuse by thoughtlessly ridden dirtbikes must take some of the responsibility for the damage.

And much of this is down to riders deviating from tracks in boggy going that have already suffered damage, cutting extra ruts and exacerbating water seepage all in the cause of pressing on as fast as we can. As TRF Chairman Geoff Wilson points out, 'Modern trailbikes are so competent that there should be no need for their riders to skirt these obstacles.' And he has a point, but that same competence, and the popularity of even faster, more powerful enduro bikes with even more ground clearance and suspension travel means that the focus of trailriding has increasingly moved away from gentle motorised rambling to full-bore blasts through the countryside, and hang the ecological consequences.

There have actually been several initiatives from trailriders interest groups to 'waymark' routes in order to deter riders from literally skirting the problems, one of which by the Rhayader and District Motor Club in respect of the more fragile sections of the Monk's Trod were ignored by the County Council, probably because it suits their purposes not to acknowledge that dirtbikers can act responsibly, but also because maintenance of obscure RoW, for which they are legally responsible, costs money they can ill-afford. But up in Cumbria the Hierarchy of Trail Routes project (HTR), launched way back in 1995 by various off-road user groups and the National Parks Authority, has resulted in the successful management of several over-used and damaged RoW.

Volunteer members of the HTR are shown in our pictures working to drain a section of track using materials sourced cheaply, and sometime gratis from sympathetic suppliers. And in a slightly different example of dispirate unity, down in Kent the local TRF group joined forces with the All-Wheel Drive Club and the Green Lane Associations to remove ten tons of fly-tipping - including 15 abandoned cars - from a byway near Breadhurst. This is all very unglamorous stuff and certainly not the sort of thing you'll read about in MCN or T+MX News, but it helps to redress a tarnished public image

UNHAPPY TRAILS



as well as the balance of nature.

Perhaps more significantly, the HTR has also been instrumental in establishing the Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs) on the Garburn Pass, a 6km, dual status trail ascending to almost 590m between the Troutbeck and Kentmere Valleys in Cumbria. Having suffered from both severe weather and over-use by MPVs for decades, the HTR is implementing a plan which involved a six-month TRO to allow from drainage and repair work to be undertaken, and a system of permits, the acquisition of which will provide users with the combination of locks on the gates along the Pass, during the period of the ETRO (a maximum of 18 months). On the nearby Gatescarth Pass, MPV access is being limited to just a few days each year, a situation familiar to fans of the Gap Road in Mid-Wales which is at least open for a couple of months each year. And in all cases any damage caused is being carefully monitored to assess prospects for future use.

But to quote the TRF's Geoff Wilson again, 'No amount of good work can bring back a destroyed SSSI. Adversaries don't care that we are doing some good if their own specific concerns aren't addressed. They see it only as covering up the cracks. And many riders have no right to take any consolation or comfort from the good work that is being done. They don't play a role in it and neither do they contribute to it. We have to do better.'

Although this litany of restraint suggests a rather cheerless future for trailriding, many options will hopefully remain, some of which actually bolster dirtbiking's public image. These include involvement with charity runs, such as last month's South East Wales Handicapped Trail Ride, volunteering as outriders for mountain bike and equestrian events (see Totally Rutted) and, if you can afford it, indulging in the numerous commercially organised ride-outs both here and abroad. There is also the real possibility that the Forestry Commission will finally decide to open selected routes to trailriders, as they've already done with cyclists.

The Route Ahead

Whilst no apologies need to be made for the alarmist tone of much of this article, we might take some comfort from the initiatives outlined immediately above as they show that something positive can actually be done.

At the Wales Off-Road Motorcycle Conference reported in last month's TBM, the need was emphasised for all those involved in and affected by trailriding to share their concerns - rather than seethe in indignant isolation - and then co-operate in finding ways that we can all share and ultimately manage precious resources. But many of us can't even be arsed to join the TRF, let alone get actively involved in the efforts of local TRF groups who are working to achieve DMMOs or repel TROs.

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However, there are a number of ways in which any and all dirtbikers can help stem the tide of protest and even the impending legislation against our sport. These are as follows:-

- Only ride legal trails, in small (and thus less obtrusive) groups, however strong the temptation to do otherwise. If in doubt, don't. Joining a local TRF Group will help you determine what is and isn't rideable.
- Ensure that your bike sports a legal silencer, lighting and number plate.
- Be VERY sensitive to non-MPV users, which means stopping and switching off engines for horse-riders, and riding slowly and quietly past walkers. If a farmer/landowner appears, always

stop and pass the time of day. It's good PR.

- Access the TRF website, trf.org.uk, read their Code of Conduct and abide by it. The site also contains guidelines on researching RoW and applying for DMMOs.
- Make sure your mates understand the threats to trail and enduro riding - even if they foolishly think it's someone else's problem - and simply stop riding with them if they act irresponsibly. Peer group pressure is a wonderful thing.
- Be prepared for permits to ride on sensitive or damaged trails, seasonal access to certain tracks and increasing hostility from landowners, the police and other interest groups.

Finally, although we have to respect the countryside and others who use it, there has to be an equilibrium between their rights and ours. Rights that we must stand up for. So I'll conclude with a recent quote from Sally Madgwick of the Cornwall Group TRF: 'Whilst happy to work with the system in addressing problem areas, the TRF will not stand aside to see its recreation extinguished in some ill-considered and indiscriminate blanket ban, which will not really address the acknowledged problems.'

WHASSITALLMEAN?

Increasingly, and partly due to the threats that hang over it, the world of dirtbiking has become bedevilled by acronyms, many of which are as off-putting as they are puzzling. So to help readers, especially non-TRF members, understand what's going on, here's a little de-mystification.

BOAT: Byway Open to All Traffic. Just what it says, and that mean MPVs as well as walkers, mountain bikers and horses.

CROW Act: The Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000. As well as giving hikers the right to roam pretty much wherever they damn well like, the CROW act stipulates that we have until 2025 to make DMMOs (below) which would bring RuPPs and other often disputed RoW up to BOAT status. The DEFRA proposals drastically claw back that time-frame to one year.

DMMO: Definitive Map Modification Order. The legal instrument by which interested parties can claim, currently on the basis of historic evidence, that a RoW should be upgraded.

GLEAM: Green Lane Environmental Action Movement. Small, but evidently well-connected (Prince Philip is a supporter) and influential beyond their weight lobby group who along with the much larger Ramblers Association

want to ban MPVs from all byways.

MPV: Mechanically Propelled Vehicle.

RuPP: Road used as Public Path. Usually a right of way dating to when horses were the primary means of transport, but still valid today although the DEFRA proposals seek to have no more of them upgraded to BOATs (above) under the CROW Act 2000 (above), after which RuPPs will cease to be open to MPVs (above).

TRO: Traffic Regulation Order. Used by County Councils to temporarily stop access to RoW. Use of consecutive TROs often leads to downgrading and users must therefore be vigilant in monitoring and protesting against their use.

UCR: Unclassified Council/County Road. Often dating back to the 19th Century Finance and Enclosure Acts, these are roads which county councils nominally have a responsibility to maintain and which are generally open to MPVs. Many have 'dual status' as byways or bridleways, which makes them contentious. Ordnance Survey maps usually refer to these as 'Other Routes with Public Access', the ambiguity of which makes it advisable to check with county council definitive (or 'master') maps (see main text).

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P & P Racing

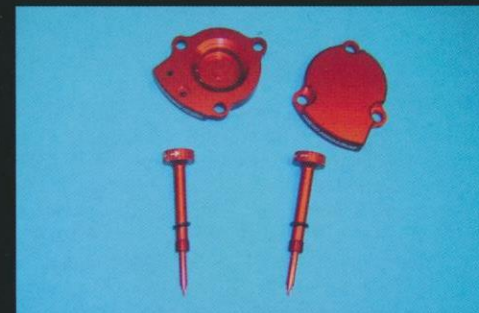
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GOOD MEASURE

STORY & PICS: BRUNO FECHAUD



For riders who find the little KTM 250EXC thumper too insipid and the 400 too physical, a French KTM dealer has come up with the perfect compromise - a hybrid 351. Perhaps the ideal solution for the average enduro pilot...

With their range of enduro thumpers (250, 400, 450 and 525 EXCs), KTM already have arguably the most comprehensive line up of four-stroke off-roaders ever developed. And yet a troublesome dealer from Nimes in the south of France is not a happy bunny. Francis Camus the owner of KTM Dealers 'Moto Verte 30' has decided to add another of his own bikes to the range. And not for the first time. Back in 1994 he built a 450LC4 using a 400 with the barrel from a 620. Then when he first rode the little KTM 250EXC thumper the same idea came to him. Why not use the same strategy to give character and horsepower to the smallest of KTM's thumpers?

Francis spent long evenings grafting the top-end of the 450 (or the 400 - they share the same barrel and piston), onto the bottom-end of the 250 - not quite as straightforward as it seems apparently. He could've just stopped there and been happy with the results but he's a perfectionist; so armed with the KTM Hard Parts catalogue he went the whole nine yards. Titanium Akrapovic system, SXS WP suspension, removable 'Racing'

clutch cover, clutch master-cylinder protector, front axle-pull, Stealth rear sprocket (part steel, part ally), carbon front fender support, KTM quick-detach plastic bashplate, Tomaselli bars, a Sigma 2000 digital speedo, and also the smaller tank and rad shrouds from the SXS model. There's a Power Now fitted to the carb's bell-mouth, alloy rad protectors, Braking Wave discs front and rear, a two-tone saddle with time-card holder and graphics from the 2002 Six Days model (Francis' preference). And I think you'll agree it looks pretty damn serious.

Eleven-and-a-half grand!

The fully kitted bike will stand you in at £11,300, which is why most customers settle for the £1300 351cc conversion according to Francis. In order to test the 351 we found a mixed terrain circuit and took along a 2004 250EXC and 450EXC by way of comparison. Logic dictated that we began with the smallest bike first, so we set off on our first laps of the rocky course on the compliant 250.

No matter how slippery the course, the KTM 250EXC never intimidates. It hooks up and finds

GOOD MEASURE



grip in the most unlikely of places, and what's more the revvy little lump always feels eager to please. In fact thanks to that free-revving little engine, you can often get away with things which you wouldn't be able to do on a larger bike.

But no matter how willing, there are times when the 250 lump feels strained and breathless. Hillclimbs limit you to first or second gear and sometimes when cornering on fire roads you simply want a little bit of extra torque to snap the rear into oversteer. There's also a fair bit of clutching to be done on the way out of corners unless your line selection is absolutely spot-on. On the other hand the 250EXC makes the most of what power is available, losing little to wheelspin.

Switching to the 450 you can't help but be blown away by its relentless wave of torque. In fact such is the effect that this has on the bike's handling that you'd never believe that it shares the same weight, geometry and overall dimensions with the smaller 250. By comparison the 450 feels much more brutal, exploding out of corners with the front wheel pawing the air. Acceleration is much more violent, and you find yourself hanging on much tighter to the bars. It's also slightly



Semi-factory rear shock is a work of art...



Like these clamps, many of the mods come from the KTM Hard Parts catalogue...



Only that little sticker on the airbox gives away the bike's true capacity...

harder to turn, requiring a whole load more effort and input from the rider, and in this respect is much more tiring. But the reserves of power available always makes it possible to overcome obstacles with a swift application of throttle.

In many respects the 450 is the easier bike to pilot than the 250 simply because it lets you be so much lazier with your throttle control and gear selection. On the other hand if you're really 'on it' with the 450 you end up using your reserves of energy very rapidly.

A Happy Medium

Resting on its side-stand next to its stone-stock siblings, the 351 could pass almost un-noticed in amongst the KTM range. Perhaps the trained eye would notice the altered suspension, trick parts and Six Days graphics but it's that little 351EXC sticker which really gives the game away. This ain't no production dirt bike.

Once seated on the 351 (nice and slim thanks to the MX tank) you notice the difference immediately, the firmer suspension, narrower bars and

the sharper brakes. But it's really the strength and verve of the motor (especially in the mid-range) which stands out. It's almost as quick-revving as a 250, but with the deep bass-like sound of the 450. And thanks to the stock close-ratio six-speed box of the original 250, the 100 additional ccs make it a much more lively proposition.

Acceleration tests on the road confirmed our initial thoughts that the 351 would leave the 250 for dead, especially once both bikes get into their mid-range. At larger throttle openings the 351 obliterates the 250 and it'll stay within a wheel's length of the 450 up to about 60mph whereupon the 450 will ease away (thanks to its greater power and wider-ratio box).

But at speeds of 60mph and below, the 351 is unbelievable. Each twist of the throttle catapults the bike forwards with an aggressiveness you simply don't find in the 250, and this gives you far greater options in terms of gear choices. Sure on the way into turns the 250 feels a touch more flickable than the 351 (which in turn feels lighter than the 450). But compared with the 250 the 351

The 351 certainly looks good. But then you'd expect that of a bike with a five figure price tag..!

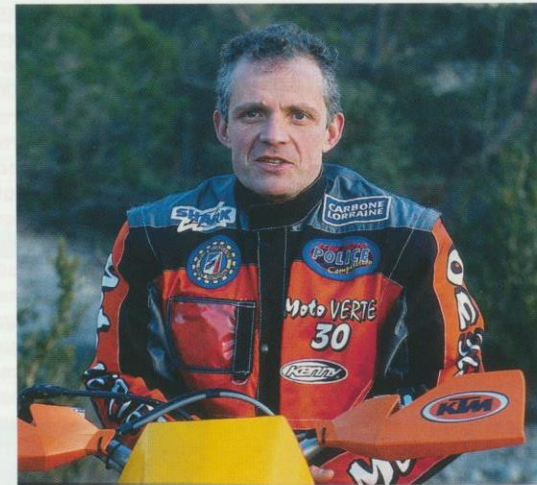


SECOND OPINION

Gilles Tixador, is an experienced national level enduro rider and confirmed rally fan. He has a 450EXC which he uses in rallies and a 250EXC for enduros and is thus well placed to judge the benefits of the 351 conversion.

The 351 engine is fuller than the 250 and inevitably more fun. In the turns it requires a bit more effort but the rewards are spectacular. As with the 250 it feels a bit short geared because of the gear-box but at modest speeds it's got to be about perfect.

'In terms of ease of use the 351 feels closer to the 250 than the 450, but without the necessity for constant gear-changing. As a bloke of average build the 351 feels much less tiring to ride than the 450, and in that respect alone gets my vote...'



pulls so much harder on the way out of a corner, so that any handling disadvantage is regained immediately. In pure performance terms (let alone feelgood factor) the 351 trounces the 250 at every turn.

Who'd Have One?

Pretty much any clubman enduro pilot would want one of these things we reckon. Last year we tested a 280cc big-bore version of the 250 (albeit one built in the UK) and found that that also offered significant advantages - mostly in the midrange. Well the 351 is like that, but even more so. Look at it this way: if you find the thought of riding a 400 or 450 all day long just a bit too knackered, but want more performance than that offered by the current crop of 250 'fours'

PURE JUICE: 100 PERCENT ORANGE

According to Francis Camus, the Akrapovic exhaust system and Power Now certainly boost the motor's output, but they also bring a level of brutality to the power delivery. Utilising the 250's original silencer, the 351 becomes slightly more mellow and flexible and this helps the bike hook up better in the slippery stuff. And Francis should know, he's been riding enduros since 1979 at national level, and has been a KTM dealer since 1983. He's a dedicated fan of the orange bikes and has supported the marque through both good and bad times. Francis can be contacted at Moto Verte 30, 13 rue Dhuoda, 30900 Nimes. Tel: 00 33 (4) 66 29 89 84



GOOD MEASURE

then this seems like the ideal compromise. Alternatively, maybe you already own a 250EXC which is starting to look and feel slightly tired by now. Well the 351 kit transforms it completely. Not only will it feel and ride like a new bike but with a new set of decals (and that magic 351 on the side), you won't recognize your old 250 any more. Guaranteed...

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Displacement: 341 cc
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Frame: Steel cradle
Front fork: 48mm WP SXS, 300mm travel
Rear shock: WP PDS SXS, 335mm travel
Front brake: Braking oversize rotor, 270mm
Rear brake: Braking oversize rotor, 240mm
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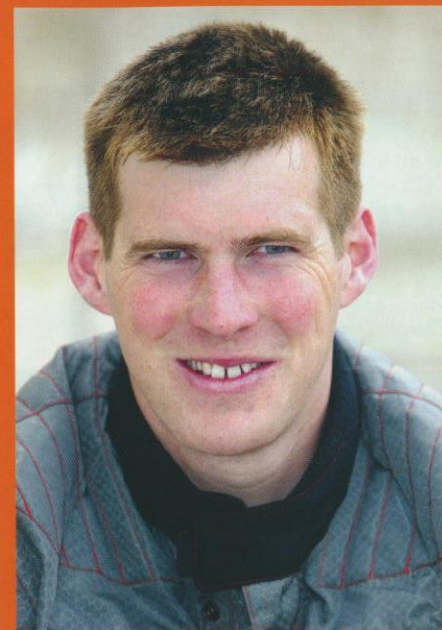


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So just who are the two Brits currently kicking butt in the WEC paddock and more importantly, on what? Jonty Edmunds investigates...

WORDS & PICS: JONTY EDMUNDS



DAVID KNIGHT
THE WEC'S JOVIAL GIANT

As well as being one of the WEC's fastest riders in any conditions, David Knight is undoubtedly one of the world's most exciting riders to watch. He came into enduro after a successful career in youth trials, simply because his brother did and he wanted to beat him. During the first three years of his professional enduro life, he rode for the Italian-based UFO Corse Yamaha team.

Physically, David is bigger than any other WEC competitor and makes any bike he rides look like a toy. One of only a few WEC regulars that can cope with both wet and dry conditions, when it comes to specialist indoor or extreme events Knighter is the rider to beat.

Needing plenty of power to haul his sizeable frame around special tests, David likes his motors strong and his levers high. Able to ride up the side of a house if required, David's skill, brute force and dogged determination enable him to take a bike places few can follow. Still refining his once wild technique, in KTM's 525EXC David has found a bike that suits him perfectly. Learning more and more about his half-litre thumper with each passing event, David's size and aggressive style have made him a favourite with spectators and event organisers the world over. While the burly Manxman has yet to net a world title he has raced against and beaten many of the sport's biggest names during the past four seasons.

BRITISH STEEL

Determined to do much more than just make up numbers in this year's World Enduro Championship, two British-based teams are proving to be a pain in the derriere for the rest of Europe's enduro elite.

Until the start of the 2004 season, the only way in which British riders could compete seriously in the WEC series was for them to race for a more established and better-funded 'foreign team'. This meant plying their trade in countries like Italy or Spain, while only making occasional appearances in the UK 'off their own back'.

Now all that's changed with the KTM UK supported D3-Racing KTM team backing David Knight (and Edward Jones), plus the Honda UK supported Honda Racing 'Fast Eddy' team which fields Paul Edmondson (and Paul Whibley).

They are without question the WEC's two most successful privateer outfits so far this season. With both teams being new from the ground up, Knight and Edmondson have already tasted victory in '04 and are well placed at the top end of their respective Enduro 3 and Enduro 2 classes.

However, the machinery they compete on is very different indeed. With David racing a European-manufactured, purpose-built enduro thumper, Eddy competes aboard a two-stroke, Japanese motocross bike converted into enduro trim. Despite racing in different classes, for different manufacturers and being at different stages of their careers, the combined result of their performances so far this season has helped remind Europe that Britain is still very much an enduro nation to be reckoned with.

DAVID KNIGHT'S D3-RACING KTM 525EXC

Despite the fact that Knight sits just a few points off the lead of the Enduro 3 world championship, the bike he's riding is quite different to his rival's machinery. The reason?

David's half-litre Katoom is a production machine, supplied through KTM UK, and modified by the Kendal-based D3-Racing team. The bikes his two closest rivals - Finn Samuli Aro and Spaniard Ivan Cervantes - compete on are full factory-built machines supplied direct from Austria. Despite being able to match his rivals in terms of results, David's race bike is developed and prepared without any direct input from the factory. As hard as it is to believe, the bike that Knight rides is just a well-prepared version of what anyone can buy.

But David's race bike is evolving. Due in part to the fact that his KTM is very unlike the bike he rode last season - a one-off Yamaha WR500F - the team consciously chose to use virtually stock engines for much of the early season. Now the D3-Racing team are altering settings and making small, but important, detail changes to DK's bike in the hope of getting as close to his rival's machinery as possible.

David's race bike is built using a combination of parts supplied through the D3 team sponsors and items from KTM's own Hard Parts catalogue. Although it's not easy to compete against the factory teams, D3 have shown that with one of the world's best riders and an extremely hard working and knowledgeable technician (Julian Stephens), it is possible for a privateer team to succeed in what is the toughest of all the WEC classes.

David's race engine is best described as a lightly modified stocker. Breathing through a Twin Air filter, the standard 39mm carburettor remains in place with jetting changes made to clean up the fuel/air mixture. A Powerblade is also fitted to the carb's bell mouth to help smooth the big motor. As far as the cylinder and head is concerned they are standard parts with the head cleaned-up to remove any unwanted rough castings that might have been left behind during manufacture. During the first four rounds of the WEC, the bike featured a slightly higher compression ratio than a standard EXC (by using a Vertex piston) but as the team are in the process of altering the bike's con rod and crankshaft to give a more instant power delivery, that may change. Unwilling to say exactly what the con rod and crank changes are, for obvious reasons, the team hope to have a motor that is as good as the factory engine in the not too distant future.

For the first two rounds of the WEC series David's bike also featured a standard EXC flywheel but that has since been swapped for a lighter SX flywheel, again to make the motor livelier. Unlike the factory machines however, both David and Julian prefer to retain the electric starter just in case the bike should stall in a special test. As Julian is quick to point out,

the risk of stalling the engine in a test is, for the D3 team, far outweighed by any gains made by removing it. The exhaust used is an Akrapovic EXC system, with only the silencer differing to those of the factory riders. The team use the titanium system because it saves 2kg in weight over stock and offers a few more horsepower - yet with only 92db.

The bike's six-speed gearbox has the lower gears closer in ratio, more like a 525SX. The clutch is virtually stock, with only a few of the steel plates swapped for slightly thicker ones to help increase preload. Twin Air supplies the oil filters with each of the gears swimming in 10/40w fully synthetic Putoline.

As far as maintenance goes, David's race lump is stripped completely every three races. With prevention better than cure, Julian prefers to fit new clutch plates before every race along with clean oil and new filters, as well as checking valve clearances. The only other aftermarket parts fitted to the engine are the Hardcore engine casings, which are made from billet alloy and allow quick access to the clutch. Thankfully the team haven't yet needed to 'inspect' a clutch during a race so far this season.

Unsurprisingly, one area of David's bike that is changed is the suspension. With the stock WP forks and shock simply replaced with SXS suspension - the 'semi-factory' WP stuff available from the KTM Hard Parts catalogue, but with further changes to the valving and bushes to give it an 'ultra plush' feel. And although firmer 4.6kg fork springs are fitted, the forks work perfectly for someone of DK's weight and ability.

The rear shock is also an SXS unit but is very different to what the factory boys' use. Very close to stock, but with a few nice touches like a titanium carbide coated shaft that help it perform better and look a little more exotic. A PDS8 shock spring is used with radically modified valve settings inside. Eric Goossens, WP's official travelling suspension guru who's present at all WEC events, helps the team by servicing David's suspension at events.

The remaining chassis changes see the bike's original plastics replaced with Polisport parts, which are then partly covered with MXM graphics displaying the team's sponsors. At the front of the bike a set of Hardcore triple clamps are used with a triple pinch-bolt fixing on the lower clamp and a 18mm offset. KTM SXS oversized bar mounts are fitted to the clamps, which in turn hold 997 Twin Wall Rental bars in place, slightly higher than the standard position. David often uses dual layer Rental grips for most conditions but if things get muddy he switches to medium compound half-waffle grips.

At the moment the team use the standard brake systems, simply flushing them through with Putoline dot 5 fluid and fitting SDP compound DP brake pads. Braking rotors are fitted both front and rear with the front disc being a floating unit on David's bike. The rear master cylinder is a 2005 part, which is slightly larger to aid cooling. The team will shortly



Above: David has his Twin Wall Rentals set higher than standard in SXS mounts. The clamps are Hardcore items, whilst the WP forks also come from the SXS range and are available from the KTM Hard Parts catalogue...

Above right: The motor is being gradually developed by D3, with conrod, crank and piston modifications. Unlike many WEC bikes, the electric start has been retained...

Right: To aid reliability, oversized GMX rods are used...

Below right: The standard Brembo brake system is used, albeit with a Braking disc. The team will soon be testing a billet caliper to increase braking performance...



start testing a billet Brembo front brake caliper and an SXS front master cylinder to provide more stopping power. Quick release stainless steel brake pins are used front and back.

British firm Talon provides the wheels as well as the radialite sprockets. Although David currently uses Talon hubs machined from billet alloy, he is also testing their new carbon fibre hubs. Both wheels are fitted with Michelin tyres and mousers. An RK O-ring chain is used, which is always riveted together just in case the chain gets twisted.

With David being one of the WEC's tallest riders, it's not surprising he prefers a higher seat although no modifications are made to the chassis or footrest positioning. One item used by the D3-Racing team as well as seemingly all factory KTM riders is a quick release plastic sump guard. Held in place by a single Dzus fastener (and lock wire), it can easily be removed and quickly cleaned.

British firm GMX supply stronger, oversized radiators, which like many parts of the bike are used to give increased reliability as much as improve the performance.

**BRITISH
STEEL**





BRITISH STEEL

PAUL EDMONDSON'S HONDA RACING FAST EDDY CR250

As everybody knows, Honda don't produce a 250cc two-stroke enduro bike. Like most Japanese manufacturers, the big H's quarter-litre off-roader is a motocrosser. But Honda's CR250, while not having the most rider-friendly power characteristics as standard, offers solid build quality, reliability and a proven race pedigree. For those reasons Paul Edmondson chose red for 2004 and formed the Honda Racing Fast Eddy team.

With so much time, effort and money having been invested into four-stroke development in recent years by the likes of KTM and Husqvarna, you'd be

forgiven for thinking that no rider would stand a chance of competing against them, least of all someone on a motocross bike with no direct factory backing. You'd be wrong. Just as Knighter has proved in the E3 class, the factory boys can be beaten on a modified standard bike. Eddy has stood on top of a WEC podium twice in 2004.

Two people have helped find the type of power Paul likes from Honda's quarter-litre engine: the first being Karl Prestwood, a former GP motocross racer turned engine tuner who is also the brains behind British based exhaust company 2C. And then there's Giorgio, a young Italian that worked as Stefan Merriman's mechanic in 2003 and who is now working for the HRFE team on a full-time basis. Karl



PAUL EDMONDSON
FLYING THE TWO-STROKE FLAG

Paul Edmondson has raced on the WEC circuit throughout three decades - the Eighties, the Nineties and now in the Noughties! With three world championship titles to his name (four if you include the European crown he netted as a youngster before the WEC's inception), Fast Eddy's career has been both lengthy and successful. Having raced for all but a few of the WEC's best teams during his time at the top, Edmondson also competed in the US for five years before returning to the WEC.

A self-confessed lover of two strokes (he's only once raced a thumper: for Husqvarna in 2002), Edmondson is seen by many as a 125cc specialist, but actually had his most successful season ever on a 250cc in 1996 - netting the world, British and Spanish enduro championships aboard a Gas Gas.

With his 125cc titles coming for three different Euro manufacturers - KTM 1989, Husqvarna 1990 and Gas Gas 1994 - Edmondson has spent the last two years campaigning Japanese machinery.

A rider that is both light and agile on a bike, Paul has neither the size nor the physical strength to boss his race bike around like some of his rivals (especially Knighter). And with just about the best throttle control in the business, Eddy has always let his bikes do the work for him. With a background in both trials and motocross, Paul reckons a 250cc two-stroke is the best all-round bike there is.

PAUL EDMONDSON'S HONDA RACING FAST EDDY CRE250

helped with the birth of the bike Paul races today while Giorgio is the one responsible for its day-to-day wellbeing.

Initially Paul was given a 2C exhaust pipe to try and, if he liked it, Karl would then consider delving into the Honda's engine to extract the power Eddy was after. Paul wanted lots of bottom-end grunt, but a motor that would accelerate quickly before developing long, strong power in each gear. In effect, Paul wanted four-stroke power characteristics from a two-stroke engine. So Karl had to start thinking very differently to the way he had when developing motors for MXGP competition.

Co-incidentally, the 2C pipe Eddy was first given to try was the same as Stefan Merriman used last season to win the 250cc two-stroke world championship. For Karl and his many years of MXGP involvement, developing a pipe for enduro competition has been a steep learning curve. What Prestwood had learned while developing a pipe for Merriman was that torque, throttle response and widespread power were required. Ideally, the type of power that allows a rider to go around a corner and down the following straight in the same gear. Not an easy task, especially on a bike with an electronic power-valve.

The precise modifications made to Edmondson's engines will always remain secret. With Karl reckoning that it would probably take him less than half a day to build a copy of Ed's race motor, the fact that it took three months to develop means he's reluctant to divulge the exact details.

What we do know however, is that the standard piston was modified to suit the cylinder, which itself was also changed to create more bottom- and mid-range power. The cylinder head was re-cut to control detonation, while the standard Honda crank remained. The exhaust pipe stub (the bit that sticks out of the cylinder which the exhaust attaches to) is modified to suit the 2C pipe, which in turn is attached to a stock silencer. The standard reeds are replaced with carbon ones, which are thinner and more durable than the original parts, with the inlet manifold also being modified slightly. Wherever possible genuine Honda parts were used in the conversion process. The motor is then jetted before each race by Giorgio to ensure that the bike's carburetion is spot-on.

As well as the motor, the suspension also came in for some work. With Paul being of very slight build - or in his own words 'a short arse' - the rear shock used is actually from a CR450F because it's shorter than the original CR250 unit. Fitted with the standard 250 spring, Paul reckons the bike sits lower and drives with noticeable improvement. It also makes the bike a little lower at the rear end. The



forks are re-valved to 'Paul's requirements', which means they're made a little suppler on the compression stroke. They retain the standard springs with the swing arm and linkage remaining standard, like all major chassis parts.

The list of aftermarket parts used isn't as long as you might think. With the original triple clamps on all the team bikes replaced with Pulse Racing clamps, riders are given a wider range of bar positions. The British company also supply the bar mounts, aluminium fuel caps, carbon fibre exhaust guards and 'one-spanner' chain adjusters. Rental bars, half-waffle soft compound grips and sprockets are all used by Paul, with him preferring to use a 48-tooth rear sprocket instead of a standard 50-tooth. Talon supplies the wheels, the rear being fitted with an 18-inch rim. Michelin tyres and mouses are used, while Italian firm Braking supply the discs, which are the only non-standard part of both the front and rear braking systems. A non-floating wavy front disc and a standard shaped rear disc are used; both are the same diameter as standard, along with a Regina O-ring chain (but not the special handmade 'racing' ones fitted to certain WEC team bikes).

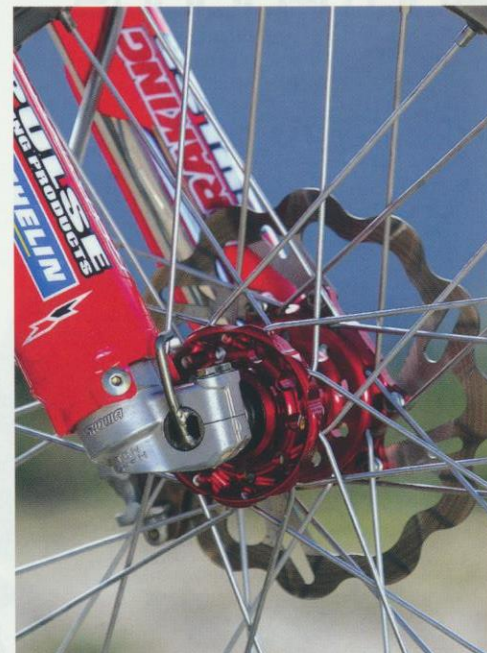
Two parts fitted to Paul's bike come from HM, the Honda off-road distributors in Italy - the side stand and the lighting generator. With the coil that generates the electricity for the lights mounted inside a wider, machined aluminium ignition cover, the second half of the unit attaches to the left side of the bike's crank. It also adds a little extra fly-wheel weight as well as the Hinson outer clutch basket (used to provide a slightly smoother clutch



Above left: The Honda's triple clamps come courtesy of Pulse Racing, the bar mounts offering Eddy a range of positions. And don't those MXM graphics look good...! Above: The CR motor has been tuned to meet Paul's requirements, with a 2C pipe and an HM lighting coil... Below and below right: Braking discs and Talon sprockets are employed. Front axle puller is standard WEC kit...



operation). With the bike starting life as a motocross machine, UFO (one of the team's bigger sponsors), supplies lights and all plastics. MXM supply the graphics, giving the Fast Eddy team bikes a clean, professional look.



EVEN CROSSER



Don't say nobody ever listens to you... In response to rider demand, Knox has launched an updated version of the popular Cross Shirt body armour. Aimed at the safety-conscious dirt biker, the Cross Shirt 1 features a fully moulded one-piece chest protector instead of the usual two-piece jobbies for extra safety. Snug neoprene wristbands that wrap around your thumbs have been added to keep the sleeves in place, but after a day hanging onto the handlebars we wonder if these might cause blisters.

The shirt also has hard shoulder and elbow protection, although the elbow armour edges could do with being rounded off a bit as they might slice your riding jersey if you happen to take a tumble.

We tried one on and found the back protection was about the right length for a six foot tall rider, adequately covering the lower spine. It also has a waist strap that doubles up as a 'kidney belt' for added support. The asymmetrical zip and polyester mesh construction of the garment makes for easy access, a decent fit and should help keep you cool.

At £129.99, the Knox shirt isn't the cheapest way to get armoured, but offers comfy all-round protection (for both off-road and SM) and is available in sizes XS-XXL. For more info contact Knox on 01900 825825 or at planet-knox.com.

BOOTI-LICIOUS



These boots have divided office opinion - a bit like Marmite, you'll either love 'em or hate 'em.

In true Germanic fashion, BMW have produced a durable, high quality boot, loaded with useful features, but the styling and black/off-white/yellow colour-scheme may not be to everybody's taste.

Nice touches, such as a rigid toe deflector that stops the lowest buckle getting snagged, the hinged ankle joint (reminiscent of an early Eighties ski boot design), and the two-piece shin-guard make the boot look distinctive, but slightly different from the norm. Discreet BMW branding on the silver anodised buckles completes the look.

The inner boot sleeve is made from Neoprene and has a fastener system for added security. Walking around the office, the boots felt very comfortable, with leather padding and a gel underlay on the ankles, and offered decent flexibility.

They're available in sizes 38-48 and with a reasonable £185.00 price tag, they won't break the bank. To find out more, contact your nearest BMW dealer or go to bmw-motorrad.com.

THIRSTY WORK

A hydration pack is always an essential piece of kit, and if you ride a Yamaha you may as well look the part with one of their water bags. Even if you don't, it's definitely worth a look.

Made from durable nylon, it features an easily removable 1.5 litre reservoir with cooling membrane liner, secured with two popper fasteners and accessed via a side zip.

It's got adjustable padded shoulder straps, and the tube can be used on either one, held securely in place by three elastic straps. To keep it in place, there's the usual waist buckle and also a smaller chest strap, both feature plenty of adjustment. There's pockets galore - one at the top, big enough for energy bars and some smokes, and two smaller ones either side of the waist, although beware of putting anything in these that might hurt if you come off. It feels comfortable enough in place, but the back padding could do with being a little more substantial. It's not a CamelBak, but is still good quality and at £27.99 we think it's an absolute steal.

Go and grab one from your nearest Yamaha off-road dealer or go to yamaha-motor.co.uk.



BAG TO THE FUTURE

Whether you're out on the lanes or competing in an enduro, a bumbag is an invaluable piece of kit. Holding tools, tubes, Mars bars and other dirt bike necessities, it can help save you from a DNF or a long walk home.

Kriega have a well-deserved reputation for quality bags, and the R3 is their latest waist pack. We've been testing one for a couple of months now and it's proved to be a great piece of kit. The three-litre capacity has been pretty handy, swallowing plenty of those dirt bike essentials and the waterproof main compartment has kept our spare gloves nice and dry.

Whilst it comes with a separate tool wallet (which lives in its own compartment), it is a little small, so you have to choose your tools carefully. But it does contain a separate zip-up pocket for all those little bits which would otherwise roll around in the bottom of the bag. Just don't forget to put it back in the pack when you've finished.

The flap which covers the body of the pack comes with another zip-up compartment, big enough for keys and a phone, or the Ed's bulging wallet.

Thanks to plenty of padding around the waistband and back-panel, the Kriega is remarkably comfortable. Once the combined compression/waist straps have been tightened (with those beautiful trademark CNC buckles) you're hard pressed to know that you're wearing it, especially as the contents are kept firmly in place with the compression

straps. Compact and unobtrusive, we like that.

The Kriega has an understated look, with a definite air of quality about it. It's well-made, nicely detailed, and whilst it may not have all of the features of a dedicated enduro bumbag it should certainly stand the test of time and the rigours of off-road use. What's more, the R3 comes with a ten year guarantee and costs a not unreasonable £45 (including p&p). You can find more details on kriega.com or by phoning 01524 793535. Tell 'em TBM sent you...





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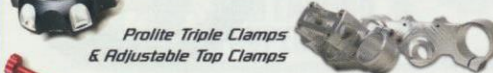


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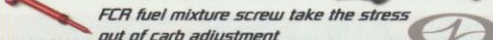
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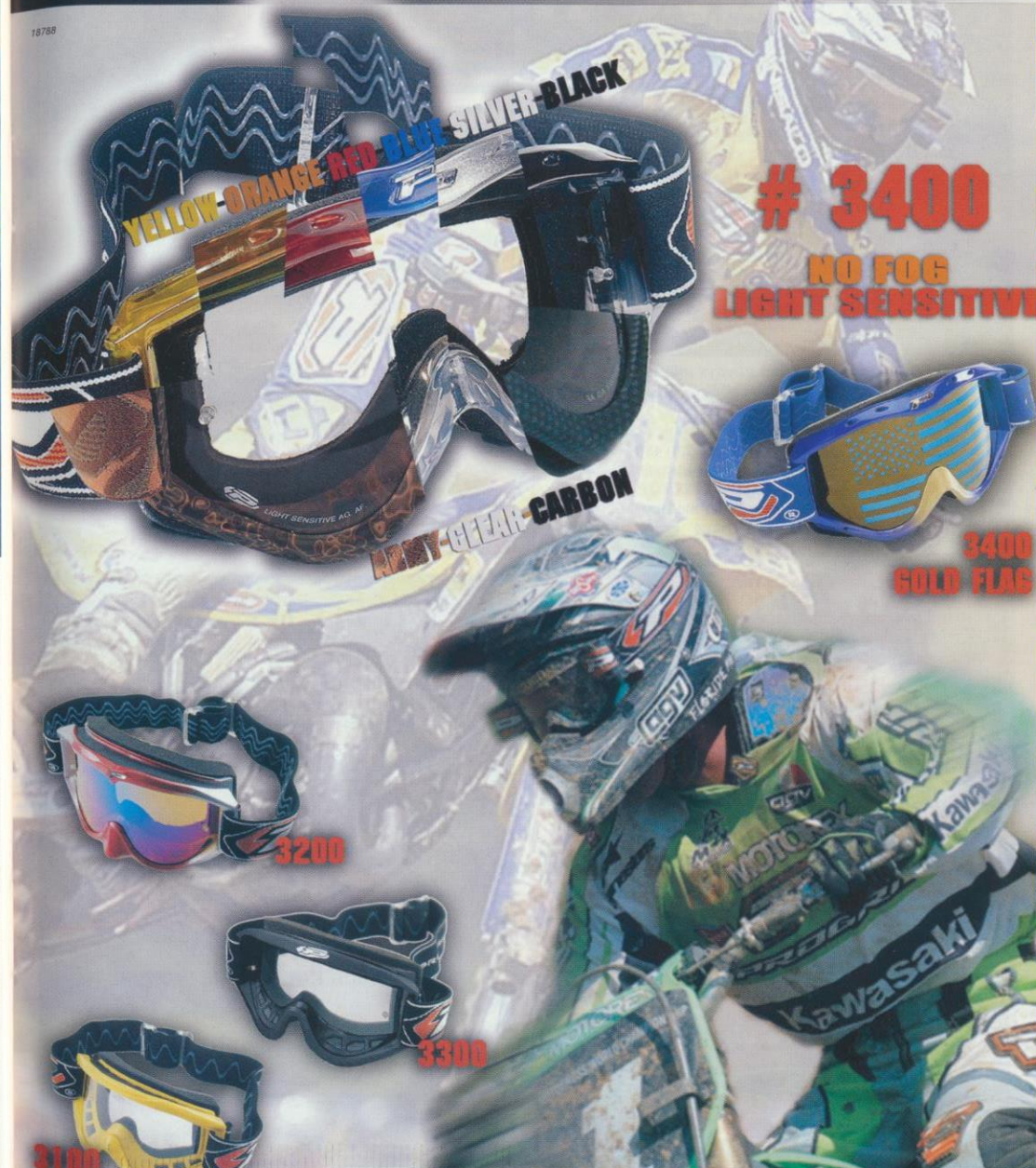
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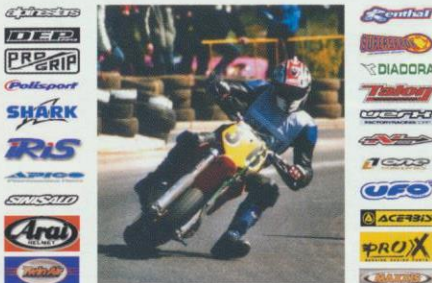


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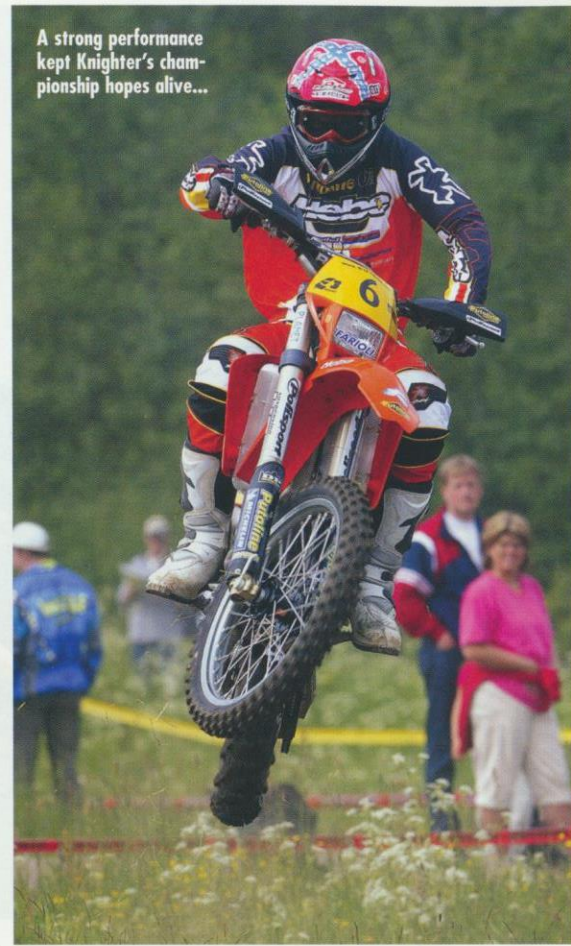
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**ROUND 5, GP OF SWEDEN,
SKOVDE, 5-6 JUNE**

With the World Enduro Championship making just one Scandinavian stop this season, and not two as in previous years, Skovde in Sweden played host to round five of the WEC. Traditionally consecutive events in both Finland and Sweden have brought countless world enduro championships to a close during the past decade, so the long and expensive trip north for just one round was something that didn't sit well with several teams. But with the powers that be having decided that, for 2004 at least, they would stop the end-of-season advantage enjoyed by Scandinavian riders, the 'one-off' northern event saw three riders dominate their classes as they took important steps towards claiming their respective class titles.

Somewhat surprisingly the Swedish event also turned out to be the most physically demanding race of the series so far. With summer in Sweden having resulted in extremely dry and dusty

A strong performance kept Knighter's championship hopes alive...



STORY & PICS: JONNY EDWARDS



Those crazy Swedes..!

PADDOCK POINTERS

↑ The relatively unknown Finn Valtteri Salonen produced by far his best ever WEC performance in Sweden aboard his HM Honda Zanardo CRE250. Placing as runner up to Juha Salminen on both days, Valtteri proved that in 'home' conditions at least he will be a rider to watch.

↑ Despite continued poor team results Gas Gas gave their 2005 450cc thumper a successful debut in Sweden. Completely redesigned for the coming season the machine proved both competitive and reliable with Thierry Klutz placing sixth and 10th in the E2 class.

↑ With the top riders in each class averaging about 20 minutes of special tests per lap, the cross-country test in Sweden was the first true cross-country test of the year. Featuring sections on grass, in trees, in sand, and up and down huge concrete tank testing ramps, it also had a typically Scandinavian rocky section.

↓ With each of the first four rounds of the WEC series having been wet at some stage, the Swedish event was incredibly dry. So dry in fact that dust was a serious problem. Requiring numerous air filter changes it also made certain areas of the special tests a little dangerous.

Despite disappointing results, Larsson was still the highest placed Swede..!



ground, and with the course consisting mainly of last years event's tracks and trails, the whooped out 50km circuit meant that without exception all riders were glad to reach the end of day two. But the Swedish event also saw the lowest number of competitors so far this season. Due in no small part to the fact that the race was so far away from many team's southern HQs.

Enduro 1

Stefan Merriman took one step closer to claiming the 2004 Enduro 1 world title in Sweden with two impressive day wins aboard his UFO Corse Yamaha. Having failed to claim a double class win at the past two events, he went about his business of winning in Sweden very efficiently, only failing to top just three tests in the E1 class during the whole weekend. Reckoning that he was riding a bit too smoothly and not revving his quarter-litre Yamaha hard enough early on day one, Merriman subsequently upped his pace

and said goodbye to his class mates. By doing so he proved that on either of the event's two motocross tests, or the cross-country, test no one could live with him. Starting day two all guns blazing, Merriman again topped the class comfortably to extend his championship lead to a sizeable 46 points.

Finishing second on day one, Merriman's team-mate Bartosz Oblucki continued his run of good results despite suffering with flu. Consistently quick - even managing to squeeze ahead of his more experienced team-mate on one occasion - Oblucki wasn't quite as fast on day two and dropped to fourth.

Claiming the runner-up spot on day two, and continuing his 'bad result one day, good result another day' form, Italian Simone Albergoni improved from sixth on day one. Like several riders unfamiliar with the northern European conditions it seemed that it was simply a lack of both Scandinavian saddle time and aggression

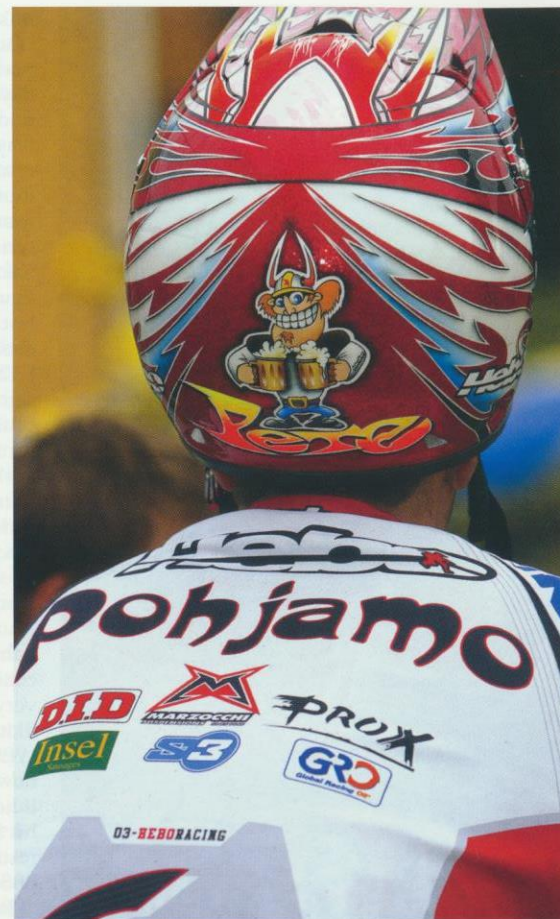
that effected Albergoni's results on the first day. By day two he looked to be a completely different rider. Much more aggressive and seemingly determined to prove that he could produce the goods - if only not consistently enough to challenge for a world title yet - Albergoni proved that he is still very much in the hunt for either second or third in the E1 championship, despite currently lying fourth.

With Merriman topping both days, the runner-up spot having been shared by Oblucki and Albergoni, it was Finland's Petteri Silvan that claimed third both times out - a result that should have been at least one position better on each day for a rider of his experience. With the tests being well-suited to Silvan and his eighth-litre stroker, the fact that he finished third on both days shows that try as he might, his best days now seem to be behind him. In fact so average was Silvan's performance on day one, veteran Italian Mario Rinaldi placed just five seconds behind him in

fourth and backed that up with a fine fifth place finish on day two. Having claimed his first ever world title in Skovde many moons ago, Rinaldi showed that even at 30-something he is one of only a few Italian riders that can perform 'away from home'. Not as fast or as consistent as he once was, but with the exception of Albergoni, Rinaldi out-performed all other Italians in the E1 class in Sweden. As the best placed Swede, TM rider Rickard Larsson had a disappointing weekend placing in fifth and seventh.

Enduro 2

Juha Salminen was simply exceptional in Sweden. Starting the event as favourite, the quiet Finn was head and shoulders above any other rider during the weekend. So much so that he topped day one by a minute and 12 seconds and day two, which was one lap and three tests shorter than the first day, by a whopping one minute and 38 seconds. In an 'actions speak louder than



Paddock Pointers

↓ The once dominant Swedes only managed one podium finish at round five of the WEC, with Husaberg rider Andreas Toresson claiming third in the E2 class on day one. With the tried and tested Swedish riders Anders Eriksson, Rickard Larsson and Bjorne Carlsson all finishing outside the top three, Sweden doesn't seem to have any emerging, up-and-coming youngsters.

↓ Due to the course for this year's Swedish event being more or less exactly the same as last years the near 50km long circuit was rough, bumpy and littered with stones and tree stumps. As a result many riders commented that it was physically harder than any other event so far this year.

Salminen was in a class of his own, with a huge winning margin in the E2 class...



unknown rider made it onto the podium on both days having produced little in the way of noteworthy results during the four previous rounds of the series. Valtteri Salonen, a young Finnish rider who last year competed aboard a 125cc KTM before signing his first professional contract for the HM Honda Zanardo squad earlier this season, made it a Finnish one-two with a brace of runner-up results. Salonen admitted that the conditions were very much to his liking and the WEC paddock is now keen to see if he can repeat his Swedish results outside of Scandinavia.

Recording the best 'home result', Husaberg rider Andreas Toresson split the two-stroke Honda's of Salonen and Spaniard Arnau Vilanova in second and fourth on day one, giving the sizeable Swedish crowd something to

cheer about. Recording his best result of the season so far, and Husaberg's best result of the event, Toresson failed to reproduce his result on day two as mistakes saw him place in eighth.

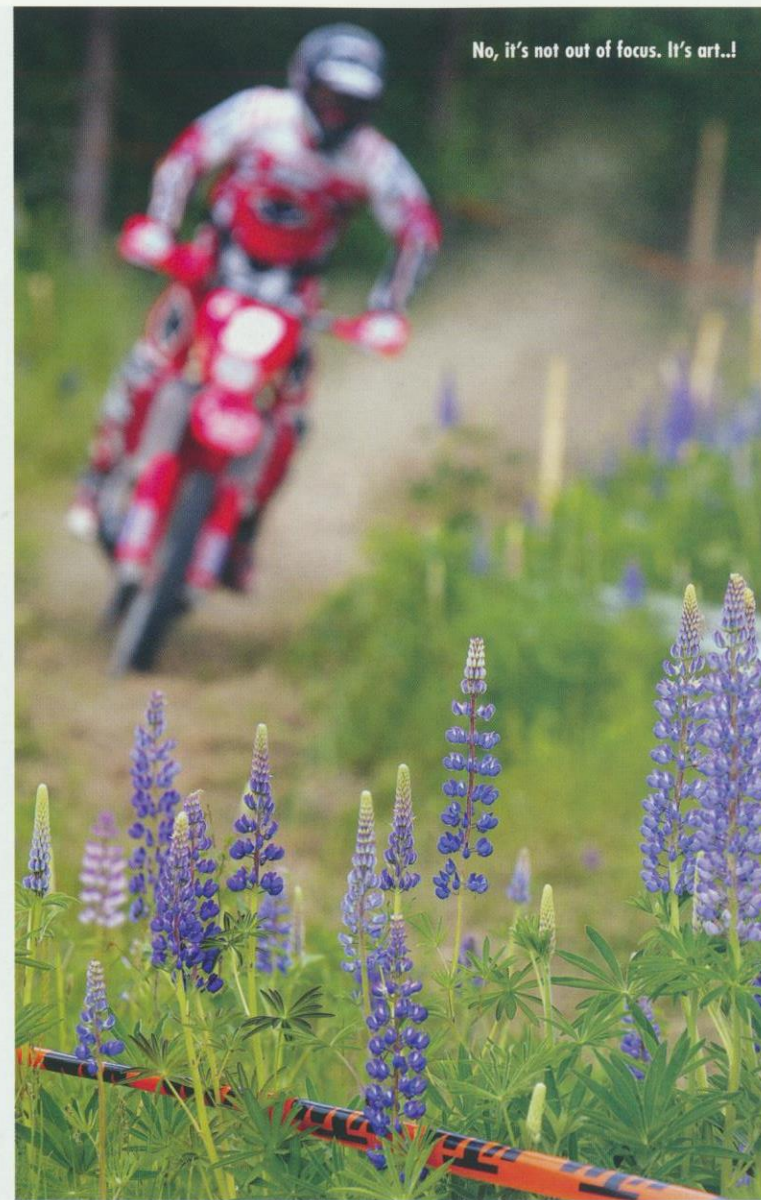
For four WEC pilots however things started in the worst possible way on day one. Arnau Vilanova, Mika Saarenkoski, Giovanni Sala and Alessandro Botturi all somehow got lost leaving the start of the event and arrived at the opening special test between 10 and 20 minutes late.

Having been the only riders to miss directional arrows, the four were later given back all of their lost time as the mistake was deemed not to have been their fault. But as riders before and after them managed to reach the test without problems, some were a little miffed by the jury's decision.

The opening day in Sweden also wasn't a good one for the three British E2 class riders. Edward Jones failed to take any points and struggled to get his head around the loose and often changing Swedish terrain. As for the two Honda Racing Fast Eddy mounted riders (Paul Edmondson and Paul Whibley), the pair were both a little slow to get going and clearly lacked time on a bike in Swedish conditions. With Edmondson failing to get himself into gear for reasons he couldn't quite put his finger on and placing seventh, Whibley placed just under two seconds behind in eighth place.

On day two though Edmondson sorted himself out and finished third, just one second ahead of Italian Alessandro Botturi who also had a day to forget on Saturday placing 12th. Proving that his day one result was just an off-day and nothing more, Edmondson strengthened his position as class runner-up. Things were also a lot better for Paul Whibley on day two as the British-based Kiwi claimed fifth, only 11 seconds behind Edmondson. Unfortunately, things didn't improve for Edward as he again failed to claim any points.

No, it's not out of focus. It's art..!



Enduro 3

Just like Merriman in the Enduro 1 class and Salminen in the enduro 2 class, KTM Racing rider Samuli Aro was the dominant force in the E3 category in Sweden. Winning both days by around 25 seconds, despite his two winning margins not being quite as much as the other two class winners, the way he went about extending his championship lead was equally as impressive. With both David Knight and Ivan Cervantes

words' kinda' way, Juha justified exactly just why he's planning on heading to the US in '05 - because there is no rider in Europe than can touch him when he's 100 percent focused on winning. As well as claiming the E2 class win on both days, Juha also managed to finish at the top of the Scratch classification. He was truly unstoppable!

The good news in Sweden was that despite Salminen's dominance, a new and relatively



Ed Jones finished outside the points in the E2 class...

breathing down his neck in the championship, Sweden was always going to be an important event in deciding which rider would gain the upper hand in the E3 class power struggle just prior to the series moving into its final stage.

Day one proved to be a trying one for Samuli, as after a small crash on one of the motocross tests he struck his forearm on a cut off branch out on the course and subsequently had a problem with his rear shock. The first of a number



A very dry summer in Sweden made the course particularly dusty...

of riders to suffer problems with PDS rear dampers. But by winning six of the 11 special tests, Aro still did enough to claim the day win.

Determined not to make any mistakes on day two, and in doing so claim his first double win of the season, he pushed hard during the opening lap and then maintained his lead to walk away with victory.

For David Knight the Swedish round of the WEC series was equally as important. Still in a strong championship position behind Aro and ahead of Cervantes, 12 months ago Knighter produced a disappointing result in Skovde, which dropped him to fourth in the then

Over 500cc four-stroke world championship. Despite the fact that the Manxman wasn't looking forward to the race, DK produced two solid results to place as runner-up on both days. With his D3-Racing team having made some engine modifications in the hope of giving him a bike more like the factory prepped machines of Aro and Cervantes, Knighter proved consistent, kept Aro honest during the weekend and more importantly beat Cervantes on both days. In doing so he strengthened his position as E3 class runner-up and proved himself as one of only a few riders capable of keeping the pressure on Aro.

Beaten into fifth on day one, Spaniard Ivan Cervantes' Swedish weekend was one of the most disappointing of any rider. Having produced strong results in '03, many expected Cervantes to be doing the winning ahead of Aro. Instead the Farioli KTM rider took far too long to get going on Saturday and couldn't get

himself into a rostrum position. Winning three of the opening day's four last special tests, a big crash three tests from home finally put an end to his chances of a decent result on day one. On day two however the stocky Spaniard upped his pace to finish just three seconds behind Knight.

On day one in the E3 class things were very tight between the second to sixth placed riders with Marko Tarkkala claiming third, finishing just over a second behind Knighter. As aggressive as always, Tarkkala suffered cruel luck on day two as his Berg cried enough within sight of the end of the day's final test. Scoring no points just as he did on day two in Italy, as one of the class' fastest riders the young Finn certainly has no chance of an end of year top three spot now. On day two Husaberg's Bjorne Carlsson produced his best result of the season so far with fourth, moving him ahead of countryman Anders Eriksson and only a handful of points away from Husqvarna's best placed E3 class riders Mika Ahola. With three rounds still remaining, the battle to be the best of the rest looks set to be just as close as the battle for the three podium positions in the E3 class.

RESULTS - DAY 1

ENDURO 1

1. STEFAN MERRIMAN (YAM) 1.05:46.77; 2. BARTOSZ OBLUCKI (YAM) 1.06:33.00; 3. PETERI SILVAN (KTM) 1.07:05.90; 4. MARIO RINALDI (YAM) 1.07:11.26; 5. RICKARD LARSSON (TM) 1.07:25.66

ENDURO 2

1. JUHA SALMINEN (KTM) 1.04:39.28; 2. VALTTERI SALONEN (HON) 1.05:51.62; 3. ANDREAS TORESSON (HSB) 1.06:08.94; 4. ARNAU VILANOVA (HON) 1.06:28.02; 5. MIKA SAARENKOSKI (HSQ) 1.06:40.88

ENDURO 3

1. SAMULI ARO (KTM) 1.05:02.65; 2. DAVID KNIGHT (KTM) 1.05:27.29; 3. MARKO TARKKALA (HSB) 1.05:28.47; 4. MIKA AHOLA (HSQ) 1.05:37.50; 5. IVAN CERVANTES (KTM) 1.05: 47.45

RESULTS - DAY 2

ENDURO 1

1. STEFAN MERRIMAN (YAM) 57:53.25; 2. SIMONE ALBERGONI (HON) 58:30.48; 3. PETERI SILVAN (KTM) 58:51.28; 4. BARTOSZ OBLUCKI (YAM) 59:12.31; 5. MARIO RINALDI (YAM) 59:25.15

ENDURO 2

1. JUHA SALMINEN (KTM) 56:13.33; 2. VALTTERI SALONEN (HON) 57:52.12; 3. PAUL EDMONDSON (HON) 58:12.39; 4. ALESSANDRO BOTTURI (KTM) 58:13.65; 5. PAUL WHIBLEY (HON) 58:24.01

ENDURO 3

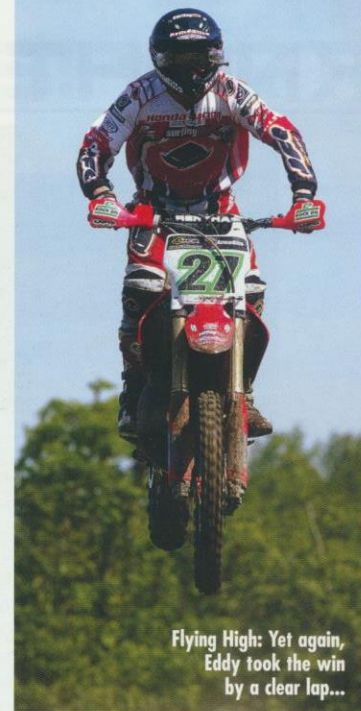
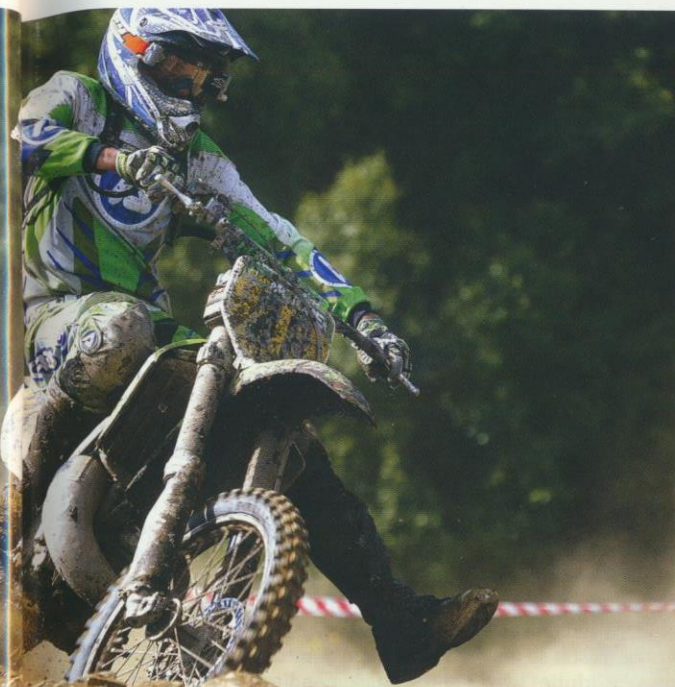
1. SAMULI ARO (KTM) 56:37.97; 2. DAVID KNIGHT (KTM) 57:03.75; 3. IVAN CERVANTES (KTM) 57:07.44; 4. BJORNE CARLSSON (HSB) 57:21.82; 5. ANDERS ERIKSSON (HSQ) 57:52.00



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LEEDS, MAY 23



Flying High: Yet again, Eddy took the win by a clear lap...

In complete contrast to Ellesmere at the beginning of April, round two of the UK Cross-Country Championship took place at a very dry Tong Hall. Honda Racing Fast Eddy rider Paul Edmondson blitzed the Pro Open two-stroke class and in doing so, finished one lap ahead of all the other Pro class riders. Claiming the

runner-up spot was Gas Gas pilot Juan Knight on his return to two-stroke machinery. Unable to match Edmondson's pace having decided the lighter 250cc stroker was a better choice for cross-country racing, Juan placed ahead of team-mate Woody Hole making it a great weekend for the Gas Gas UK team.

Unfortunately for HRFE team rider Paul Whibley, the dry weather didn't help him as he crashed heavily on the opening lap and failed to finish. But the most impressive Pro class result was that of Husqvarna rider Daryl Bolter who topped the Pro 125cc two-stroke and 250cc four-stroke class. As the last of the three Pro and Expert classes to leave the start, Bolter and the rest of the field battled their way forward with the Husqvarna mounted youngster finishing the race in a highly respectable third place overall.

Ahead of Yamaha thumper riders Jason Fraser and Rowan Jones, Bolter was placed a full two and a half minutes clear of Fraser, with Ricky Mair the next best placed 125cc rider in fourth.

In the Pro Open four-stroke class, David Knight decided not to compete, instead choosing to work on his speed for forthcoming WEC events. Three riders finished on 18 laps after fighting tooth and nail for much of the early part of the race. With Husaberg rider Chris Tett first to drop back a bit as the race progressed, just four seconds separated eventual winner Kevin Murray from Richard Hay at the end of the event as neither of the Yamaha-mounted duo wanted to accept defeat...

NEXT ROUND: CULHAM, OXFORDSHIRE ON 25 JULY...

RESULTS

PRO 125CC 2T & 250CC 4T

1. DARYL BOLTER (HUSQVARNA) 18 LAPS
2. JASON FRASER (YAMAHA) 18 LAPS
3. ROWAN JONES (YAMAHA) 17 LAPS

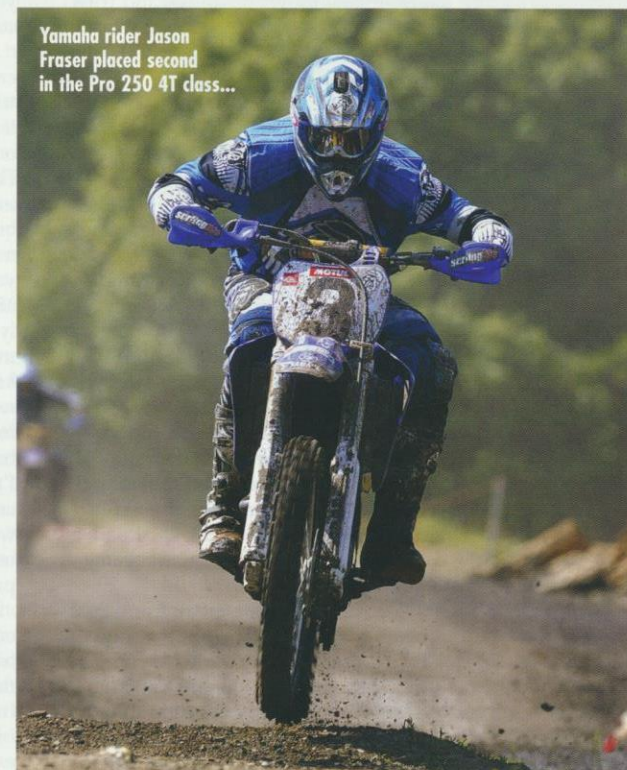
PRO OPEN 2T

1. PAUL EDMONDSON (HONDA) 19 LAPS
2. JUAN KNIGHT (GAS GAS) 18 LAPS
3. WOODY HOLE (GAS GAS) 18 LAPS

PRO OPEN 4T

1. KEVIN MURRAY (YAMAHA) 18 LAPS
2. RICHARD HAY (YAMAHA) 18 LAPS
3. CHRIS TETT (HUSABERG) 18 LAPS

Yamaha rider Jason Fraser placed second in the Pro 250 4T class...





'FROM THE ADRENALINE-FUELLED, CLOSE CONTACT WORLD OF INTERNATIONAL MX, TRAVELLING TO THE TRANS ATLANTIC OFF-ROAD CHALLENGE WAS A BIT OF A SHOCK AS ICELAND HAS TO BE THE MOST CHILLED-OUT PLACE I'VE EVER BEEN...'

I hope I'm not tempting fate by saying this, but things are going really well for me at the moment. I feel I'm riding as well, if not better than I have for a long time. And the recent changes the team has made to my race bike has given me even more confidence to take the fight to my Enduro 3 classmates. In fact this last month has been one of the most enjoyable of the season so far. Because as well as my WEC duties I've also mixed things up a little and tried my hand at two very different events.

BRITAIN'S TOP ENDURO RIDER WRITES EXCLUSIVELY FOR TBM...

As important as the WEC is to me I've got to admit that it sometimes feels as if I was born in the wrong decade as I seem to be one of only a few riders that enjoys competing in different motorcycle disciplines, just like riders did 20 or 30 years ago. That's why, or at least one of the reasons why, I took part in the third round of the KWS International Motocross Series at Hawkstone Park and one week later in the third running of the Trans Atlantic Off-Road Challenge in Iceland with my teammate Edward Jones.

Deciding to take a break from cross-country racing and skip the second round of the UK XC series to compete in the KWS International Motocross event was definitely the right thing for me to do, especially as we've now moved into the second half of the

WEC season. Although it took most of the first race to get my head back into 'motocross mode' after focusing almost solely on enduros for so much of this year, I really enjoyed having a go at something different. The main reason I wanted to race however was because I wanted to push myself and see if I could take my riding to a higher level in the hope of returning to the WEC a little quicker and a little stronger. Now you're probably asking yourself why I couldn't have done that in an enduro?

Well the reason for using a motocross event to push myself, as opposed to an enduro, is simple. In an enduro if you ride too fast on a special test one of two things usually happens. Firstly, you either crash - risking injuring yourself and damaging your bike - or secondly, you simply make mistakes and lose time, which affects your result. By entering an international motocross race, a race that ultimately didn't mean a great deal to either myself or the team in terms of where I finished, I was able to push my limits safe in the knowledge that if I did make a mistake the chances of getting hurt were much less likely. At the level I'm at, people expect me to win every enduro event I enter in the UK so if I were to explain to them that I was only using the race to push my limits they'd probably think I was making excuses.

My first race result was badly affected by arm pump, mainly because I hadn't spent enough time setting up the 540SX that I was riding. Jumping from an enduro bike to the fire-breathing 540 was a bigger leap than I'd expected and getting my head around

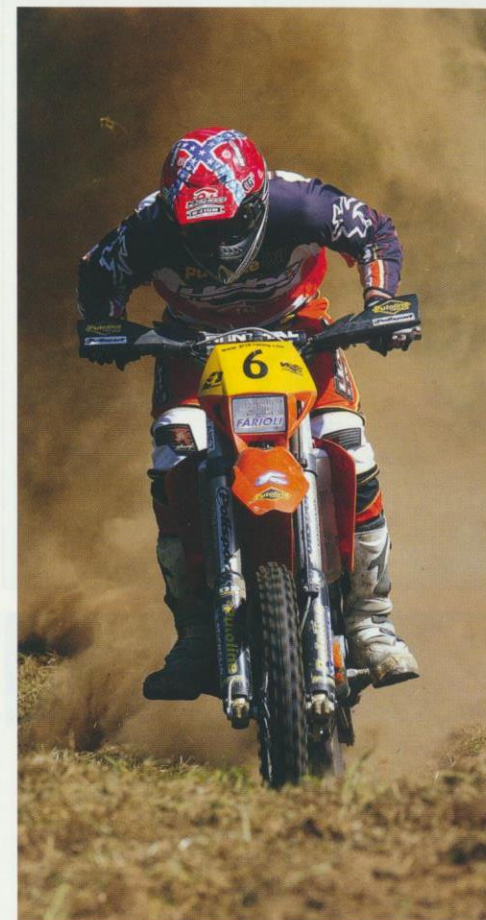
having other riders surrounding me out on the track also took some getting used to again. Making a few changes to the bike, race two was much better and I finished the event with an eighth and a fifth, and feeling as if I could do okay at MX if I simply did more of it. I'm certainly not looking to make the switch to motocross but spicing things up by doing something different definitely helped both my confidence and my speed.

From the adrenaline-fuelled, close contact world of international MX, travelling to the Trans Atlantic Off-Road Challenge was a bit of a shock as Iceland has to be the most chilled-out place I've ever been. With the event being a relaxed six-hour, two-man GNCC style race it meant that I got to spend three hours playing in the volcanic sands that cover much of the Island - and it was great fun. Having only spent about 20 minutes testing the bikes that KTM Iceland kindly lent us, Edward and myself weren't quite sure what to expect. Thankfully, the race was as much fun as everyone told us it would be and winning it made for a great few days away from home with no real pressure to perform.

From Iceland it was on to Sweden for the serious business of the WEC. Having claimed my first win of the season in France, I was dreading the Swedish event because it was held in the exact same place as the '03 Swedish round and I had bad memories of the place. I dropped to fourth in the Over 500cc four-stroke world championship in Sweden last year after two pretty rubbish results and despite feeling confident in my riding, wasn't looking forward to the race at all.

Thankfully, it wasn't as bad as I thought and finishing second on both days to Samuli Aro was spot on. I wasn't as pleased as I would have been if I'd beaten him but as I placed third overall on both days I was happy. Day one was pretty straightforward really and despite the course being whooped out and rough as guts, I was glad to see that the cross-country tests was improved from '03 as it featured a typically Scandinavian section which was littered with rocks.

Day two started badly as my rear shock wasn't working as well as it should. Part way through the day I switched it for my second shock which had just been serviced by WP, and after a few tests to get it dialled in perfectly I was back up to second behind Aro. To be honest, with Aro riding as well as he was there was no way I was going



to beat him. Not unless he made a mistake. Matching his times on some of the tests, he was simply too fast on others and I decided that two more consistent finishes were better than going for glory and risking crashing.

The weird thing about Sweden was that loads of people seemed to be telling me that I'd already committed to various different manufacturers for next season. Which is not true at all. Don't get me wrong it's nice to know that teams are interested, it's just a little strange that it was all news to me! I'll have more of an idea as to what I'm doing next year in a month's time, until then I'm just telling people that I'm riding a factory Ossa next year!

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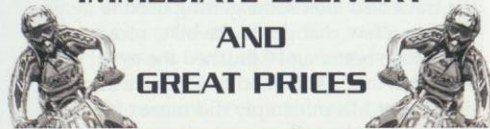
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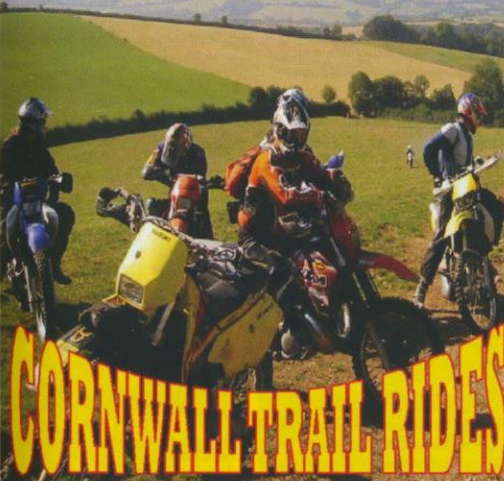
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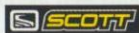
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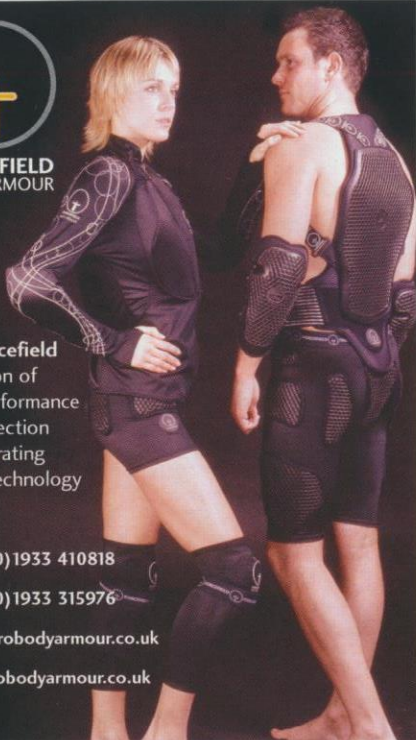


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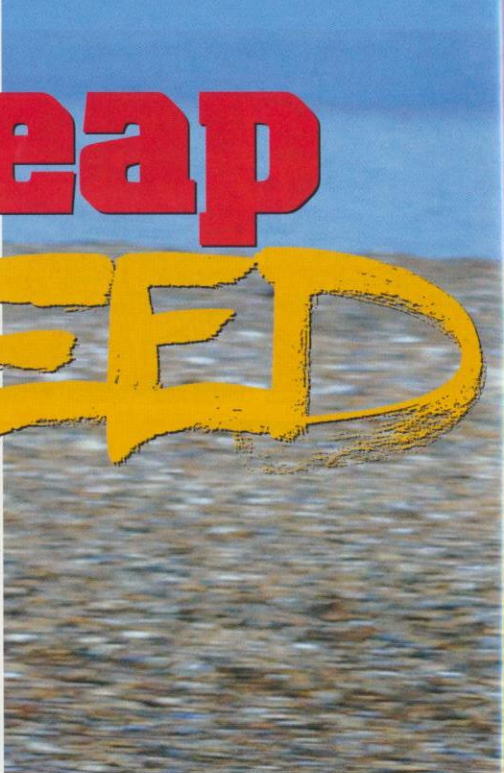
STORY: JAMES BARNICORT; PICS: JB & SM

Crikey, the latest TBM project bike is still alive and very nearly kicking...

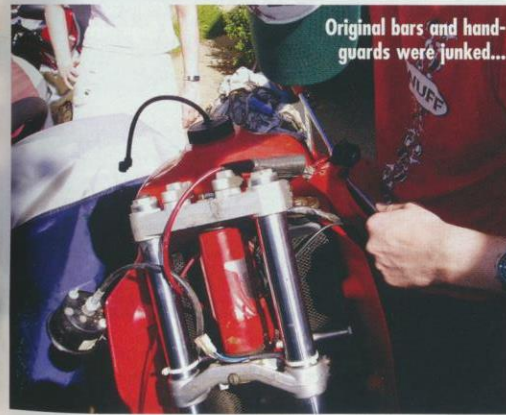
The 'Project Cheap Speed' Cagiva WMX500 has come a long way since we last saw it back in issue 102. You'd hardly recognise it! a complete transformation... it's like a whole new bike... Oh, alright then, it hasn't really come a long way at all. Progress can at best, be described as 'slow and steady', with the WMX spending its time propping up a pile of tyres whilst its 17 litre fuel tank is used to dump stale petrol out of our jerry cans!

However, a recent spell of good weather has seen the ol' girl dragged from the shed, and the rusty bolts attacked with a variety of ill-fitting tools.

Unfortunately, with the build well underway, we appear to have hit a slight stumbling block. It's not that we've found something hideously wrong with the 500cc lump (though we probably will!), and nor is it that we're lacking parts for the 18 year old bike. No, it's that the Welsh Trail Riders Association (WTRA) who organise the Cambrian Rally (for which we were preparing the bike) have now sent us the first press release since they had to reschedule the event. And it would appear that they've moved the goalposts slightly. Actually, let me rephrase that: They've pulled down the goalposts, chopped them into little bits and chucked them on the bonfire, whilst dancing round in circles chanting in that funny language of theirs, before spiking their football on the park fence as they left. Because what they've done is gone and banned ALL two-strokes! Aaaargh!



Now, in previous years the organisers have allowed certain stokers to enter: those on their agreed list of trailies (which includes CRMs, Lanzas etc and of course our WMX). The reasoning behind this harks back to a time when the majority of competition enduro bikes were two-strokes. The club wanted to make the event more trailie biased - and most trailies at the time were thumpers - so they banned enduro stokers. Of course, with the advent of the modern dirt thumper many people were free to turn up on four-stroke competition machinery and so they were placed in a 'Sportsbike' class (as the



Original bars and handguards were junked...

majority of the entry are now).

So in banning all two-strokes, the organisers have effectively further cut the amount of trail bikes entering (remember, enduro stinkwheels weren't allowed anyway) which seems slightly at odds with the theme of a trail bike rally.!

Right about now I know you're all having a good chortle and thinking this is just sour grapes. And you'd be right. But we also thought it seemed a little unfair (which is the most polite term I can think of right now) to exclude one trail rider on a CRM, yet allow someone to enter on a WR-F/EXC/TE/FE

enduro bike. So we had a word with WTRA and asked if they could see their way to still allowing last year's agreed list of two-stroke trailies. Or alternatively if they want more trail bikes to enter, then how about having an agreed list of both two- and four-stroke trail bikes and anything outside of this (ie an enduro bike) doesn't get an entry? Simple. Or so you'd think.

However, WTRA stood firm, dug their heels in and said 'Nac Oes or whatever 'no' is in Welsh. They mentioned something about noise ('cos thumpers are oh so quiet!) and wanting to see more big four-stroke trailies and multi-cylinders (ie big trailies) taking part - having tailored the course to suit, and given priority over the limited places to such machines.

So d'ya reckon we could lever a GSX-R1100 motor into the Cagiva's frame? Nah, neither do I. Which is why we're simply going to have to run the WMX in another event. Oh well...

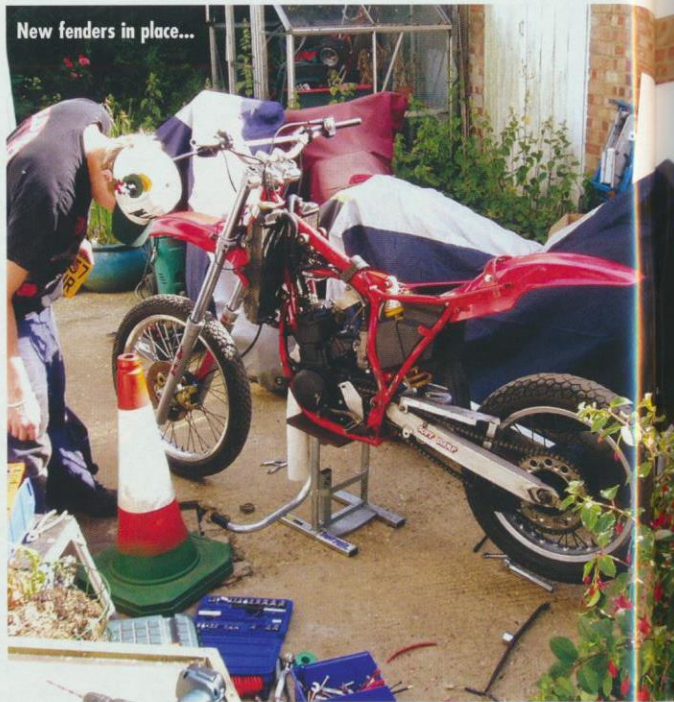
No Change

So, after all that, what have we done to the 500 since you last saw it? Well... I can tell you that we still haven't sorted out the rear shock's pre-load, or bled the new Brembo front stopper. Instead attention turned to the cosmetics.

The old plastics were looking just a little 'sun-bleached' and we wanted to give the WMX a slightly more modern appearance. So we chucked it in the back of the van and headed up to Bedfordshire to the



James' Pipe Works...!



New fenders in place...

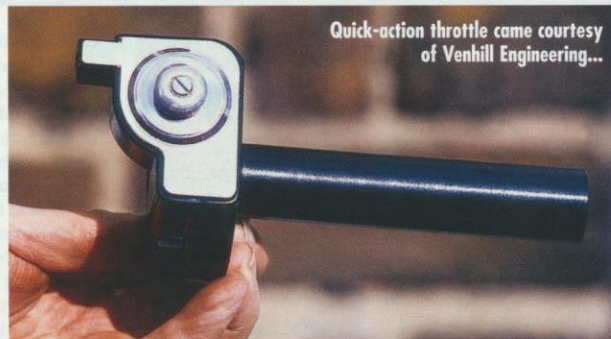


We had a lot of work to do...

UK's Acerbis importer, Bert Harkins Racing. The original Cagiva panels were made by the Italian plastics company but there was no way that BHR would have anything designed to fit it now. It would be a case of suck it and see, mix and match, bodge-it and scarper.

The first part to be junked was the aesthetically-challenged rear fender. Cracked, melted and salmon pink in colour, it was probably the worst part on the entire bike. Which is saying something! With the old part in a skip, Bert emerged from his warehouse with a universal MX rear fender, which although not a perfect fit will certainly do the job. And with a modicum of trimming it's brought the rear-end back up to date! What's more, once enhanced with a new Acerbis LED tail-light it'll look simply gorgeous. We hope!

Without some serious work (and there's nothing serious about *this* project, let me tell you) we can't do anything about the side- or rad-panels. But we can change the headlight - to an Acerbis road legal HP unit - and the front fender to a modern Honda CR version. Of course, this wasn't quite as simple as re-drilling our new mudguard (oh no!) as there's very little clearance between the forks and the rads. So out came the hacksaw, to chop a good five inches from the back of the fender, and an angle grinder was employed to remove a (hopefully) surplus

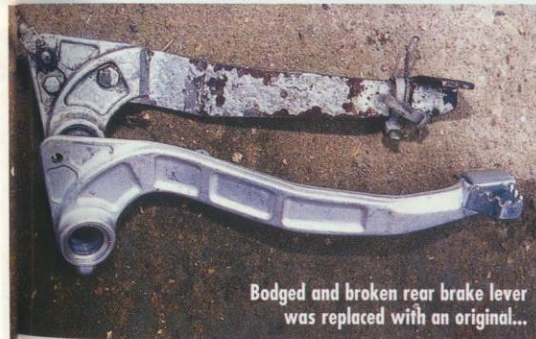


Quick-action throttle came courtesy of Venhill Engineering...

bracket sticking out the front of one of the rads.

With the new plastics in place it was time to fit some shiny new bars. The old ones were steel, a hideous bend (which fouled the tank) and just ever so slightly 'tweaked'. The darkest depths of the TBM shed gave up a pair of reasonable looking alloy bars of indeterminate origin. They're not a bad bend (if a little short), and with the clamps set in the furthest forward position and the cables swapped for some of Venhill's finest, it should make riding the Cagiva a much more pleasurable experience..!

While we were at it, the original twistgrip was junked in favour of a Venhill quick-action item. This comes with two settings, motocross or enduro, (depending just how quickly you want to get to casualty!) and should make riding the WMX an



Bodged and broken rear brake lever was replaced with an original...

even more terrifying experience.

After last instalment's rear shock rebuild, we still had to reconnect the rear (drum) brake to the lever. Now the original lever had long since snapped, and the bodge the bike came with... well, let's just say even Blez would've called it shoddy. Having seen an immaculate 250 Cagiva displayed in Husky Sport's Cheriton showroom with its beautiful alloy rear brake still intact I wondered if they had one in stock for our 500 (they brought a few WMXs into the country back in the Nineties). Luckily for us, the answer was 'yes' and they did us a good price too. Hurrah!

And lastly, the final piece of this issue's senseless spannering was the removal of the rusty old exhaust pipe. This was then cleaned up with a wire brush, before being sprayed with high temperature paint



(which will inevitably burn off the first time the bike's fired up).

And so, with everything coming along nicely (with the obvious exception of our race entry) next time we'll be telling you how we grafted on a four-stroke cylinder-head and got the WMX running on diesel. Cambrian Rally on a ratty 500 stroker..? Can't be done, I'm afraid!

Huge thanks to:

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And reader Robin Smith for tech spec/service info.

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KTM 250EXC, 2003, 20 hours use, taxed, handguards, computer, exc cond, £2950. Tel (mobile) 07770 623662 or 01672 871106 (Berks)

KTM 400EXC, 2001, new c+s/rear tyre, good cond, £3150. Tel 020 8206 2177 (Middx)

Honda XR250, 1995, import, elec start, 10000 miles, no T&T, green laned only, very reliable, £1250. Tel 0115 960 6514 (Notts)

Yamaha XT600E, 1990, T&T, two owners from new, elec start, new tyres, immaculate cond, very reluctant sale, £1450 ono. Tel (mobile) 07770 772164 or 01773 744936 (Derbys)

Beta Alp 4.0, 600km, used twice, as new, gift at £3200. Tel 01495 200691 (Gwent)

Yamaha WR400F, 1999, V-reg, White Bros exhaust, Talons, usual extras, £2400 with silver Excel rims, £2700 with blue Excels. Tel 07769 700580 (Middx)

Yamaha XT600E, 1995, N-reg, Scootiler, MT21s, good cond, £1000 ono. Also Honda XL500, 1979, T-reg, runs well but need TLC, £300 ono or £1200 the pair.

Tel (mobile) 07885 835752 or 01798 342809 (W Sussex)
Honda XR400R, 2003, road reg'd, 1800km, immaculate cond, £3550 ono. Tel 01483 200144 (Surrey)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2001, kickstart model, 1600 miles, Scorpion exhaust system plus original, mainly winter road use, £2950 ono. Tel 01977 679199 (W Yorks)

CCM 604E, 02-reg, black, 950 miles, handguards, good tyres, not mint hence, £2950. Tel 01663 744114 (Derbys)

Honda XR250R, 1999, T-reg, T&T, 2900 miles, well maintained, trail use only, vgc, £1850. Tel 0161 428 7053 (Manchester)

KTM 400EXC, 2002, road legal, soft seat, Ceet graphics, brushguards, recent fork overhaul, £3200. Tel 07733 231782 (Wilts)

Honda XR400R, 2002 model, 51-reg, new c+s/pads front and rear, mostly road use, exc cond, bargain at £2700. Tel 01270 761659 (Cheshire)

Yamaha TTR250 Open Enduro, T&T, oil cooler, sump/brushguards, well cared for bike, £1595. Tel (work) 01227 712329 or (home) 01227 367608 (Kent)

Honda CRM250 AR, 1998, T&T, new tyres, DEP pipe, many extras, good cond, £2500. Tel 07966 422212 (Derbys)

Honda XR650R, 2004, 630 miles, never been off-road, mint cond, with stand and tool belt, £3600 ono. Tel 01757 289121 (N Yorks)

KTM 450EXC, 2003, 1200 miles, hand/sumpguards, clutch saver, green lane use only, mint cond, £4200. Tel (mobile) 07763 205214 or 01937 834942 (N Yorks)

Gas Gas EC400FSE, 2002, very little use, exc cond, £3500 ono, can deliver. Tel (mobile) 07970 747550 or (eves) 01550 721192 (Carms)

Honda XL600R, B-reg, red, T&T, exc all-round cond, new bike forces sale, £1200 ono. Tel 01823 421786 (Somerset)

Honda XR400R, 2002, Renthals, brush/frameguards, bashplate, new tyres, green lane use only, great cond, must be seen, £2650 ono. Tel 01691 654093 (Shrops)

Yamaha WR426F, 2001, road legal, 1000km, FMF Q exhaust, handguards, many extras, maintained regardless of cost, vgc, £3500. Tel 01796 481391 (Perthshire)

Gas Gas Pampera mkIII, 2002, taxed, Renthals, handguards, bashplate, o-ring chain, gaiters, Scott grips, light-weight green laner, £1900 ono. Tel 07968 352826 (W Mids)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2002, 1000 miles, many sensible extras, exc cond, full details on request, house move forces reluctant sale, £3400 ono. Tel (mobile) 07831 832123 or (home) 01785 604745 (Staffs)

Suzuki DR350S, 1995, N-reg, T&T, CRD pipe, Acerbis tank, £1500 ono. Tel 01223 237025 (Camps)

Honda XR400R, T&T, standard bike, very low miles, very little use, superb example, exc cond, £2600. Tel 01908 230829 (Bucks)

Yamaha XTZ660 Tenere, 1999, T&T, 18000km, twin lights, regularly serviced, new tyres, top box, heated grips, regrettable sale, £2300 ono. Tel 07779 011197 (Ceredigion)

Honda XL250S, 1980, only 7000 miles, two owners, new tyres/c+s, original cond, £1500 ono. Tel 01425 240311 (Dorset)

Yamaha TTR250, 2001, blue/white, unregistered, mint cond, £2500 ono. Tel 07876 118991 (N Wales)

KTM 200EXC, 2003, low miles, Fatbars, handguards, Excel rims, uprated suspension, spare wheels, exc bike, must be

seen, £3400. Tel (mobile) 07770 977256 or 0114 251 4868 (S Yorks)

Suzuki DR250, 1996, N-reg, scruffy but good runner, needs front wheel bearings for MoT, baby forces sale, £850. Tel 07782 291559 (Cheshire)

KTM LC4, 2002, 1700 miles, slight damage to side but still used daily for work, make good supermoto, offers over £2500. Tel 01942 897042 (Manchester)

Gas Gas Pampera 250, 2002, handguards, green lane and long distance trial use, vgc, £2000. Tel (mobile) 07976 833682 or 01789 773633 (Worcs)

Honda XR400R, 2001, X-reg, taxed, Gadget bashplate, Trailtech computer, recent tyres/c+s, mainly green lane use, £2295 ono. Tel 01455 446415 (Leics)

Suzuki DR600, 1988, 19000 miles, import, needs registering but forms come with bike, £760. Tel 0161 763 1699 (Lancs)

Yamaha WR250F, 2001, Y-reg, taxed, full FMF system, handguards, bashplate, just serviced, vgc, £2795 ono. Tel 01202 659701 (Dorset)

Armstrong MT500, 8500km, T&T, new c+s, good tyres, rack, panniers, tidy cond, £950 ono. Tel (mobile) 07905 476446 or (home) 01234 852675 (Beds)

Honda XR250R, R-reg, T&T, 6000km, new tyres/c+s, £1950 ono. Tel 01992 766523 (Middx)

Yamaha TTR600, 2001, 8000 miles, one aged owner, never been off-road, £2400 or may p/x for BMW R80 GS/R100 GS/R100 R. Tel 01992 575379 (Essex)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2001, blue/white, T&T, low miles, very clean, £2500 ono. Tel 020 8659 3836 (London)

Beta Alp 4.0, 2003, 2700 miles, taxed, mainly road use, don't miss a nice bike, first to see will buy. Tel 07970 656417 (Gwent)

Honda XL250 Degree, MoT, elec start, good fun trail bike, reasonably low seat, ideal bike for girls, £1250 ono. Tel 07711 186369 (Berks)

Yamaha WR426F, 2003, road reg'd, under 200 miles, Renthals, a few extras, green laned only, exc fun, £4000 ono. Tel 01246 551255 (Derbys)

Honda CRM250 mkII, MoT, new c+s/tyres, ready to use, £1400. Tel (mobile) 07711 186369 or 01189 314299 (Berks)

Gas Gas Pampera 250, 2003, blue/black, road reg'd, one owner, exc cond, reluctant sale, exc value at £2195. Tel 01443 217232 (Mid Glam)

KTM GS504, 1984, road reg'd, lights, Marzocchis, Brembos, WP shock, tuned motor, SM wheels included, £1150. Tel 01384 863982 (W Mids)

Honda CRM250 mkI, 1991, H-reg, MoT, new 'flower' discs/pads, alloy silencer, tidy bike, £1295. Tel (mobile) 07971 409565 or 01295 680085 (Warks)

Yamaha TTR250, M-reg, T&T, low miles, elec start, ideal first green laner, £1500. Tel 01246 551255 (Derbys)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2001, 1000 miles, Renthals, Arrow exhaust, handguards, bashplate, plus Talon supermoto wheels and Dunlop tyres, hardly used, £3250. Tel 01727 860550 (Herts)

Honda CRM250 mkII, T&T, DEP system, 'guards, spare wheels/cables etc, reconditioned suspension, trail use, good cond, £1700. Tel 07974 804371 (Cheshire)

BMW F650 GS, 2003, Abus blue, taxed, still under warranty, 1400 miles, handguards, heated grips, £4000. Tel 01339 756036 (Aberdeen)

Beta Alp 4.0, 2003, 2900km, taxed, still under warranty, great trail/road bike, exc cond, £2900. Tel 01535 655970 (Yorks)

Honda XR250, 1999, silver, elec start, 21000km with 2000km off-road, handguards, digital speedo/timers, well maintained, neat and tidy, £2250 ono. Tel Steve on 01704 896375

(Lancs)
Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2001, T&T, SPES silencer, Renthals, CRD bashplate/frameguards, graphics kit, new tyres, vgc, £2750. Tel 01785 259777 (Staffs)

Triumph T100C, 1968, classic trail bike, MoT, free tax, wide-ratio 'box, new clutch, stainless spokes, Dunlop rims, immaculate cond, £2900. Tel 01268 413136 (Essex)

Honda XR250R, 2002, taxed, 1900km, new rear tyre, handguards, Renthals, CRD sumpguard, £2800 ono. Tel (mobile) 07833 995973 or 01443 202862 (S Wales)

Yamaha XT550, 1982, no T&T, running but will need exhaust system, new bike forces sale, must go, best offer. Tel 07778 792613 (Warks)

KTM 640 LC4E, 2001, black/silver, taxed, 4600 miles, KTM 18L tank, vgc, £3500. Tel (ask for Richard) 01452 372155 (Gloucs)

Husqvarna TE450, 2004 model, only 300 miles, Renthals, handguards, wife forces sale, bargain at £4250. Tel 07885 650076 (Hants)

Husaberg FE400, 2000, W-reg, elec start, 2300km, some spares available, well maintained, green lane use only, £3000 ono. Tel (mobile) 07887 527801 or 01768 881679 (Cumbria)

KTM 525MXC, 2003, taxed, rallyguards, bashplate, 13L tank, EXC numberplate, vgc, maintained regardless of cost, £3995 ono. Tel 07782 244789 (Derbys)

Yamaha XT225 Serow, 1998, T&T, 11000 miles, elec start, new tyres, clean and original, £1900 ono. Tel 01756 795802 (N Yorks)

Honda XR650R SM, FMF system, K&N, pumper carb, exc cond, c/w off-road wheels, £3950. Tel (mobile) 07950 269579 or 01708 752696 (Essex)

Yamaha XT600 Tenere, 1986, 48000km, dual start, stainless exhaust, MT21s, Metzeler Enduros plus spares, very good original cond, £1500. Tel 07976 216472 (Hants)

Yamaha Serow, 1993, T&T, 8000 miles, elec start, disc brakes, little use, nice bike in vgc, £1400. Tel 01547 528158 (Powys)

Gas Gas EC200, road reg'd, Acerbis barkbusters/rear unit, recent full service, used for hare and hounds only, immaculate cond, accept £2595 ono. Tel 07730 685954 (London)

Honda XR250R, 1997, R-reg, T&T, hand/sumpguards, toolbag, new tyres etc, very little off-road use, exc cond, reluctant sale, £2000. Tel (mobile) 07833 683388 or 01270 768302 (Cheshire)

Yamaha WR400F, 2000, loads of extras, factory road kit, race pipe, lots of spares, as new, £2850 or take trials bike in p/x. Tel 020 8390 6166 (Surrey)

Yamaha DT250MX, 1978, total rebuild, no T&T, small amount of work to finish, lots of spares, £375 ono can deliver. Tel 07717 730871 (Berks)

Yamaha XT600E, 52-reg, black, Datatag, Renthals, rack, FSH, £2625. Tel 01772 423709 (Lancs)

CCM 604E, 2000, 4000 miles, mostly summer road use, several extras, just serviced, bargain at £2000 ono. Tel 07797 715626 (Jersey)

Honda XL250R, 1984, T&T, RFVC engine, new clutch/brakes, recovered seat, reliable, good green laner, £850 ono. Tel 07748 197500 (Devon)

Suzuki DR350 Enduro, 1994, T&T, 9500 miles, good green-laner, new bike forces sale, £1195 ono. Tel (mobile) 07719 938824 or 01977 672924 (W Yorks)

Honda XL185/125, 1982, red/black, T&T, six-speed, very reliable, ideal trailie or LDT bike, cheap fun, new bike forces sale, £695. Tel 01600 772400 (Monmouth)

Yamaha TTR250 Open Enduro, 1996, N-reg, MoT, CRD sys-

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

tem, extras, good cond, £1750. Tel 07810 580229 (Cumbria)
KTM 400EXC, 2000, T&T, sump-plate, alloy handguards, well maintained, £2900. Tel 01278 652579 (Somerset)

Beta Alp 200, 2001, T&T, low miles, dual start, new c+s/tyres, exc cond, £1900. Tel 01902 791275 (Staffs)
Gas Gas EC300, 2002, blue, only used six times, 400 miles, little used toy, no damage, mint cond, £2995.

Tel (mobile) 07816 828155 or 01260 280165 (Cheshire)
Honda 650 Dominator, W-reg, great on road, as new cond, £2500 or may p/x smaller-engined, lower geared bike. Tel (mobile) 07980 480032 or 01295 750665 (Oxon)

Praga ED250 enduro, 02-reg, two-stroke, road legal, 1800km, Dell'orto carb conversion, good cond, £1700 ono. Tel 02392 693016 (Hants)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2002, CRD exhaust, barkbusters, Renthals, MT21s, green lane use only, very little use, better than new cond, £3150 ono. Tel 02392 660353 (Hants)

Honda CRM250, 1989, T&T, new c+s, respoked wheels, good enduro tyres, £1200 ono. Tel 01483 503203 (Surrey)
KTM EXC Racing 4T, 2003, 48 hours use, elec start, handguards, sump-plate, exc cond, £3300 ono.

Tel (mobile) 07989 347444 or 01373 462381 (Somerset)
KTM 200EXC, 2001, 970 miles, well maintained, extras include Fatbars, handguards, flywheel weight etc, spares, manuals, exc cond, £2500. Tel (mobile) 07850 046574 or 0121 6810598 (Midlands)

KTM 525MXC, 2002, low miles, taxed, large tank, all usual extras, vgc, £3900 ono. Tel 01980 626083 (Wilts)
Honda Transalp, 1987, T&T, Givi screen, topbox, barkbusters, recent rear tyre/c+s/head bearings, exc cond, £1250. Tel 01353 740886 (Cambs)

KTM 250EXC, 2003, hand/sumpguards, clutch saver, excellent condition, £2850 ono. Tel Paul on (mobile) 07880 732683 or 01443 836189 (S Wales)

KTM 300EXC, 2003, 20 hours use, hand/sumpguards, exc cond, £3495 ono. Tel 01373 467259 (Somerset)
CCM 604e supermoto, 2000, X-reg, grey/black, MoT, 4200 miles, off-road wheels, good cond, £2900 ono.

Tel (mobile) 07974 24868 (?) or 01428 606314 (Surrey)
Honda XR600, 2002, red, 7200 miles, FSH, new wheels/tyres/shock/carb/plastics/Renthals, fantastic standard cond, brilliant bike, £3000. Tel 01625 425953 (Cheshire)

Honda CRM250 AR, 1997, red/white, 17000km, full DEP, bashplate, frameguards, good cond, £1900. Tel 01522 889079 (Lincs)

Honda XR400R, 1999, T&T, 4900km, road tyres, handguards, FMF pipe, well serviced and clean, £2300. Tel 01778 346908 (Lincs)

Suzuki PE250, 1977/78, twin-shock, not reg'd, recent £550 engine by 'Crooks', matching frame and engine numbers, can email pics, £1000. Tel 01387 820287 (Dumfries)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2003, UK bike, yellow, 2100 miles, FSSH, remainder of warranty, superb cond, £3100. Tel (mobile) 07764 834841 or 01730 892432 (Hants)

KTM 450EXC, 2003 model, 52-reg, 1000 miles, barkbusters, sumpguard, clutch saver, green lane use only, vgc, £4050. Tel 07818 812535 (Devon)

Gas Gas EC300, 2002, new piston/rings/c+s, DEP pipe, Renthals, green lane use only, good cond, £2495 ono. Tel 07876 616265 (Wilts)

KTM 200EXC (GS), 2000, sump/handguards, light green lane use only, vgc, £2350. Tel 07970 253680 (E Sussex)
Kawasaki KMX125, 2002, 51-reg, 1450 miles, one mature owner, good original cond with all paperwork from new, £1800. Tel 01276 33847 (Hants)

Gas Gas EC250, 2002, road reg'd, taxed, lights/indicators, handguards, very good original cond, ready to green lane or enduro, £2350 ono. Tel 01874 794597 (W Mids)

Honda XR400R R3, 52-reg, 1300km, taxed, one owner, vgc, £3150 ono. Tel (mobile) 07770 983407 or 01603 872292 (Norfolk)

KTM 200EXC, 2001, road reg'd, taxed, new tyres, recent x-ring c+s, handguards, good cond, £2000. Tel 01944 758377 (N Yorks)

Gas Gas EC400FSE, 2003, red, 720 miles, £3600. Or £4000 with spare Talon wheels/tyres. Will sell wheels separately. Tel 01293 431055 (Surrey)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2002, elec start, new c+s/tyres/plastics, FMF exhaust/graphics, Renthals, hand/sumpguards, £3050. Tel Bill on 0161 338 5731 (Cheshire)

Kawasaki KDX200, 1989, road reg'd, well maintained, good cond, new bike forces sale, £700 ono. Tel 01452 536615 (Gloucs)

Honda XR400R, 1999, W-reg, red, T&T, one owner, handguards, new discs, recent suspension rebuild, well maintained, super reliable, £2000 no offers. Tel 01462 743717 (Herts)

KTM 400EXC, 2002, bashplate, handguards, fork protectors, Trailtech, just spent £700, £3300. Tel 01793 882966 (Wilts)

Kawasaki KLR650, 1987, MoT, 30000 miles, new c+s/battery/screen, rebored, good tyres, dent in tank, £750. Tel 07709 352844 (Suffolk)

Suzuki DR-Z400, 2002, yellow/white, taxed, 3200 miles, new c+s, extras, recent tyres, good cond, £2900. Tel 07967 011196 (Gloucs)

Suzuki DR-Z400SK2, 2002, yellow, taxed, only 4300 miles, Alphadot, Gadget bashplate, Renthals, handguards, new tyres, spares, bargain at £2800. Tel 0161 628 4063 (Manchester)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2002 model, yellow, T&T, 2500 miles, service record, still under warranty, £3300 ono. Also Honda XR250, 2001 model, red, 5000 miles, £2300. Tel 02920 593457 (S Wales)

Suzuki DR-Z400SY, 2000, W-reg, T&T, 3200 miles, CRD exhaust, sump/frameguards, good cond, extras and spares included, £2500. Tel James on 01480 421023 (Cambs)

Yamaha TTR600, 2001, 7000 miles, never used off-road, good cond, mature owner requires something more civilised, £2200 or exchange for BMW R100/R80 GS. Tel 01992 575379 (Essex)

CCM 350 two-stroke, reg'd 1992, pictured in TBM 79, page 49, £950. Tel 07899 754938 (Oxon)

Husaberg FE501e, 2003, road legal enduro bike, elec start, very light, bashplate, new decals, exc cond, ring for full spec, £3300. Tel 07753 551566 (W Yorks)

Suzuki RMX250N, 1992, J-reg, yellow, import, MoT, autolube, barrel damage, light green lane/road use only, exc cond, sensible offers. Tel 01293 781121 (Surrey)

Yamaha TTR250 Open Enduro, 1993, K-reg, elec start, little use, new rear tyre, good green laner, exc cond, £1500 ono. Tel 01691 777140 (Shrops)

Honda XR400R, T-reg, MoT, 6000km, FMF Q-pipe, Werx seat/graphics, Gadget bashplate, c/w original parts, must sell as moving abroad, £2495 ono. Tel 07789 006514 (Cambs)

KTM 200EXC, 2004, road reg'd, taxed, only 145 miles of green laning, perfect cond, £3500 ono. Tel 07810 637008 (Cambs)

Yamaha XT350, 1985, full chassis overhaul, sweet engine, new bodywork, spares, manual, stainless pannier racks,

vgc, can email pics, £900. Tel 01872 273890 (Cornwall)
KTM 250EXC 4T, 2002, taxed, green lane use only, good cond, £3500. Tel 01874 553622 (Cornwall)

Yamaha TTR600, X-reg, brand new seat/tank/headlamp/blue plastics, no it's not been crashed, good cond, £2500 ono. Tel (mobile) 07971 241138 or 0161 456 9326 (Cheshire)

Yamaha XT600E, 51-reg, blue, 1100 miles, good cond, £2500 ono. Tel (after 6pm) 01597 851540 (Powys)

Aprilia Tuareg Wind, 1988, one owner, £1100. Also 1992, lowered leading link forks, £900. Lots of spares. Tel 01234 822074 (Beds)

Gas Gas EC200, 2002, 52-reg, new piston rings/c+s/rear tyre, hand/sumpguards, WRP bars, well maintained, vgc, £2650 ono. Tel 01386 832111 (W Mids)

WANTED

Wanted Beta Alp 200, reasonable cond, cash waiting. Tel 07970 017202 (Monmouthshire)

Wanted Suzuki DR800, complete bike, non-runner preferred. Or CDI unit, electrics, plus any other parts considered. Tel (mobile) 07770 772700 or 01305 824538 (Dorset)

Wanted skidplate or bashplate to fit 1989 Kawasaki KMX200, must be in good cond, not the engine bar. Tel 01969 663341 (N Yorks)

Wanted Kawasaki KDX250B2, 1982 model, complete bike or any new or used spares. Tel (mobile) 07770 772164 or 01773 744936 (Derbys)

Wanted front wheel for DR350. Also large tank, must be in good cond. Tel 0161 626 1350 (Manchester)

Wanted DR350 elec start or XT600E, in p/x for Kawasaki ZX10, 1989, G-reg, two owners, service history, vgc, giving up touring, no rubbish please. Tel 01296 483000 (Bucks)

Wanted workshop manual for Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2000 model. Tel John on (mobile) 07971 864668 or 01438 216056 (Herts)

Wanted BMW R80G/S forks and yokes etc, to restore to original, have Kawasaki items for sale or swap. Tel Nick (leave message) on 07904 505496 (Warrington)

SPARES

Yoshimura Ti exhaust system for DR-ZE, £375. Supermoto wheels and tyres for sale, £575 ono.

Tel (after 2pm) 01483 832077 (Surrey)
Supermoto wheels for Yamaha WR/YZ, gold Talons/Excels, 320mm wave disc, includes headlamp and SM fender, as new, £750. Tel 01993 770718 (Oxon)

KTM 525 barrel and piston, unused, with all parts to convert 450EXC, cost £650, sell for £300 ono. Tel 07788 441191 (Northants)

Three-bike trailer, lights etc, properly maintained, £200. XR250/200 genuine workshop manual, £10. Yamaha DT250 manual, £10. Tel 01932 240150 (Surrey)

KX250 rear wheel, Talon hub, 18in Excel rim, disc etc, vgc, £130. Large fuel tank, clear, vgc, fit 1999 onwards, £60. TM250E flywheel weight, 1998. Tel 07788 441191 (Northants)

Alpinestars Tech 6 boots, black/white, size UK 7, brand new, unused, still boxed, £140. Tel 07870 679476 (S Wales)
Gaerne boots, size 9, unused. Tel 01202 692366 (Dorset)

Two-bike trailer, will carry two 600cc dirt bikes, stores vertically, vgc, £175. Tel (mobile) 07986 473063 or 01257 263137 (Lancs)

Two Kawasaki KDX220 factory spares kits, plus other bits, offers. Tel (mobile) 07929 838301 or 01829 740148 (Cheshire)
Over 50 copies of TBM, offers. Tel 01223 237025 (Cambs)

Supertrapp silencer for XR250, £30. Tel 07782 291559 (Cheshire)
Acerbis large capacity fuel tank for Honda XR250/400/600, £100. Also silencer baffle for 1998 XR400R, £10. Tel 01752 863444 (Devon)

Hebo hydraulic clutch conversion kit, new, still in box, cost £140, offers. Tel (mobile) 07929 838301 or 01829 740148 (Cheshire)

Wheels and tyres from KTM 640 LC4, 2004 model, c/w front disc, only 15 miles use, immaculate, £380 ono. Tel (mobile) 07714 662253 or 01594 835025 (Gloucs)

Two-bike trailer and helmet for sale. Tel 07876 118991 (N Wales)
FMF Powerbomb header and Powercore can for XR400R. Also new wiring harness and CDI, nylon clutch cable, new sprockets, £370 ono will split. Tel 01947 840985 (Yorks)

IMS four gallon tank for Suzuki DR-Z400, white, new and unused, fits 2000-04 E-model or ES, cost £250, accept £180. Tel 020 8906 2286 (Herts)

Three-bike trailer, new tyres, ramp, light board, £180 ono. Tel 07815 007853 (Merseyside)

Sinisalo 2004 enduro jacket, blue, size large, size 36" trousers, XL shirt, worn three times, cost £255, sell for £150. Tel (mobile) 07751 085915 or 01642 363330 (Cleveland)

Spares for Honda XL600R/LM/RM, everything available, phone for prices. Also large Acerbis plastic tank for Kawasaki KLR600/650, £100. KLR250 engine and spare cylinder-head, £50. Tel 07979 772666 (Sussex)

CRD silencer to fit DR350, good cond, offers. Also pair of brake calipers, new rear pads, offers. Tel 01202 601455 (Dorset)

Carbon fibre airbox for Yamaha WR/YZ-F250, off 2001 WR-F, mint cond, cost £300, sell for £95. Standard silencer for 2001 WR400F, as new, £80. Tel 01932 561991 (Surrey)

Standard exhaust for Yamaha YZ450E, mint cond, £100. Tel 07932 550413 (Tyne & Wear)

Yamaha Serow wiring diagram, laminated, £4 inc postage. Tel (after 6pm) 01209 831963 (Cornwall)

Kawasaki KMX125/200 parts, front wheels, suspension, rad, headlight, brakes, exhaust, rear shock, swingarm, linkage and more. Tel 01761 452606 (Somerset)

Talon wheels to fit Gas Gas EC400FSE, with tyres, £400. Tel 01293 431055 (Surrey)

Lider bike trailer, two plus one, galvanised, loading ramp, integral lights/electrics, jockey wheel, prop stands, 750kg capacity, spare floorboard, quality trailer, £350. Tel 01600 715883 (S Wales)

Original wheels for XR400R, perfect order with tyres/tubes/rimlocks but no discs or sprocket, £500. Tel 07776 216565 (Wilts)

Modified footrests and brackets for Pampera mkIII moves footrests further back for better riding position/traction, £30. Also BMW panniers and rack, as new, £175. Tel 01242 697494 (Gloucs)

Parts for Honda CRM250 mkII, please phone for details. Tel 07712 778558 (Bristol)

Kawasaki forks/yokes/bars, currently on BMW R80G/S, swap for original BMW parts. Tel Nick (leave message) on 07904 505496 (Warrington)

