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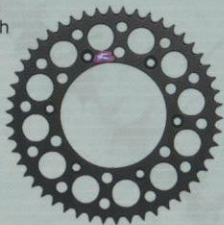


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Inside:

HIGH FIVE

Top Five BEC
Class Winners
Head to Head!

Husky 125
CRF250X
CR250R
WR450F
KTM 525

Biggest
Ever Issue!

DALES WINTER-MAN

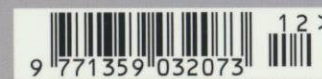
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Heaven And Hell THE SECOND COMING

with music by
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and others

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EDITORIAL

Brand New

New logo? Yeah we've got one of those, as you might've spotted on the front cover of this month's mag. Why bother changing it? Oh I dunno, we thought, it needed a bit of a revamp. You know how it is. Naturally enough (this being TBM) we decided to go ahead with the re-branding just a day after we'd ordered a kilometre of soft bannering, five hundred new stickers and a few miles of course marker tape - all featuring the old elliptical TBM oval.

Obviously, it's this sort of joined-up thinking which sees the magazine waft effortlessly towards deadline each and every month with nary a hiccup. Yeah right.

The reality is (strangely enough), somewhat removed from that utopian image. Stuff goes wrong all the time: we always struggle to get test bikes when we need them, then when we've got them we fall off the things and break 'em. And if we're not falling off and breaking them then there's no light for photos, or the track we've chosen to ride is waterlogged, or being used for a car boot sale.

Then when we get back to the office we find that our email has gone AWOL, that the bureau we use for scanning our images have all gone out to lunch and won't be back for a week, or that we wasted an entire afternoon's photo shoot because our photo-processors accidentally fogged our films (or occasionally that smudger James has forgotten to put a film in the camera - don't laugh, it really happened). And before you ask, we just sold our hyper-expensive digital camera (at a huge loss I might add) because it failed to work properly from day one.

But this is the sort of stuff which makes the joy of publishing a mag like TBM all the more pleasurable. Because when it does finally come together you feel so elated and ecstatic that you immediately go out and get hammered and forget all about the hassle you've suffered during the past month. Oh... and then of course the mailing house decides to 'sit on' the magazine for a few days, and the following week thousands of irate subscribers ring you up to find out if you've eloped with all their money.

Of course I wouldn't have it any other way, but just for once I'd love to have an easy issue of the mag. One which goes together so effortlessly that we can all get home in time to enjoy the relaxing sight of Andy Hunter giving Minty a good kicking in East-Enders. Because if there's one thing I've learned in this game, it's that just as you begin to throttle-off for the end of the monthly race, the piston of good luck collides with the descending valve of fate, locking up the wheel of fortune good and proper...

I hope you like the new logo on the front of the mag (and soon to be appearing on a brand-new long-sleeved T-shirt near you - just in time for Xmas eh?), but knowing our luck the printers will have probably printed it upside down...

SI MELBER

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FESTIVE FIGURES

Tis' the season to be jolly - dirt bike sales are up for the fourth consecutive month, with the latest 'Adventure Sport' model figures up another three percent from last month to 14percent.

The 'Trail/Enduro' bike sales are also improving, now only down seven percent on last year's figures, still a way in front of current total motorcycle sales (registrations) of minus twelve percent.

There's been no change in the 'Adventure Sport' top five, with the big Beemer still sitting pretty in the number one spot, up another 498 units, and the CCM R30 is still holding onto fifth position with another eight bikes sold.

In the 'Trail/Enduro' category there's no stopping the powerful little 125 Honda XR, up another 94 units. The ever-popular Yam DT125 has managed to get one up on the Suzuki Van Van, climbing up to second place with a further 67 units sold.



Adventure Sport	
1 BMW R1200GS	1440
2 Honda XL125V	624
3 Triumph 955 Tiger	468
4 BMW F650GS	386
5 CCM R30	341

Trail / Enduro	
1 Honda XR125L	1365
2 Yamaha DT125	501
3 Suzuki RV125	490
4 Honda CRF250X	457
5 Suzuki DR-Z400S	391



MY FIRST BIKE

MIKE RAPLEY HAS BEEN RIDING AND REPORTING ABOUT TRIALS FOR ALL HIS ADULT LIFE. HIS FIRST BIKE WAS, NATURALLY ENOUGH, A TRIALLER...

SIXTY-FIVE quid it cost my Dad in 1963. And if you could buy it now in suitable fettle it would probably cost 25 times that amount.

'It' was 846 KFC, a 199cc Triumph Cub in trials trim that was the first of so many off-road machines that I have owned or been loaned over the past 40 years that I have lost count, but it's still the only bike of mine which I can instantly remember the registration number.

I had been following trials with my Dad for several years, so it became inevitable that the day would come when I had my own trials bike. As a raw 16-year-old in 1963, youth trials were still in the distant future, so it was only once my 16th birthday had passed that the purchase of a bike became an issue.

Dad looked around for a while until he came upon the Cub in Johnny Argrave's shop in Upton Lea near Slough and having been assured it was suitable for the purpose, money changed hands.

But riding trials was still some way in the future as Dad wouldn't let me take part until I had passed my driving test. However, under pressure, he did relent and just two days before my motorcycle driving test, I rode my first trial, the enjoyable Farnham Royal

Club's Home Guard Cup Trial in December 1963.

Over the following few months I took part in numerous South Midland Centre events until trial number eight, the West Ham Club's Hawken Cup Trial, where I won my first trophy as Best Novice and where the above picture was taken.

As it turned out, it also proved to be the last trial I rode on 846 KFC as during my ninth trial, I rode through a puddle, the bike cut out, and never went again - at least not in my hands. Dad returned it to Argrave's shop, asked him to fix it and sell it at the same time, which he did with dad collecting the cash difference.

Looking at the picture of the Cub with yours truly aboard, it seems pretty basic and rough, but it was a tidy bike for the time - or so I thought. I have few memories of how the Cub performed, but I do recall that any sort of a hill was an instant *five* as I had no ability and the bike had limited power.

But it instilled the thrill of riding trials in my blood and was soon followed by a 1964 Royal Enfield Crusader trials - then a Cotton, then numerous Bultacos, then bike after bike after bike until now, 40 years later the magic of trialling means as much to me now as it did all those years ago...

SPARE PART?



After CCM's recent resurrection, you can still get hold of spare control cables for most models from Venhill Engineering UK. They were an OE CCM supplier until 1999, and also distribute the German range of Magura handlebars, (fitted to the 404 and other current models). Expect to pay £14.99 for an R30 clutch cable, £12.99 for a throttle cable and £42.99 for front brake hoses - for more info, call Venhill on 01306 885111. Meanwhile the resurrected CCM company [CCM (Britain) Ltd] chose the new Telford Dirt Bike Expo to unveil a cut-price, stripped-down DR-Z engine MXer which retails at £3995 and can easily be converted for road use!

Tee Time

Support Britain's top female desert racer in this year's Dakar Rallye... Join Team Desert Rose and as getting regular email updates during the race, you'll receive either a T-shirt or a hoody (for just £22 or £32 inc p&p respectively). Try teamdesertrose.com for an order form and do your bit for Patsy. (Ladies skinny fit T-shirts are also available).



SNIPPETS

☛ SATANIC SILENCE

Boosting power output is always a good thing, and exhaust specialists Devil have just released some new silencers for Yamaha's XT660R.

The new Magnum exhaust system features a pair of specially designed super-slim, road legal cans with removable baffles, T304 aluminium link pipes and a comprehensive mounting kit.

Available in either stainless Magnum Inox at £582.00 or Magnum carbon-fibre at £690.00. Call 01706 212102 for more details.

☛ SHOW-OFFS

Two lucky winners have won TBM's free entry into Dirt Rider Expo, plus a bonus £100 worth of spending vouchers each. Ian Allder from Herts and Malcolm Chant from Staffs (obviously both big Monty Python fans) managed to correctly answer our pointless question, 'What is the air-speed velocity of an unladen Swallow...?' Of course the right answer was 'What do you mean? An African or European Swallow?'

Well done guys - and thanks to Ian for sending in his answer on the back of such an uplifting postcard...





FILL BILL

This is the sort of really-useful new product we like. Pure Pro's Rapid Fill nozzle attaches to a standard five- or ten-litre plastic jerrycan and allows you to fill your bike's tank single-handedly. Push down on the spring-loaded filler and it'll disgorge five litres in under ten seconds without spilling a drop. Best of all you can't over-fill your tank because as soon as the level reaches the nozzle it shuts off the delivery. Good stuff. At £19.95 we thought it was a bit pricey, but we reckon that (like us) you'll change your mind, first time you use it. Get one from any off-road stockists or call 01778 394909 for details.



SHIFT IT

Shift may be a relative newcomer to the enduro scene (they're well known in MX), but their new XC enduro jacket pushes all the right buttons for us. For starters the design is clean and simple with two exterior front pockets, twin zipped vents on the front (a single vent on the rear) and a chunky central zip with a storm flap. The sleeves are separately vented as well as being removable and there's an aertex mesh lining, removable hard elbow armour and a couple more pockets round the back for stashing the sleeves. And that's about it... Clean and elegant design.

The XC jacket costs a very reasonable £90 and we reckon that that's good value. For details of your nearest Shift stockist call 0191 487 6100.

I'M GLOVIN' IT

Winter time means using winter gloves and these are among the best we've seen this year. XC-ting's Top Hill Gloves are made from a combination of cordura and clarino with an inner membrane of HIPORA which claims to make them waterproof and breathable.

We haven't had chance to test out their claims but they feel comfortable on - in particular we like the long and narrow cuff, and the slim overall design. As with any winter gloves, there's a certain amount of bulkiness in the fingers, but if you can put up with that, then at £29.99, the Top Hills seem a bit of a bargain. Call 08707742600 for your nearest dealer.



FLASH BASH

We've always found that products from Summers' Racing Components (SRC) are generally well designed, light, and superbly functional. And this bashplate for Honda's CRF250X is no exception. We like it because it's drilled for lightness, comes with a full fixing kit (including a ball-ended Allen key), and provides maximum protection. And we like the fact that the build quality is chunky rather than presentational. All SRC products are available directly from CORE Racing Imports on 07776 132144 and this one costs £88.99. Check it out...



Light Fantastic

Stefan Merriman and UFO Corse Yamaha have had huge success in 2004, with both a WR250 and a 450. TBM took a spin on their pared-down machines...

Stefan Merriman is a WEC rider like no other. Australia's most successful off-road motorcycle racer, as a four-time world enduro champion and a two-time outright ISDE victor the jockey-sized rider has proved he can turn his hand to winning on close to any size or make of enduro bike. In '00 it was on a two-stroke Husqvarna, in '01 it was aboard a 400cc four-stroke Husqvarna, in '03 it was on a two-stroke Honda, and this year it has been aboard a four-stroke Yamaha. With a unique, highly professional and passionate approach to his racing, a riding style like no other and a racer's brain that often sees him thinking outside of the 'norm', Merriman is a rider many describe (in jest) as being simply 'a little bit special'.

But there is one other thing that separates Stefan from his WEC colleagues in a much more profound way: the fact that he goes against the grain. Whenever any topic concerning Merriman is debated, be it current trends in riding style or machine set-up, convention has to be forgotten. In fact convention, and everything it stands for, has to be scrunched up like a dirty old rag and thrown clean out of the window. A machine's reputation means little to Stefan. What might not work for the masses often works just fine for the pint-sized wonder. It's as simple as that. If Stefan develops a fondness for a bike, any bike, it usually means one thing - he's gonna win on it.

10 TBM

He first did exactly that aboard Husqvarna's 'prehistoric' 360cc two-stroke when he came to Europe and he did it again this year aboard Yamaha's WR450F - a bike not known as a factory KTM beater. Stefan is unique. Stefan is unorthodox. Stefan is simply Stefan.

Light Year

Having dominated the WEC's Enduro 1 class (125cc two-stroke and 250cc four-stroke) this season aboard his WR250F, Stefan has also raced Yamaha's 450cc enduro machine with similar success in '04. While his E1 dominance this year is common knowledge to those who follow enduro's premier series, with this year's ISDE

being overshadowed by events off the track, Stefan's impressive 450-mounted victory received far less recognition than it deserved. And the fact that few outside of Italy know that Stefan became overall Italian Enduro Champion in '04 aboard the Japanese four-fifty has also done little to spread the word that the Merriman/WR450 combination is every bit as proficient as the Merriman/WR250 partnership.

Combining a rider as talented as Stefan with a machine as dominant as Yamaha's WR250F was only ever going to result in success. But a WR450? 'What the hell does he want to ride that thing for?' commented onlookers when Stefan announced he was to race the big Yam at this

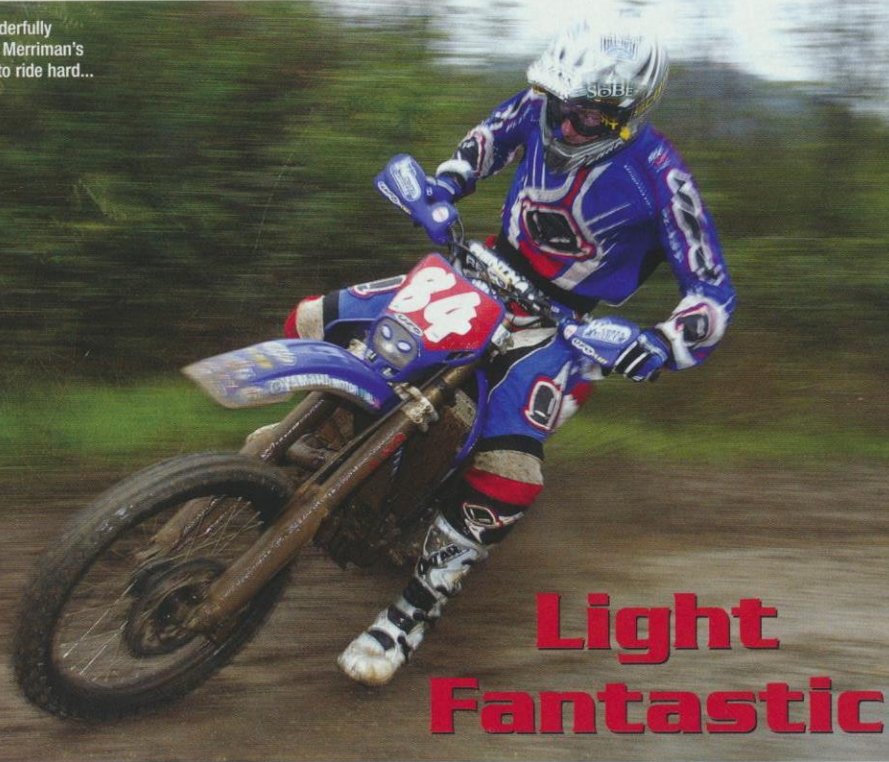
year's ISDE. After all, the 450's power characteristics, portly ergos and an unwillingness to manoeuvre with either the ease or grace of some of its 450cc class-mates, means that it wouldn't be many peoples' first choice of race bike. But Merriman loves it.

Lighten Up

Unsurprisingly, Stefan's bike isn't simply a 'prepped' version of the standard machine. While 'factory' team bikes are often visually similar to those purchased by the great unwashed, on closer inspection they are, more often than not, noticeably different. Stefan's bike is no exception to this rule, having spent many hours in the team's race



Thanks to wonderfully smooth power, Merriman's 450 was easy to ride hard...



Light Fantastic

shop being refined and developed into the machine it is now. And the fact that no one has ever performed so well at this level on a WR450F warrants giving the bike a closer look.

Whilst most 'hobby riders' are happy to get used to the 450F's often forceful mannerisms and embrace the fact that it has solid Japanese build quality and an electric starter, for a serious racer a machine which carries excess weight is a huge no-no. While it's normal for most teams to put their bikes on a diet for a few weeks prior to the start of any major competition, by comparison Merriman's bike has simply been starved of all nutrition. Exactly how much lighter it is than a standard WR450F the team wouldn't tell me, but what they would say was that it's 10kg lighter than his 450-mounted team-mate Andrea Beconi's bike. And Beconi's machine, while not as 'special' as Stefan's, is a long, long way from a standard WR450F. So the saving of a further 10kg over an already lightweight, race-ready 450 means that Stefan's bike must be one of, if not *the* lightest 450cc enduro bike in competition today.

Weight Watchers

To lose weight, the bike has been stripped of all unnecessary parts. That means the removal of the complete electric starter system - battery, bearings, starter motor, internal gears and any other parts which are needed to fire the machine into life at the touch of the button. Merriman now relies solely on the kick-starter.

The frame on Stefan's bike, while remaining 100percent standard, now holds no oil. Ordinarily the WR's frame contains one litre of oil, with a further 300ml in the engine, but in this case the motor contains all of the oil. The removal of the dry sump's hoses and oil pumps represents a significant weight saving, but not as much as the liberal use of titanium and carbon fibre.

With the exception of the bike's three spindles (front wheel, rear wheel and swing-arm/engine spindle) each and every nut, bolt and fastener is titanium. The lightweight metal is used everywhere, absolutely everywhere. The swing-arm linkage bolts are titanium, the foot-pegs are titanium (they're from a Yamaha YZ450),

From a distance it still resembles the standard WR... Well, if you squint a bit..!



Billet clamps are easy to spot, but did you notice the carbon tank..?



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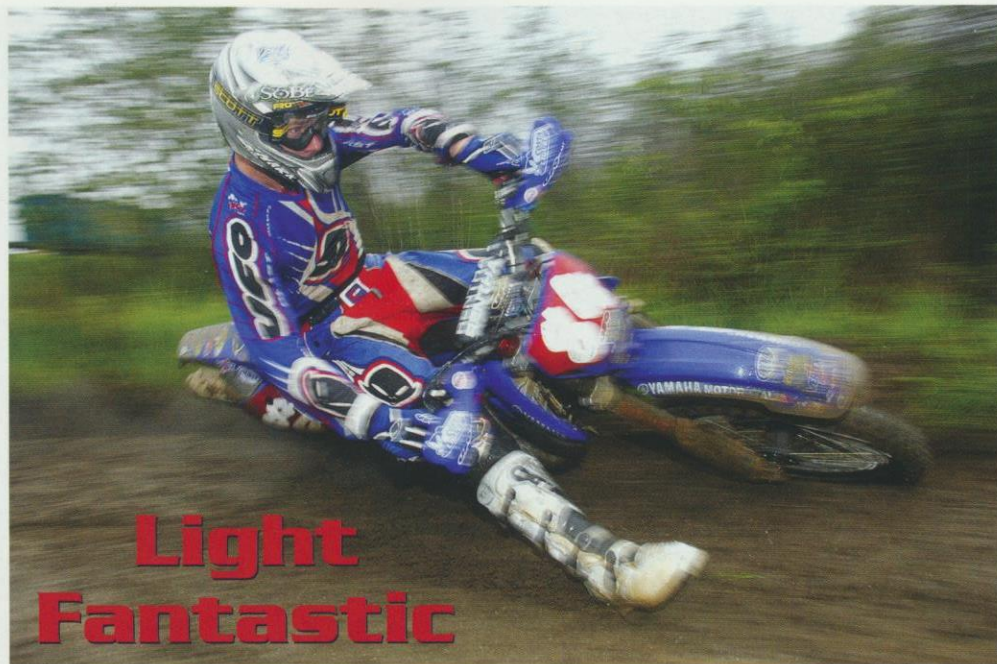
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Stefan Merriman &
WR250F – 2004 World
Enduro Champions

FIRST CHECK



Light Fantastic

and so are the shock and fork mounting bolts. All of the plastic panels are held in place with titanium fasteners and all external engine bolts are titanium. Oh, and the Leo Vince Exhaust system is also titanium.

As for carbon fibre, the engine mounting brackets, seat-base, rear light unit, exhaust guard and rear chainguard are all made from the black weave. But best of all so are both the fuel tank and the sub-frame/airbox!

The standard WR tank is far too bulky and has been replaced with a much smaller, narrower unit. The 7.5 litre tank is very similar in shape to that fitted to a Yamaha motocross bike, but rarely is it brimmed with fuel.

The sub-frame/airbox is an absolute work of art. Giving the bike a slightly lower seat height than a standard sub-frame, it's easy to miss the fact that the bike is fitted with the one-piece unit. Due to the scarcity of these parts, at a glance it could easily be dismissed as an airbox neatly covered in carbon-effect stickers. But the one-piece unit is both lighter and stronger than the equivalent standard part and is also a lot more expensive. What's more, it's made by a company which frequently manufactures parts for NASA! I kid you not.

Slim and Trim

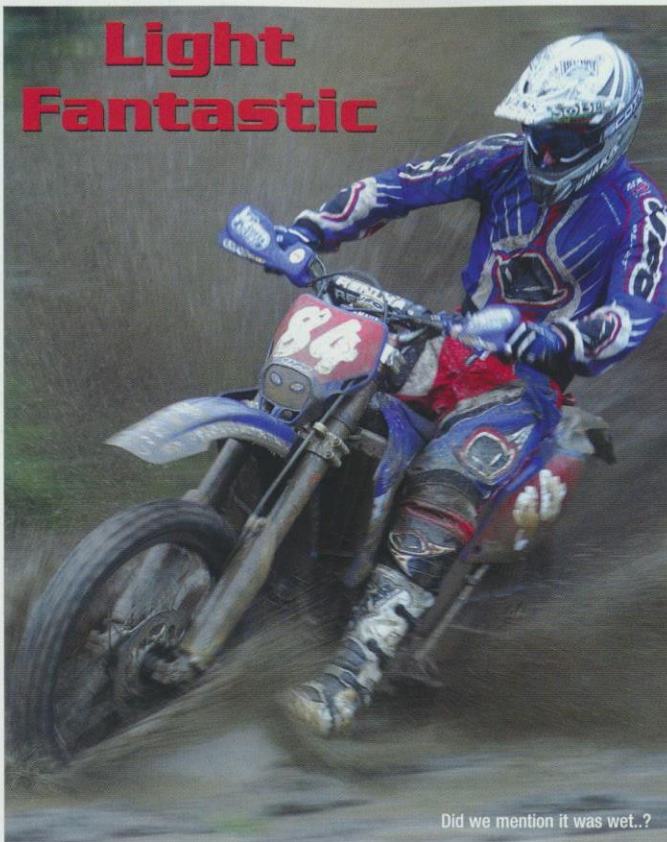
In terms of engine mods, aside from jetting changes and the fitting of the Leo Vince exhaust system, there are only three notable differences over a standard 450 lump. The first is the fitting of a Vertex piston, made to the team's requirements (it's lighter). The second is that the bike, more often than not, runs YZ cams. And thirdly it's fitted with an STM slipper clutch. Thought to be the only WEC-level bike using a slipper clutch, the STM unit, I was told, makes 'a big difference' but also makes the WR's already heavy clutch action even more so, despite the team having lengthened the activating arm.

Apparently, WR and YZ cams both produce the same 'length' of power over the rev range. However, as Stefan's mechanic Giuli explained, the WR cams make their power earlier in the range (the power kicks-in lower down but tails off earlier than with YZ cams). Because of this difference in power delivery Stefan uses one or the other, depending on track conditions.

With a standard WR crank, gearbox and carburettor, Stefan's engine isn't hugely different to that of a standard bike. But importantly it's simpler, lighter and has less moving parts.

Despite being one-core wider than YZ rads,

Light Fantastic



Did we mention it was wet..?

radiator the rubber-mounted shroud simply pulls itself away from its mooring.

Weighty Matters

Due to the bike's weight loss, Stefan runs the same suspension set-up on his 450F that he does on his 250. While that might not sound particularly noteworthy, it is. Fitting 250F suspension to a 450F would normally result in a noticeably under-sprung bike, but Stefan's isn't. Instead the suspension has a very lively, yet well balanced action when stationary - almost like that of a trials bike. Stefan runs 49mm USD Solva forks which feature both high- and low-speed compression, and a Solva shock (fitted with a titanium spring) which also benefits from high- and low-speed compression adjustment. The forks are held in place with billet Solva clamps, and Stefan runs a steering damper, which is neatly attached to a carbon fibre bracket and tucked away under a Renthal bar-pad.

The brakes on Stefan's bike are highly personalised. Tucked

behind the right UFO handguard is a Honda-style Nissin front master cylinder fitted with a shortened lever. At the other end of this system is the standard caliper and a 260mm floating front disk. The rear brake set-up also differs from stock. Featuring a smaller than standard solid rear disc, the standard rear caliper is linked to the master cylinder via a carbon kevlar hose. With the standard lever replaced with a much stronger, billet unit, Stefan prefers to run an altered linkage system so as to further soften the action of the rear brake. CHT wheels are used, fitted with Michelin tyres and mousses.

Speed of Light

Despite the Italian weather doing its best to spoil the day, the fact that the heavens remained open from morning till night meant that I was able to test Stefan's bike in the kind of conditions where 450s are known to perform at their worst.

Stefan's bike retains the WR parts. Because of the bike's reduced oil capacity, the larger rads are necessary to keep everything cool. And so to make the bike thinner at the rider's knees, the team employs a system which allows them to both run the rad shrouds close to the radiators, and remove and replace the rad louvres in just a few seconds. After removing the pre-formed recess through which the rad shroud is bolted to the radiator, the team strip away every ridge and strengthening fin from the rear of the panel so that it touches the rad from top to bottom. Fitting the panel using a rubber headlight strap, the shroud is then attached to a small carbon fibre bracket close to the frame, which also holds the rad louvres in position. This allows the louvres to be removed in double quick time should they become blocked, and also makes the bike approximately three centimetres thinner. Now, should Stefan clip a tree, rather than damage a

MERRIMAN'S WR250F... RAIN STOPS PLAY



The nimble little 250 really needed to be kept on the boil...

Like the best laid plans, the testing of Stefan's WR250F didn't go quite as I'd hoped it would. Having ridden the 450F, it was raining so hard by the time I fired up the 250 that the decision was taken to put the bike back in the van after just 20 minutes - before someone drowned or developed pneumonia!

During those 20 short, rain-soaked minutes I was able to form a brief impression as to how Stefan sets-up the smaller of his two bikes. Initially, with the exception of having less power, it felt exactly the same to ride as the 450. Then, as I started to pick up my pace, I realised more so than ever before just how much a bike's power affects the way it feels and handles. Although both of Stefan's bikes are of a similar weight, the 250 felt not only much more manoeuvrable but also smaller.

Expecting the bike to produce strong power from bottom to top, I actually found that it was a bit of a buzz-box as it liked to be revved. Whilst I wanted to feed-in the power

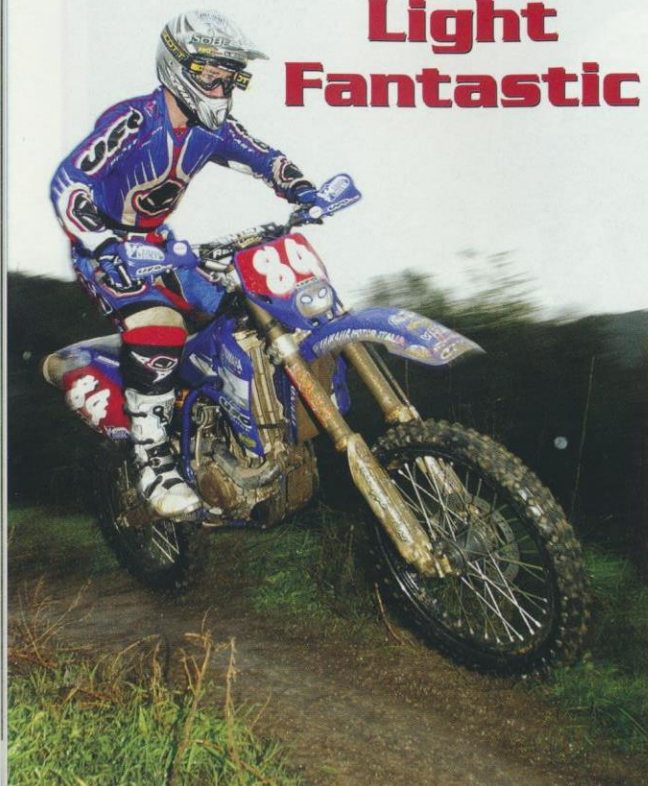
from the bottom-end, the way Stefan explodes out of corners he must be using much more of the mid-range.

Even with the entire track covered in three inches of slop and water, the bike would turn where and when asked - much the same as his 450 did. In fact, the bike did pretty much everything in the same way the 450 did!



FIRST CHECK

Light Fantastic



wheel followed the front no matter how brutally, or early I down-shifted. Ordinarily down-shifting early on a 450cc thumper results in the rear wheel sliding past the front as it struggles to rotate fast enough. But on Stefan's bike the rear wheel followed the front without fail - something which meant I never once found myself fighting the bike whilst entering a turn. As if it were a two-stroke, I was able to come into a flat, slippery turn, brake and down-shift at the same time and focus all my efforts on tipping the bike into a rut. Not having to wrestle the bike on the way into a turn meant that I was able to exit corners in complete control.

Despite having only limited modifications, the motor in Stefan's ISDE winning bike felt a lot more manageable than a production WR450F powerplant. Possibly due to the fact that the bike was fitted with YZ cams, its power was noticeably smoother, softer even, yet still very strong. In short, the engine was responsive yet entirely manageable. So much so, that I found myself able to push the bike harder with each passing lap, and not once did I feel that the bike was the boss.

The WR's suspension felt neither hard and harsh, nor soft. Reasonably quick in the way it rebounded, the suspension always felt as if it were ready to attack the next bump, which it always soaked up well. The steering was sharp, the drive out of corners and across bumps always predictable and reassuring, and the bike seemed attached to the ground in a completely non four-stroke way. When fitted with production Japanese suspension, the weight of a thumper often causes it to wallow, but Stefan's 450 felt alive and responsive.

In Conclusion

If Yamaha's production WR450F could be built to perform like Stefan's then they would be much more enjoyable machines to ride all year round. With reduced weight and manageable power, Stefan's bike is proof that 450cc thumpers can perform as well as two-strokes when conditions turn tricky. Which means that if Yamaha could leave some of the bike's weight in Japan it would instantly become a much more competent, and appealing, machine to riders of all abilities.

A pleasure to ride in the dry, thumpers are often complete pigs to ride in the wet - especially Yamaha's standard WR450F. So was Stefan's lightweight race bike any easier to manage than a standard 450F? Of course it was! Not just a little bit easier to manage but hugely easier to stop, much easier to turn and a great deal easier to be forceful with. In fact, the bike felt very much like a two-stroke in the way I was able to place it exactly where I wanted to in a turn (far more so than any four-stroke I've ridden in either the wet or the dry). Precise front wheel placing is all but impossible to do on a standard WR450F when conditions are greasy, but Stefan's bike went where I wanted it to, when I wanted it to.

The reason it was so easy to ride was twofold. Firstly, the lack of bulk meant that when I wanted it to stop or turn direction it would, rather than sailing on past the beginning of a rutted turn. Secondly, the slipper clutch, while making down shifting a little 'crunchy', meant that the rear

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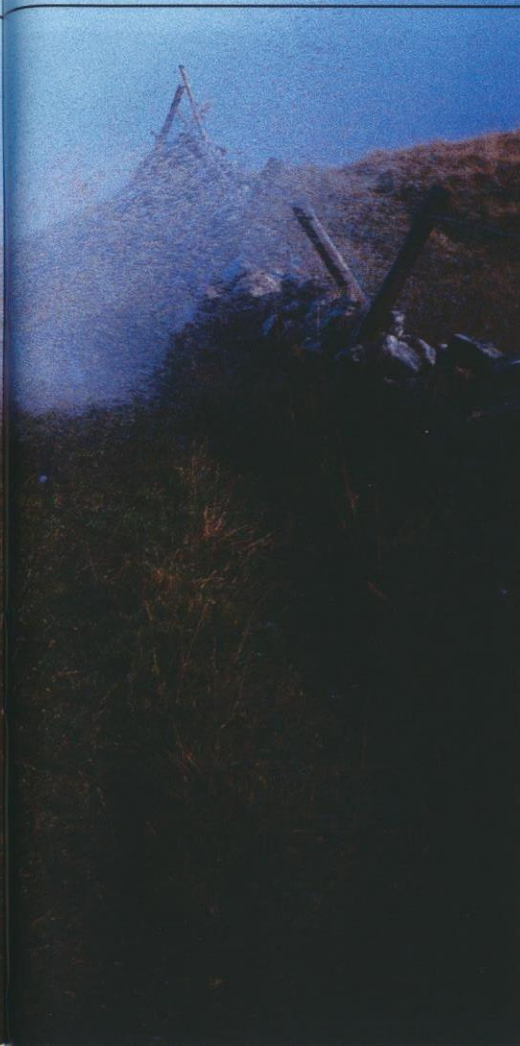
Yorkshire Tales

This month Mark Williams takes his mechanical jinx to North Yorkshire, for a somewhat rocky ride...

Looking back at past 'Rounds, I note that I usually kick off with some glib homilies that stereotype the culture or topography of the area I'm visiting: cream teas in Devon, gently undulating green lanes in the Home Counties, that sort of nonsense. And what inevitably happens is that I'm proven comprehensively wrong in my assumptions, usually at my own physical and mental expense. Not so this

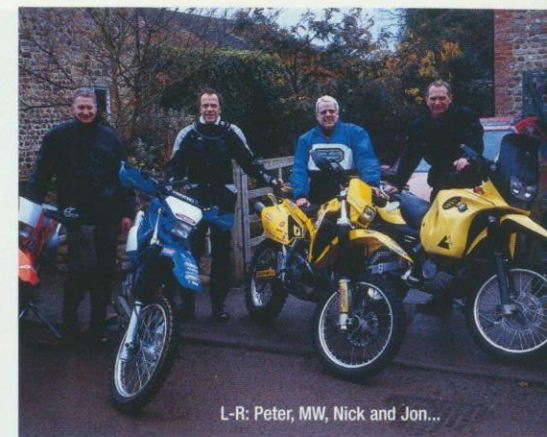
month however, because the area in question was the North Yorkshire Dales, an area of this sceptred isle which I visited lots as a kid and which, topographically and architecturally, is pretty similar to the Peak District where I 'Did a Round' back in April.

True, I hadn't actually ridden the trails of the area, but one of the guys I rode with in the Peaks, Rob Davies, is familiar with the terrain and in



fact put me in touch with Jon Hunter, my host on this occasion. And as Rob had told me well in advance, most of the tracks are hard surfaced and 'very, very long.' Pretty much like the Peak District in other words, so having a good idea of what I was in for, I set off on a drizzly Saturday night with some trepidation as slippery, boulder-strewn rocky climbs and descents drain the stamina like little else. Plus, they're not as nice to fall off on as good old British mud!

And well before I even got to Jon's place in Thornborough, just north of Ripon, I had my first calamity when the trusty ZX estate suddenly



L-R: Peter, MW, Nick and Jon...

started generating nasty noises from the rear-end and the trailer began swerving all over the M42. With heavy traffic exiting the NEC Bike Show, I managed to pull into the nearside lane without causing a pile-up, but as it was coned off for the endless roadworks that bedevil this particular thoroughfare, I had to suffer blaring horns as I moved cones and managed to pull the rig onto the hard-shoulder to discover the ripped rear tyre that was the cause of the problem. There then followed a frustrating, knuckle-grazing, three-quarters of an hour as I wrestled to release the spare from its rusty cage under the car and change the wheel - in the pouring rain - aided only by the thin glimmer from a small torch.

As you will soon discover, this was a grim omen for what lay ahead, although when I finally tipped up at Jon's place to find a warm welcome, a very late supper and several glasses of wine waiting for me I naively thought that I'd got all my automotive bad luck out of the way for at least the next 24 hours. Wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong.

After a companionable hour or so joshing about our various riding experiences and generally putting the world to rights, followed by a good and much-needed night's sleep, I awoke to a damp, grey morning - which seems to be a worryingly consistent factor in my tenure as TBM's Roundsman. The forecast had been irritatingly vague, but at least it wasn't tipping it down, as it had been when I rode the Peaks, and by 9am we were breakfasted and ready to rock with more than a semblance of optimism. And with two more of Jon's mates to share it. So let's get the intros out of the way.

Laying Down the Law

Like the aforementioned Rob Davies, Jon Hunter is a copper: what is it with me and trailriding policemen? But though his mild nature might belie his career choice, his big strong frame is kind of what you'd expect... but there I go again with my typecasting. Mind you, you need to be big and strong if you do your dirtbikery on a BMW F650 laden with all the extra bodywork, instrumentation and ancillary gubbins of a pukka rally-raid racer. Jon built up the bike himself using a massive Touratech tank, seat and fairing, plus 50mm KTM front forks and various other trick bits. Not exactly the bike you want to drop in a bog but, as a short stint in the saddle revealed, a bike that floats over the roughest terrain and has plenty of grunt to keep it going.

Gulliver Travels

In fact Peter Gulliver used to own on a similar bike to Jon's - a genuine Touratech'd jobbie - which they planned to use for long-distance continental touring (and beyond), but after a serious accident wiped out his bike last year, he's currently a borrower. And today he was lucky - or perhaps unlucky - enough to have the use of a Katosh SXC400 - the old LC4-motored KTM which preceded the latest EXCs. Its owner, Dominic Curran who runs the off-road i2i Motorcycle Academy, was to've joined us himself, but a badly sprained wrist denied me the chance to be humbled by yet another wizard rider half my age. Still, he gamely transported the KTM to Jon's place and reunited it with Pete who'd ridden it at a couple of i2i's advanced off-road training sessions. Oh, and I forgot to mention that Pete works as a technician at an independent school near his home in Barnard Castle, which basically means sorting out art and scientific equipment for the little darlings who're studying for their GCSEs.

The Jovial Engineer

'My name's Mike Nicholson, but I won't answer if anyone calls me that,' he smiled. So along with the rest of the world, we'll call him Nick then. As he's been the owner of a mighty tidy DR-Z400 this past two years, I wasn't too surprised to learn that Nick is an engineer by trade, although he occupies a slightly esoteric niche repairing and refurbishing printing machinery for a company just outside Wetherby. It's good to know that Britain is still active in exporting some of its engineering expertise.

A Thorny Problem

So off we went in top spirits along the B6267 towards Masham, anticipating a jolly, if perhaps taxing day's riding. But before I'd even ridden a couple of miles a nasty wobble from the rear wheel obliged me to stop and deal with my second puncture of the weekend. Williams and punctures seem to be an unsettlingly familiar motif for Doing the Rounds, but with the expert help of Jon and his giant tyre-lever extension, we'd soon removed the inch-long thorn from the Trelleborg, patched the tube and put just enough air in it to get to the filling station at Masham where I topped it up. Damn those Sunday hedgecutters!

Things were looking up by the time we hung a left off the A6108 at East Witton and ascended a somewhat sandy, rocky, but not too technical hill up Witton Fell, and even the sun made an appearance to further improve my mood. The track took us south and slightly east across the Witton and Agra Moors, and although the surface was loose at times, it was a thoroughly good yomp. After it ended at Gollinglith Foot, Jon led us along a succession of narrow, indifferently tarmac'd lanes into Ilton, where we took a UCR up past Brandwith Howe and onto Masham Moor.

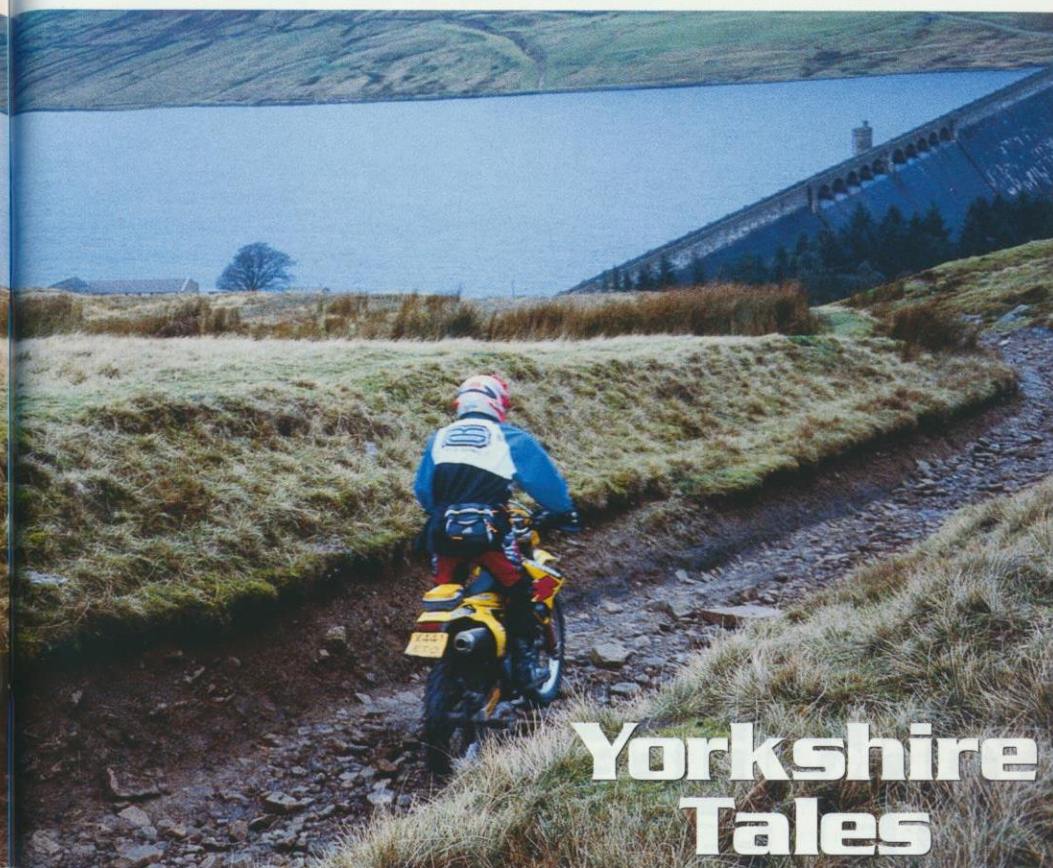
Triptych of Tyre Troubles

Rob had been right about the length of these Yorkshire lanes, this one being the best part of five miles with plenty of whoops, puddles and scarified surfaces to keep us on our mettle, and on our 'pegs most of the time, too. However our progress was interrupted by a familiar wobble from my back wheel: yes, puncture number three had emerged to spoil our fun.

This time a patch was deemed insufficient



A typical North Yorks trail: plenty of rocks and a stunning view...



Yorkshire Tales

insurance against the rocky terrain and luckily Jon had a spare HD tube which we rather cack-handedly managed to get into place and eventually inflate, but not before Nick and I had both exhausted our patience, our tiny handpumps and a couple of mini compressed-air bottles.

Fully inflated at last - and in more ways than one - we finally made it to the end of this lane and down into Lofthouse. But on the steep, twisty and by now rain-strewn tarmac into the hamlet, Nick managed to lock his rear wheel and come a cropper. Fortunately, although he hadn't had the good sense - like me - to limit his offs to the trails, the only damage was to the bolts holding the oil filter cover... or so we thought.

Once he'd picked himself up we carried on into Lofthouse, where the road west to Middlemoor took us to the base of a steep and tricky climb up In Moor. Then just as it seemed

I'd recovered my puff - three miles later in fact - it was time for a twisty, rocky descent down Nidderdale Hill to the Scar House Reservoir. I was starting to get the measure of much of the going we were to experience on this trip, although mastering the sudden emergence of slippery limestone slabs amidst the gulleys and screeds of loose rocks (which varied in size from a fist to a baby's head) was another matter.

The initial temptation to gun the TT-R in second or third and rush up these hills soon gave way to a more trials orientated plonk - picking a pathway in second or bottom which the down-gear, torqued-up engine is comfortable enough with... most of the time. The trouble is that some of these ascents, and indeed the descents, seemed to go on forever, and even though the bike may not've run out of steam, I got pretty close to doing so and lost my concentration along with



Yorkshire Tales

my energy. Perhaps the words 'Old Fart' spring to mind here, but I was heartened by Nick's admiration for my riding style... obviously in an unguarded moment.

Rock Climbing

We passed over the dam of the reservoir to scowls from various dog walkers, and rose up another rocky track towards the base of the ominously named Dead Man's Hill. Not quite living up to its name, it nevertheless made a casualty out of me when, trying to avoid one of its more treacherous boulder-filled gulleys, I changed track and gave it a big handful, only to high-side over the edge of the ravine and put a nasty crick in my back that's still troubling me as I scribble these words. Nick, riding behind me, was clearly less impressed with this escapade than my previous trailsmanship, and pointed out that there was

a somewhat easier route up the hill on the right-hand side. However, I somewhat doubted that the mighty Jon Hunter had deigned to take it on his F650.

Indeed when I finally reached the gate at the top he and Pete were looking hideously relaxed as I muttered my apologies for yet further delays to our mutual progress. Composure if not pride restored, we rode across a rather soggy Arkleside Moor before hitting tarmac again and making a sharp left onto a cracking track that runs along the ridge between Cow Side and North Moor. Originally a metalled road, the surface has been so badly degraded that before it reached Tor Dyke it resembled little more than a stony track. Once back on tarmac however, we made the often tortuous descent into Kettlewell, where I'm told Janet Street-Walker has a holiday home. Sadly, I hadn't phoned ahead to pop in for coffee,



crumpets and a shouting match about RoWs, so we pressed on north along the B6160.

I have to say that the Wharfe Valley along which this road runs is quite scenically magnificent, even the dull, drizzly weather failing to detract from its somehow bleak grandeur. By now we were a good hour behind the schedule that Jon had set us, so I was getting decidedly peckish as we reached the track that took us from the B6160 and up Kidstones Fell. Much of this going was fairly straightforward, but where we took a left fork just south of Busk Moss (no, I'm not making these names up), it suddenly got steep and nasty. Another long (three mile-ish) track would've served up some top

views down Raydale and on to Semer Water had it not been for the mist which was increasingly our cohort for the rest of the day.

Although by now I was becoming fairly desperate to get some grub, Jon hadn't finished with us yet, taking us across the River Bain and up through Countersett. Here the tarmac dissects an old Roman Road where we turned left for a good blat along a bit of a rutty, but entirely exhilarating switchbackery, eventually descending to the road again at West Duerley Pasture. At this point Jon took pity on my rumbling stomach and led us down into Hawes where not one, but two very biker friendly 'caffs' face each other across the high street.

Over giant sausage'n'egg'n'bacon baps, copious chips and mugs of tea, we watched other groups of trail riders coming and going, plus a few speed-fiends braving the wintery weather on

gleaming new superbikes. Hawes is a mecca for motorcyclists of every stripe, although we were reminded of the treachery than can unseat those with the red mist in their visors when an ambulance sped through Hawes, klaxons wailing and blue lights a'blaze.

Taking a Leak

And just as we were marshalling ourselves for the off, Nick spotted a leak from the hose that feeds the water pump on his DR-Z, a fracture obviously caused by his clash with the tarmac earlier on, which miraculously hadn't completely drained the radiators. More running repairs with a G-clamp that Jon just happened to have with him(!), my multi-tool penknife and a lot of fingers enabled Nick and Jon to shorten the hose but with just enough length left to refit it over the flange and tighten up the jubilee clip.

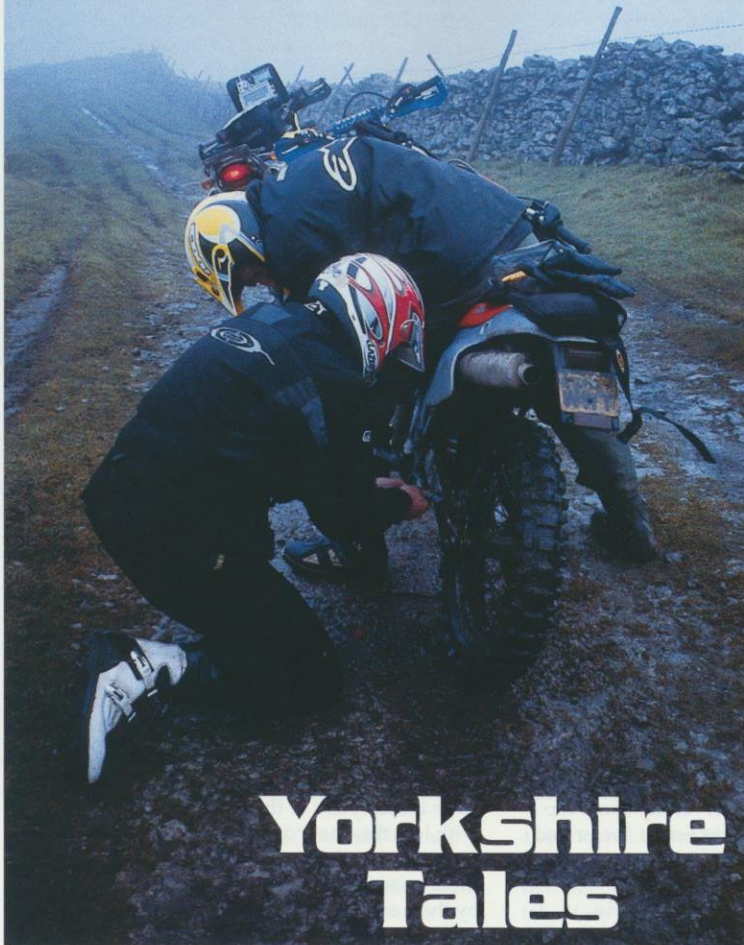
By now it was getting on for three o'clock and with the light already starting to fade, and the mist closing in, Jon elected to shorten the route and take us back along the Roman Road, but this time in the opposite direction. Moreover we rode it full length this time, the last bit of which I swapped bikes with Jon and discovered what Real Men have to deal with on the Yorkshire Moors. Fortunately I swapped back onto my TT-R when we reached the tarmac that took us into Bainbridge, because Jon's plan was then to take us to the right-hand leg of the track that we'd ridden up earlier from Kidstones Fell.

And suddenly we were experiencing a very different type of terrain, one hardly suited to large motorcycles of the rally-raid persuasion with less than new dual purpose tyres. In a word or three - soggy, boggy, rutty going made all the more miserable by the minimal visibility afforded by the heavy mist. Nick and I waddled through it with relative ease (but lots of footwork) and I even managed to ride several hundred yards of it hard up against the stone wall that skirted what was nominally a track. But Jon was slithering all over the place and at one stage Pete has to dismount and help him manhandle the big Beemer.

This wasn't much fun for Pete either, because the KTM's side-stand return spring had been stretched beyond use where it had been snagged by the kickstart lever, and the SXC had to be dumped against a wall or a bank whenever he had to dismount.

By now both Nick and I were starting to tire after the excesses of the day's riding and I was getting a bad dose of cramp in my left thigh, so

At last, a mechanical malady which was nothing to do with Mark...



Yorkshire Tales

Thar She Blows

I have to say that this qualified as one of the more exciting, rewarding rides of my later life, nailing the little TT-R's engine hard against the throttle-stop in order to keep up with Jon immediately ahead of me. We even left the KTM and DR-Z way behind as we swooped around the numerous tight bends and Sunday drivers off home to their TV and slippers.

It was beyond dusk when we turned into Thornborough and we stopped to let the other two catch up... only they didn't. So, adrenaline and Samaritan sentiments raging, I turned round and raced a couple of miles back down the road where I found the sorry sight of Nick and Pete poring over what turned out to be a blown KTM engine.

I had in fact remarked earlier that the aged Austrian motor sounded like a bag of spanners, an observation Pete shrugged off with

what I took to be a stoic smile, but the fast belt back to base had obviously done for whatever life it had left in it. The next day I learnt that Dominic Curran had graciously agreed to swallow the cost of the re-build 'because it'd been due for one anyway'.

Even so, Pete's luck was still to descend a couple more notches, for loading the bike into Jon's van a little later, he managed to rip the nail off his right index finger, a brutally painful end to what had been, at the very least, a highly eventful day. But at least I got home without getting yet another puncture..!

we stopped on the brow of Stake Moss for a breather and a possible photo opportunity looking across dramatic Bishopdale and beyond. Sadly the low light and the heavy mist obviated this, and mindful that we had a good forty minutes of road work to get back to Thornborough, Jon led us down the rocky descent I'd struggled up earlier and onto the B6160 towards Leyburn. Worn, wet, but anxious to get back before the feeble lighting arrangements of all but Jon's BM jeopardised forward progress, we set off at a serious clip from Leyburn, especially when the B-road became the A684 just beyond Aysgarth.



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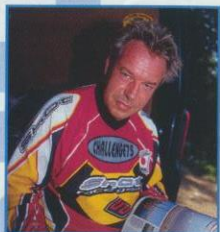
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DIRTY

'WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO PUT A MAN ON THE MOON, BUT I HAVE LONG SINCE GIVEN UP ON THE IDEA OF BEING ABLE TO PURCHASE ANYTHING TRULY WATERPROOF'

I don't know about you, but often, as I ride along, I find myself repetitively humming a fragment of some tune or other. On balance I'd say that Wagner's *Ride of the Valkyrie* - the piece of music that they blast out of the helicopters in *Apocalypse Now* as they attack the beach - is the most frequently mangled morsel, but over

CHRIS EVANS PONDERES THE SOUNDTRACK TO HIS LIFE...

the last few weeks this has been subconsciously knocked off the No 1 spot by American rockers Linkin Park's *Rollin' Rollin' Rollin'* - if you're over 25 years old, think thrashing guitars and aggressive vocals. People who know me would no doubt say it is the retarded adolescent in me, but I'd prefer to think it is the direct result of the phenomenal amount of kilometres I seem to be clocking up at the moment. Since last month's column I have done three back-to-back trail riding holidays and almost 2000km, and my KTM's wonderful digital counter now proudly displays 6000 kays and 153 hours of use - up from a big fat zero at the beginning of March.

Incredibly the bike seems to be taking it all in its stride. Its appetite for tyres, chains, sprockets, brake pads and oil remains nothing short of gargantuan, but as long as these service items are changed with monotonous regularity it appears to keep running like clockwork. Of course eventually I'll have to get the

top-end looked at, and I predict that tappets, cam-chain and rings will all need attention - but that will have to wait until after my last sortie of the season, in a couple of weeks time.

If the Katoche is holding up well, so, miraculously, is its rider. Regular readers may remember that I was auto-disgusted by my miserable performance on the Dawn to Dusk back in August, where I struggled to do two laps of the 15 mile course. Right now I reckon I could turn up and put in a decent showing in the Ironman class! I suppose I am what those in the know call 'bike fit'. What it means for me is that I can climb on the bike at 9:00 in the morning and ride at a constant steady pace until 5:00 in the evening, and providing I have a good night's sleep, and a good dinner, then do the same thing all over again the next day. And for somebody not renowned for what the French call 'hygiene de vie' (taking exercise) this is nothing short of miraculous.

And it isn't just my stamina that has improved - my technique has also definitely cranked up a notch or two during the last couple of months.

Quite why this should have happened after 30 odd years of riding is less easy to explain, but on reflection must be put down to the more technical nature of the new Lozere route. In fact I hadn't really noticed any difference until I switched from there to the Morvan and remarked that bits which had caused me problems in the past could now be negotiated with barely a whimper.

In fact the only part of the equation that hasn't held up too well to all this recent self-abuse is my riding kit. My lovely new silver Shark helmet remains as comfortable as ever, but all the paint has peeled off the flexi helmet peak, both my Kenny and Pro Grip riding gloves have split, the soles of my Alpinestar Tech 8s have worn through where they come into contact with the footrests and my Oxbow riding jacket zips up no more. More depressing still is that anything that had even the vaguest pretensions of waterproof-ness have sprung Titanic size leaks. Thus my army surplus Gore-Tex riding socks now resemble sponges, while my Alpinestars over-jacket and trousers are boil-in-the-bag effective in the dry and tea-bag absorbent in the wet.

If I was writing for any 'normal' magazine I would have already been on the blag-o-phone ordering up hugely expensive replacement items. But out of respect for His Melbership's 'admirable in principle / expensive in reality' *no freebies* editorial policy, I will have to wait until my annual pilgrimage to the Dirt Rider Expo in Stoneleigh. There I will take advantage of the range of products on display to purchase (at trade price, God willing) a jacket and trousers and a couple of pairs of gloves.

We might be able to put a man on the moon but I have long since given up on the idea of being able to purchase anything truly waterproof - or something that'll remain waterproof after more than a few rides. So instead I will be looking at the fit and finish of whatever I choose, on the basis that if I'm going to get wet through - I might as well look good and feel comfy doing it.

And if the worst of the 'alert orange' weather conditions we 'enjoyed' on the last Lozere come back to haunt me again I might have to think about changing my humming tune to Supertramp's: 'It's Raining Again...'



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'REGARDLESS OF WHAT DREAD PROPOSALS MATERIALISE FROM DEFRA, EXHAUST NOISE WILL BECOME THE NEXT BIG ISSUE IN DIRTBIKING'

Thirty years ago in the desert that nervously skirts the northern suburbs of Los Angeles, I sat drinking an unreasonable amount of coffee from a battered vacuum flask at 3am. Me and the girlfriend had better things to do at the time, but I'd been tipped off that there was going to be some serious motorcycle action out in these godforsaken boondocks. Something so strange and spectacular that I begged

MARK WILLIAMS WONDERS WHAT ALL THE NOISE IS ABOUT?

her to come along too. Oh yeah, and I wanted her as a witness just in case I got stomped for poking my nose into very private and seriously illegal biker business.

Those with long memories and an interest in mankind's wilder excesses may recall that back in the '70s outlaw bikers controlled much of California's drugs trade, and my informant - a fellow journalist on Rolling Stone magazine (which had recently run a major feature on these gangs) - suggested that the story I was working on might involve the same scary individuals. So it wasn't only the cold that was causing me to shiver that night.

But there we were, under the stars, waiting for... well waiting for what would eventually form the basis of 'They Only Come Out At Night' a piece on clandestine, nocturnal roadracers which I wrote for Which Bike? in 1980. And then just as I was thinking of wrenching the fifth of bourbon

from Linda's vice-like grip, a faint, almost imperceptible drone could be heard in the distance along Highway 17. Its volume grew louder by the second, but it was a full minute or two before it was accompanied by the pin-pricks, then the muted shimmer of distant headlamps, by which time the noise was a strident, angry blare. Travelling at speeds well in excess of twice the (ridiculous) state 55mph speed limit, the covey of nine or ten large Jap superbikes was upon us, and then gone in a flurry of tail-lamps within what seemed like nanoseconds. But the noise stayed with us for many more minutes. And if you've been struggling to see the point of this little reminiscence in the pages of TBM, then that's exactly it: the noise.

None of those stripped-down, hopped-up roadsters wore their stock exhaust systems, and they were excruciatingly loud. And multiplied by eight or nine, and in a sparse rural landscape, they were aurally unbearable.

Fast forward 34 years and somewhere along the ancient Strata Florida byway in Mid Wales the trill of fieldfares and the gentle babble of the Afon Mwyro river is suddenly and no less dramatically punctured by the rasp of 12, maybe 13 enduro and MX bikes being ridden as fast as their riders dared along the increasingly degraded track.

My reaction this time was not one of mild fear and considerable awe, it was one of considerable fear and mild apoplexy. Although I still sometimes try to justify those off-road riders whose thoughtlessness harms both themselves and the rest of us in the mid- and long-term, this lot were com-

pletely indefensible. But even though riding so fast and in such a large group can in no way be considered responsible trailriding (even less so since I later learnt this was a commercial ride-out run by a TRF member), this isn't what exercised my ire. It was quite simply, the noise.

When you're out riding by yourself and you come across other dirtbikes, you don't really notice the noise they're making, but when you're, say, hiking or horseriding, the unmitigated racket caused by many aggressively ridden dirtbikes with what are often illegal exhaust systems, has an effect as shattering as anything I'd ever heard in the Californian desert.

And regardless of what dread proposals materialise from DEFRA, exhaust noise will become THE next big issue in dirtbiking. For the uninitiated, from June 2003 EU Directive 97/24EC made it illegal to sell a motorcycle over 175cc whose exhaust note exceeds 80dB - down 3dB from the previous year.

However, manufacturers selling road-legal trail and enduro machines must obviously conform to this limit although some of them get round the issue by selling their enduro mounts as 'competition' models. The SVA regulations allow individuals owners the chance to register such bikes themselves, allowing them to exploit a discretionary leeway that, by happy coincidence enables, say, a stock WR250F to come in under the ACU/FIM limit of 85dB.

And the ACU/FIM noise test is a static one, whereas the EU version is a second gear, mid-throttle ride-by affair which would almost certainly exclude all the aforementioned 'competition' models if they were so tested.

The series of discussions taking place between DEFRA and the off-road motoring lobby (see last month's TBM) included much heated discussion on the subject of exhaust noise, neatly encapsulated by Motor Cycle Industry Association press officer Craig Cary-Clinch: 'The problem appears to be illegal modification by purchasers (ie aftermarket

silencers), or second hand purchases already illegally modified. This falls outside the control of manufacturers themselves and is extremely frustrating as it leads to calls for quieter manufactured bikes, when in fact there's no need for this.

'In defence of riders, the problem could partly be a lack of awareness of current regs for riding RoW. However there is a culture of noise with bikes being used on RoWs, which is rightly being challenged by groups like LARA and the TRF.'

Indeed. But when these very groups are trying to convince Alun Michael that the byways we want to ride are actually legally defined as roads, then surely our machines should meet the noise limits applied to what are otherwise understood to be roadbikes?

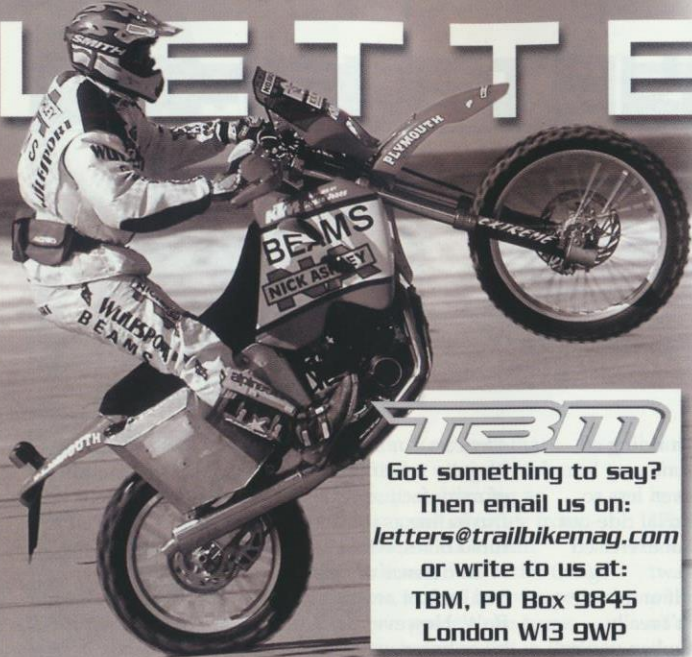
Quite how the ACU square their 85dB noise level for competition bikes that are registered for the roads for which the legal limit is 80dB, is also a sticky question, but ACU Trials & Enduro executive, Mary Kerr, told me that 'there are moves afoot to reduce the level for 2006, but the exact figure hasn't yet been decided.'

And until I started doing my homework for this column, prompted by that Strata Florida experience, I hadn't realised that I was also a guilty party: having junked the embarrassingly vocal CRD can I'd fitted to my TT-R250, I thought I was being responsible by replacing it with an Oshiro item which met the ACU/FIM limits but not, of course, those for EU roadbikes. Now I'm faced with a dilemma: suffer some serious power loss and re-fit the ultra-quiet Yamaha original, or risk the odium of other countryside aficionados who haven't equipped themselves with earplugs.

But ignoring for a moment the possible outcome of the DEFRA consultations, if the recommendations of the influential Acoustical Society of the Netherlands for a further ten percent cut in EU exhaust levels should be taken up, then we are indeed in for a very rough ride (sic).

Anyone for a little night-time trailriding in the California desert..?

LETTERS



TBM
 Got something to say?
 Then email us on:
letters@trailbikemag.com
 or write to us at:
 TBM, PO Box 9845
 London W13 9WP

Trail Bike Money

Dear TBM

I have been trying to find your website for a while now and was amazed at how many TBMs there actually are (The Brent Magazine, Timothy Bloxom Mapping, Traditional Bowhunters Magazine etc) so I

was wondering if you could tell me the address of your website?

I was also wondering if you could tell me what bike to buy? I have about £1000 to spend on a cheap motocross/enduro bike that will be used off-road only, on weekends and I'm not sure what to get.

I am looking for a 250cc two-stroke and am thinking about a

Honda CR250 or Kawasaki KX250 - are these good choices? If not, have you got any other suggestions?

Thomas
via email

PS great magazine, I look forward to getting it every month.

Thomas, you didn't mention the Tunnel Boring Machine that comes up on Google whenever we type in TBM..! Anyway our website is currently 'under construction' and we hope to go live with it very shortly - full details will be announced in the mag. In the meantime if you're looking for a pure off-roader and you've only got a grand to spare, then either of the two bikes you mention would be ideal. But try and secure a decent example or else keep saving...

Toilet Humour

Dear TBM

As usual and as everyone always says, great read. Your magazine finds itself pride of place in the WC and gives me hours of uninterrupted (by girlfriend) reading pleasure.

Is there any chance you guys will carry out a group test of the newest four-stroke 250s - CRF, Husky, KTM and the like? I need some help with choosing my next bike. Cheers.

Chris O'Grady
Hove, East Sussex

Chris, we try and arrange a 250 four-stroke shootout each year, but some years it's impossible

to get them all together at the same time. This year we tested the CRF250X in Wales in May, the Yamaha and Husky 250s in August and a Suzuki RM-Z250 in September. However we are planning to get all the '05 bikes together for one big shootout just as soon as we can. Watch this space...

Wycombe Wobbler

Dear TBM

I suppose I should be thanking you for publishing a picture of me in last month's magazine (rider number 174) but did you have to state the blinking obvious and call me a beginner?

As though anyone couldn't tell with me wobbling round the outside of the bend - actually I was being polite and letting the faster guys through!

Being a 'forty something' and never having ridden off road except for 50-odd miles green laning and doing one of the Witley MCC's excellent training

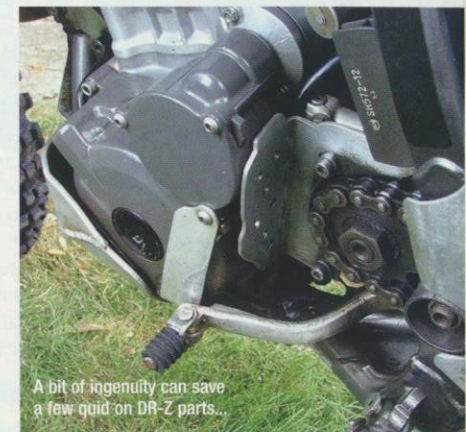
days before entering the enduro, I was very pleased not to finish last. I thoroughly enjoyed it, even though I couldn't walk properly for the next week - must get fitter.

I'd like to have been able to tell you about my next enduro and plans for next season, but unfortunately some scumbags broke their way through my reinforced garage door and stole my KTM so my plans are on hold.

Will still enjoy reading your mag whilst saving hard for another bike and an even stronger garage door.

Gerry Marsh
via email

PS Would you be kind enough to warn people in the High Wycombe area - I believe the thieves followed me home and waited for me to go to work a couple of days later.



A bit of ingenuity can save a few quid on DR-Z parts...

On the Case

Dear TBM

I know there have been quite a few letters on this subject in the past - well here's yet another! I recently sold my DR-Z after several years of faultless riding (the bike that is, not me!).

Over this period of time, I have experimented with a number of 'home-made' modifications - particularly with regards to case protection. I find it somewhat bizarre that people will risk holing £150 cases (not to mention the hassle getting home), when a couple of simple mods requiring nothing more sophisticated than a drill, file, hacksaw and tin-snips will save the day.

Perhaps the easiest mod is protecting the left-side casing from the gear lever. As suggested previously, file the back of the gear lever first. Next step, pop down to B&Q and grab some aluminum straps (two or three quid). Cut to a suitable length, drill a hole at each end, round the edges, and then bend to profile - job done. The lower



Keep your eyes peeled for the bike on the right - it's been nicked.

Off-road only: A used Mxer can get you on the dirt on a budget...



starter sprag clutch cover bolt and bashplate make ideal attachment points.

Next, the chain case-saver. Again, a section of sheet aluminum (must be 3-4mm thick) does the trick. Use the existing steel saver as a template (which, by the way, will not necessarily save your alternator loom or case - as witnessed out on the trail). Yes, this does take more time - a whole one and a half hours in fact. Due to the narrow profile, it still provides adequate room for all the crud to fall out. What's more it works - the version pictured here has been fully tested courtesy of a decapitated split link!

Last but not least the brake lever - using, you guessed it, more aluminum sheet! Simply cut a disk the size of the case face and hold it in place using silicon sealant (note: the sealant

must be heat and oil resistant - the red stuff designed for automotive cooling systems is ideal - only takes 15 minutes.)

So, to totally protect your bike (assuming you already have a bash plate), takes approx two to three hours, with a total cost of about 15-20 quid. Which is more aggro? Losing a few hours in an evening or wasting several weeks replacing damaged cases?

Trajan Seymour
Bagshot, Surrey

Electric Dream

Hi TBM

I currently use a CRM250 mkII for trail riding, which is a superb off-roader for this purpose. The only problem is that it's kick-start only and I really would like an electric-start due to the frequent stops for rambles, horses etc. I like the two-stroke simplicity and so would like to know which

stokers I could consider that are leccy start?

I have been a subscriber to your mag from the start and have read over the Yamaha DT230 Lanza test, which I get the impression was a bit soft and heavy. Could this be addressed with suspension mods/rebuilds and some after-market goodies to lighten it? I would appreciate your expert views.

Colin (frustrated stoker fan)
via email

Colin, the DT230 Lanza (and new DT125RE) are among a select few electric-start two-stroke trailies currently available. There's no doubt that the Lanza makes an excellent trail bike - we reckon it's even more torquey than the CRM. Its problem is (as you rightly surmise) excess weight and soft suspension. In our opinion both of these issues could be addressed if you set your mind to it. Go for it...



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Way to Go

Dear TBM

Keep up the good work but please, less of the vintage stuff! What about a feature on Rights of Way?

I am in the TRF so know a bit about it - perhaps you could show the differences for a given small area of the number of trails the OS map shows (by-ways only, technically), compared to what can be legally ridden from the definitive map?

I keep meaning to go and have a look but there is always some job I haven't finished around the house and I have got to ride the bike some time...

John
via email

Yeah, we like your idea John and we'll look into it. In the meantime I hope you will have seen and liked the feature in the latest issue entitled 'Writes of Way'. That's if you bought the issue of course - it had one of those 'vintage' bikes you're not keen on - on the cover...

Power Up

Dear TBM

Please advise on the best way to improve bhp/performance from my standard DR-Z400S K3 2003 model? Also, is the enduro version more powerful and if so, what's the difference?

I was also wondering, can

36 TBM

the tailpipe be modified rather than replaced by cutting and/or welding, as funds are a bit tight at present?

D Lawrence
Ely, Cambridgeshire

PS Well sorted mag.

Actually there are quite a few differences between the enduro and road models including the compression ratio (11.3:1 S, 12.2:1 E), exhaust system (noisier and much less restrictive on the E), and carburettor (3mm smaller on the S, flat-slide on the E). Probably the cheapest way to liberate a bit more power is to take the bike along to a dyno shop and ensure that it is jetted correctly - especially if you are considering messing with the stock exhaust. Personally I'd leave the silencer well alone though, and consider investing in an aftermarket pipe, but make sure it's good and quiet.

Saffer in a State

Dear TBM

Your magazine gets around! I am an avid enduro-riding South African living in Connecticut, USA, where I receive your great magazine monthly by subscription.

I chose TBM above all other dirt bike related offerings due to your attention to the subject concerned, and that a lot less than half your magazine is adverts - unique!

I ride an XR650R and a CR500R (bought the CR500 new on the Isle of Man, 2000. Ask David Knight if he remem-

bers the 'mad South African on the CR500?')

How about some articles on the XR650R? Thanks for an excellent publication.

Robin Johnson
via email

Er... Righto

Sub Normal

Dear TBM

You'll be glad to know that the November issue dropped through my letterbox much earlier than normal and way ahead of it going on sale in the shops. Thanks for sorting this [subscription problem] out after my last letter.

By the way, great article on the Maico v Yam 450. How about doing a series on renovating an old twin shock enduro bike? I know you have done similar stories of project bikes (with some success!) but they are normally restricted to a budget.

How about something along the lines of 'What does it take to do the full Monty?' no expense spared, first-class restoration? May even bring in some additional advertising revenues from specialist suppliers in that field. Just a thought. Thanks again!

Gerald Andrews
via email

At last, a happy customer. We like the idea of the twin-shock project bike Gerald, we'd welcome any suggestions from other readers as to what it should be..?



Not to be tried on a KLR650 - apparently...

Water Tight

Dear TBM

Just to voice an opinion on the Kawasaki KLR650 - a group of us go green laning of a weekend with three lads on XR650s, me with the more nimble XR440 and another lad on the dreaded KLR, which always seems to stop right at the vital point (ie middle of water).

How anyone can enjoy riding this bl**dy thing is beyond me! All Colin seems to be doing is kicking it over... The trouble is he's too tight to buy an XR or anything that will keep running.

By the way, great mag - wish I had started off-roading years ago because it beats running into cars and the only thing around the next corner is, at the worst, a horse!

Neil
via email

Well that's alright then...



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High

STORY & PICS: JONTY EDMUNDS

FIVE

Five different classes, won by five different riders, on five different bikes. TBM tested the top British Enduro Championship machines...

The British Enduro Championship is a very different enduro series to most others. Run over far fewer rounds than the equivalent French, Spanish or Italian championships, it spans seven months, has a minimum of 16 separate classes per event and follows a very traditional, some would say out-dated, capacity class structure. With more 'cc' classes than most other national enduro championships within Europe (and two more than the recently revised World Enduro Championship) the five bikes that placed at the top of the Championship class this season are as varied and diverse as you are likely to find - as are their riders!

While each machine is very different, and some classes have offered more competition than others, they all have one thing in common - they have matched reliability with performance to finish the season ahead of the rest. Three of the bikes are thumpers and two of them two-strokes, three were manufactured in Europe and one's a converted Japanese motocrosser. But how do they compare with one another?

Take Five

Multi-bike or 'shoot-out' tests normally follow a fairly simple set of rules. By gathering together all of the available machines from within one particular class, testing them together provides a far more accurate picture of how each bike performs in relation to the others. It's a simple idea that has proved popular over the years and is applied to cars, cameras and computers as often as it is to motorcycles.

However, when gathering together bikes from five different race classes, things have to be approached a little differently. When each of the bikes is specifically set-up to suit the requirements of five very different riders - some relatively new to the sport, some old-hands, some big, some small, some professional and some keen 'amateurs' - things start to get interesting. How would Daryl Bolter's WR125 Husky two-stroke compare to David Knight's KTM 525EXC? Would Wayne Braybrook's CRF250X have the beating of Richard Hay's WR450F? And how would Paul Edmondson's

converted Honda CR250 MXer perform?

Knowing that such a varied bunch of machines would throw up a few surprises, we decided to ride each of the bikes in order (125 - 525) to see where each of their strengths and weaknesses lay. With each bike also being very different to the standard machine, the test also provided an insight into the different way each of the riders set-up their bikes. It also offered a look at how each bike can be made to perform when it's been 'de-junked' with its non-essential parts removed.

Feather-weight Fighter

Jumping aboard Daryl Bolter's Husqvarna WR125 I was instantly reminded just how much fun riding a well-prepped eighth-litre machine can be. With 125s being anything but en vogue in '04 (thanks in no small part to the 'four-stroke revolution', and riders swapping to 250 thumpers), Daryl's Husky was a breath of fresh air. I've always rated the little WR Husqvarna due to its rideability, stability and ability to perform, and it has proved itself as both a clubman machine and one capable of winning trophies at the highest level.

Converting the standard WR into the bike Daryl has raced this season has been a relatively simple process. The usual bars, graphics and consumables have all been replaced with after-market parts, and despite the assortment of 'trick bits' the bike remains very close to the original specification. The standard wheels are rebuilt by Talon, and Braking discs are fitted alongside Talon sprockets (13/50 gearing).

As far as the motor is concerned, no major changes have been made. A 2C pipe is fitted in conjunction with the standard silencer and the motor is then methodically rebuilt by 2C's Karl Prestwood using a Wossner piston. It's then jetted carefully. And that's it.

In the suspension department, the rear shock is retained while at the front the standard forks are replaced with a set of semi-factory 'kit'

Marzocchis. Completing the bike are Renthal bars, Michelin tyres and mousers, MXM graphics, Pro Grip grips, a DID chain, Fro Systems titanium footpegs, Acerbis plastics, a CRD sumpguard, Vesrah pads and a lightweight wiring loom.

Ordinarily, people think of 125s as hard to ride due to their lack of low-end power. But surprisingly, it was entirely possible to be 'lazy' on Daryl's bike

Normally, you'd need to keep an eighth-litre machine higher in its rev range than any other bike in order for it to perform. But this bike produced remarkably strong power low-down, though not at the expense of a punchy mid-range or good top-end power. While some 125s have good bottom-end torque as well as strong top-end performance, getting from bottom to top is anything but easy. With Daryl's bike it was easy. Light, nimble and responsive on the faster third- and fourth-gear tracks, being 'only' a 125 I found myself able to boss the machine around



Opposite page: The Husky floated over obstacles, remaining composed at all times...

Top: Daryl's bike closely resembles a standard WR125, just with the usual 'trick bits' fitted...

Above: Braking wave disc and Talon sprocket adorn the rear wheel...

Right: The front-end now wears 'semi-factory' Marzocchis, set-up by fellow BEC racer Chris Hockey's Endurotech concern...



at all times. But it was in the slower stop-start going where the bike was really impressive. Solidly planted, the bike would stop, turn and accelerate away from even the slickest corners incredibly well. When riding down a rocky riverbed the bike seemed to almost float over most bumps. And even when things did get a little out of shape I always felt I knew what the bike was going to do next - something which is very important with a race bike.

Slip Slidin' Away

Unfortunately Wayne Braybrook's CRF250X wasn't the exact same spec as ridden in this year's BEC series (due to it having been prepared for his annual assault on Weston Beach Race). And after riding Daryl's 125, the differences between the two machines (which would compete in the same class in WEC events) were huge. Built to appeal to the masses, the 'X' has sold in large numbers thanks to its electric-start and easy-going trail manners. But, as I soon found out, whilst it's a cracking little dirt bike, a high-end competition machine it most certainly isn't. In fact, I have to take my hat off to Wayne for his performance this season aboard the quarter-litre thumper.

It seems the more competitive you want a 250X to be, the more you need to make it like a CRF250R. That is what WEC teams do, and, to a lesser extent, this is what Wayne has done. As Honda put it, you need to fit the 'Closed Course Competition Kit' to an 'X' to make it more competitive. Having been prepped for Weston, our bike felt more like the standard 'X' than the machine Wayne raced at the Breckland, Hafren, Crychan and Natterjack. And as such it was easy to see why a few simple, yet effective, modifications are essential for BEC use. Without them the bike simply isn't a racing machine.

Starting with a production 250X, Wayne normally uses an 'R' fuel tank to make the bike less bulky and more manoeuvrable (fuel checks in BEC events are never normally more than 30 to 40 minutes apart). The suspension remains fairly standard, only fitting an 'R' spring to the shock. The engine is modified by fitting an 'R' camshaft, opening up the airbox to help the motor breathe easier, fitting the 'carb kit', (a different needle and bigger main jet), and switching wires on the ECU to make the machine rev 1500rpm higher. Slipping on a DEP enduro silencer completes the package. The rolling chassis is then treated to Talon wheels and sprockets, an Iris chain, Dunlop



Opposite page: The Honda proved particularly hard to ride fast on the slippery terrain...

Top: What Wayne's bike lacked in performance it more than made up for in looks. His CRF-X is simply stunning... Above: Rear axle puller makes removal of the Talon wheel much easier...

Right: The standard CRF-X motor needs 'derestricting' for top-level competition...

tyres, numerous REP/Hope parts and Renthal bars and grips.

As on any bike fitted with a 'long-distance' tank, it didn't take long for me to find that the extra width was a problem. And with an 'X' camshaft fitted the bike felt extremely uncompetitive. I can see why Wayne would want to try and give the bike a little more 'go'.

The front wheel felt anything but positive, while the rear-end seemed to want to go sideways all the time. Slow to build revs and with a gearbox that had huge gaps between third, fourth and fifth, riding the bike on slippery terrain was both frustrating and difficult. It was hard to ride lazily (it would slip and slide all over the place), and it was hard to ride at 100percent (as it would continuously slip and slide all over the place)!

The suspension felt very unresponsive, and the fact that first gear was so low and second a long way from first, meant that trying to coast down the rocky stream was all but impossible. Attempting it in first gear was a jerky affair, as I accelerated and shut off. But in second I was working much harder than I expected as I was constantly accelerating and then breaking traction by pulling in the clutch. The bike also felt heavy, and I found myself making far more mistakes than I should have for the relatively slow speed I was riding at.

Whilst I didn't get on with Wayne's CRF-X, the fact that he won the championship on it speaks volumes about his riding.

Shake, Rattle and Roll

Originally a motocross machine, Paul Edmondson's CR250E is the most heavily modified bike here. A bike which is often converted into enduro trim, Honda's quarter-litre CR needs more than a set of lights to perform well in the WEC. As a result Karl Prestwood, the same former GP Mxer turned engine builder that worked on Daryl Bolter's 125 engine, spent

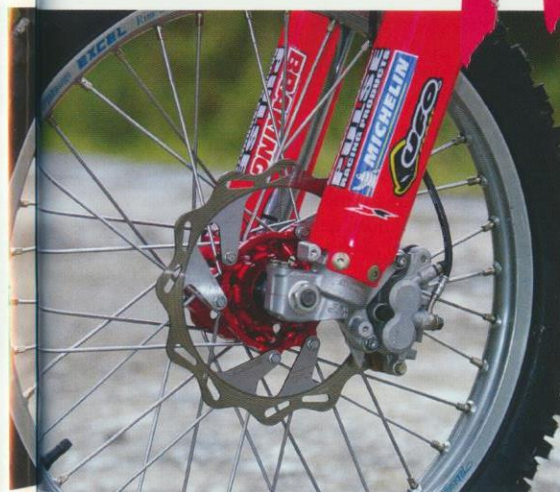


the best part of three months extracting the type of power Paul wanted from the CR motor. Starting with the expansion chamber, Karl then developed the engine's performance to give strong, responsive power, though the exact nature of the work is a carefully guarded secret.

The conversion from MX bike to 250cc two-stroke BEC winning machine also includes modifications to the suspension, as well as the obligatory lighting kit. As Paul's a relatively lightweight rider, both the forks and shock are re-valved, the latter being the shorter part from a 450cc Honda.

With a host of aftermarket products fitted, including Pulse clamps, Renthal bars and sprockets, Talon wheels, Braking discs, Michelin tyres, a 2C exhaust system, MXM graphics and UFO plastics, the bike has spent many hours being set-up to perform at its best. But then as a bike built to perform on the world stage (Paul uses the same bike for WEC) you'd expect that.

I'll come straight out and say it: Paul's bike was a massive disappointment to ride. Whilst the team didn't want the race bike to be tested at a time of year when shows and indoor events fill the calendar, the promise that the practice bike would be the same as the racer simply wasn't the



High
FIVE

Opposite page: With a 'lightswitch' power delivery, a cautious approach was required aboard the CR...

Top: Like Wayne Braybrook's CRF, Eddy's Honda is a great looking enduro bike...

Above: The de-rigueur Talon/Excel combination is fitted with a Braking wave disc...

Right: The CR motor is heavily worked to produce the type of power Paul requires...

case. It was clearly set-up for his size, weight and height; it looked the same, was fitted with the products supplied by the team's sponsors... It's just that it performed like a knackered old 250cc CR.

The biggest area of disappointment was the engine. While strong and fast at the top-end, it rattled like the proverbial bag of spanners and vibrated like an old farm bike when revved. The jetting was also pretty terrible. Not what I was expecting at all. With very little strength low down, the power felt as if the expansion chamber has a fist-sized dent in it. I was expecting to be able to roll the power on and off when needed, but the all-or-nothing delivery made it extremely difficult to ride unless employing lots of clutch or a low gear. Definitely not what KP spent months developing.

I also found the suspension to be anything but impressive. Low on the rear-end, not very responsive and pretty dead feeling - the overall package certainly didn't fill me with confidence. While the forks worked pretty well, the dullness of the rear-end affected the way the bike reacted at speed over rough terrain. Instead of feeling that I could go faster and be more aggressive, I was left feeling cautious, afraid even, of what the bike might do if I hit a bump and wasn't 100percent prepared for the way it reacted.

The Ironman's Bike

Of all the bikes in this test, Richard Hay's WR450F has probably been the least competitive in the overall BEC championship - partly because it's not a bike that's easy to race and partly because, due to work and family commitments, Richard's days as a BEC front-runner are now behind him. Nevertheless, Richard and the Morris Lubricants Yamaha team have tried to make the bike better suited for competition in much the same way Wayne Braybrook has his CRF250X.

In terms of the bike's chassis, the biggest change Richard made to his race bike was to fit a motocross tank and radiators. This makes it noticeably slimmer, which in turn makes it easier to manoeuvre. Richard has also employed several



methods of cutting weight which haven't cost the earth. The wiring loom has been reduced to a bare minimum; the radiator header tank has been removed; Fro Systems Ti foot pegs have been fitted and an Applied top clamp (which holds in place Renthal Fatbars and a GPR steering damper) added.

The only engine modifications come in the form of a DEP silencer, jetting changes and holes drilled in the sides of the airbox to help the motor breathe. Retaining the electric-starter, Richard also runs one extra clutch plate to stiffen up the action and prevent it from slipping. The bike's 14/50 gearing is also standard.

The suspension, however, is far from stock. Okay, so the WR retains the standard forks and shock, but Richard has motocross springs fitted front and rear, as well as having the valving made more like that of a motocross machine. Talon wheels, Acerbis plastics, Dunlop tyres, a Pulse Racing fuel cap and a Core side-stand complete the modifications.

The first thing I noticed, or should I say the first thing that I couldn't help but notice, was the bike's very firm suspension. This made it sit high in its suspension stroke, which for a tall rider like myself was initially very comfortable. But when



High
FIVE



Opposite page: Technical going certainly isn't the Yamaha's natural habitat...
Top: Unlike many top-flight enduro bikes, Richard's WR isn't dripping in aftermarket parts...
Above: More common in the world of supermoto, the Yam runs a drilled airbox to help the motor breathe...
Right: The 'open cockpit' makes for a very comfortable riding position...

trying to get the bike's forks to compress under heavy braking to make flat cornering easier, they simply wouldn't. The standard WR450F isn't the easiest of bikes to place accurately in a turn, and Richard's fondness for MX-like suspension resulted in his race bike reacting in much the same way.

The bike felt like it had poorly set-up PDS/WP suspension fitted, but I guess that's just the way Richard likes it. It's certainly the firmest suspension I've ever tried on an enduro bike, and the machine's tendency to run wide in turns meant that I had to enter corners as wide as possible to stand half a chance of holding the line I wanted. The front-end instilled very little confidence, and due to the overly hard shock the bike skated around instead of driving out of flat corners.

The fact that the clutch was extremely heavy didn't help the Yamaha feel easy to use, and with second gear a little too low and third gear a little too high, the fast-building power of the 450 motor meant that the bike was hardly rider-friendly. However, with a very 'open' handlebar set-up the riding position was very comfortable.

In general I found Richard's WR450 very difficult to get on with when riding at speed, yet it was strangely predictable in the way it would behave. More supple suspension would doubtless help make the bike more rideable, but because I knew I was going to struggle a little in controlling it, I rode slightly slower than I would normally!

The Gentle Giant

As winner of both the Over 500cc four-stroke and Overall British Enduro Championship titles, many have failed to comprehend just how David Knight has managed to produce such blisteringly fast special test times this season, in all conditions, on a bike perceived to be big, heavy and much less manoeuvrable than runner-up Paul Edmondson's 250cc two-stroke Honda. Physically the biggest rider in the BEC series, Knighter's size and strength are obvious clues as to how he has managed to dominate his machine, and ultimately his competitors.

The fact that David's 525EXC is now essentially a factory machine has also helped him gain the



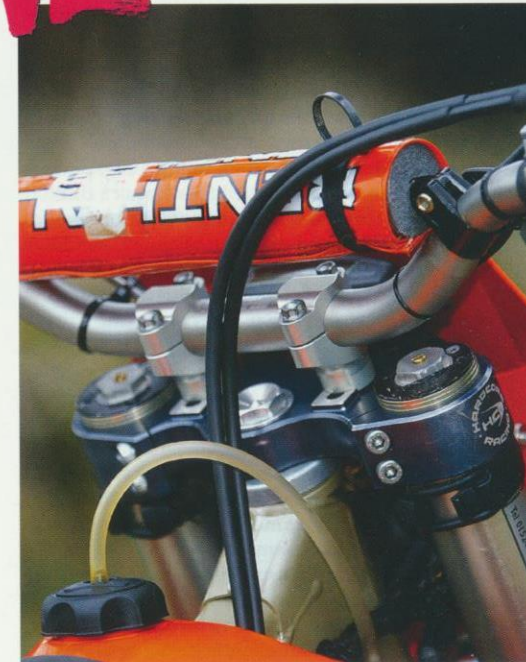
upper hand this season. With the possible exception of a different CDI unit and a slightly different compression ratio, Knighter's bike is the same as that on which Samuli Aro topped the E3 world championship this season. Starting out life as a standard 525, D3-Racing transformed the production machine into DK's race bike by making suspension and engine modifications to bring it up to 'factory' spec.

Developed during the first half of the season, David's machine has remained virtually unchanged since mid-way through the year, the bike having got closer and closer to the spec used by official KTM/WP contracted riders. Whilst the standard 39mm carb and ignition system remain, the bike's cylinder head, crank and con-rod have all been modified. A Vertex piston has been fitted and a titanium Akrapovic exhaust system takes care of the spent gasses. The gearbox also came in for some significant changes as its lower gears were replaced with those from a 525SX to close up the ratios. Unlike the factory 525s, David prefers to retain the electric starter on his bike and fit British-made, over-sized GMX radiators.

The production suspension units have been



High FIVE



Opposite page: Despite initial reservations, the 525 proved amazingly easy to ride...
 Top: Although developed by D3 Racing, David's KTM is essentially a 'factory' machine...
 Above: Talon wheel wears a floating wave disc, whilst the axle puller helps cut work time...
 Right: Hardcore clamps hold upgraded WP SXS forks and Renthal Twinwall bars...

replaced with SXS dampers, and between Julian (D3-Racing founder and Knighter's technician) and WP, the suspension has been brought in line with 'officially-supplied' WP kit. And once the bike's fitted with Talon wheels and sprockets, Renthal bars, Polisport plastics, DP brake pads, Braking disks, an RK chain, and MXM graphics it's pretty much ready to ride.

Unsurprisingly David's bike doesn't lack power. But what was surprising was just how smooth and gentle that power was. Unfortunately, that wasn't how I found it at first. Being a little too casual with my throttle control, the bike initially felt aggressive and way too powerful. To be honest, I wanted to get off the bike for fear of ending up in hospital, but after five or ten minutes I started to realise that only a very small amount throttle movement was needed to ease the bike forwards. Once I started to apply the power more gently the tractability of the motor's power became clear. And boy was it impressive.

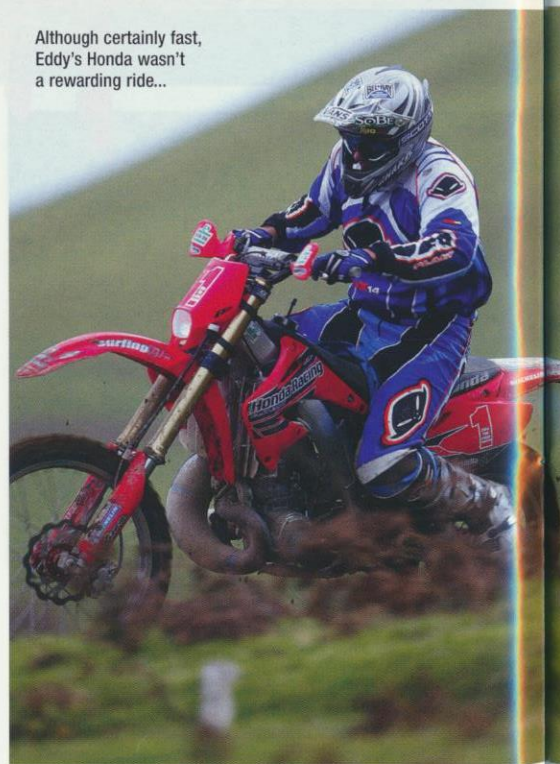
Having ridden the bike earlier in the year, and spent three weeks on crutches after crashing it, I wasn't looking forward to 'another go'. Expecting to hate the bike for being a big, powerful half-litre thumper, what I found was a bike much easier to ride than I was expecting. Heck, I even enjoyed riding it. When riding down a rocky stream the bike was incredibly stable, and almost unfeasibly easy to manage. Not the big, bad 500cc four-stroke that I was expecting.

The beauty of the bike's power was that I didn't have to worry about being in the right gear, something I guess you would expect with a big four-stroke. Seemingly having 'short gears' and 'long power', the overlap meant that when I entered a tight turn in third rather than second the bike wouldn't grumble one little bit. Instead it provided me with a more than ample amount of torque to set me on my way.

The other thing that surprised me was the fact that the bike performed incredibly well in the mud. Thumpers are known to be difficult to ride in wet (Wayne's and Richard's certainly were)



Wahey! Smooth, strong power made the big 'ol KTM easy to hustle...



Although certainly fast, Eddy's Honda wasn't a rewarding ride...

The CRF-X felt more like a trail bike than a racer...



due to them pushing the front-end in corners - and their power characteristics spinning up the rear. But David's bike was a joy to ride. It would stop, even on flat, slippery turns, give great feel from the front wheel, and then drive straight out of a corner, no matter how bumpy the straight or slippery the camber.

As for the bike's suspension, well, I'll simply say this. Before I rode David's bike I certainly wasn't a fan of link-less PDS suspension. I think I've now been converted...

The Bigger Picture

Riding such a varied group of bikes in such a short period of time made it easier to understand why certain riders have performed better than others in this year's BEC series. Take Knighter for example, and the myth that 500cc four-strokes are a little unforgiving and can be difficult to ride unless you're a 'real man'. While 500cc thumpers certainly aren't as easy to ride as smaller capacity two-strokes (they produce too much power to ever be as nimble or manoeuvrable) DK's race bike was by far the easiest four-stroke to ride of those being tested. A great bike matched to a great rider equals BEC title winner. Simple.

Okay so the D3 KTM is all but a factory bike, but it out-performed both the CRF250X and the WR450F in areas that I wasn't expecting it to. Its ability to corner (stop, turn, hold a line and drive

out of a turn) and confidence-inspiring manner made it considerably easier to ride than the other two thumpers. In fact, riding the big bike down the rocky stream was almost as easy as it was riding the 125. I still can't believe just how effortlessly it floated over rocks and ruts!

Like David's bike, Daryl's 125 did pretty much everything well. It was fast, handled great, and produced good power. I know that some would argue a 125cc two-stroke doesn't have enough power to do anything except handle well, but Bolter's Husky is a great enduro machine. It might have only been used in international competition a few times this season, but having thrown my leg over a few factory 125s in recent years I believe it's as good as most eighth-litre machines out there.

Although 125cc two strokes don't compete directly against 250cc four strokes in BEC events, in WEC they do. And if I had to choose between Daryl's or Wayne's bike to compete on I'd choose the Husky - no question about it. I couldn't believe just how much easier the 125 was to ride on flat, grassy fields. I also found that a 125 is a lot easier to pull out of a bog than a 250 four-stroke when buried wheel deep!

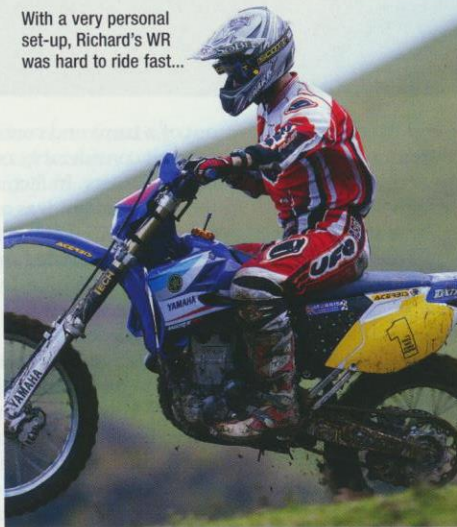
Whereas the 125 did what I wanted it to - simple things like stop, turn, accelerate and rev - the 250X drove me mad, as time after time I couldn't get it to hold a line in a turn or drive out

of a corner without plenty of clutch to keep it singing. No matter how smooth, strong, or powerful an engine is, when fitted with a wide-ratio gearbox it's simply no good for high-end competition use - certainly not in the mud anyway. The 125 ran rings around the 250X mainly because I was able to keep its engine singing. With the 'X', I could rev it to the moon in one gear and then shift up, but when the motor dropped off the cam the clutch needed abuse to get it singing again - which wasted time!

Eddy's CR250 did give some clues as to why many riders are reverting back to two strokes. The bike 'rode' lighter and was less tiring than the 450 Yam. And although clearly a tired motor, it offered one huge advantage over a thumper - its ability to bump-start. While Knighter's, Wayne's, and Richard's bikes would pretty much start on the button whenever asked, they couldn't be bump started if I stalled them while riding. The two-strokes could. And on the few occasions I stalled Paul's bike I was on my way again immediately. A crucial point in the middle of a special test.

Class Dismissed...

Five different riders, with five very different bikes. Wayne's and Richard's bikes felt like well-prepared production machines (and performed as such), whilst as a factory bike, Knighter's KTM handled very much like a two-stroke, yet produced smooth, responsive four-stroke power - similar to that of a motocross thumper. And perhaps therein lies the secret to



With a very personal set-up, Richard's WR was hard to ride fast...

Daryl's WR Husky was a great example of a 125 enduro weapon...

a competitive, top-level enduro bike. As crazy as this might sound, the bikes which performed best - Daryl's and David's - were in many ways similar to MX machines. Obviously the chassis were set-up for enduro use, but the motors had that strong smooth power. All of which which meant that they could be brought into the meat of their power easily, which allowed me to concentrate on riding them rather than having to work them. And that's what makes all the difference when racing...

Thanks to...
Each of the riders and their team for allowing us to test their bikes... and for bringing them to mid-Wales. Michelin for providing enough tyres to ensure each of the bikes was fitted with new rubber for the test. Sign of the Time (01978 854770) for supplying the numbers fitted to each of the bikes. Oh, and Tommy at Cwnderw for being as friendly and interested in what we were doing as ever...

High Five

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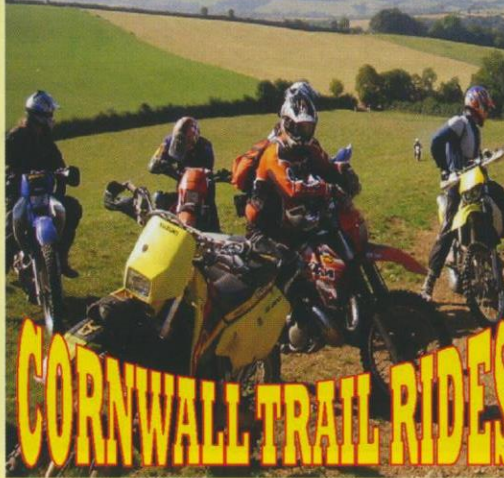


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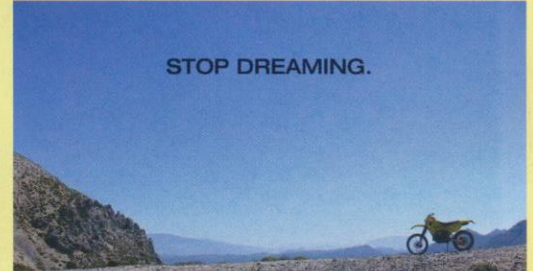
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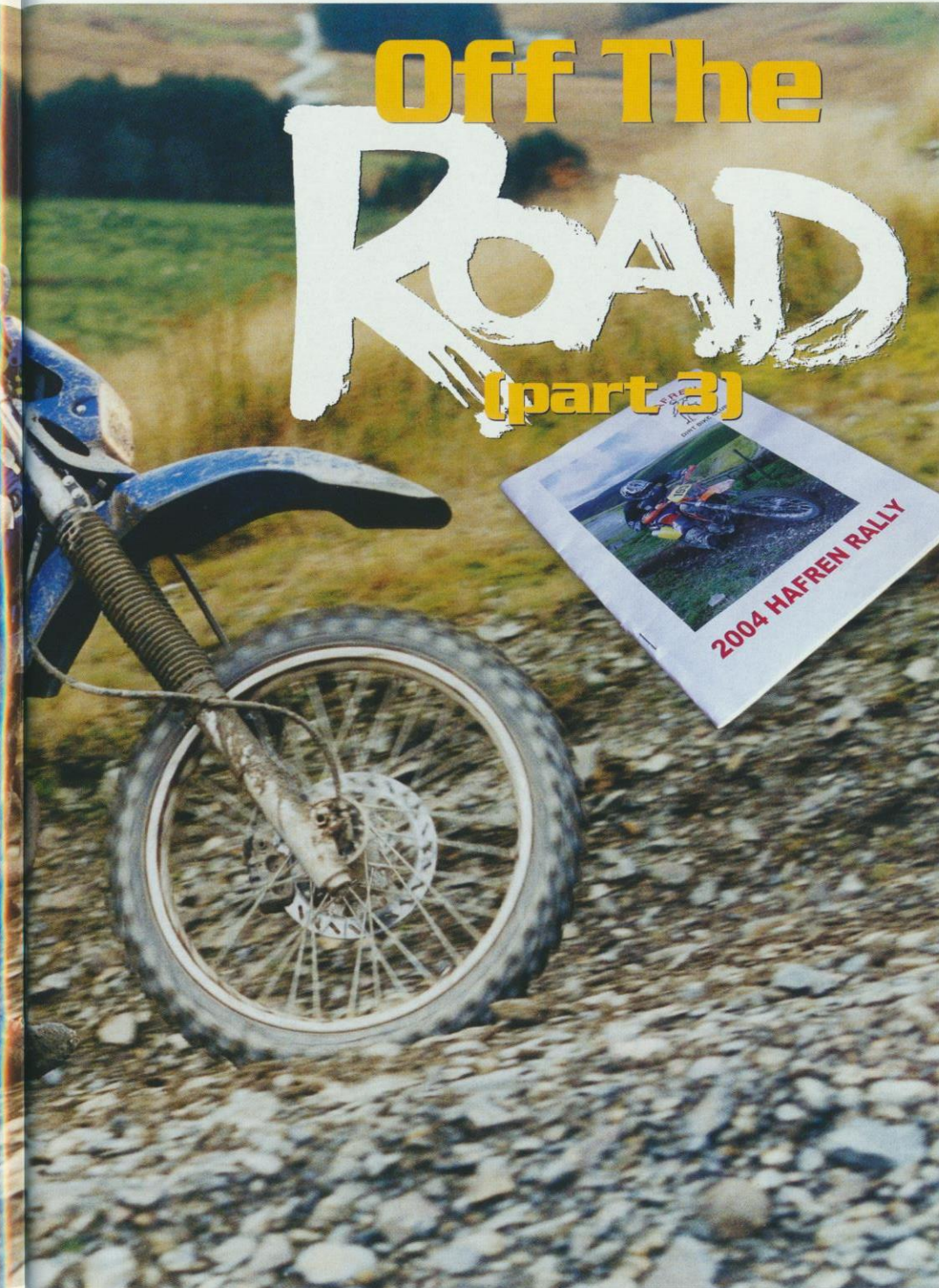
Never Raced or Rallied...

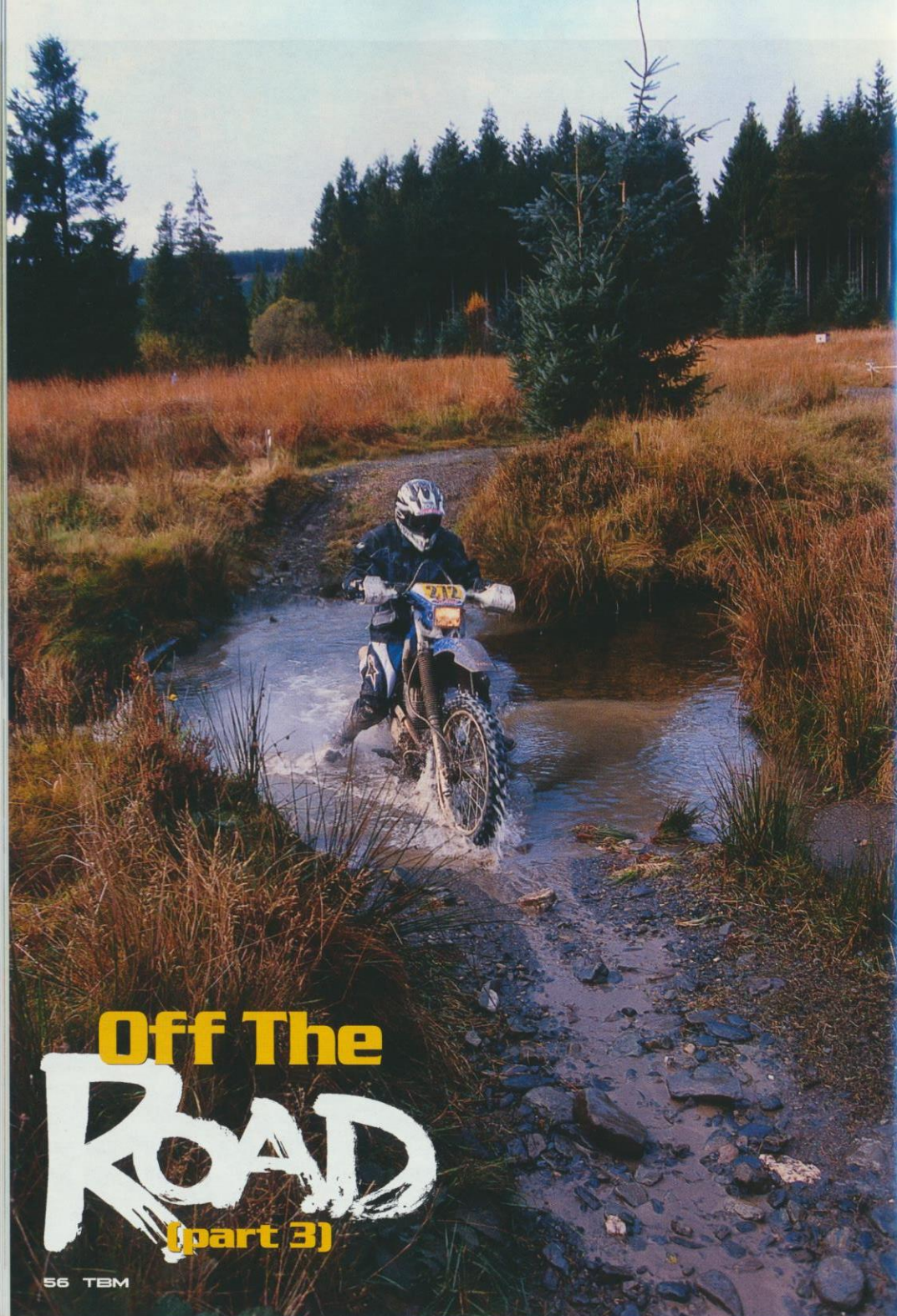
In a bid to pop her competition cherry, TBM race virgin Mel entered this year's Hafren Rally...



Off The ROAD

(part 3)





Off The Road

(part 3)



Never one to question our esteemed Editor's decisions, I did feel he was guilty of gilding my dirt riding lily somewhat when he decided I was ready to enter this year's Hafren Rally.

Don't get me wrong, I'm the kinda' girl who's usually up for anything (as long as it doesn't involve strawberries), but this seemed a little over-ambitious, even by my standards.

Now, you may be thinking this is a case of 'the lady doth protest too much', but contrary to popular belief, here at TBM we aren't out playing on bikes all day, every day - the truth is, we're actually keyboard slaves most of the month as sadly the magazine can't write itself.

So, with just a few dirty experiences under my belt, I think I could be forgiven for feeling a little nervous. Especially when in the week before Si and Deputy Dawg Jimbo took great delight in warning me about what would happen if I really stuffed it up - like falling 70ft down a bank off a fire-road at 50mph.

Nice Pear

Armed with this cheery mental picture, things started, in true TBM stylee, to go a bit pear-shaped before James and I had even left the office. James was going to be riding our Honda CRF250X and taking pictures, but its refusal to run properly wasn't the best of omens. And things didn't get any better when, ten minutes before my 10.30am start time, he managed to slice open his finger on the TBM van!

They say bad things come in threes, so lining up on a brand new Yamaha TTR250 with only ten miles on the clock (courtesy of Geraint Jones and the Yamaha Off Road school), I was praying for the safe return of us both. As I chugged away from the start with James, (astride a borrowed WR250 - thanks again, Geraint) in not so hot pursuit, I was immediately faced with a sharp left turn up a hill. Dropping down the other side, I recognised the 'supercross track' I had trained on the last time with the Joneses, which made me feel a little more confident.

Off The Road (part 3)



Even though the first lap was untimed, I was acutely aware I needed to hustle round fairly quickly if I wanted to complete the event, due to the limited hours of daylight you get in winter, and my late start time.

With this in mind, I got to the first special stage determined to blast through it. Going flat-out up another hill (well, about 30mph), I bumped over some shaley terrain before descending the other side into two bumpy ruts down to the track. Feeling on familiar territory, I then had the first of many unplanned detours as I gassed it away from the track up a hill into some peaty slop far too fast, resulting in a sharp exit-stage-right, straight off the course, luckily onto some grass. Suitably chastened, I proceeded with a bit more caution, with my first lesson learned: vary your riding style and speed depending on what type of terrain you are tackling, otherwise it could all go Pete Tong.

Old Scrubber

It didn't take long for my cack-handed throttle jockey tendencies to come back as I hit the first fire-road section at a fair old lick, but then had to hastily scrub-off speed when I noticed the course turning off 45 degrees onto a cut forestry track with deep ruts.

I wasn't the only one with a lamentable lack of observation skills as a KTM mounted guy in front of me also went in far too hot and fell off right in my path. Little did I know that just round the corner the special stage ended, otherwise I

wouldn't have gallantly offered my assistance!

After another quick fire-road blast, it was time for the second special stage. Both Dylan and Rowan Jones were starting the riders, and after a bit of chit-chat (and a few furtive looks by both of them at the TTR to check its condition), I was off.

Encouraged by my progress so far, it soon all ground to a halt in the woods in some big, rooty ruts - which some of you may remember, are not my favourite type of going. So I waited for my 'knight in body armour' James to turn up and do some rescuing, and after a few big pushes, I was up and out.

Conscious that I had 'lost' time, I emerged from the trees hoping for an easy fire-road or two to make up for it. No such luck, as turning left and then immediate right, I was faced with a fairly steep scramble up a loose rocky incline. There were a few riders taking a breather here, but I decided to push on and pinned it in first up the hill onto a bumpy track running along the top. The route then turned into a wooded, undulating single track complete with big puddles and lots of roots.

Now, roots and puddles I can just about cope with, but combine that with a narrow track and all of a sudden it becomes a little tricky. I know now that this is typical trail riding fare, but given that I had never encountered this before, it took a lot of concentration and balance to stay upright and keep up a steady pace. Then it all went wrong as a monster root came out of nowhere and I ended up flying through the air like super-

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Off The Road

(part 3)



woman, fortunately landing on some soft heather. This was my first official crash of the day, and little did I know that the number would reach double figures by the end of play.

Mud Bath

After dusting myself down, I managed to catch and pass a few competitors on a short stretch of fire-roads before going off-road again where a large puddle and a rock step stopped me dead in my tracks, almost causing the Dep Ed to get wet feet as he was right behind me - that'll teach him for tailgating.

Next up was one of the sections that caused me grief on every lap - a small, relatively easy climb, but with large loose pieces of slate at the bottom

on top of mud. Try as I might, I just couldn't get through it without slipping all over the place and soon dug myself a bit of a trench with the back wheel trying to power out. Sitting way back on the seat probably didn't gain me any more traction, either. Dutifully, James bailed me out yet again, and I went shooting off quite happily until my next challenge, one that soon became known as 'the big muddy hill'.

Now, I was a bit afraid of hills as I'm always convinced I'll never get up them in one go, and the fact this was thick, lumpy mud didn't do too much for me. In a true self-fulfilling prophecy moment, I eased up on the throttle and sure enough got stuck halfway up. However, I did manage to get up the rest of the hill without further mishap, vowing to just give it the berries next time round.

By now, I was beginning to feel the burn and it got worse as I wound my way down through the forest in very slippery gloom and hit some more of my favourite loose slate at the foot of the slope where I promptly toppled off. Not for the first time was I glad of the TTR's leccy start as I wearily climbed aboard again and on towards the third and final special stage.

Accelerating away from the start, there was a short 200-yard fire-road dash before another hill, which mindful of my failure on the last such obstacle, I breezed up in second, keeping the power on all the way. A few rocky steps and a spot of fire-road later and the test finish was in sight... except I was so relieved to see it I, well, didn't see it was a chicane until it was too

late and crashed right into it, much to the marshal's amusement.

Lady Spiller

It was then only a couple of miles back to the Sweet Lamb start/finish car park area, but it was already 1pm, so after a quick fuel splash 'n' dash, it was time to get out there again.

The pressure was most definitely on this time as now it was against the clock and I badly wanted to do well, if only to avoid the inevitable endless ribbing from my fellow hacks if I got a DNF in my first ever competition. James had also said I needed to up my speed on the fire-roads (to make up for the amount of time spent sitting on my derriere in the mud no doubt), so mindful of

this, I tore off towards the first special stage.

Three or four minutes into the test and it all finally began to click. Although I wasn't setting the world on fire with my lukewarm pace, I was definitely more fluid and looking ahead to the next corner, which in turn translated into quicker forward motion.

All was going swimmingly and I even had time to take in some of the beautiful Welsh scenery, but my faultless special stage was ruined about 200m before the end.

Unfortunately, another lady rider on her Pampera brought about my downfall by getting stuck in the same rut that I'd picked. Not until I rounded the corner did I see this and, lacking the experience to change ruts or navigate round her safely, I too hit the deck. Poor James didn't know what had hit him as he rode into view, only to be greeted by a screaming banshee, madly jumping up and down and demanding that her bike be moved pronto!

On a Bender

Tantrum-throwing over, I then proceeded to redeem myself a little by not falling off for at least 15 whole minutes, until I hit the wooded heavily rutted section again. Even then, I managed to stay on the bike most of the way through, only stupidly falling off at the end when the worst was practically over.

There was no flying off into the undergrowth this time either as I navigated the giant root with ease, although it very nearly all ended in tears a little further on at the puddle/rock step combo again. Getting up was no problem, but I gave it a bit too much gas and it carried me at an alarming rate of knots towards some big fir trees, which thwacked me soundly across the face before I somehow veered back onto the track.

After that lucky escape (James said afterwards he had no idea how the hell I stayed on the bike), I had run out of lives as I approached the slate incline that had previously caused me so much angst.

Now, you would expect that I would've learned by now but no, predictably I got stuck in exactly the same place as before and needed roadside assistance yet again. The only explanation I can give for what happened next was that I was a little... ahem, fired up as I reached the top and decided to give it some more right wrist. A little too much as it turned out, as somehow not only did I manage to leave a perfectly straight path, but I speared off into a tree and launched the bike over a bank.

You see, I have this rather worrying tendency to gas it (a la Crasher Cornish). Not when there might be a chance of saving it, but instead at the

HAFREN RALLY WHASSAT THEN?



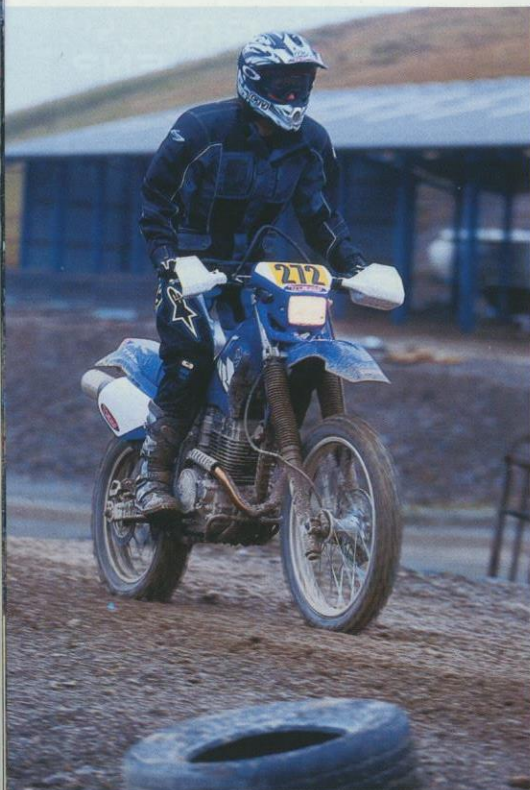
If you hadn't already guessed, UK rallying is a great way to start your off-road competition career. Much like a car rally, there are liaison stages and timed special stages, and although organisers like you to stick to a time schedule, rarely are there penalties for arriving at a stage late.

The Hafren Rally is typical of this type of event. First run back in 1996, the Rally takes place every autumn in mid-Wales, and uses the infamous Hafren Forest.

Each lap measures around 45 miles, over a mixture of flowing tracks, fast fire-roads and gentle trails. The going is fairly easy, and as such there are often large numbers of multi-cylinder big trailies entered amongst the hordes of enduro machines. This year competitors rode two full laps, and one part lap (38 miles). The first lap was untimed, a 'sighting lap' if you like, and only on the second lap did times on the three special stages count. Lap three featured only two 'stages'.

As soon as the '05 regs are available, we'll let you know...





hill was muddy and littered with cut branches, it became quite technical and I subsequently dropped the TTR. Another lesson well learnt then.

Gunning it back to the finish, a quick glance at my watch showed that there was just enough time to squeak in the third and final half lap. Sadly, it wasn't to be as

the gate onto the course had been closed early due to the dwindling daylight.

Even though I was really disappointed at not getting the chance to go out again, I had to agree with James it was for the best, as by the time we had got back to the van and changed, it was almost dark.

So, imagine my disbelief, shock and delight at being told I had, in fact, scooped the 'Best Lady' award! I knew I had given it my all, but never thought I would have a cat in hell's chance of actually winning anything - just finishing in one piece was prize enough for me. To be fair, the other five lady competitors all did really well, especially Anita Bowden on her Pampera - the one and the same gurlie who thwarted my first special stage so expertly!

However, I took away a lot more than just a swollen head and bruises from the Hafren. I'm now not afraid of tackling different types of terrain, and more importantly, have some idea of how to do it, as well as how definitely not to! All I can say is - next year... watch out boys. *Competition?* This girl's hooked...

Special thanks to: Geraint Jones and the rest of the Jones clan for their help at extremely short notice; to all at the Hafren Dirt Bike Club for a thoroughly enjoyable event, and to my fellow competitors - many of whom stopped to help a damsel in distress. Finally, thanks to James for being abused all day!

moment of no return, thus creating maximum damage opportunities.

With the poor little Yam buried in foliage, I hurriedly extricated myself from my fir tree hugging position and scrambled back up, hoping fervently that James had missed it all. Yeah right! Never one to miss a snapping moment, he had already assumed the position and was happily clicking away (see the end of year pictures for the results).

Once the bike had been hauled out of its ever-so-nearly-final resting place, James noticed another TBM first - a bent choke lever! Sorry Geraint.

Best in Show

Fortunately, the only other tumble I took that lap was near the end, on a climb that before I had just sailed up. However, because this time I took it slower, and as the



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04

ON THE FLOOR

Si Melber: Crash Test Dummies

'You'd have thought that three wheels would have been so much more stable than two.' That was the thought somersaulting through my brain at precisely the same time my body was performing much the same task - albeit rather more involuntarily. It was October and the enduro sidecar I'd been riding during a rare outing on three wheels had just executed a perfect forward roll.

Readers occasionally ask us why we don't feature more sidecars in TBM? Hold on, let me just think about that one for a second. At this point I'd really like to say a big 'Sorry' to my passenger Adie Sarfas who, like me, ended up trapped beneath the outfit, but who (unlike me) was supporting the full weight of it on his hand. I'd have liked to have said as much at the time, but frankly I was too busy laughing. Sorry, Adie. I really am.

I had reason to feel sorry for myself during our Husaberg 450 test back at the beginning of the year. On the way out of a ridiculously slippery corner, I gassed up the Berg and lost the back end which slid out then gripped in the classic high-side. Being flicked feet-first out of the saddle and up into the air wasn't anywhere near as painful as landing nuts-first on the Berg's unforgiving bar-end. Ouch.



Left: Remember we told you how easy Honda's CRF250X was to ride...
Below: Take one CRF450 with an auto-clutch, add an incompetent test rider and what have you got..?

In between these tests there were all the usual gawky get-offs, sorry spills and bonkers bail-outs too numerous to mention - which seem to be part and parcel of this road tester's working week. Though I've got to say that I was pleased that it wasn't *me* on the receiving end of our two-bike tangle when Jonty and I clashed mid-corner during our photo-shoot for the cover of the July issue.

Poor Jonty, he figured out exactly what was likely to happen when I first suggested we dive into the corner side by side for a two-bike cover shot. Going into the left-hander on Yamaha's 2-Trac I was on the outside of him, but as we exited the turn, the all-wheel-drive machine hooked up slightly quicker than I'd expected (!) and shot directly across his path onto the inside line...

It must have been like riding straight into a high kerb for him. The second Jonty's front wheel touched my rear wheel it stopped turning. Instantly.

The resulting forward momentum

'Unless I'm very much mistaken I think that's a fine example of a rare Saddleback worm. I think I'll save that for my lunch...'

suddenly became *rotational* momentum, hurling the hapless hack up and over the bars just as surely as if someone had poked a big stick through his spokes. It probably wouldn't have been so bad had it not been for the fact that Jonty was still recovering from an earlier illness, and had been advised to 'take things easy'. Needless to say I had to take the subsequent rap from Jonty's mum...

Perhaps the only other TBM contributor as unlucky as Jonty this year was our capricious columnist Mark Williams who bizarrely enough managed to get a puncture during every single one of his numerous outings whilst *Doing the Rounds* up and down the country.

Well... every outing except his most recent (detailed in this issue), where he got no less than three punctures, including one in his car. Don't waste your money doing the Lottery, eh Mark?

Back at TBM Towers things have been almost as eventful with new hackette Mel joining the TBM Wrecking Crew. I'd like to say that we're proud to be breaking new ground employing a female dirt bike tester, but in fact not that much has changed - she crashes just as hard and often as the boys - she just looks a whole lot better doing it.

My bike of the year? Could've been Honda's brilliant new CRF250X, or Husky's gorgeous (but ultimately pointless) TE510

04 ON THE FLOOR

After impaling the editorial 'plums' on the Berg's bar-end it wasn't so much a matter of rubbing-'em as counting-'em...

Centennial, but in fact I've chosen Yamaha's audacious WR450F 2-Trac. No other manufacturer gets close. In launching the world's first production 2WD dirt bike, Yamaha not only debuted a new model, but a whole new genre. Congratulations to them for having the balls to do it.

And just to show that I'm even-handed with my praise and criticism, Yamaha also scoop our award for Lemon of the Year with their XT660R. Obviously the styling budget had already been spent developing the 2-Trac. What *were* they thinking of?

I'll finish by saying a big THANKS to you guys and girls for sticking with us this year, and over the coming 12 months we promise to bring you even more of the stuff you've (hopefully) enjoyed reading about in these pages. One thing you can be sure of is that TBM will continue to be independent, fair-minded, and bullsh*t-free. Now that's something *no* other dirt bike magazine can promise you... **SM**



James Barnicoat: Calamity James strikes again...

2004 got off to a slightly faltering start for this particular member of the TBM Wrecking Crew. For we'd only just put the finishing touches to the 2003 End of Year Crash-fest when I thought I'd borrow the Ed's prized Yamaha WR-250Z for a recreational ride at a local hare 'n' hounds. Nothing tricky, just a twisty course across some greasy grassland. Unfortunately, on my second lap things all went a little pear-shaped, and the end result was that the Ed's favourite bike ended up... well, kinda banana-shaped!

One second all was well, the next I was sliding along the track on my front, to the horrifying soundtrack of a two-stroke 250 cart-wheeling alongside me. Still sliding, I looked over to see the Yam shedding panels left, right, and centre. Uh-oh.

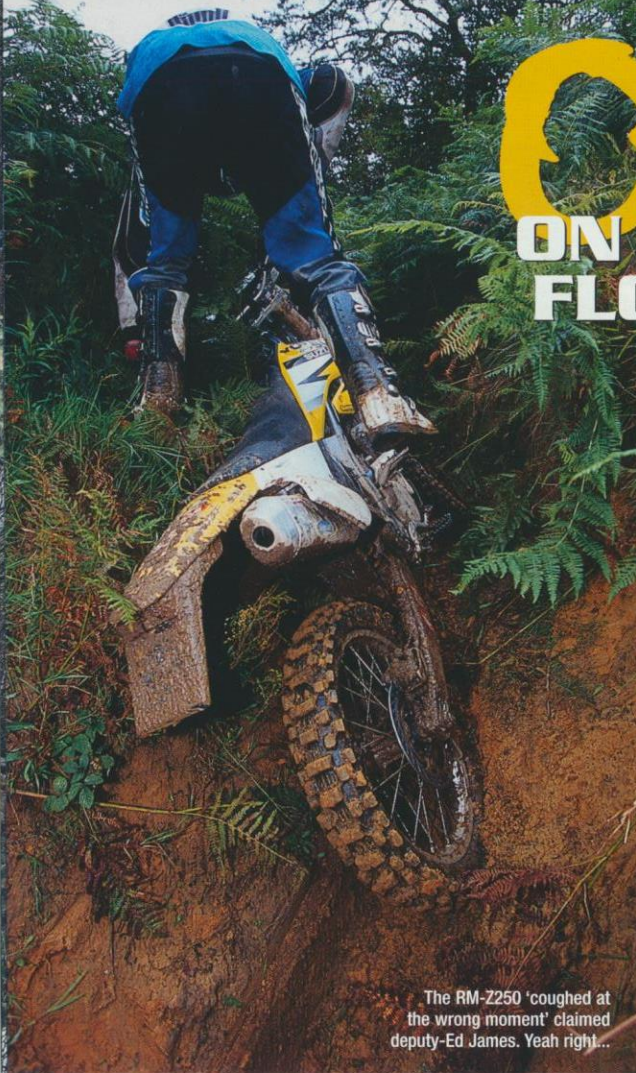
Despite initial, adrenaline-fuelled protestations that I was 'just a little winded' and would 'carry on after a bit of a rest,' the marshals insisted I visited the St John's. And I'm glad they did, as a later visit to casualty revealed a broken wrist, a couple of cracked ribs and a spot of concussion.

Still, I got off lightly compared to the unfortunate Husky rider who later crashed at the very same spot and ended up with two spiral fractures. One in each leg. Ouch.

Of course, that wasn't all of the year's crashing out of the way. Notable 'offs'



04 ON THE FLOOR



The RM-2250 'coughed at the wrong moment' claimed deputy-Ed James. Yeah right...

fun, with a fantastic course marked through the Italian countryside. And closer to home, riding CRF230s with Crasher Cornish and the guys from West Country Trail Tours was quite a hoot. What's more, having purchased TBM contributor, and now Aussie-bound explorer, Clive Garnham's old Montesa 315R trialler, there've been many enjoyable outings clambering over fallen tree trunks and up very slippery slopes. All new to me.

Of course, it hasn't all been beer and skittles. There was our test of the waterproof riding gear back in issue 102, when I stood out in the TBM yard on a cold winter's eve, whilst the editor sprayed me with the jetwash!

And, of course, who could forget about TBM's latest project bike, the 'Cheap Speed' Cagiva WMX500? Er, I could, as the big stroker still hasn't turned a wheel, having become an integral part of the largest spiderweb you've ever seen at the back of the TBM shed.

But enough of this waffle, it's time for the biggest, most prestigious award in the dirtbike industry, an accolade so huge that no plastic trophy of a wheelying 70s Greeves scrambler can do it justice - it's 'Barni's Bike of the Year'.

In 2003 a '70s Montesa scooped the win, being joined on the podium by the '04 KTM 250EXC two-stroke and our aforementioned 1986 Cagiva. This year my top three is more conventional (just a little, mind), though it's worth mentioning a



This pic: The poor old Berg 450 bites the dust once again... Right: That'll be the 2005 KTMs then...

few bikes which didn't quite make the podium.

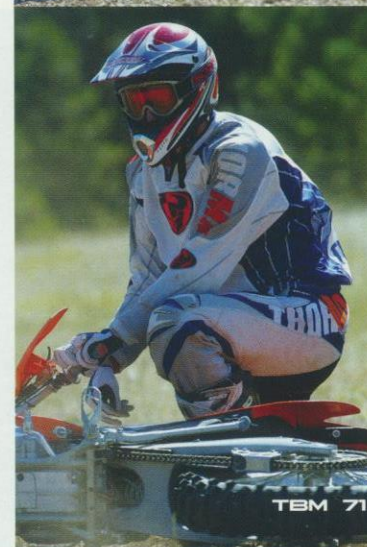
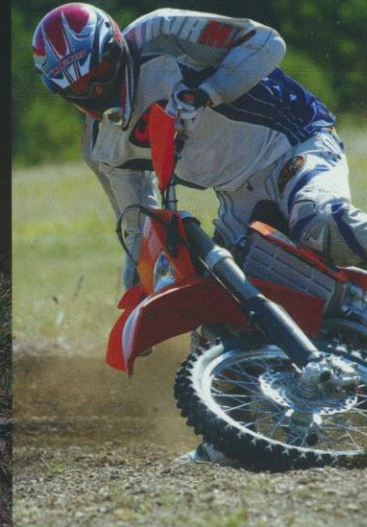
First off, Honda's new CRF250X. So easy to ride quick, such a great looking bike, it's just a shame that we keep hearing nasty things about their valves. Sherco's 4.5i, or at least the pre-production bike I rode back at the start of the year, also deserves a mention for being a great clubman 450. But I'll reserve further judgement till we get a test of a production bike. Reader Mark Hollis' CRF450R is certainly worthy of a sentence or two here. Now, as standard the big MXer makes a pretty lousy enduro bike (it's way too feisty) but Mark's bike was fitted with a Rekluse semi-auto clutch and a bar-mounted rear brake. And around our test track this made it so much fun I really didn't want to give it back!

But, I digress. So on to the top three. Once again, the KTM 250EXC stroker ('05 model) places third. I'd rather it were a little bit more stable, and the brakes were Nissins rather than Brembos, but other than that I really can't fault it. A great bike.

Rather than keeping you in suspense, at this point I'm going to cop-out and announce joint winners 'cos I couldn't decide between them. So step forward Gareth Jones' beautiful 1981 Maico 400 Mega 2 together with the KTM 950 Adventure. The Maico gets the nod on so many levels it's hard to know where to start. It's a big two-stroke, and if you hadn't already guessed, I kinda like that. It's great to ride and sounds awesome. And above all, it's very, very cool.

The V-twin Katosh is obviously hugely different, but again has so much going for it. There aren't many bikes out there that'll get you down to the Alps at breakneck speed, and then allow you to wave at mountain bikers as you pass them on a tricky loose-rock descent. And it looks gorgeous, too.

In fact, if I didn't have to shell out on parts for Si's trashed Yamaha I'd probably go out and buy a 950 myself. Ah, yes, the WR, I'd forgotten about that. It's only been a year since I trashed it, suppose I'd better hurry up and fix it... **JB**



include forward-rolling an EC250 down a six-foot Welsh rock-step and landing on the TBM camera gear that was strapped to my back; performing a flying-W over a bank 'aboard' the WR450F during our Maico v Yamaha test and then later on, trapping an already injured hand between a rock and a hard place. And then of course there were the many mid-special test crashes on the Welsh Two-Day which proved that the WR250F was tougher than a Welsh pine!

Interspersed with these crashes, there's been some great riding. The CRF-X launch in northern Spain combined technical rocks with fast and flowing trails and was simply awesome. July's launch of the '05 KTMs also proved to be great

Mel Falconer: Dirt Doyenne

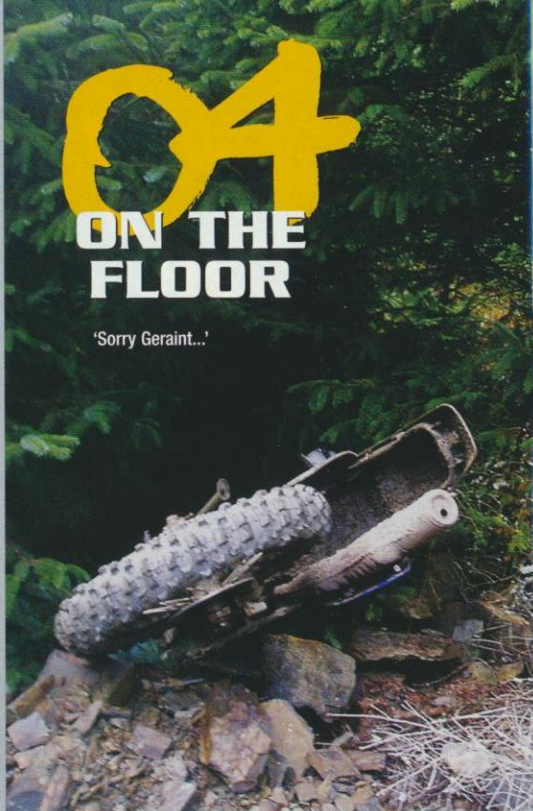
Six months into my TBM tenure and I've already learnt a hell of a lot, including one thing in particular - behind every great man there lies a great woman, as I'm sure the Ed will concur. Or... one in front of him, if he's not careful!

Joking aside, it's been one helluva' ride so far. Despite being pushed into the dirtbike deep-end I think I've managed to doggy-paddle around fairly convincingly. And if the editor thought that by taking on a gurlie tester he would be able to reduce his repair bills, well, let's just say that he's been on a steep learning curve as well.

From wobbly beginnings aboard the Wingco's trusty trials bike to hustling my way around the Hafren on a TTR250, I've really come to appreciate just how much fun getting down and dirty can be.

Easily my best moment so far this year was losing my competition virginity in the Hafren Rally. Managing to achieve the 'Best Lady' accolade was an unexpected, but very welcome bonus... leaving me definitely wanting more.

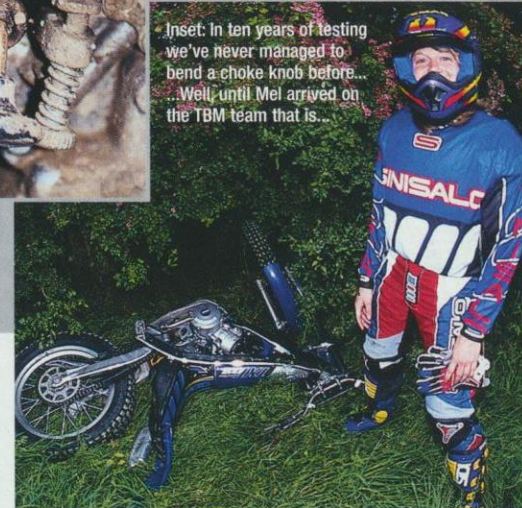
But nobody can be more surprised (and chuffed) than me about the progress I've made in such a short space of time, and for that the credit has to go to my partners in grime, Si and James. Thanks guys. **MF**



Here: Hafren Rally 2004



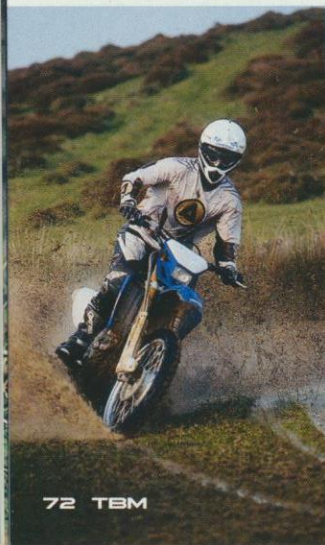
Inset: In ten years of testing we've never managed to bend a choke knob before... Well, until Mel arrived on the TBM team that is...



Jonty Edmunds: Look Back in Anger

2004. Thank god that one's behind me. I know that the annual end-of-season TBM look-back is supposed to be a light-hearted commentary about the year that's all-but finished, but I for one am truly glad that 2005 is almost here. Not because I haven't enjoyed riding, writing about or photo-

graphing enduro bikes the world over. Far from it, it's just that this year's travel and testing was somewhat curtailed after I managed to pick up some unwanted Brazilian bacteria while covering the 78th ISDE in Brazil for this very magazine at the tail end of '03.



And before you ask. No there wasn't a woman involved. I'd figured I'd simply been overdoing things, but then the doctors thought I'd had a stroke, and then later that I had an infection of the brain lining. Starting the new year with a month-and-a-day in hospital is something I hope never to repeat.

The highlight of the sporting year for me was seeing Knighter re-establish himself as one of the world's best during the course of the season. With no factory backing, it was great to see him (supported every step of the way by the British based D3-Racing team), place at the sharp end of the WEC from start to finish.



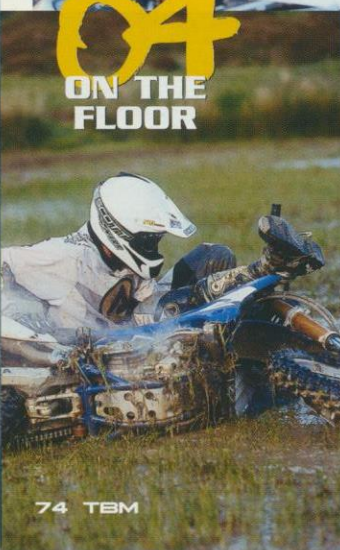
...You're messing with the big boys now Jonty...

Which was the best race of '04? The inaugural Hell's Gate event in Italy. Dominated by Knighter, it showed that with vision, a sizeable amount of funding and a great venue, a new-from-the-ground-up race can work. The worst? Without question the ISDE in Poland. Any event in which a competitor is killed is always a sad one. One in which a rider, as well as an outrider and two members of the public are killed is a tragic one. I hope I never attend anything like it again.

Internationally, Juha Salminen has been the rider that has once again impressed me most. Performing at speeds approaching those not even the Purple Helmets can achieve, Juha again proved himself as the best enduro rider in the world. His switch to the US GNCC series is a huge loss to the WEC.

Of the bikes I've ridden this season, Yamaha's 2-Trac has been without doubt the most entertaining. Even if getting taken out by the Ed while trying to capture a 'cover shot' certainly wasn't!

And finally, seeing Juha and Gio Sala treated to a very private lapdance in front of around 15000 people at the final round of the WEC in Germany is a sight that is still waking me at night. Having fought for position at the front of the stage in order to photograph the 2004 WEC class winners, I got closer than any man should ever get to a second-hand looking, German stripper. I guess '04 wasn't all bad! **JE**



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News at TEN

Paul Blezard has competed in every Cambrian Rally since the event started in 1994. He returned for the 10th anniversary edition, riding a BMW R1150GS...

Amazingly, the Cambrian Rally has been around even longer than TBM. In fact it's ten and a half years since the inaugural event because the first Cambrian was held on Easter Day 1994, and this year's was only the second to be run later in the year. (In 2001 it didn't run at all, due to the Foot and Mouth epidemic).

For the last few years the event's been based at

the 'mock German village' in the middle of the army land on the Eppynt ranges, but the temporary loss of that land due to the activities of illegal riders required a complete change of course, along with much else besides.

The two Bobs, Perring and Jeffries, got together with their WTRA colleagues and decided to take the opportunity to give the Cambrian a thorough

revamp. So for the first time it became a two day event, run over a single near-hundred mile lap on each day. Then they added an extra twist with the introduction of roadbook navigation, making it more like a long distance trial - but much faster. For anyone contemplating doing an African rally, it was certainly excellent roadbook reading practice, with plenty of scope for getting lost in the big, bad Welsh forests, as many soon discovered!

As Clerk of the course Phil Wilkinson said in his introduction in the programme, 'the course is aimed very much at the big trail bike rider' and it was great to see so many big trailie entries. In recent years I've sometimes felt like some sort of deranged idiot as I've competed on ever bigger

and heavier monster trailies, while the average entrant seemed to be opting for lighter and more capable enduro machinery.

This year I could hardly believe my eyes as competitor after competitor rolled into the Llandovery Rugby club car park on R1150GSs - seven of us in all, plus seven more on the older 'airhead' BMW boxers. There were also five of the new KTM 950 V-twins, two Cagiva Elefants a pair of Africa Twins, a Super Tenere, and a rare Honda XLV750 shaftie. That's 24 twins in all, plus a good selection of big single Teneres, KTM Adventures, Dominators, KLX650s and the like. No less than 43 of the 72 entries in the trail bike class were over 600cc, nearly a third of the 150-odd total.

Mid Wales Monsoon

Fortunately the temperature was fairly mild, but boy did it rain! As 2003 winner Katrina Price was flagged away from the Rugby club gates at 11am on Saturday morning, the rain was coming down in stair rods and it was still lashing down when myself and my sparring partners Pat and Digger were flagged away nearly an hour later, bringing up the rear. In fact the rain hardly let up all day.

Bob Perring had warned us that the most testing part of the course would be the first few off-road miles in the Crychan forest, and so it proved. Fortunately the steep single track path was downhill and then flat, although full of whoops from a previous enduro - little did I know that we'd be routed back up it at the end of the day! By the time I'd got to the end of the whoops my goggles were steamed up and useless, but from a machine-handling point of view the worst was over.

Although there were some tricky sections over cut branches soon after, it was the road book navigation that most people struggled with. The lack of orange arrows (combined with the torrential rain) sure as hell kept people's speeds down in the liaison sections this year!



STORY & PICS: PAUL BLEZARD

By the time we got to the first special stage, just off the A483, I was more than a little soggy and glad I'd brought a change of gloves. At least a dozen riders joined the queue behind us after getting lost in the forest, as we waited for our turn to ride the short but sweet 2.5 mile car rally stage at Esgair Dafydd which was used as a gravel hill climb in the 1980s TV show 'Rally Sprint'.

For the first time, the Cambrian 'specials' were started with automatic 'traffic lights' combined with electronic timing. I nearly went straight on at the first corner due to poor visibility and decided it was safer to ride without eye protection than to risk going off the edge of a mountain!

Most of the going was on fire roads of one sort or another, but there were a couple of little excursions into the forest to make things more 'interesting' and a couple of challenging hills, especially for those of us on 'big uns'. After a scenic ride on the narrow tarmac road around the Llyn Briane reservoir we eventually came to the second special stage. Running down the fire roads of Nant-yr-hwch, it was no less than ten miles long, by far the longest 'special' ever set in the Cambrian. And it proved quite eventful for me...

Battle of the Big 'Uns

I nearly crashed within a few hundred yards of the start when I got the big Beemer horribly sideways across the central camber of the track. I was actually bracing myself for a big 'off' when it somehow sorted itself out again. The next thing I knew Andy Cadney was showing me the wheel of his Cagiva 'Rogue' Elephant, despite having crashed - jamming his bike in third gear!

Shortly after, there was a sharp right turn at a pile of logs and Andy came within inches of my back wheel completely sideways, before overshooting the turn. I increased my speed in a desperate attempt to keep him at bay, but a couple of miles later he swept passed with impressive ease in quite a tricky two-track section.

We heard that Noel Fletcher had had a big 'off' on his very special lightweight GS when he hit a log while overtaking a slower rider. He eventually managed to ride out, but was too battered and bruised to return to the fray on Sunday - a shame because he'd been fastest twin and second fastest trailbike in the first special!

Wet, wet, wet

It was 3pm by the time we got to the 'lunch stop' in the forest near Abergwesyn and I have not been so wet and miserable on a motorcycle for many a long year. I was absolutely soaked to the skin. With the special stages over for the day, quite a few 'wusses' called it a day and rode straight back to Llandoverly.

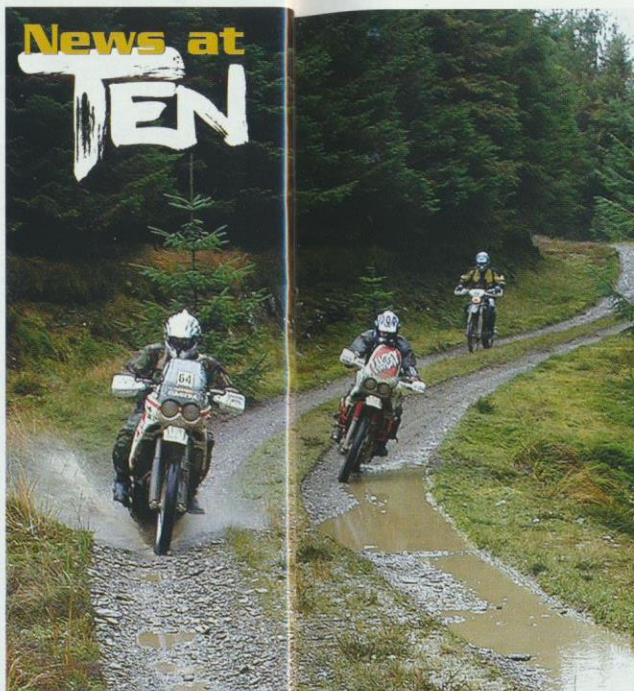
I was tempted to do the same myself until I caught up with Richard Ireland on his immaculate R1150GS, who was game to go back in the forest. To cut a long story short, we met several people going the wrong way down a fire road, picked up several lost stragglers, missed a turn ourselves, but eventually got back to the dreaded endure whoops that had started the off-road day, only to be confronted by a queue of riders at the bottom of the final hill. Turned out that the torrents of flood water had taken several inches out of the bottom of a gully, and it was getting deeper and narrower

by the second. When we first arrived we just managed to get an 1150 through it with a lot of shoving and heaving but within minutes the gully had got so narrow that you couldn't even fit an XR400 through. There was an alternative route, about four inches wide, up on the bank alongside, which required squeezing past a tree, but that didn't seem very sensible with a quarter tonne of 1150. There was nothing for it but to turn back, ride the bloody whoops for the third time, and follow a marshall out of the forest on a fire road. Even the A483 back to Llandoverly was flooded in places.

Another Day

Sunday dawned bright and sunny, thank God. The route was essentially the same as Saturday, except that the narrow-slotted gully had been cut out, and a parallel track down to the whoops substituted, which was far from easy, even downhill. Pat dropped his 950 trying to get it over the log at the top and a guy on an enduro bike fell off right in front of me half way down. Like everyone else, I went a bit quicker on the first special than the day before, but lost several seconds when I overshoot the final corner - curses!

I also had an embarrassing 'paddle' at the top of the big climb, having 'cleaned' it in the rain the day before; the surface had deteriorated, but what really put me off was Pat standing at the



tight left hander. Fortunately I managed not stay upright and on the fire road, unlike many other riders whose skid marks led straight into the shrubbery.

I was going faster than I had in the rain the day before, but not fast enough, because an Akrapovic was soon bellying in my lug'oles and Keenan and his KTM made a clean pass on me as we came out of a slow corner with four miles still to go. Curses!

Back at the lunch stop, another superfast GS rider, Phil Colclough was trying to get his bent

rear shock to unspring itself from 'full bump'. He managed to limp back to Llandoverly and take the best multi-cylinder award, and fourth trailbike.

We chewed the fat at the burger bar with Elephant riders Andy Cadney and John Monger, discovering that both their machines are much improved from standard, but that Andy was still stuck in third gear from his crash the day before. It didn't stop him taking best 901-1100cc, and 15th, while John got best Service Rider in 26th.

The ride back through the forest was uneventful, apart from the fact that the heavens opened once again, but this time we didn't take any



top with his bloody camera. The descent down the other side was pretty damn tricky too, although we all managed to stay shiny side up.

The start of the long second special was held up while the ambulance carted someone off to hospital (fortunately not serious), and the early part of the special stage was enlivened for me by catching the irrepressibly cheerful Fiona Moran, who'd ridden her 'bag of nails' CRM into the gully alongside the track, but still had a big smile on her face. A few miles further on I had a big moment of my own when I got the 1150 in a full-lock broadside for several seconds approaching a



wrong turns. We were glad that common sense had prevailed so that those of us on 'big uns' were able to by-pass the two worst climbs.

Women rule, OK?

When the results came through it was no great surprise to discover that Queen Katrina Price had once again wiped the floor with all us feeble men on her humble Honda CRM250.

I hope she won't mind me mentioning that she's nearly 40 now, but doesn't seem to be slowing down at all. She beat best Sports class rider Brian Eland and his KTM 400 by over half a minute. Okay, she knows those Welsh forests like the back of her hand, but it's still a mighty impressive achievement. Chris Pascoe took runner-up and the John Deacon Memorial Award on his KTM 950, while Colin Newman took third trailbike and best over 40 on his Gas Gas 400.

Also over 40 and still not slowing down, Gill Myers, beat 90percent of the blokes to take 'Best Lady' in sixth - having swapped her faithful XT350 for a TTR250. Just behind her Phil Gunn took best 701-900cc on his GS80 twin, helped by the addition of a front end off a KTM LC4 - 'Never had brakes like it on a BMW before!'

Laurence Leahy made me look pretty damn slow with his times on his R1150GS, taking best over 1100cc and 16th place, just behind Andy Cadney's Cagiva. Bob 'Robocop' Broom humiliated a shedful of riders half his age by taking 29th and best over 60 trailbike on his KTM 450. Fellow 60-something John Hall was even faster on his 525EXC in the Sports class, while 50-something Smiler Hutson was positively blistering on his Gas Gas 450, beaten only by Brian Eland and sportsbike runner-up Michael Purvis. Best over

80 TBM



40 Mike Wadkins was only just behind in fourth.

In fact the Cambrian Rally is a great demonstration that dirt riding keeps you young, with no less than 24 riders past their half century and 60 riders over 40, most of whom finished.

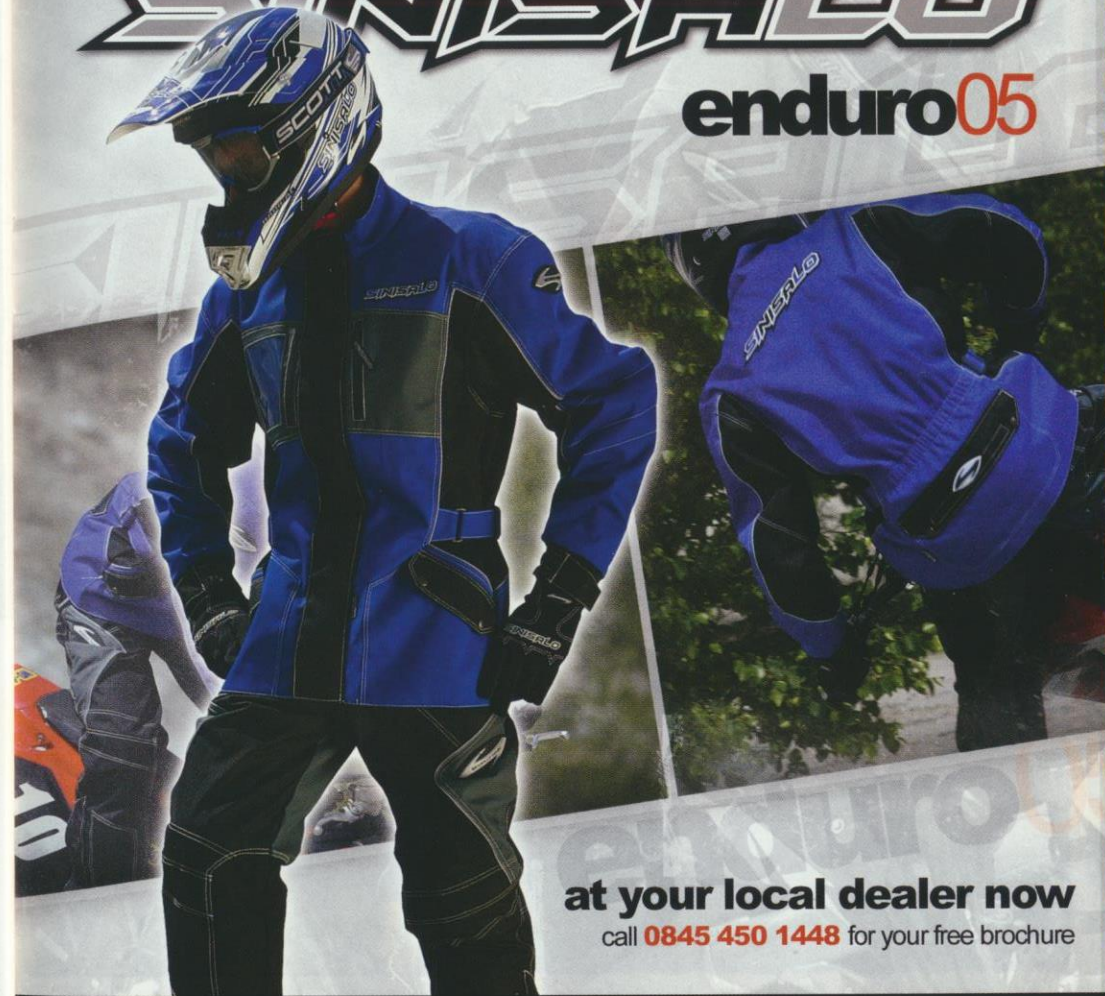
Nearly last, but by no means least, Globe-trotting Tiffany Coates took a well-deserved 'Spirit of the Cambrian Rally' award. Although she'd ridden her BMW to Australia and back via South Africa, she had never done any form of competition before the Cambrian. She rode her monster-mileage R80GS up from Land's End in pouring rain on Friday night, wisely changed the tyres, did the event without major mishap, (but was handicapped by a horrendously stiff throttle for most of it), then changed the tyres back again and rode home.

Derek Arnold also rode his KTM 950 to the event and did it all with a road rear tyre, and even took in some of the Ridgeway in the dark on the way home. Overall, everyone I spoke to thoroughly enjoyed the new-style Cambrian, despite the atrocious weather. I hope they'll stick with the road-book format for next year. Roll on the Easter Event on the Epynt ranges (whatever they decide to call it), and the Cambrian 2005. In the meantime, please keep off the ranges...

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GREATEST BRITONS

ENDURO RIDERS RULE THE ROOST AT THE INAUGURAL MOTO 1 EVENT DESIGNED TO FIND BRITAIN'S BEST ALL-ROUND MOTORCYCLE SPORTS STAR. AND TBM WAS THERE TO RECORD IT ALL...

Who is Britain's best all-round motorcycle racer? It's a question often discussed but rarely settled. Would, for instance a road racer beat an enduro rider, or could a trials rider beat an MX racer at various different biking disciplines?

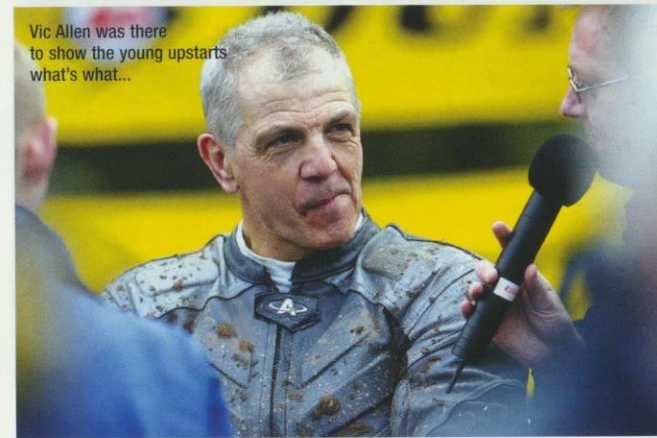
Well now we know, and it probably won't come as any great surprise to hear who it is - Manxman, David Knight. World Enduro 2 Championship runner-up, 2004 Overall British Enduro Champion, European

Supermoto Championship points scorer, three times Weston Beach Race winner, British Motocross Championship points scorer, former trials rider, TBM columnist and all-round bike nut. Yes, Knighter is officially 'Britain's ultimate motorcycling sports star'.

How do we know? Because he comfortably topped the inaugural Moto 1 event staged at Donington Park in late October, an event designed to establish once and for all, Britain's best biking bulldog.



Billy MacKenzie on the gas in the trials event...



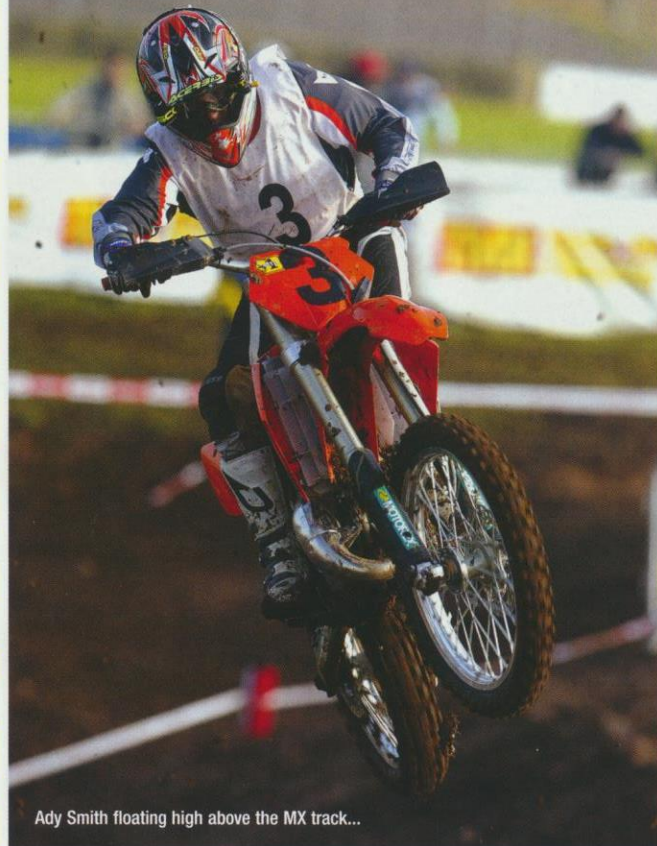
Vic Allen was there to show the young upstarts what's what...

The concept behind the Moto 1 event was simple: take 24 of the country's top bike racers, bring them together at an appropriate venue and let them compete in four different motorcycling disciplines to determine who's the best all-rounder. With riders representing road racing, motocross, trials, enduro, supermoto and a stunt rider thrown in for good measure, a weekend long programme of events all within the grounds of the historic Donington Park

facility in Derbyshire promised plenty of action.

From road racing there was the brat pack of Kieran Clarke, Karl Harris, Craig Jones, Dean Ellison, Jon Kirkam, Stuart Easton, Michael Laverty and Tom Sykes. With many having graduated from a schoolboy motocross background, the likes of Clarke and Laverty, and especially Harris, were expected to be fairly handy at more than a couple of the disciplines.

With road racers making up the majority of the competitors



Ady Smith floating high above the MX track...

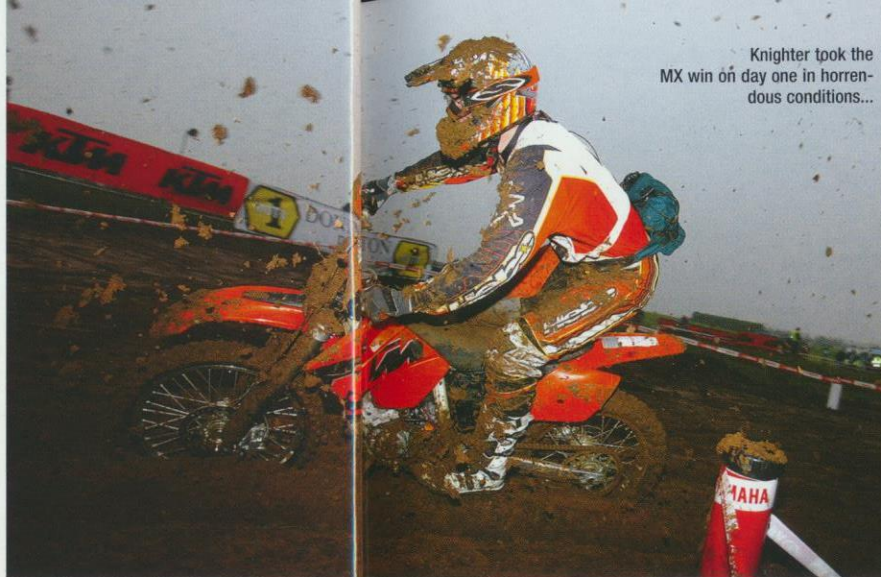
ADY SMITH: 'I'VE REALLY ENJOYED IT THIS WEEKEND. IT'S A DREAM COME TRUE TO COMPETE IN AN EVENT LIKE THIS FOR ME BECAUSE I CAN REMEMBER THE ORIGINAL SUPERBIKE SIX EVENT.'

(the event was marketed towards attracting road race fans) the next biggest group of riders was the enduro clan. Headed by pre-event favourite David Knight, his brother Juan, his D3-Racing KTM team-mate Edward Jones, Wayne Braybrook and (latterly supermoto star) Ady Smith, the strength of those representing the enduro world was impressive.

Sherco stars Graham Jarvis and Sam Connor represented the sport of trials, while David Tougher and Leighton Haigh

(as well as Ady Smith) flew the flag for supermoto. MX riders Billy MacKenzie, David Campbell and the Smyth brothers Jody and Danny were joined by stunt rider Craig Jones, as well as the event's one and only female competitor road racer Anita Doran and 59-year-old Scottish all-rounder Vic Allan.

With all riders competing in a trial, a motocross race, a supermoto event and finally a road race on both days, day one got off to a decidedly wet



Knighter took the MX win on day one in horrendous conditions...



DAVID KNIGHT: 'IT'S BEEN AN INCREDIBLE WEEKEND - I'VE HAD SO MUCH FUN. GETTING TO NOT ONLY RIDE AGAINST, BUT ALSO SPEND THE WEEKEND WITH, SOME OF THE BIGGEST NAMES FROM OTHER MOTORCYCLING DISCIPLINES HAS BEEN GREAT. I'M ALREADY LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT YEAR'S EVENT.'



and gloomy start. With the trials starting at 8:30 it was obvious within only a few metres of the first of the ten sections that the void between those riders who had ridden trials and those that hadn't was enormous. The sections were relatively straightforward, but overnight rain meant that crashes were plentiful. Despite the observers being fairly

lenient towards the trials first timers, well over half the field made the sections look all but impossible. Sam Connor and Graham Jarvis however made them look extremely easy.

What was also noticeable was the fact that not only did the non-trials riders have little clue what to do in the sections, they had little clue what to do full stop! Unaware that they



needed to catch the observers' eye, or wait for him or her to raise their arm, before entering the section, many of the earlier numbered riders rode straight into and out of the sections forgetting to get their penalty cards stamped. With the 'pros' walking the sections and moving rocks, tree roots and the like with their boots before getting anywhere near their bikes, those that knew what they were doing were impressive to watch, but they weren't half as entertaining as those that had no clue.

As expected it was Connor

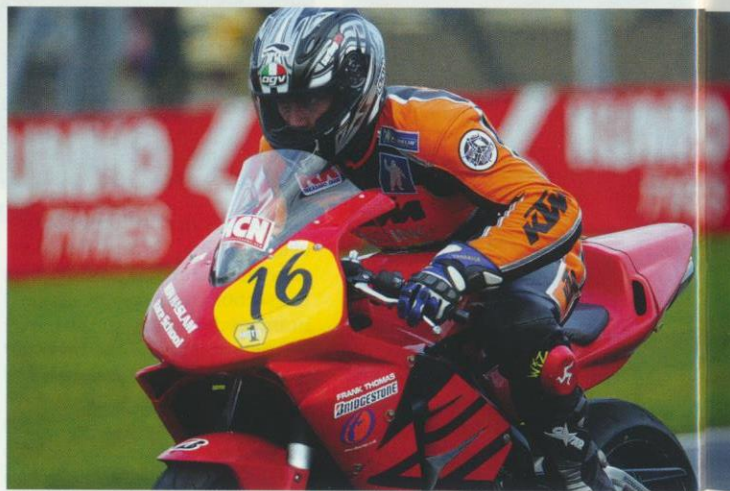
and Jarvis that dominated the trial on day one with Braybrook, cheered on every step of the way by his support crew - the Montesa Mafia - who claimed third, while David Knight claimed fourth ahead of brother Juan and Ady Smith. One event down and the enduro riders were already showing their strengths.

From the wet, muddy and extremely slippery trial, the event moved onto a wet, muddy and extremely slippery motocross which amazingly saw Knighter claim the win ahead of MX regular Danny



Trials rider Graham Jarvis gets to grips with a big Husky in the SM race...

Smyth with Ady Smith finishing third. With the track being just under one-minute long, the action during the race was non-stop, and the horrendously muddy conditions meant that it really suited the enduro riders. Gating well, Knighter hit the front early on to move to the top of the overall results where he would stay for the rest of the competition. Behind him GP motocross rider Billy MacKenzie fell in the first corner and was then lapped by Knighter - while none of the road racers scored any points. One of the most impressive results was that of trials rider Sam Connor. Clearly not a regular motocross rider, but having done a certain amount of 'scrambling' over the years, Sam proved that he'd make a damn good enduro rider as he mixed it with BEC front



runners Braybrook and Ed Jones for much of the race.

Starting the event as favourite for good reason, Knighter began the day's third discipline - the supermoto -

keen to extend his lead. And he did. With the course again being just under one-minute long, the mix of tarmac, dirt and gravel provided exciting racing with Honda rider



Leighton Haigh claiming the win aboard his own race bike just ahead of Ady and David Knight. Motocross rider David Campbell placed fourth while supermoto rider David Tougher claimed fifth with Braybrook sixth.

The road race event was a case of do unto others, as they have done unto you. In other words the road race regulars made the rest of the field, with the exception of Leighton Haigh, look like complete amateurs. Which of course most of them were. Just like the trials, the difference between those accustomed to getting their knee down and those who weren't, was huge.

With 19-year-old British Supersport Championship runner Tom Sykes topping the event ahead of the rest of the road racers, Tougher was the

best of the non road racers finishing ahead of Smyth, Haigh, Knighter and Braybrook. All the off-road riders claimed to have enjoyed the thrill of riding at speeds way above those they're used to. And by managing to score points in each of the four

way too difficult for the rest. With Graham Jarvis moving ahead of Sherco team-mate Sam Connor as the pair managed to collectively put their feet down fewer times than most other riders did simply getting to the first section, Knighter claimed third ahead of Smyth -

WAYNE BRAYBROOK: 'THE WHOLE EVENT HAS BEEN SUPERB. IT NEEDS TO CONTINUE AND GROW AND TRY AND ATTRACT SOME MORE HIGH PROFILE RIDERS. IF IT DOES IT'LL BECOME A HUGE END-OF-YEAR SPECTACULAR, I'M SURE OF THAT.'

disciplines, Knighter, Smyth and Braybrook sat at the top of the results with day two still to come.

Thankfully, the weather improved for the second day's competition and with some of the sections having been altered they were again simply too easy for the trials riders and

stretching his lead at the top of the overall classification. By this stage, Knighter was already starting to think about the win, and more importantly the six grand on offer to the winning rider.

With the motocross track drier than on day one, but still extremely slippery, most knew



Juan Knight flying high...



DONINGTON PARK

Sam Connor showed that he's no slouch on an MX bike...



that only a mechanical problem would rob David of the win. Thrashing a 125cc KTM to within an inch of its life, David again produced another solid result, placing as runner-up behind David Campbell. With Smyth coming home third, Knighter's victory was almost secured with two more disciplines still to go! Only needing to finish ahead of Ady in the supermoto event, Knighter out-qualified him and came home second to Leighton Haigh to claim the title of Moto 1 champion 2004. With Smyth following him home in third, Wayne Braybrook importantly placed ahead of Scott Campbell with Tougher dropping one position from his day one result to finish sixth.

With Knighter crowned champion, and Smyth all but assured second, the third place position between Braybrook, Campbell and Leighton Haigh was still to be decided. Campbell had closed right up to Braybrook after he topped the motocross and Wayne managed to finish seventh, so the road race result was an important one for both. Claiming three points for finishing 13th, Wayne grabbed the final rostrum position after Campbell failed to score any points. Despite Haigh finishing two places ahead of Braybrook, it wasn't enough to affect his final result and he finally finished fifth overall, having only failed to score points in one of the eight events.

But at the top of the results it was enduro riders Knighter, Smyth and Braybrook who had proved themselves as the best performers in the competition. And despite the fact that a few well-known stars weren't competing, Knighter proved to all that he's Britain's ultimate bike racer. Something that most of us knew already!

OVERALL MOTO 1 RESULTS (POINTS)

1	DAVID KNIGHT	121
2	ADY SMITH	96
3	WAYNE BRAYBROOK	77
4	DAVID CAMPBELL	75
5	LEIGHTON HAIGH	70
6	TOM SYKES	63
7	SAM CONNOR	61
8	GRAHAM JARVIS	60
9	JUAN KNIGHT	59
10	DANNY SMYTH	51



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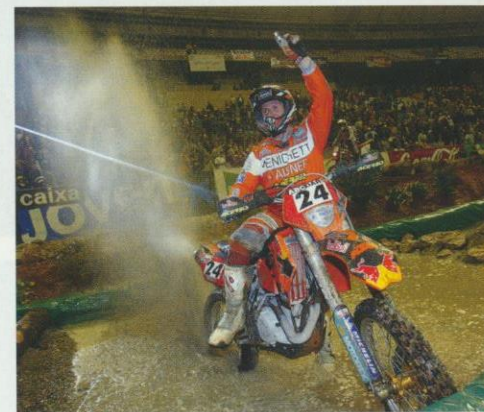
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Above:Albergoni worked his little four-stroke Honda hard all evening, ending up with victory in the E1 class. Meanwhile Botturi kept the crowd amused with his antics...



INSIDE EDGE

**6TH BARCELONA INDOOR ENDURO
PALAU SANT JORDI, BARCELONA,
16 OCTOBER**

It was all change this year at the annual end-of-season Barcelona International Indoor Enduro. For the past five years, the racing has been split two ways, with riders working their way through heats, semi finals and a last-chance qualifier (LCQ) before arriving at either a four-stroke or a two-stroke final.

This year, things were very different. The event organisers decided to adopt the WEC's three classes (Enduro1, Enduro 2 and Enduro 3), with the invited stars racing in four straight finals to determine the class winners, with a Super final still bringing the proceedings to a close.

While many were a little sceptical about the changes, the four three-lap races provided every bit as much excitement as in previous years - and more crashes than ever. With the track having been made a little easier and notably faster, the gathering of the world's best enduro riders saw Italian Simone Albergoni top the E1 class, Finn Juha Salminen the E2 category while fellow Finn Mika Ahola claimed a surprise victory in the E3 class.

With Stefan Merriman, Anders Eriksson and Marko Tarkkala the only named WEC riders not competing, the entry list was as strong as ever. Introducing a 'junior' race for Spanish youngsters, it wasn't only the home grown under 21-year-old riders that made things look difficult - Samuli Aro, Richard Larsson and even Britain's David Knight ended up on their ear at some stage during the proceedings.

Enduro 1

With Stefan Merriman back home in Oz with his partner Lexy as they await the imminent arrival of their first child, the E1 class was missing a little of its sparkle. So, taking over the top spot was Simone Albergoni - the rider who placed as runner-up to Merriman in the E1 WEC class this year.

Also in the mix were Bartosz Oblucki (who placed third in the E1 world championship), plus TM's Richard Larsson, KTM rider Petteri Silvan and Italian Roberto Bazzurri.

Out of the ten riders in the E1 class two per-

formed head and shoulders better than the rest - Albergoni and the veteran Italian Roberto Bazzurri. Albergoni recorded the fastest qualifying time of the class ahead of Bazzurri during the pre-event timed practice session, and the two Italians claimed a pair of race wins each.

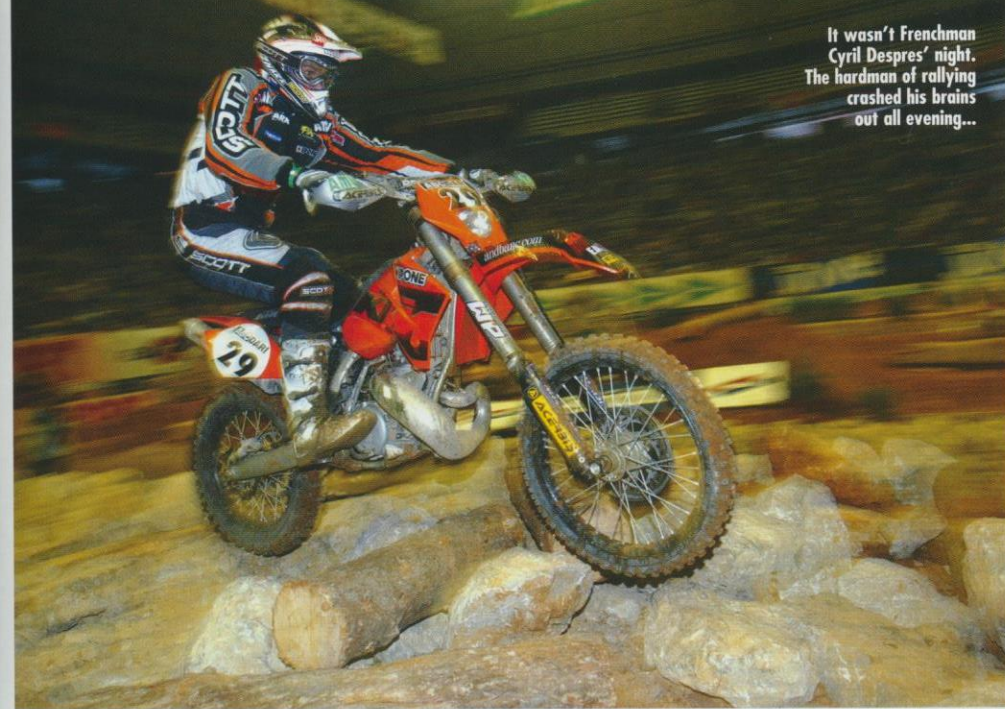
With Albergoni winning the first two races and Bazzurri claiming the last two, it meant although they were tied on points at the end of the night's racing, the victory went to Albergoni.

KTM Racing rider Petteri Silvan got two third-place finishes during the evening, therefore claiming the overall E1 class third place spot on his first visit to Barcelona. Finishing just one point ahead of Bartosz Oblucki, the pair placed ahead of home rider Cristobal Guerrero.

With the exception of Richard Larsson cart-wheeling down the start straight during the second E1 race of the night, the smallest of the three capacity classes failed to provide as much excitement as expected.

This could have been down to the fact that the track wasn't quite as difficult as in previous

David Knight could only manage second place - beaten by Salminen in the final...



It wasn't Frenchman Cyril Despres' night. The hardman of rallying crashed his brains out all evening...

years, so the class that is normally home to crazed youngsters provided very steady, predictable racing.

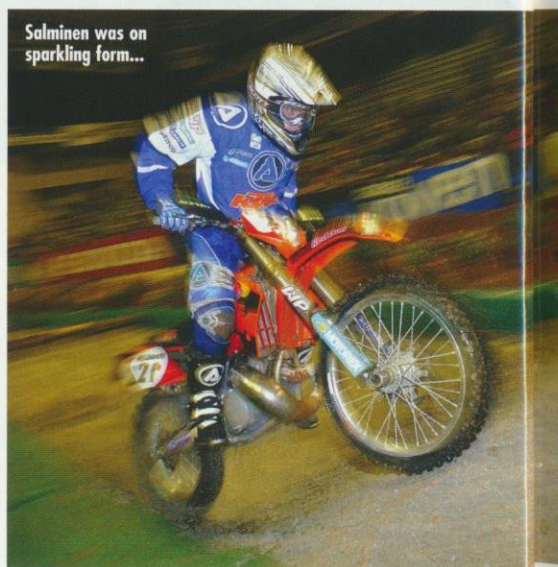
Enduro 2

With Juha Salminen deciding to ditch the 450cc four-stroke on which he claimed yet another world enduro title this season, the Finn was competing aboard a 250cc two-stroke in readiness for his attack on the US GNCC series next year.

As usual Juha was the man to beat, but Paul Edmondson, Arnau Vilanova, Alessandro Botturi, Petri Pohjamo and rally ace Cyril Despres were all in it to win it. However, with Juha qualifying a full three seconds faster than Cyril, it seemed inevitable the Finn would claim yet another win.

But Salminen saw his event get off to the worst possible start as he placed sixth in his first race. With his front wheel washing out as he passed through the water crossing, he re-mounted only to find his front brake lever stuck-on thanks to a buckled handguard. Clearly flustered by the whole experience, Juha's 'off race' was his only one of the night as he went on to claim victory in the second, third and fourth E2 races.

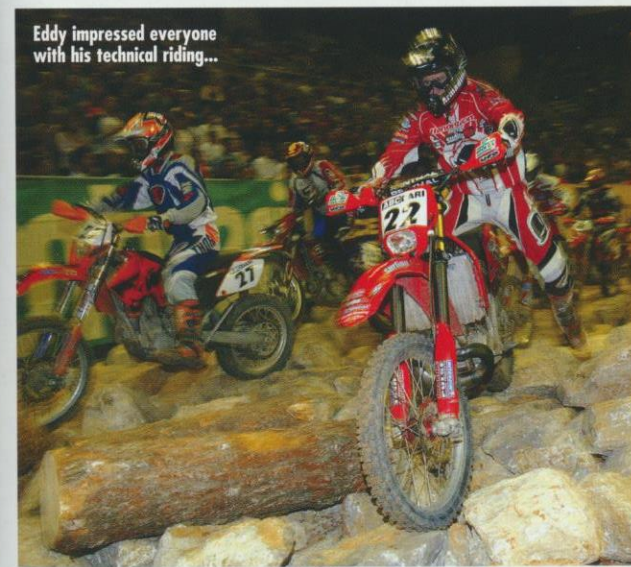
As victor of the first race, Paul Edmondson shocked even himself as he gated well to take a comfortable victory. Then placing first, fourth, second and second again, Eddy finished just one point behind Salminen and could have topped



Salminen was on sparkling form...

the class if he had finished just one position higher during his second race.

Burly Italian Alessandro Botturi placed third, Spaniard Arnau Vilanova was in fourth and Cyril Despres claimed fifth. As the rider that crashed harder than any other 12 months ago, Cyril seemed to not care that the start of the Dakar is



Eddy impressed everyone with his technical riding...

rapidly approaching, (an event he starts as favourite to win), and was up to his usual tricks as he crashed, crashed and crashed some more. If nothing else, Cyril proved once again that he is certainly made of tough stuff - hopefully he won't ride his rally bike in quite the same way he does his 250cc KTM!

Enduro 3

Disappointingly, David Knight failed to claim victory in the Enduro 3 class, a result that surprised most and annoyed the Manxman. Fastest in timed practice, Knight had the rider that beat him in the WEC - Samuli Aro - to contend with, as well as the likes of Ivan Cervantes and Husky rider Mika Ahola.

Winning the first E3 race, Samuli Aro then beat himself into the Spanish track more times than he can remember. Fast when upright, he had two of the night's biggest crashes and was lucky not to have left the stadium in an ambulance. After finishing tenth in the second race, second in the third and then ninth in the last, Aro eventually placed fifth overall.

Coming second to Aro in his first race, Knight then moved to the top spot in race two and looked to have things under control - until the third race that was. Getting a poor jump out of the gate, he collided with a '...kin Gas rider' halfway down the start straight and rounded the first corner close to the rear of the field.

Then, making steady forward process, DK then

Wildcard entry
Roberto Bazzuri
bagged second place
in the E1 class...



through into the event's Grand Finale, the four-lap event provided a little less excitement than in previous years, due to most riders being extremely tired after their four class races.

Salminen gated well, with Knighter soon on his tail, but knowing that getting too close to a rider can be a dangerous thing when racing indoors, David decided to hang back and wait for a possible mistake from Juha.

It didn't come. Riding with a clear track ahead of him, Juha simply did enough to win. Knighter settled for second while Alessandro Botturi claimed third, making it an all-KTM podium...

RESULTS

ENDURO 1 CLASS

1	SIMONE ALBERGONI	(HONDA)	1+1+2+6=10 PTS
2	ROBERTO BAZZURRI	(HUSQVARNA)	5+3+1+1=10
3	PETTERI SILVAN	(KTM)	3+4+5+3=15

ENDURO 2 CLASS

1	JUHA SALMINEN	(KTM)	6+1+1+1=9
2	PAUL EDMONDSON	(HONDA)	1+4+2+3=10
3	ALESSANDRO BOTTURI	(KTM)	3+8+3+2=16

ENDURO 3 CLASS

1	MIKA AHOLA	(HUSQVARNA)	3+2+1+2=8
2	DAVID KNIGHT	(KTM)	2+1+8+1=12
3	IVAN CERVANTES	(KTM)	6+4+3+3=16

SUPER FINAL

1	JUHA SALMINEN	(KTM)
2	DAVID KNIGHT	(KTM)
3	ALESSANDRO BOTTURI	(KTM)

got a little too impatient and, as he later admitted, made a mess of things. Uncharacteristically, he hit the deck midway through the race, which saw him place eighth. Going on to top the final E3 race of the night, David's runner-up finish did put him ahead of the likes of Cervantes and the fast-starting Xavier Galindo, but just behind Mika Ahola.

Ahola's win was a surprise to many. Not a rider thought of as a one-off event specialist, and certainly not a competitor with a background in trials, the Husqvarna pilot's victory was due to one thing - consistency.

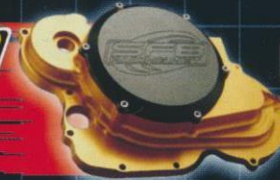
Winning just one race, the third, he placed within the top three in each of the other races.

The Super Final

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RIVER DEEP,



MOUNTAIN HIGH

THE FAMOUS SCOTT TRIAL - ALWAYS TOUGH - WAS MADE EVEN HARDER THIS YEAR BY A WATERLOGGED COURSE AND HAZARDOUS SECTIONS. MIKE RAPLEY WAS THERE TO RECORD THE ACTION...

As ever the Scott lived up to its fearsome reputation...



were in full flood, brown waters were flowing off the moor tops cascading over rocks, washing gravel down the roads and lying in ever deepening pools. The already sodden landscape could soak up no more.

Not a good day to send 200 trials riders out for a 75 mile, 76-section time and observation trial that on a dry, bright sunny day is talked about in awe for being THE toughest of the year.

But the lads and their followers were gathering, many well prepared for the ordeal that was to follow, but equally, many ill-prepared for the classic Scott. So the Scott was on, half an hour late maybe, but definitely on.

Yet again the Richmond Club's trial

7:30am Saturday, 23 October 2004: John Fraser, clerk of the course for the Scott, the world's oldest time and observation trial was looking worried: 'We'll have to put the start time back half an hour' he said. 'There's so much water about, I just hope it doesn't rain any more. Anyway, how can I cancel now?' he said, looking around the field where hundreds of riders, followers, observers, marshals and spectators had gathered for the start of the 2004 Scott Trial.

Without doubt, the Scott is the world's toughest single day trial. For much of Thursday and throughout all of Friday and the early hours of Saturday morning, torrential rain had drenched the north of England. The gently flowing beck and gutters that normally hold barely a trickle,

had attracted a full house entry of 200 enthusiastic riders and sharp on the dot of 9.30am Robert Allinson led them away for the 90th anniversary Scott Trial - for what was to prove to be one of the toughest Scotts for many years.

Orgate, normally less than ten minutes from the start is the first spectator and photographer's spot, but not this year. The river was simply impassable and even the concreted crossing was only just passable for the riders, so it was Cold Knuckles where the first, few hardy spectators gathered. This dank, dark gully is always horrendous, but this year was even worse, the huge waterfall, normally barely damp, had six inches of water cascading down it, and with anything up to half a dozen riders all struggling at the



Graham Jarvis works his way towards another outstanding Scott victory...

same time to climb it, the backlog soon built up, with frequently up to 60 riders waiting in the smoky, choking gully for their turn at the steps.

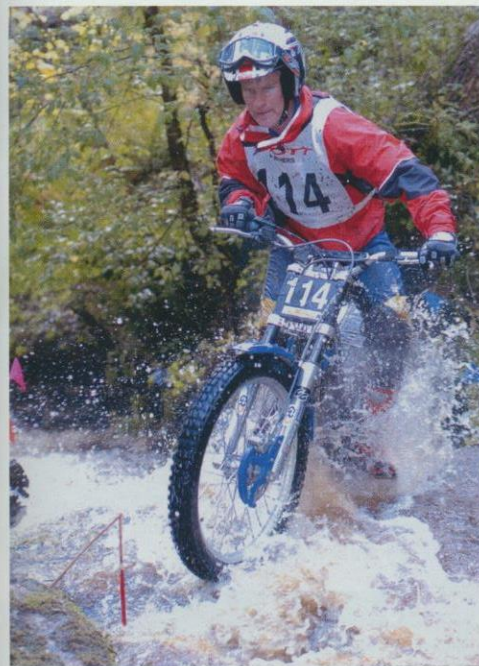
Willing spectators helped clear the hold-up and the last starter, Roger Williams, was soon up and away from the hazard, which was still only 22 minutes after the start, but boy, it had been hectic in there.

With the trial running in the opposite direction to most years (it was nine years since the last time the course had run anti-clockwise), Underbanks became a favourite vantage spot with many hundreds lining the gully that provides a series of rock slabs in mud. No real problem for many riders, marks were still lost in the hundreds before the entry set-off for the long run across Fremington Edge with Whaw Bridge the next major vantage point on the Reeth to Tan Hill road.

Amazingly, number 187, John Sunter was the first rider to appear and he was obviously flying on his Montesa but it was soon apparent that the real Scott aces were not far behind and Ben Hemingway, Ian Austermuhle, Graham Jarvis, James Dabill, Phil Alderson and Boyd Webster were separated by only minutes. Up on the moors from Whaw lies Punchard. Horrible it is, with a vicious stream and big waterfalls that nobody except the riders and observers see. It's



Amos Bilbao steers his new four-stroke Montesa to third place...



all rideable, but oh so tough and even though there was plenty of grip this year, the water foaming over the (hidden) steps was the real problem to overcome.

With the course running t'other way round, Tank Trap, Grand Canyon and By Pass all came before the infamous Grouse Moor, where this year, Ritchie Sunter, who always looks after that stretch of the trial, had to use more tracks rather

than the open moor as normal, due to the soaking conditions. But it was still mighty tough, though it did result in a quicker trial than is normal.

As the survivors filed slowly off the moor for the big spectator section, Surrender (easier this year due to the gushing water), Jarvis, Austermuhle and Dabill seemed almost joined at the hip; John Sunter having been overtaken on the Grouse Moor following a front wheel puncture and a heavy crash. Sam Connor was ten minutes adrift

and Ben Hemingway another five while Phil Alderson, (four times a winner), but now well over 40 years old was still very much in touch and ahead of James Lampkin and Spanish ace Amos Bilbao, debuting the new Montesa 4RT in the UK. Then they came thick and fast as the stragglers realised that the end was in sight, though in reality it was still a good hour and a half away for most of them.

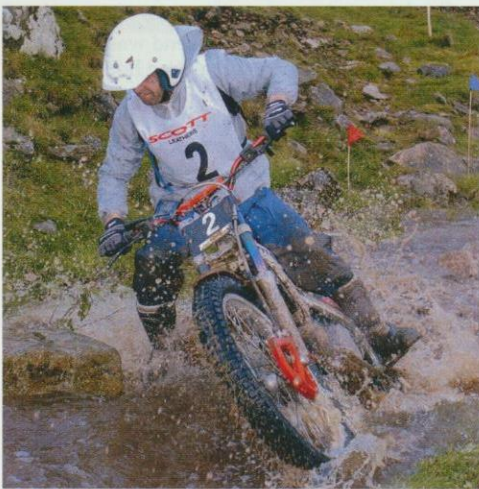
Rotten Wood is the very last 'oh my gawd' section, a steep, two section rocky gully that is mighty slippery, yet strangely comparatively dry when compared to the rest of the trial. Jarvis was first man through, then Austermuhle then Dabill then Connor and then Alderson, who crashed off the Sherco between the two subs. Ben Hemingway's Beta sounded as if it would expire in seconds, indeed it did a mile later but was refreshed with a gulp of fruit juice as coolant to stagger its way up the final fields to the finish.

Some 4 hours and 45 minutes after leaving the start, Jarvis was back and claiming a good run through the sections - but not as good as last year when he lost a miserly 11 marks. This year his total was 47 but that was beaten on observation by Dan Thorpe who lost only 45.

Complaining of an aching neck and a damaged toe, Jarvis was obviously pleased with what he thought would be his sixth win - a victory that was confirmed later that same evening at the presentation which matched his father-in-law and sponsor Malcolm Rathmell's past efforts.

And as the 68 confirmed finishers made it back (the allowance is two-and-a-half hours over standard time) the tales of woe multiplied. Belgian Apico employee Jan Cardinaels was

Becky Cook was going well this year but didn't make the finish in time...



the Best lady award, while Bilbao was proud to announce that the new four-stroke Mont was still running as sweetly as it had at the start.

Dan Thorpe finished 54 marks on time, mostly due to spending loads of time unwrapping a tangled chain from the gearbox sprocket, yet Chris Grundy unfortunately drowned and hydrauliced his Montesa at the trial's very first river crossing before the first section.

Tales of woe will undoubtedly continue to be related for many a month to come, but next October, most will be back again for another crack at the Yorkshire Dales and the Scott Trial, when Graham Jarvis will aim to set the all time record of seven Scott wins - one more than Malcolm Rathmell and Sammy Miller with whom he jointly holds the record...

RESULTS

- 1 GRAHAM JARVIS (SHERCO) 0 TIME + 47 OBSERVATION = 47 (STANDARD TIME 4HOURS 45MINUTES 26 SECONDS)
- 2 IAN AUSTERMUHLE (BETA) 6 + 63 = 69
- 3 AMOS BILBAO (MONTESA) 32 + 51 = 83
- 4 MARTIN CROSSWAITE (SCORPA) 33 + 56 = 89
- 5 JAMES LAMPKIN (MONTESA) 39 + 55 = 94
- 6 PHILIP ALDERSON (SHERCO) 22 + 77 = 99
- 7 DAN THORPE (GAS GAS) 54 + 45 = 99
- 8 DAN CLARK (SCORPA) 30 + 72 = 102
- 9 SAM CONNOR (SHERCO) 30 + 72 = 102
- 10 JAMES DABILL (BETA) 9 + 95 = 104

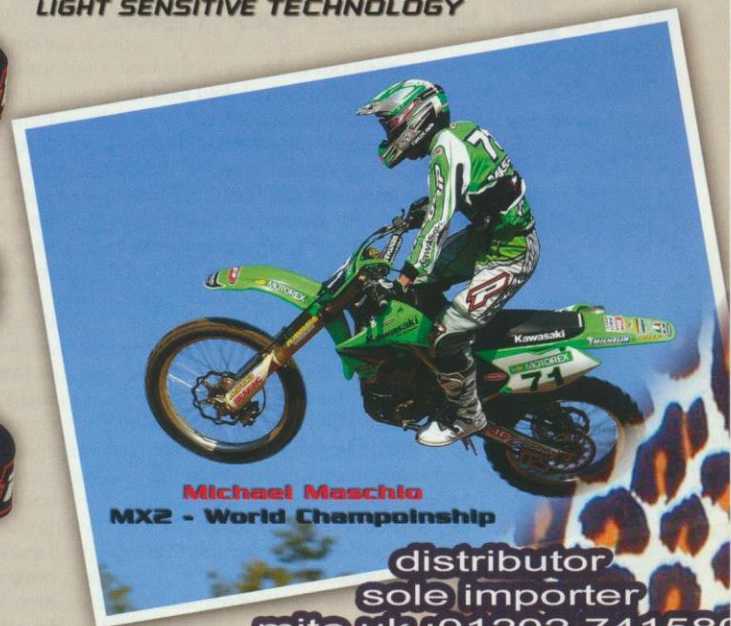
amazed at the speed Jarvis had set, while youngster Ashley Smith had cracked his teeth in a crash over the bars. Best first timer Michael Brown was heard asking a mate 'was that a real Scott?' - too right mate, none are easy but some are tougher than others and water made this year a baddie.

Ben Hemingway knew his bike would need a total rebuild and Richard Gaskell's front wheel had the king of dents in it. Katy Sunter, the third member of the Sunter family eventually made it to the finish, but out of time, though she still got

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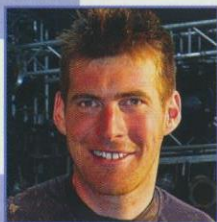
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SPEED



'MY TEAMING UP WITH THE D3-RACING KTM TEAM TURNED OUT TO BE ONE OF THE BEST MOVES I'VE EVER MADE.'

It's funny how things change. 12 months ago I had just finished fourth in the Over 500cc four-stroke world championship - my worst end-of-season WEC result ever - and things were looking bleak. I didn't have any concrete offers of employment for '04 and while I can joke about it now, the semi-factory Ossa deal my brother light-heartedly offered me was at one point looking like my best option. Thankfully, my teaming up with the D3-Racing KTM

**BRITAIN'S TOP
ENDURO RIDER WRITES
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team turned out to be one of the best moves I've ever made. Like I said it's funny how things change.

With over six full weeks still to go until we even reach the end of this season [at the time of writing] I have just finished my second official test with KTM. Having signed to compete as an official member of the KTM factory enduro team in '05 all is most definitely good in the David Knight camp right now. What's more, the specification for my race bike for next season is all but finalised and I have also ridden KTM's new DOHC 250cc four-stroke. So I'm excited, relaxed and looking forward to '05. But the beginning of the month wasn't quite as productive as my recent KTM test as I travelled to Weston-Super-Mare only to DNF the beach race.

Not finishing the Weston Beach Race this year was just one of those things that can happen to any rider - novice, expert or professional. As disappointing as it was, I was pretty bloody mad

at the time, it happened and that's all there is to it really. More so than at any race, pretty much anywhere in the world, things can, and do, happen at Weston that can spoil your weekend no matter how well you prepare yourself and your bike. It's just part of the race. In past years the event hasn't attracted that many top riders, which is why I rode in both the solo and quad races - to try and challenge myself. This year there was plenty of competition, but I didn't have lady luck on my side.

I'll be honest and say that I wasn't as ready as I could have been for the race this year. I had the last round of the WEC the weekend before and I didn't get the bike I rode at Weston until the week after that.

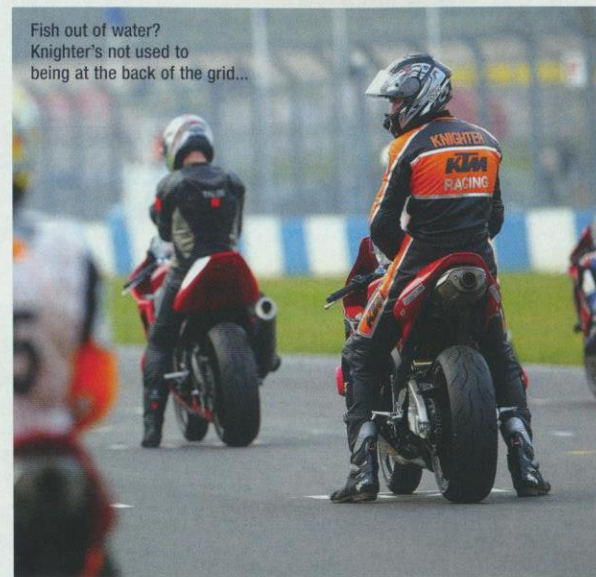
For some reason I had a lot of arm-pump during the first few laps of the race. Thankfully it eased but just as I was getting going my chain snapped. That was the end of my race. I was pretty mad at the time but better to have something go wrong there than at a WEC event.

From the disappointment of Weston things soon got a lot, lot better for me as I won the first Moto 1 event, staged at Donington Park. It was an event that I'd been looking forward to competing in for a while and having spent a day on a Ron Haslam road race school I couldn't wait to mix it up with all the other riders that had been invited to compete. Although I guess I started the Moto 1 event as favourite, because of WEC commitments and then Weston I wasn't as ready for it as I wanted to be. It might be nearing the end of the year but there just doesn't seem to be enough days in the week.

The whole Moto 1 weekend was



Fish out of water?
Knighter's not used to
being at the back of the grid...



absolutely great. I'm not just saying that because I won because even the riders who finished in 15th and 16th places had massive smiles on their faces - especially after the road race. It was quite interesting the way the event panned out. I think that most people knew before the start that a good result in your weakest discipline was what was needed to place well in the overall results. I also think it came as a bit of a surprise to everyone just how different all the sports are. There were definitely some riders competing that thought they could just turn up and by doing well in their own specialist discipline they'd do well overall. The trial pretty much saw to that for most.

For me the road racing was by far the best of the four disciplines. Certainly not in terms of my result because I was definitely a bit of a fish out of water, but just because it was great fun to try something that I'd not done before.

Hopefully the event will get stronger and stronger. I think any rider with a background in trials, who has then moved on to either motocross or enduro, will always be difficult to beat - you can see that just by looking at the three riders on the podium this year. The road racers were complaining a lot because they thought the trials sections were too difficult. What they failed to see was that there were more road racers in the event, which made it hard for the non-tarmac riders to score points in the road race. I finished

in the top three in every event apart from the road racing, which I was really pleased with. I think that a neutral event, that no rider specialises in, would be good in the future to even things out a bit.

Winning six grand in prize money is more than I've ever won before in my life so I started to look at the event differently once I was actually in it. It was great to win the money but the event would have actually been better fun for me if there hadn't been any prize money.

I've recently spent a week close to Barcelona testing with the KTM squad prior to the indoor enduro which was really productive. I've been through similar pre-season testing sessions before with other teams but with KTM everything just seemed to be done that much more professionally. They had people there telling us what to test, when to test it and if I didn't feel comfortable with the changes they'd made they would simply give me something different to try. I know roughly what I'm going to ride next year already. All I have to do now is test the bike at home, in conditions and on tracks that I am familiar with. In Spain we rode on hard-pack, which I'm not used to testing on, but I felt really comfortable on the bike. To have my '05 race bike be 90percent ready in November is something that I've never had before. It will give me a chance to take a rest now over Christmas. And I think I really need that...



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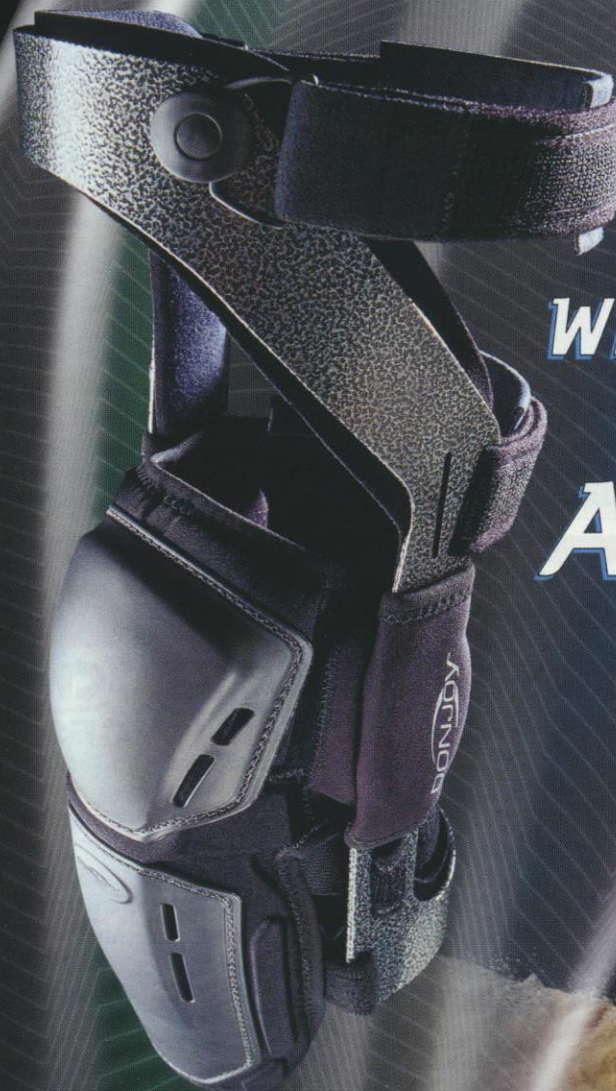
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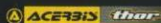
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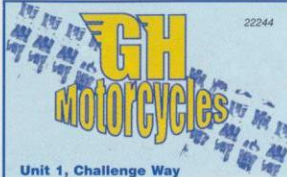
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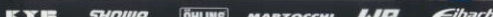


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With two Yamahas strapped to their trusty motorhome, TBM contributors Jim and Dot Jones headed off on a round-the-world adventure. And landing in the US they found that there ain't nothing finer than dirt biking in North Carolina...



Courses for Horses

STORY & PICS: JIM AND DOT JONES

Here in America some vehicles display a bumper sticker stating that 'All golf courses should be motocross circuits'. Now we wouldn't go quite as far as that (after all, what would all those doctors do with their time?) but it highlights the fact that you are only welcome at a golf course if you intend to play golf. So shouldn't there be places where you're required to arrive either on, or with, a motorcycle - a motorcycling resort, a place where everybody thinks and lives bikes.

Up until recently we'd have thought this was daydreaming - a vision of a place that's new and fresh, with soft green grass, a whispering stream underneath tall trees and congenial hosts. Everybody would be made welcome. If you had a tent you could use it, if not they would pitch one for you. If you

wanted to take your caravan or motorhome... hey, no problem. But there'd also be a bunkhouse, log cabins and motel-style rooms. Best of all there would be a welcoming leisure pavilion equipped with comfortable settees, projection television, pool tables, draughts, chess and the kitchen would provide excellent, home-cooked breakfasts and evening meals. But the best bit would be the location; an area with more than 400 miles of dirt roads and hundreds of miles of torturous twisting tarmac. In our dream, riders of dirt bikes, trailies, sportsbikes and Hogs mixed together

enjoying each other's company.

Unlikely? No. Because we've just spent a great ten days in such a place.

Ironhorse Motorcycle Lodge is at Stecoah,



Courses for

Horses



near Fontana in North Carolina. Being just south of the Smokey Mountains National Park means that there's a vast array of activities on offer, including the great museum 'Wheels through Time' at Maggie Valley. And the area also has its own newspaper devoted to biking in general, though occasionally they include the odd car photo! We also spent a few hours at a steam train festival in Bryson City and wandered around the Cherokee Museum, but we gave Dolly Parton's 'Dollywood' a miss...

The owners of the resort are John and Charlene Powell, motorcyclists themselves; John has a Harley and a Transalp, and can trace his ancestry back to Wales, the home of off-roading! Every camp-ground and hotel in the Smokies welcomes motorcyclists but John was fired with the idea of having a resort that catered especially for bikers. Not wanting to take on someone else's business he decided to start from scratch. The first step was to buy 40 acres of woodland and design the layout and buildings with future growth in mind. Even though the resort only opened in 2003, John will be building four new log cabins this winter, each with four double bedrooms (with en-suite), in order to cope with the demand. He now has clubs and organisations booking the site for conventions and meetings, with a recent gathering

for bikers who had travelled around the world.

When we arrived in the area our first impression was 'where did all these bikers come from?' and it was entirely possible to get tired of waving to riders going in the opposite direction. Passing through the town of Cherokee, the home of the native Indians of the same name, our visit coincided with a bike rally. And we've never seen so many Harleys. There were car parks set aside especially for them and the town welcomed them with banners and window displays. Apparently, they meet there several times a year and the townspeople recognise the trade they bring.

Motorcycling in the USA has undergone a transformation in recent years and now riders are just as likely to be doctors and lawyers as factory workers. For example, while we were at Ironhorse we met Ara Gureghian, a freelance chef who works for six months and then rides around America for six months. He was born in Montpelier, France, of Armenian parents and now lives in Naples, Florida. When working, he cooks for the rich and famous and when riding he runs a well-prepared BMW Adventure, complete with full Touratech kit and a one-man tent. Every other day at the resort he cooked a speciality dish; his cheesecake and key lime pie had to be experienced. It's not very often that we can afford



a \$1000 a day chef! Many of the other guests were there with their wives and girlfriends, who also had their own bikes with them. One group of riders from Chattanooga arrived on Kawasaki KLR650 trail bikes loaded with all their gear. They had arrived on the Friday, and after dumping their luggage rode the area's dirt tracks before loading up for the journey home on Sunday.

Once our motorhome was settled at Ironhorse we unloaded our two Yamaha 250s, a TT-R and a WR-F. It's very rare to see road registered enduro models here in the US, as they mostly prefer big trailies which they call Dual Purpose bikes. Our little Yams seemed lost amongst all the Harleys, Japanese cruisers, sportsbikes and big trailies.

Immediately we were the centre of attention. It appeared that everyone wanted to ride dirt bikes and the Smokies abound in trails. Some are easy and could be ridden on a GS1150, whilst others are a bit more challenging.

Each day John, or one of the other riders would point us in the direction of the best trails. John even had one on his land that went to the highest point in the area. The Tatham Gap Road is all gravel and was constructed by General Winfield Scott in 1836 as part of a route for the Cherokee Indians to walk along when they were forced off their lands and driven westwards into

Oklahoma. Known as the 'Trail of Tears' it now provides an interesting ride over the mountains, though you'd expect this historic route to be protected - it probably would be elsewhere. We met quads, 4x4s, and walkers on the Trail, usually stopping for a chat before returning to camp via the longer, more challenging Little Snowbird Trail, another old Indian route.

Enter the Dragon

One of the attractions for road riders is the Tail of the Dragon, reputed to be the best biking road in all of America, and hordes of riders visit the area just to ride its eleven miles. The Tail starts at Deal's Gap, (a filling station, restaurant, souvenir shop and motel all-in-one), and is a narrow, well-surfaced road with 318 corners.

Naturally some riders try a little too hard and a visit to the 'Tree of Shame' gives an idea of just how many bikes are 'binned'. Fairings, exhausts, footrests, headlamps and all manner of damaged parts from bikes of every make, colour and vintage hang from its branches.

Riders gather in large numbers at Deal's Gap, talk, drink coffee, compare times, eat a burger and when they judge the time is right to get a clear run they 'go for the Tail'. Most of them buy a T-shirt, and the fact that they sell 7000 each



week which is an indication of just how popular the road is. When we arrived there the car park was like a bike show - European, Japanese or American, they were all there. And even though the road is tarmac we agreed that we had to ride the Tail just for the record, so we headed out onto the blacktop.

On the way back I decided to settle into a comfortable pace and just swing the little WR through the bends, whilst Dot hung back and stopped for photographs. To my amazement, as I approached one bend I was confronted by an articulated truck slowly grinding its way along the narrow road.

At each end of the Tail there are clear signs warning large vehicles not to attempt this route, but I guess some of these 'dumbass' drivers just can't read.

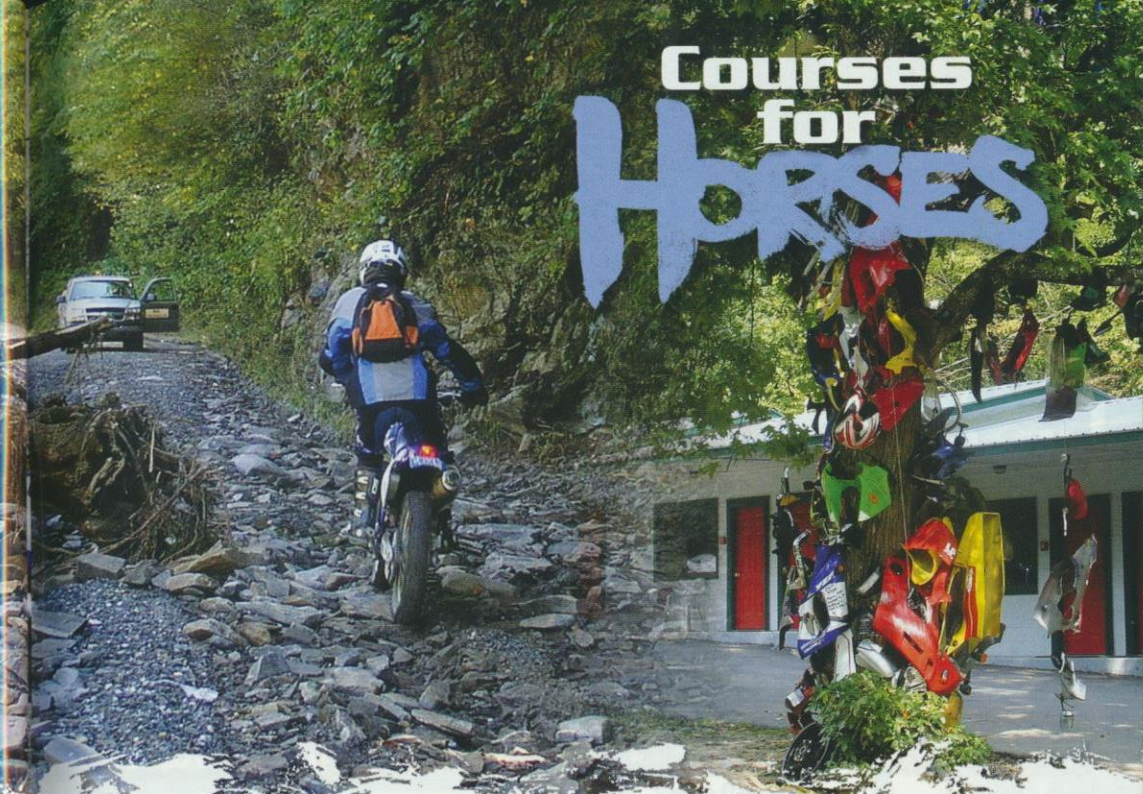
By this time Dot was well behind, and I hoped she didn't meet the truck at a dangerous place. As it turned out I needn't have worried. As the rig came around one of the bends it literally fell off the road and only a convenient rock face prevented it from toppling over. A second truck promptly did the same thing, leaving the road completely blocked. Dot joined two other riders directing traffic and it was the evening's topic for discussion back at Ironhorse.

Next day we found our own 'Dragon's Tail' - a dirt track in the mountains. Aptly named 'The Winding Stairs Trail', it began at a bridge crossing the Nantahala River, which roars through a deep gorge. The Olympic canoeing was held here during the Atlanta games but on this day the river remained empty of die-hard paddlers. Further up the trail we rode around more corners than we could count, and debated whether to go back the 25 miles just to ride it again.

Onward up to the Telling Gap, we had a great view of the surrounding forests, only spoiled by the electric pylons that also cross the hill at the gap. Here we crossed the long distance footpath known as the Appalachian Trail and met a few intrepid hikers who were just walking one part of the 2174 mile route. We then headed back along Needmore Road, where the loose gravel surface followed the riverbank.

The following day our route took us north to try the Fire Road 81 Trail which crossed the border into Tennessee at 4300ft. This was an easy ride through the forest and we stopped to investigate the old Stewart pioneer cabin, wondering how people managed to survive in such remote places. Some of the side trails were marked as only being suitable for experienced off-roaders

Courses for Horses



and we eagerly turned off to try and find some more challenging terrain. Sadly this trail proved just as easy as the one we'd left!

We returned to the main trail and continued to a sunny spot where we enjoyed our lunch right on the state line. At the town of Tellico Plains we refuelled the bikes and cooled down with a huge ice cream, before enjoying a faster non-stop 60km return trip.

Wet and Wild

Down in Florida the hurricane season was still in full swing, and we'd already experienced the tail-end of 'Charlie' as the winds roared up the north-east coast and heavy rain and mud slides devastated part of the Blue Ridge Parkway and Interstate.

Then along came the tail of Ivan and we had two more days of heavy rain, when everyone congregated in the pavilion and watched films whilst the bikes were all kept warm and dry in the big garage. The result of all this rain was pretty spectacular, with many roads closed, the dams along the Little Tennessee River overflowing and the spillways discharging millions of gallons of water. Better still, the Needmore Road alongside the river was impassable to all traffic except for

two silly old codgers on dirt bikes who revelled in the tricky going! At last we could ride some technical trails and the surfaces were very bad, with a few trees across the tracks slowing us down. The authorities had placed barriers across the trails but it was very easy to get around them and enjoy a good ride knowing that no quads or 4x4s were coming the other way.

In spite of the long tarmac journeys along lovely single-track roads (much like those in mid-Wales) we still managed to enjoy hundreds of miles of tracks and even considered staying at Iron Horse another week. But in the end we decided to leave on a high. We had found the best location ever, met hundreds of fellow guests and made lots of new friends. John made us promise to return but unfortunately we knew we could not...

For more information on the Iron Horse Motorcycle Lodge click onto ironhorseNC.com, or to see the Tail of the Dragon go to ridethedragon.com. And to follow Jim and Dot on their round the world travels check out beady.com/roundtheworld.

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BIKES

KTM 660SMC, 2003, only 800 miles, extra black bodywork and Danger UK graphics, superb road and trackday bike, as new cond, £4495. Tel (mobile) 07786 270002 or 01603 879739 (Norfolk)

Husaberg FE501e, 2003, less than 24 hours use, totally standard, oil changed every three hours use, selling due to lack of use, £3000 ono. Tel 01235 210713 (Oxon)

Suzuki DR-Z400SK3, 2003, blue, 2900 miles, standard bike, hardly used, pair of enduro tyres included, bargain at £2750. Tel 01429 282289 (Cleveland)

KTM 250EXC, 2002 model, 1600 miles, vgc, £2995 ono. Tel (mobile) 07860 571732 or 01761 241775 (Somerset)

Honda XR250R, 2000, T&T, low miles, bashplate, 'guards, green laned only, vgc, £1900. Tel (mobile) 07929 838301 or 01829 740148 (Cheshire)

KTM 450EXC, 2003, very clean, professionally maintained, hand/sumpguards, £3450. Tel 07968 826486 (Leics)

Yamaha WR400F, 2003, 53-reg, 13 months old, taxed, under 400 miles, totally standard with Renthals and road kit, spares, exc cond, £2995 ono. Tel 01404 811769 (Devon)

Husqvarna TE250, 2003, taxed, one owner, fully serviced, new c+s, ready to race or trail, £3650 ono. Tel 07956 393322 (Wilts)

Gas Gas TXT250 Pro trials bike, 2003, blue, one owner, ready to go, unused past seven months, vgc, £2350. Tel 07956 393322 (Wilts)

Honda XR250R, 02-reg, taxed, 3000km, sumpguard, full plastics, exc cond, £2300. Tel 07841 827620 (Northants)

Yamaha TTR250, 1994, T&T, elec start, ideal green laner, reliable bike, good cond, £1300 ono. Tel 01902 650344 (W Mids)

KTM 400EXC, 2002, steering damper, sumpguard, green lane use, £3350. Tel 01953 883735 (Norfolk)

Gas Gas EC400FSE, 03-reg, taxed, elec start, WP suspension, green lane use, clean and tidy, £2950 ono. Tel (mobile) 07976 902498 or 0121 477 0940 (Midlands)

Gas Gas EC200, 2002, road reg'd, taxed, Ohlins suspension front and rear, DEP pipe, Renthals, £1800 ovno. Tel (eves) 01787 313066 (Suffolk)

Husqvarna TE450, 2004, UK bike, Tag bars, over 45 rider, totally reliable, well maintained, exc cond, £3850. Tel 01323 761792 (Suffolk)

Honda XR400R, 2000, T&T, performance exhaust, bashplate, handguards, well looked after, vgc, £2400 ovno. Tel 07801 286250 (N Yorks)

Yamaha DT125R, 1996, blue/white, great fun, ideal first bike, good cond, phone for details, £650 ono. Tel Chris on 01924 840160 (W Yorks)

Gas Gas EC300, 2001, road reg'd, T&T, Renthals, sumpguard, green lane use only, exc cond, £1500. Tel (mobile) 07887 580989 or 01246 569285 (Derbys)

Honda XR280R, L-reg, well maintained, recent tyres/seat cover/fork seals and MoT, sump/frame/handguards, strong reliable trailie, £1395. Tel 01926 614595 (Warks)

Honda CRM250 AR, V-reg. Yamaha TTR, R-reg. Suzuki DR-Z400s, 02-reg. All green laned, phone for details. Tel 01792 842611 (Swansea)

Honda XR400R, 51-reg, T&T, 5000km, FMF Q-pipe otherwise standard, trail use only, all bills etc, first to see will buy, £2500 ono. Tel 07970 276316 (London)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2002, yellow, 2500 miles, fully serviced, Renthals, spare black plastics, good cond, £2600. Tel (mobile) 07721 033368 or 01474 353760 (Kent)

Kawasaki KLX650, 1993, L-reg, bit tatty but very good working order, phone for more details, £1500. Tel Keith (after 7pm) on 01747 828532 (Dorset)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2001, braided hose, sumpguard, new seat cover, regularly serviced, very reliable bike, £2400. Tel Steve on (mobile) 07802 946331 or 01822 860446 (Devon)

CCM 604E Sport, 2001 model, 51-reg, only 875 miles, almost showroom cond, £2500 or swap for Honda Dominator. Tel 01491 834059 (Oxon)

Yamaha YZ426F, 2002, road reg'd, full WR road kit, SPES race exhaust, new tyres/c+s, Reikon bars, MX plastics included, £3000. Tel 01202 624783 (Dorset)

Honda TLM220R trail bike, 1990, G-reg, T&T, 3600km, new tyres, vgc for year, £1450 ono. Tel 07810 508910 (S Wales)

Yamaha WR426F, taxed, only 1300 miles, full road kit, light green lane use only, exc original cond, £3395. Tel (mobile) 07810 807431 or 01202 659501 (Dorset)

KTM 200EXC, 2003, one owner, vgc, £3000 ono. Tel 01792 234777 (S Wales)

Honda XL250 Degree, T&T, ideal for small trail rider, £950 no offers. Tel Rob (anytime) on 07711 186369 (Berks)

Honda XR250R, 1991, T&T, Renthals, handguards, DEP pipe, green lane use only, vgc, £875 ono. Tel 01524 822928 (Lancs)

Gas Gas EC125, 2003, road reg'd, complete engine/gearbox rebuild, new clutch/c+s, exc cond, £2550 ono. Tel 07989 561819 (York)

Suzuki RM250, 2003, road reg'd, DEP system, Twinwalls, new chain & sprockets/clutch/discs/pads, lots of spares, enduro plastics, £2500 ono. Tel (eves) 07981 557915 (Surrey)

Honda XR250, 1996, MoT, 8000km, ex-MoD, new c+s, exc cond, £1450. Tel 07977 094174 (Dorset)

Yamaha WR426F, 2002, Yamaha road kit, new clutch, recent tyres/c+s, Renthals, good clean bike, £2950. Tel (mobile) 07855 414799 or 0115 943 6594 (Notts)

KTM 450EXC, 2004, 1500 miles, 52 hours use, well maintained, trail ridden, £300 worth of extras, exc cond, £4400 ono. Tel (mobile) 07742 954570 or 01235 862933 (Oxon)

Yamaha XT660R, 2004, 04-reg, black/grey, taxed, very low miles, Yamaha warranty, £4150 ono. Tel (mobile) 07775 591916 or 01269 832193 (S Wales)

Beta Alp 200, 4300km, one mature owner, rear-set pegs, very economical, good clean bike, suits shorter riders, £1800 ono. Tel 01235 763989 (Oxon)

Honda XL185, 1980, T&T, 9000 miles, sympathetic restoration, almost as new, very straight and original, phone for details, £1000 ovno. Tel (mobile) 07789 562473 or 01603 473909 (Norfolk)

Honda CRM250 AR, 1999, black/red, only 5500km, Renthals, sump/handguards, vgc, £2950. Tel (mobile) 07802 358030 OR 01458 253707 (Somerset)

KTM 250EXC 2T, 2004, one owner, new front tyre, hand-

guards, clutch saver, few spares, maintained regardless of cost, very clean, £3650. Tel 01260 277552 (Cheshire)

Honda XR400R, 2003, one owner, CRD sumpguard, Renthals, green laned only, superb example, £2795. Tel 01625 668966 (Cheshire)

Honda XR400R, 2000 model, alloy bars/handguards, bashplate, grease nipples throughout, recent chain, well maintained, good tyres, good cond, £2200. Tel 01352 759853 (Flintshire)

KTM 300EXC, 2002 model, taxed, one owner, Renthals, standard engine, reliable, exc original cond, £3200. Tel 01953 601774/5 (Norfolk)

Honda CRM250 AR, 1998, red/black, T&T, 15000km, hand/frame/sumpguards, big pegs, DEP system, TRF member, new bike forces sale, £2575 ono. Tel 01509 413096 (Leics)

Yamaha XTZ750, 1990, MoT, 35000 miles, stainless exhaust, new tyres, 18in alloy rims, Goodridge hoses, spare engine, £1000. Tel 01620 880239 (E Lothian)

KTM 125EXC, 2004, 25 hours use, 11L tank, black rims, Braking wave discs, case saver, hand/sumpguards, mint cond, £3295. Tel 07779 845187 (Cumbria)

Honda XR440R3, 2002, 52-reg, Wiseco kit, pumper carb, Renthals, sumpguard, CRD frameguards, FMF pipe, Dyna ignition, AC10s, green lane use only, £2995. Tel (mobile) 07702 651209 or 01245 854565 (Derbys)

Honda XR400R, 2000, W-reg, red/silver, T&T, braided brake hose, Acerbis handguards, £2000. Tel 07747 655200 (Lincs)

Yamaha WR250F, 53-reg, one year old, T&T, 1200 miles, elec start, road kit, green lane use only, very clean, standard bike, no time to ride, £4200 ono. Tel (mobile) 07966 380418 or 01246 207659 (Derbys)

KTM 200EXC, 2003, road reg'd, one owner, little use by TRF member, mint cond, £2850 ovno. Tel 01246 413760 (Derbys)

Honda Africa Twin, 1996, T&T, panniers, centre stand, Scottolier, well maintained, tidy bike, £2400 ono. Tel 01273 509937 (E Sussex)

TM 125, 1999, recently rebuilt engine, Renthals, ally tank, vgc, £1350. Tel (mobile) 07731 355156 or 01628 635151 (Berks)

Kawasaki KDX250, 1992, T&T, new c+s/tyres, reliable, spares inc autolube engine, £1395. Tel (mobile) 07801 715631 or 01245 265609 (Essex)

Honda CRM250 AR, 1999, black/red, T&T, only 2900km, sump/handguards, exc original cond, £2650. Tel 01430 828533 (Yorks)

Gas Gas EC450FSE, 2004 model, reg'd Jan '04, 14 hours use, bought from Bike Tech, better than new, £4095 ono. Tel 01442 384862 (Herts)

Yamaha TTR250 Raid, N-reg, T&T, 9000 miles, excellent condition, selling due to bigger bike, £1900 ovno. Tel 0161 969 4280 (Cheshire)

Honda Dominator, 1990, blue, T&T, 28000 miles, Datag, Hagon shock, Prodro tail pipe, new rear tyre, £1050. Tel Neil on (mobile) 07870 873979 or 01568 708931 (Hereford)

Honda CRM250 mkII, 1991, white, T&T, blue USD forks, commuter use only, tidy cond, £1200 ono. Tel 01827 250516 (Staffs)

Yamaha TY250 'Pinkie', new tyre/graphics, tank cover, good cond, £875. Also Yamaha Breeze 125 Quad, auto, many new parts, reverse gear, £750 or may deal on child's trials or MX bike with semi-auto or manual 'box. Tel (mobile) 07870 873979 or 01568 708931 (Hereford)

Yamaha Serow, 1986, new clutch/shock/swingarm bearings, good cond, £795 ono. Tel 01793 700348 (Wilts)

Kawasaki KDX200, 1997, road reg'd, new tyres, well maintained, great bike, £1595. Tel (mobile) 07885 941969 or 01202 841932 (Dorset)

Kawasaki KDX220, 03-reg, taxed, only 400 miles, road lights, speedo, MX tyres, green lane use only, as new, £2700. Tel 01706 878782 (Lancs)

KTM 200EXC, 2001, road reg'd, FMF pipe, Fatbars, wave discs, '03 plastics, spares inc plastics and pipe, £2150. Tel 02380 693967 (Hants)

Beta Alp 200, 2000, X-reg, T&T, only 5500km, sensible mods, great example, £1600. Tel 01622 721677 (Kent)

Honda XR400R, 2001, T&T, 4700km, Renthals, hand/sumpguards, lowered, two new tyres, all original spares kept, excellent condition, £2500 ono. Tel 07890 415951 (London)

Yamaha TTR250, 1994, MoT, 28000km, new battery/pads, road tyres plus selection of knobblies, vgc, £1350 ono. Tel 07773 233091 (Essex)

KTM 525EXC, reg'd 02, taxed, 1600 miles, new fork seals, vgc, bargain at £3200. Tel 07714 124620 (E Sussex)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2001, Y-reg, blue/white, T&T, 3600 miles, handguards, used three times off-road, not for me, £2500. Tel 07789 413853 (Oxon)

Kawasaki KDX220, '03 model, 3200 miles, FMF system, Renthals, frameguards etc, new piston fitted at 2500 miles, maintained regardless of cost, £2450 ono. Tel 01366 387091 (Norfolk)

Yamaha WR426F, 2002, road reg'd, taxed, FMF Q-pipe, recent tyres/c+s, well maintained, with receipts, good condition, £3000 ono. Tel (mobile) 07761 823625 or 01235 527599 (Oxon)

Honda XLR250 Baja, 1993, T&T, 23500km, religiously maintained, exc cond, inc some spares, £1600 or swap plus cash for CRF450. Tel 01929 481500 (Dorset)

KTM 250EXC 4T, 2003 model, 02-reg, elec start, sump/handguards, clutch saver, recent c+s, well maintained, £2750 or may consider p/x. Tel 01252 654722 (Hants)

Yamaha WR400F, 1999, V-reg, T&T, good cond, £1950 ono. Tel 01455 230546 (Leics)

Honda Dominator 650, X-reg, 6200 miles, road use only, good cond, £2000. Tel (eves) 01425 278618 (Dorset)

KTM Rallye, 1997, two-and-a-half days racing after £2000 engine rebuild, some spares, vgc, make exc Christmas present, £2750 ono. Tel 01269 594604 (Carms)

Yamaha XTZ750, F-reg, 36000 miles, new discs, recent tyres/c+s, genuine original cond, £1350. Tel 07761 360288 (Staffs)

Honda CRM250 mkIII, L-reg, T&T, 3500km, totally original bike, not seen dirt, stunning example, £1700 or p/x for XLR/XR250. Tel 01942 517915 (Lancs)

Honda CR250 enduro, reg'd 02, lights etc, good cond, £2000. Tel 01473 712621 (Suffolk)

Honda XR600R, 1998, 3000 miles, HRC race kit, all per-

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

formance parts fitted, Talons, never been dirty, spares, must be seen, £2300. Tel 01732 865964 (Kent)

Yamaha Serow, 1991, MoT, dual start, religiously maintained, many new parts and spares, can email pics, call for details, £1250 ono. Tel 01256 861759 (Hants)

Honda XR400R, 2002, 150 miles, road use only, Renthals, skidplate, frameguards, totally as new, offers over, £3000. Tel 0151 428 8420 (Lancs)

KTM 200SX, 2003, never raced, clean and tidy bike, very reliable, must sell, £2500 inc light kit. Tel (mobile) 07710 143975 or 01455 285398 (Leics)

Yamaha XT225 Serow, 1996, N-reg, purple/white, T&T, two lady owners since imported in 1998, vgc, £1500. Tel 01483 760293 (Surrey)

Honda XL600, 1986, T&T, dual start, Laser exhaust, superb cond, must be seen, £1550. Tel (mobile) 07715 731333 or 01386 833210 (Worcs)

Yamaha XT600 Tenere, 1986, blue/yellow, MoT, 30000 miles, dual start, new battery/fuel pump, original except for stainless exhaust, exc cond, £1400. Tel (mobile) 07976 216472 or 02380 453516 (Hants)

Yamaha WR426F, 02-reg, taxed, sump/frame/handguards, new tyres/Renthal c+s, well looked after, £3200 ono. Tel 07708 359670 (Essex)

Honda CRM250 mkII, T&T, one owner, new c+s, RSV pipe, Aktive reeds, alloy bashplate, clean original bike, £1650. Tel (mobile) 07711 471774 or 01235 510133 (Oxon)

Suzuki DR350S, 1992, J-reg, blue/white, T&T, vgc, £1250 ono. Tel 01844 281051 (Oxon)

Suzuki DR350SE, T-reg, T&T, FSH, new tyres, standard bike, good cond, £1700 ono. Tel 07816 347681 (Derbys)

KTM EXC 4T, '04 model, hardly used, £4500. Tel 07816 388791 (Oxon)

Honda Dominator 650, W-reg, red, 6000 miles, as new, £2500 or p/x BMW R/GS. Tel (mobile) 07980 480032 or 01295 750665 (Oxon)

Yamaha XT500, 1979, MoT, 27000 miles, 90percent original, vgc, £1100 ono. Tel 07901 932954 (Beds)

Honda CT125C, 1984 model, very rare twin-shock trailie, log book, small jobs needed for MoT, £795 ovno. Tel 01298 22080 (Derbys)

Suzuki DR350, 1991, not ridden since 1999, good cond, call for more details, cheap green laner at £900. Tel (mobile) 07976 283019 or 0115 930 4543 (Derbys)

Gas Gas EC300, taxed, new c+s, forks serviced, green lane use, clean and pampered, rider retiring, £2750 ovno. Tel 01942 797160 (Lancs)

KTM 400EXC, 2005 model, 04-reg, ten hours road/green lane use, factory sump/handguards, absolutely immaculate, as new, £4850 ovno. Tel (mobile) 07765 241128 or 01249 650067 (Wilts)

Yamaha WR250F, reg'd 2004, road kit, Trailtech computer, barkbusters, light use, mint cond, £4700. Tel 07717 690656 (Somerset)

Yamaha WR426F, 02-reg, taxed, sump/frame/handguards, new Renthal c+s/tyres, well looked after, £3200 ono. Tel 07708 359670 (Essex)

Kawasaki KDX200, 1998, R-reg, T&T, FMF pipe, Renthals, many spares inc standard exhaust system, well cared for, exc cond, £1750. Tel 01386 858552 (Worcs)

Suzuki DR250, R-reg, elec start, Acerbis guards, new

tyres/c+s, exc green lane bike, good cond, £1400 ono. Tel 01325 377296 (N Yorks)

KTM 400EXC, 2004, 1200 miles, 52 hours use, bashplate, handguards, excellent condition, £4100 ovno. Tel 01405 818896 (S Yorks)

KTM 450EXC, 2004 model, road kit, clutchsaver, skid plate, meticulously maintained, too fast for owner, £4200 ono. Tel 01531 650433 (Hereford)

Yamaha TTR250, 2003 UK model, only 1000 miles, balance of Yamaha warranty, as new, £2995 ono or poss p/x. Tel 01629 823276 (Derbys)

KTM 250EXC 2T, 2003 Six Days special, new c+s, handguards, clutchsaver, well maintained, £2700 or poss p/x for CRF250X. Tel (eves) 01242 514856 (Gloucs)

CCM 604DS, 2001, good cond, £2900 ono. Tel 07812 014690 (W Mids)

Gas Gas EC450FSE, 2004, £3500. Also Gas Gas EC250, 2001, new piston/rings, £1700. Both bikes fully road legal. Tel 07801 473775 (N Ireland)

KTM 400EXC, 2003, Dynojetted, green lane use only, vgc, lost licence forces sale, £3200. Tel 01756 791755 (Yorks)

Honda TL125, been stood around, good runner, all original, could do with front pipe, £400. Tel 01604 832162 (Northants)

Yamaha TTR250 Raid, 1996, N-reg, T&T, 9000 miles, mint cond, exc first bike, sale due to bigger bike, £1900 ovno. Tel 0161 969 4280 (Cheshire)

TM 250E enduro 4T, kick start model, road reg'd, stored last two years, vgc, exc green laner, £2250. Tel (mobile) 07715 013534 or 0161 474 0773 (Cheshire)

Yamaha WR450F, 2003, green lane use only, handguards, new c+s/boots, £4000 ono or swap elec start WR250F etc. Tel 07879 845063 (Avon)

KTM 450EXC, 2004, taxed, 200 miles, used twice only, not raced, plus parts, exc cond, £4250. Tel 07711 440593 (Surrey)

Beta Alp 200, 03-reg, yellow, 6000km, never off-roaded, new rear tyre, Sola-Larmed, £2100 firm, no canvassers. Tel 01204 883659 (Lancs)

Honda XR400R, 1996, T&T, recent c+s and fork seals, plus wheel/steering/swingarm bearings, some spares and extras, £1750 ono. Tel 07821 262992 (Northants)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2000 model, T&T, Renthals, CRD guards/bashplate, bargain at £2350. Tel 01773 872645 (Derbys)

Yamaha PW50, automatic, one year old, suit age 3-6, very little use, vgc, bargain at £650. Tel Shane on 01202 682601 (Dorset)

Beta Alp 200, 2001, 51-reg, T&T, low miles, dual start, new tyres, exc cond, £1700 ono. Tel 07903 871584 (Herts)

WANTED

Wanted forks and shock for 2004 Honda CRF450R. Tel (mobile) 07786 270002 or 01603 879739 (Norfolk)

Wanted bashplate for XR400R, prefer wraparound type. Tel 02920 843643 (S Wales)

Wanted front disc for CCM 604E DS, new or used, or info on dealer/distributor so I can source one.

Tel Glenn on 07813 276290 (Bucks)

Wanted rear wheel rim for Suzuki DR-Z400E. Tel Ian (after 18:30) on 01507 578436 (Lincs)

Wanted for DR-Z400, tank, seat, all plastics, S-model clocks, CRD exhaust and sumpguard. Tel 01792 535738 (Glamorgan)

Wanted Honda XL600R parts, sidepanels, light switchgear, speedo cable, silencer and workshop manual. Tel 01780 740914 (Cambs)

Wanted Suzuki RM250 rolling chassis, early '90s, must have USD forks, airbox, wheels etc, engine not required, for project. Tel 01737 780247 (Surrey)

Wanted XR250 cylinder head or complete engine. Tel 01793 700348 (Wilts)

Wanted aftermarket exhaust or silencer for 1992 Honda Transalp 600. Also Kawasaki Tengai rear shock, sidepanels and other bits needed. Tel 01706 878782 (Lancs)

Wanted large tank for 2001 YZ426F. Tel 01751 473666 (N Yorks)

Wanted Honda XR200 or XL185 engines, or parts required, anything considered. Tel Mike on 01793 337571 (Wilts)

Wanted for Honda TL125S, genuine toolbox, standard exhaust rear heatshield and silencer, indicators, lighting kit, gasket set, owners handbook and factory manual. Tel 01904 490764 (Yorks)

Wanted front caliper and master cylinder for Gas Gas 250. Tel 07801 473775 (N Ireland)

Wanted header pipe for 2004 KTM 450EXC, standard or aftermarket part. Tel (mobile) 07802 195597 or 01620 893327 (E Lothian)

SPARES

Rally/adventure bashplate for XR650R, large side compartments, front toolbox, high quality, professionally made, powder-coated, can email pics, £320 ono. Tel 01189 671838 (Berks)

Wulfsport lined waterproof trousers, 36in waist, 34in leg, black with red panel, armour in knees/hips, used once, £20. Tel 02920 843643 (S Wales)

Single-bike trailer, complete with ramp, lightboard and spare tyre, fully galvanised, good cond, £120. Tel 01536 770651 (Northants)

Silencer for KTM LC4/SXC, £95. Duke bar-end weights, £10. Touratech control lamps, set, £20. Tel 07717 093228 (Lancs)

XT350 parts, 1995 model, barrel piston, swingarm, rear shock plus odds 'n' sods, all good, £150. Also KX200 seat and rear caliper. Tel 01604 832162 (Northants)

Set of MX wheels for CCM 604. Also Remus end can, 17T front sprocket, headlamp, Scottolier, new chain, offers. Tel (mobile) 07817 518685 or 01204 848162 (Lancs)

Comfort seat for KTM LC4 640, as new, £40 ono. Tel (mobile) 07813 005308 or 01495 769559 (S Wales)

KTM parts, DEP enduro can to suit 2004 4T, cost £255, sell for £180. Plus many more new spares inc filters, levers, plastics. Tel 01531 650433 (Hereford)

Renthal top clamp and bar mounts to suit Yamaha YZ/WR426/400/250125, mint, £80. Tel 01942 216967 (Lancs)

Alpinestars Tech 6 boots, size 10/44-45 euro, Tech 8 buckles, walked in only, as new, £120. Tel 01942 216967 (Lancs)

Complete piston kit for CRM250 mkII, includes small-end, pin, circlips, unused and boxed, £60. Tel 01252 654722 (Hants)

Parts for 2003 Honda XR400R, tank, seat, fenders, all red, original tank decals, all mint cond, offers. Tel 01942 517915 (Lancs)

SWM enduro and trials spares, new and used, ring with requirements. Tel 07789 995646 (Somerset)

FMF Q-pipe system for 2002 WR250F, with Powerbomb header, looks great, enduro legal and more power, £200. Tel (mobile) 07710 459196 or 01923 469858 (Herts)

Solid rear disc for Honda XR400R, IMS gear lever, air filter, all like new, £60 the lot. Tel (mobile) 07860 358325 or 02825 649900 (Co Antrim)

Renthal Twinwalls, £40. REP alloy filler cap for DR-Z, £15. Motion Pro 8.5in tyre levers, £10. Scott Six Days bumbag, £20. WR/DR-Z plug spanner, £5. Tel 01380 729982 (Wilts)

Owners service manual for WR250FP, as new, £20. Also Axo knee pads, as new, £10. Tel (mobile) 07710 459196 or 01923 469858 (Herts)

KTM Big Bomb full exhaust, WP hard shock spring, high seat, all to fit 520/525 models, all as new, £350. Tel 01873 880549 (Monmouthshire)

DEP pipe for Suzuki DR350, new, £100. Sumpguard, £30. Frameguards, £15. Tel 01803 529661 (Devon)

Seat cover for KTM 200, brand new, £25. Tel 020 8249 2767 (Kent)

Back issues of TBM, issues 1,2, 12-14, 22, 29, 33, 44, 54, 58, 61, 64-66, 68, 70, 72, all mint, offers. Tel Brian on 02891 471446 (N Ireland)

Standard exhaust system for XR600, complete, vgc, £100 plus p&p. Tel 01204 430451 (Lancs)

Parts for Suzuki DR800 DR Big, sidepanels, £20. T/strips, £4. Front fender, £10. Rear fender and toolbox, £15. Headlamp plus bracket, £15. Rear light, £10. Pair of wheels, £70. Tel 01767 640252 (Beds)

STOLEN

Stolen KTM 400EXC, 2000 model, reg X632 LDD, frame no VBKRACA402YM329798, engine no 0059502606, stolen from Reading in late October, reward offered for return of bike. Tel (mobile) 07969 130609 or 01189 835326 (Berks)

Stolen KTM 400EXC, 2004 model, Works team graphics, frame no VBKRCA403N221538, engine no 0459585107, stolen from High Wycombe area between the hours of 05:15 and 08:30 on 26 October. Tel 07967 663029 (Bucks)

Stolen HM Honda CRE250, 1997 model, reg P850 PLM, frame no 0200281, eng no 6002434, white sidepanels and tank, black backgrounds, red fenders, CRE250 graphics, race no 140 on front plate, lighting kit, ignition cover is larger than normal with 'HM' on it, stolen from High Wycombe on 12 November, £500 reward for recovery. Any info please tel (mobile) 07963 820935 or 01494 448485 (Bucks)

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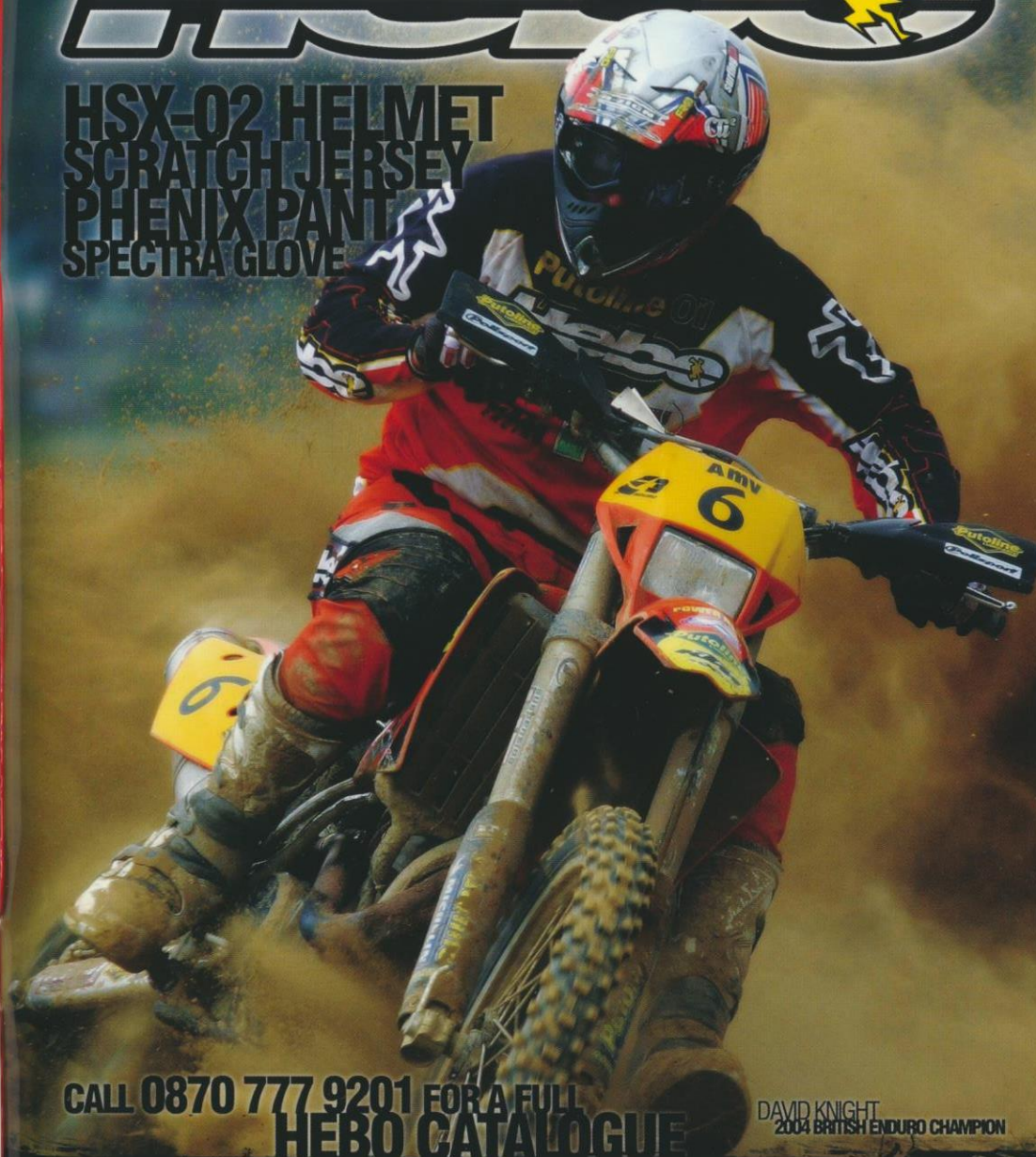
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