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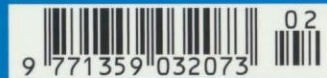
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EDITORIAL

You've Got A Friend...

There's no doubt in my mind that one of the best aspects of this pastime of ours is the fact that you get to make some great friends. And as incongruous as that may sound when talking about a sport as utterly solitary as riding a dirt bike, I can only assume that the time spent alone in the saddle only serves to intensify the desire to share your experiences at journey's end. Whether these friendships are formed out on the trail as the result of a common enjoyment of the countryside and the day's ride, or whether they are forged in the heat of competition when you're battling against not just other riders, but also the course and the elements, I can't be sure. But I do know that nothing brings people together like the shared joy of talking about dirt bikes.

For a start riding dirt bikes is like no other sport I know. The pleasures are all pretty questionable. It's physically tough, emotionally draining and at times excruciatingly painful. Not to mention expensive. And at this time of the year it's frequently cold, wet and miserable. So how come every time I step off a dirt bike my face cracks into a huge grin?

Well there's nothing quite as funny as watching a mate who's just overtaken you whilst giving you the bird, dropping his front and rear wheels into deep, but parallel ruts, then grinding to a frustrating halt. Whilst the enjoyment of timing your overtake back to coincide with the deepest puddle on the trail just has to be one of life's most underrated pleasures.

And then there's the satisfaction of coming across like-minded loons who are just as unhealthily obsessed about this damn-fool crazy sport as you are. Take for instance the three Derbyshire TRF lads we met and rode with recently. They didn't know us from Adam yet when we rang 'em up out of the blue and asked them to be our guides around their area, they agreed without hesitation. What's more they graciously put up with us arriving late (after getting stuck in traffic), wasting hours trying to fix a bike which refused to start, and then stood around in the cold while we undertook all the necessary photography. And to cap it all the following day they sent us an email saying that they had really enjoyed riding with us and we were welcome to come back any time. Were they mad?

Nope, just dirt junkies like ourselves...

SI MELBER

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'Anyway, this bloke walks into the shop the other day, and he says to me...'



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FEBRUARY 2005

NO.114

GOT THE BLUES

New Yamaha-motored enduro weapons from Spain!

Spanish bike builders Rieju will soon be race testing their all-new Yamaha WR-F powered enduro bikes throughout Europe, before production starts in time for the '06 model year.

The company look set to produce both 250 and 450 four-stroke models, using a CR-esque aluminium beam frame mated with contemporary components to create a well-specced and compact package. The suspension is Kayaba/Paioli, the wheels Excel, and the swingarm is the WR-F's chunky ally item. The cockpit sees a pair of tapered braceless bars sitting behind a set of digital clocks.

Until now, Rieju's off-road range has centred on budget learner trailies, but these new enduro models could well prove hugely popular if they combine Yamaha's power with an agile slim-line chassis.

The biggest question mark, however, is whether or not the bikes will come with the twin silencer set-up you see here, as surely this can only add weight and heighten the risk of damage.

Expect a TBM test just as soon as we can get a ride on one...



SAND STORM

It looks as if this year's Le Touquet event on the 6 February will be the last one ever. The powers-that-be over in the chic French seaside town have finally bowed to pressure from environmental lobbyists who claimed that the legendary sand race is causing massive long-term damage to the dunes.

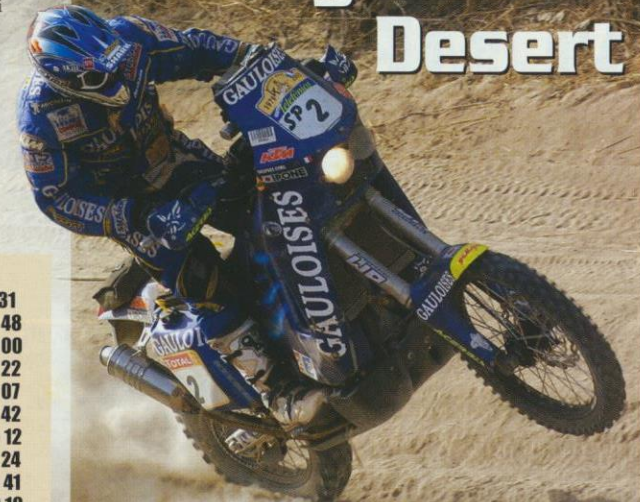
As well as being extremely bad news for the region (it's their third largest leisure event), this certainly doesn't bode well for off-road sport in France in general.



Frenchman Cyril Despres clinched his first ever Dakar victory, despite the sad death of team-mate and mentor Fabrizio Meoni during the race. The 31yr old KTM factory rider battled on and won the event, after coming third last year and runner-up in 2003.

Spaniard Marc Coma and 'Roof of Africa' veteran Alfie Cox had to settle for second and third place respectively. British finishers included Honda XR650 pilot Mick Extance in 48th and Si Pavay on his BMW F650 in 78th position.

King Of The Desert



Position	Rider	Make	Time
1	Depres	KTM	47h 27 31
2	Coma	KTM	47h 36 48
3	Cox	KTM	47h 39 00
4	Esteve Pujol	KTM	47h 39 22
5	Fretigne	YAMAHA	48h 01 07
6	Caldecott	KTM	48h 15 42
7	De Azevedo	KTM	48h 55 12
8	Sala	KTM	49h 01 24
9	Blais	KTM	49h 20 41
10	Brucy	KTM	50h 39 10

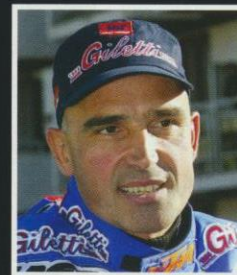
IN MEMORY

Respected Italian rallye rider Fabrizio Meoni was killed whilst competing in this year's Dakar Rallye. Already twice winner of the Dakar, the experienced and charismatic 47yr old works KTM rider crashed on the Atar - Kiffa eleventh stage.

Despite the medical crew's best efforts, they were unable to save Meoni's life. He leaves behind him his wife Elena and two children, 14yr old Gioele and two-year-old Chiara.

Team-mate and eventual winner Cyril Despres commented 'Fabrizio was my friend and my mentor and I had the impression that he was happy to see me pick up his baton. I hope to be a good student.'

KTM have announced that in honour of Fabrizio's memory they will take over the funding of a free school in a poor Dakar suburb he had discreetly founded and financed.



Come And Have a Go...

The UK's first ever extreme sprint off-road race is happening on 20 Feb at Nantmawr Quarry, Oswestry, Shropshire.

'The Tough One', organised by Wirral Off-Road, is a two-hour hare scramble where Britain's top riders will go head-to-head for the chance to win £1500.

The 3.5km course features a challenging mix of natural and man-made obstacles including steep climbs, rock sections and water holes.

Taking part are 20 invitation-only riders, including reigning British Enduro Champ David Knight, former 125cc British Enduro Champion Edward Jones, former Overall British Enduro Champion Ady Smith and trials turned enduro ace Tom Sagar. To up the ante even further, clear favourite Knightier will start five minutes behind the rest of the Pro class!

Also eligible to enter are 25 expert level riders with a £500 winners prize up for grabs, plus the top ten finishers will get their £50 entry fee back.

An entry form for expert riders is available to download at wirraloffroad.co.uk.



LUCKY NUMBERS

It's yet more good news for dirt bike sales, up as they are for the sixth month in a row. Adventure Sport model numbers rose another one percent to 19-percent from last month. Trail/Enduro bike sales are now down five percent on last year's figures, but are well ahead of the total motorcycle sales (registrations) still holding steady at minus 11-percent.

There's been a new entry in the 'Adventure Sport' chart, with the fifth placed CCM R30 supermoto being edged out by the Honda

XL1000V, or Varadero as it's better known. However, the big Beemer still remains the top seller, having shifted another 106 units, and twice as many machines as the second placed Honda.

No movers so far in the 'Trail/Enduro' category though, with the ever-popular pint-sized Honda XR125L shifting nearly three times as many units as the second placed Yamaha DT125. The latest complete figures are as follows (on the right):



ADVENTURE SPORT		
1	BMW R1200GS	1382
2	Honda XL125V	697
3	Triumph 955 Tiger	515
4	BMW F650GS	459
5	CCM R30	358
TRAIL/ENDURO		
1	Honda XR125L	1544
2	Yamaha DT125R	585
3	Suzuki RV125	564
4	Honda CRF250X	533
5	Suzuki DR-Z400S	482

SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT?

Not something we'd ordinarily feature in TBM, the International Historic Motorsport Show has always been a beanfeast for fans of classic competition four wheelers of every persuasion. But this year the organisers tell us it's going to be different.

Held at Stoneleigh Park - a venue Dirt Rider Expo attendees will be familiar with - 2005's IHMS will for the first time feature classic twin-shock scramblers, enduro and pre-1965/69 trials bikes, and as such should certainly be of interest to fans of TBM's *From the Archives* series.

The event runs from 25-27 February and the old off-roaders will be found in Hall 3. More details from 01367 250001.



WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

The latest must-have book for enduro fans is here - Off Road Champions 2004. This hardback annual contains over 250 full-colour pages featuring action images of the cream of Europe's enduro talent including Stefan Merriman, Juha Salminen, Samuli Aro, and of course, our very own David Knight and Paul Edmondson.

It also features extensive coverage from the eight-round WEC series, as well as the 79th ISDE from Poland, World Trials Championship, Italian and German Enduro Champs, World Supermoto Champs, and of course the 2004 Dakar Rallye.

Priced at £25.00 plus £6.55 p&p (next day special delivery), Off Road Champions is available from Jonty Edmunds Photography on 07779 091014 or jonty.edmunds@attglobal.net.



SNIPPETS

TECHNICALLY SPEAKING...

If you're stuck in the garage trying to fathom out exactly what's wrong with your pride and joy, then hopefully we can help you. Email us on tech@trailbikemag.com and our resident technical expert Steve Plain will do his best to solve all of your problems.

BASIC TRAINING

Multiple Enduro Champion Geraint Jones is again running his popular enduro training schools at Slab Common, Hants.

The three one-day schools on 18/19/20 Feb cost £60/day and will cater for beginners to experts. Entry forms can be found on team-reme.co.uk but hurry - places are limited.

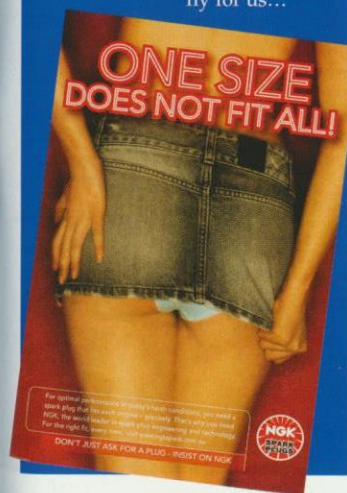
CORRECTION

A letter in last month's TBM headed 'Blazing Saddles' was not meant to imply any reference to the trail riding company of the same name.

We apologise for any confusion that this may have caused. Blazing Saddles can be contacted on 0034 965 369 193.

PERFECT FIT

Only our cousins down under could make spark plugs appear sexy! This ad from Australasian Dirtbike Magazine (ADB) certainly makes the sparks fly for us...



BRITAIN'S TOP FEMALE ENDURO RIDER AND WINNER OF THIS YEAR'S CAMBRIAN RALLY, KATRINA PRICE HAS FOND MEMORIES OF HER FIRST DIMINUTIVE DIRTBIKE...

When TBM asked me to write a few words on my first bike, my first thought was 'can I remember that far back?' It seemed a very long time ago now and actually, it is: twenty-five years ago in fact!

It was in 1980, it was a Yamaha DT175MX, and it came in pieces in a box. The 'bike' was bought from a local farmer, and boy, was it fun trying to piece it all together! I thought it was fantastic, and had great fun on it, making a big bald patch in our field - much to the disgust of my sister, as it meant less grass for her horse!

I don't know why I became so interested in bikes really. Maybe it was my mother's fault, as there is photographic evidence of her as a teenager riding pillion with the boys around town, but something tells me it was not the bikes she was drawn to!

Anyway, WTRA were running enduro events in the Crychan Forest back then and when my sister passed her car test in 1978 she used to drive me to the forest to watch. Those were the days when enduros really were hard and nobody ever complained about it, and special tests didn't really matter as every-one lost time anyway.

I clearly remember watching the Beacons Enduro in about 1978 when a rider ran out of petrol. The only

way we could help was to take off one of my Wellington boots and fill it with petrol from the pump of our Land Rover. He was eternally grateful, and a few years later the same person helped me out with some sponsorship when I rode a Kawasaki KDX200. My welly was never quite the same though!

I never thought I would ever get to ride a Six-Days enduro and definitely not six of them. Each one was going to be the last one. When I did stop I did some world rounds instead. The terrain in some of those was really difficult, but a great experience. When you see people like Merriman being pulled up a hill you know it's tough!

The European rounds I did in the Ladies Championship were really great fun. I made some good friends and winning the championship was just a bonus.

These days I just ride when I feel like it. It's now more difficult to get away from work, I am getting older and I suppose the desire to win is not there as it used to be over 21 years ago.

I do a few trials in the winter for fun, and maybe later this year I will get to win the over 40s class in an enduro. Oh no, there is that dreaded 'win' word again. Maybe the old killer instinct is still in there somewhere after all...



5 MINUTES WITH...

BROTHER AND SISTER ENDURO RIDERS SI AND KATIE WAKELY ARE TWO OF THE SPORT'S UP AND COMING STARS...

WHAT WAS THE FIRST ENDURO BIKE YOU EVER OWNED?

Si: With the exception of my TM 125, which I had in 2003, I've not owned any enduro bikes. All the other bikes I've raced have been converted motocross bikes, like the Honda I ride now. My TM was supplied through a dealer and I used it for the whole season. I really enjoyed riding the bike.

Katie: It was the bike that I rode last year, a Yamaha YZ125. It was a converted motocrosser with lights and an 18in rear wheel. I had a few silly little problems with it but it ran well all year really. I used it just for enduro because I was lucky enough to have a YZ250 for my motocross.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST EVER ENDURO?

Si: It was the Natterjack in 2002. I raced in the Clubman class and think I finished about second overall on my Yamaha YZ125. It was certainly very different to what I was used to because of all the new rules and stuff. I didn't have any major problems and I'm still competing in enduros, which shows how much I enjoyed it.

Katie: My first timecard enduro was the 2004 Breckland Enduro. I rode in the 125cc Clubman class and I think I finished fifth, which I was pretty happy with. I was on a huge learning curve because I didn't know how fast to go on the tight checks. I really enjoyed it because it was physical but not too difficult.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE EVENT?

Si: Definitely the Breckland because of the tight times and the fact that it is so physically challenging. It was my first Championship class event after I moved from Clubman so it was quite a shock to the system! I had a really good first day but then I had a big crash on day two that spoiled my result. I was just happy that I'd coped with the event as well as I did.

Katie: I really enjoyed the Crychan Enduro last year. I thought that both the tests and the going were great. A broken gear selector shaft spoilt day one but day two went well. I think I finished top four in the 125s.

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

Si: That has to be my first European Enduro Championship event in Italy in 2003. I was a bit overwhelmed by it all, it was incredibly hot and the course was very technical. I really learned a lot despite the fact I didn't manage to score any points. I think I finished 16th in the 125cc junior class which I was pretty pleased with

because I finished both days.

Katie: Definitely the first day of the Hafren Enduro last year. I had the flu pretty bad which didn't help things, and I only just managed to get to check one - there were about 40 bikes stuck on one hill. I was completely worn out and couldn't carry on so I decided to get myself sorted for day two. Day two went well - it was my first real mud 'n' ruts event, although I found it quite extreme in places and being at the rear of the Clubman class certainly didn't make it any easier.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR BEST EVER PERFORMANCE?

Si: Two actually - last year's Breckland simply because I finished the event without too many dramas and the Crychan in terms of a result - I won the 125cc class on day one. I felt good from the moment I woke up and put in some really good cross-country test times and enjoyed the motocross special test. You needed to be quite brave on the cross-country test to put in good times, which I managed to do.

Katie: That was probably at the first round of the Fast Eddy Cross-Country series last year. It was horrendously muddy but I just kept going. I was second Clubman for the first hour but then I dropped back to sixth because I started getting tired. It was the first time I'd ridden in the mud for more than 20 minutes.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST DISAPPOINTING RESULT?

Si: Last year's Natterjack. I finished the event with good results but I was disappointed at not being more competitive than I was. I was leading the 125cc Championship class going into the event but wasn't able to challenge Darryl Bolter the way I hoped I would. I don't know if it was because it was a long season or what but I just wasn't on top of my game. Thankfully I haven't had too many disappointing results.

Katie: Probably day one at the Hafren last year. I was just annoyed

with myself that I hadn't finished it. I've learned to always keep going because as soon as I pulled out, I found out that the Clubman were only going to do one lap!

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CRASH?

Si: That was last year when I was practicing with Paul Edmondson. We were at a track that had a couple of ski jumps one after the other and I got things wrong as I took off the second one. I landed on top of a pile of tyres, which sent me flying over the handlebars. Luckily I didn't hurt myself but it frightened me a little bit. I've been pretty lucky and haven't broken too many bones, only my arm.

Katie: I've been lucky and not had any in an enduro so far... not yet anyway, touch wood. However, I've dislocated shoulders and broken my leg and had loads of other niggly little injuries from motocross. Most have been from practicing and not racing though.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED ENDURO MEMORY?

Si: My gold medal finish at the ISDE in Poland last year. I had a big crash on day four, which I thought was going to drop me off gold so I had to ride hard to make sure I stayed on gold. Getting the medal means a lot to me because I could have easily thrown it away when I crashed.

Katie: I'd say it's from the Welsh two-day enduro last year. I really enjoyed the event, the social side of the competition and the prize-giving ceremony afterwards. It was great.

WHAT BIKE HAVE YOU ENJOYED RIDING THE MOST?

Si: I really enjoyed the TM I had, but like I said, I haven't had too many enduro bikes. I suppose that I like riding 125cc bikes because of my physical size. I feel really well suited to my Hondas now though.

Katie: I've only had the 125cc Yamaha so far so I guess it has to be that. I had a 250cc four-stroke, which

I really enjoyed motocrossing, but it would have been too heavy for me for enduros.

WHAT RIDER HAS HAD THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR CAREER?

Si: When I was a schoolboy motocross rider I used to look up to Stefan Everts, but I guess now it is Paul Edmondson. The rider that has had the biggest influence on my career though is Rob Sartin, from Talon Engineering. He has helped me with advice on fitness training and prior to the six days last year, with the little, but important, things.

Katie: My brother Si. If he hadn't started doing enduros I wouldn't have either. I go practicing with him a lot and learn from him what he has learnt from other riders, which really helps me.

WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED TERRAIN?

Si: To be honest I don't really have a favourite terrain. I grew up racing on stubble fields but I also like sand, mud and faster going. I really like ruts. I never really enjoyed riding on hard pack until recently but that was simply because I didn't ride on it enough.

Katie: I like sand and any surface other than hardpack that is grippy. I don't like hard pack.

WHAT DOES ENDURO SPORT NEED MORE OF?

Si: More coverage in the mainstream media and on TV. I don't know how that would happen but if more people knew about and understood the sport it would have to be a good thing for everyone. Most minority sports are probably in the same boat, which probably makes it hard for any of them to get on TV.

Katie: I think we need more timecard events. I'm lucky in the South West because there are a couple of really strong clubs that run Hare 'n' Hound events but in other areas of the country it's not so good.

WHAT DOES ENDURO SPORT NEED LESS OF?

Si: People who don't know and understand our sport - people who get practice areas closed down and think we shouldn't be in the countryside. We're just using the available land to have some fun on our bikes, we're not doing any real harm.

Katie: People trying to stop us riding our bikes. Yeah, bikes make noise but we could be doing a lot worse things.

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

Si: I think, and hope, that there will be many more youngsters in it. There are more hare scramble type events for them to compete in now compared to just a few years ago, so I hope they will stay involved in the sport and start competing in enduros.

Katie: I think the way things are going it will be a lot stronger, at least I hope it will be. Enduro seems to be getting taken more seriously now by the wider motorcycle industry, which has to be a good thing.

WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE IN ENDUROS?

Si: I definitely want to win a British Championship title and hopefully a world championship as well. I'd like to get my name known abroad this year while competing in as many rounds of the Junior World Enduro championship as possible. One day I'd like to be able to say I'm a world champion.

Katie: This year I want to try and win the 125cc Clubman championship and see how well I can do in the overall. I'd like to do a few European Enduro Championship events as well. In the long term I'd like to move up to Expert and see if I can one day ride in the Championship class. I'd like to win the Ladies class of the EEC as well.

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WRITES of Way

STORY: MARK WILLIAMS

Mark Williams brings us up to date on the 'Right to Ride' campaign

Back in November we reported that DEFRA had still not published its conclusions from the 'Use of Mechanically Propelled Vehicles (MPV) on Rights of Way' consultation exercise, but just before we went to press this month this actually happened. Certain wags had excused the ongoing delay as a case of Alun Michael - having already banned fox hunting and the use of handguns - wanting to take a breather before criminalising yet another section of Britain's law-abiding public. There is also the little matter of an imminent general election in the run-up to which, further complex and controversial legislation might do the Labour party's chances no good whatsoever.

More likely, however, is that the response to the consultation was far, far greater than anticipated and, apparently fairly evenly balanced between MPV and rambling interests, making it more difficult for the Minister to claim that there was unequivocal backing for whatever pronouncements he might make. And as reported in November's TBM, DEFRA had at its own instigation invited MPV lobby groups to a series of meetings, the outcome of which was a 'Solutions Paper' aimed at helping resolve some of the more justifiable issues raised by the consultations document (eg illegal use of RoW, and use of illegal vehicles on RoW).

Having hinted at what these might be in



WRITES of Way

November, it was revealed at the Trail Riders Fellowship Executive Meeting on January 15th that this Paper recommended that a 'time limited' working group be established to look at and provide advice on three main issues: clarity on and effective enforcement of current byway rules; a sustainability assessment of existing RoW, and; detailed analysis of management of activity on byways. The report just published confirms that these will all now take place.

So, if these recommendations have been taken on board by DEFRA, and on the face of it, it appears that they have, then there's likely to be more breathing space for definitive map modification orders (DMMOs) to be made to bring RuPPs and other trails up to Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) status beyond the draconian 12 month window originally proposed by DEFRA. (See accompanying story for more on this)

A Road is a Road is a Road

Perhaps the best news to come out of the TRF meeting was that the report commissioned on the status of Unclassified County Roads (UCRs), again mentioned in our November issue, has finally gone through its 'peer review' stage and following subsequent modifications is now available to all interested parties. The 60-page document, 'UCRs - A study into their Status', concludes, as anticipated, that 'Routes recorded by local highway authorities as Unclassified Roads and Unclassified County Roads are, where there is no evidence to the contrary, public vehicular highways'.

Precisely because this study was carried out by three respected, impartial RoW consultants who examined a wealth of legal precedent, and then subjected it to peer group review, this is probably the best news we beleaguered trailriders have had for years. Quite apart from the fact that 'on the balance of probability' it accords RuPPs (ie Roads used as Public Paths) vehicular status, it means that hundreds if not thousands of UCRs are now almost certainly safe from Alun Michael's axe if they have not been successfully upgraded by DMMOs within whatever time-frame he sets.

County Council Highway and RoW officers are already clamouring for copies of the Study, as too are other MPV and byway interest groups who - like us - should be exceedingly grateful that the TRF had the initiative and were willing to risk some £10,000 on the exercise, but hopefully some of this can be recovered by sales of the report (Pictured right - more details at the end).

Unsuitable
for motors

Reviewing our Rights

And underlining the vital, if decidedly unsexy work the TRF is doing on behalf of all dirtbikers and off-road MPV users - which means you and me - a further £20,000 could be the bill if the judicial review of the 'Preshute 12' planning decision goes against it.

As reported previously, and arcane though it certainly sounds, this involved a local planning inspector, on the basis of guidelines recently handed down by the Government, deciding that a RuPP in Wiltshire which had previously been downgraded to a footpath could not now be claimed as a BOAT under a DMMO.

Since, once again, this could mean the loss of thousands of rideable byways, this is of critical importance to us all. But the good news is that the two barristers seconded to make the application for Judicial Review have agreed to do so on a 'No win, No fee' basis, which surely underlines their confidence in a successful outcome.

Furthermore, the Government has indicated that they will not oppose such an application and as you may know, if a Review goes in favour of its claimants, costs are paid by the Treasury. If it doesn't however, that's when the TRF could get stung for 20 grand and the TRF are urgently seeking insurance to cover such an eventuality.

Finally, the conclusion of the abovementioned UCR Study could obviously be extremely helpful

to M'Learned Friends in preparing their case for the judicial Review, all of which put a skip in the steps of those who attended the TRF Executive Meeting. But as must now be blindingly obvious, all the TRF's efforts - which includes advising local groups on claiming DMMOs and supporting localised RoW legal battles and which we all

benefit from - are costing a great deal of money. So if you haven't already joined the TRF, or contributed to their fighting fund, now is the time to do so. And if you or anyone you know has a special interest in RoW legalities, then you can buy copies of 'Unclassified County Road - A Study Into Their Status' for £20. Cheques should be made payable to Trail Riders Fellowship and sent to TRF, PO Box 343, Market Drayton, Shropshire GU1 4LT. Membership details are available from the same address, and you can also send your Fighting Fund donations there, too.

Or you can access the TRF website - www.trf.org.uk - for the bigger picture. Finally, it's nice to be able to report a bit of good news for a change...

For the very latest info on DEFRA's pronouncements, see over the page. **Mark Williams**



Stop Press!

DEFRA Disseminates

REPORT: MARK WILLIAMS

Just as we were going to press, DEFRA finally issued its first response to the consultation document 'Use of MPVs on RoW' under the ominous title, 'The Government's Framework for Action'. In fact from an admittedly cursory reading of the 104-page report, any action to be taken remains uncertain, but the conclusions as far as trailriding is concerned are not at all bad.

Whilst acknowledging that as far as BOATs are concerned, 'conflict between motor vehicles driven by farmers and other property owners and non motor vehicle users appears to be limited, whereas there appears to be a more general antipathy towards recreational motor vehicle users from others', the report accepts that recreational MPV users have legitimate rights to travel along them.

But as expected, the report makes much of the damage caused to sensitive surfaces and the polarity that exists between MPV and non-MPV users of byways on grounds of the noise and speed generally associated with recreational MPV users, ie us lot. This, it notes is 'not helped by "macho" culture in some groups... which encourages "mud-plugging", or driving in large convoys on green lanes.' Interestingly, it also hints at the lower level of damage caused by two- as opposed to four-wheeled users.

We might also take some comfort that the much-feared cut-off date of just one year for claiming existing RuPPs and other restricted byways such as BOATs is completely absent from the text, although it is proposed to give local authorities increased powers of 'extinguishment and diversion' of existing restricted byways, and also the power to create restricted byways, which does sound rather ominous. But heavily dropped hints that Michael was minded to recommend that TROs should be applied to all BOAT claims made during the proposed one year 'window' were not entirely allayed by assertion 'that measures to control or restrict traffic on byways open to all traffic would best be applied on a case by case basis.'

Nevertheless the threat of clawing back the current 2025 time limit by which such DMMOs

must be applied for still remains, and the CROW Act 2000 will be amended accordingly at some point. 'I remain certain that there is a need to promote legislation to change the basis on which public rights of way for use by mechanically propelled vehicles can be claimed,' writes Michael in his Foreword.

He concludes that, 'Enforcement and enhancement of rights of way are resource-intensive activities. That is why legislation and restriction are to be used firmly, but in moderation, and will only be part of the solution. Better use of existing legislation, better management and cultural change amongst some user groups requires a cooperative approach supported by the law.'

In essence, such pronouncements could be seen as bland, even ambiguous and in next month's TBM we shall present a fuller analysis of this hefty document. But it cannot be entirely coincidental that it appeared

the same day as another long delayed report based on 'the Faber-Maunsell project' which was commissioned by DEFRA to 'quantify the level of motor vehicle use on byways open to all traffic in England and to assess the implications of use for the network.'

Simply summarised, it concludes that 'there was no evidence of

widespread damage to the byway network from motor vehicles, whether they were recreational vehicles or using byways for land management or access to dwellings'. And taken in concert with the aforementioned MPV/RoW consultation report, perhaps it's not surprising that TRF Chairman, Geoff Wilson's initial reaction was cautiously optimistic:

'(Alun Michael) says he wants a pro-active approach by public bodies, user groups and the private sector. A large part of the rest of the solution will be down to us to deliver. In my analysis we have been given that opportunity.

'Over the past few months I put my head on the block by saying that I looked forward to a more secure future. I think we may have it here, if we can marginalise the careless and work with all concerned to match our 21st century activity with the resource. That means that 21st century bikes have to suit 21st century sensitivities.

'There is a place in our countryside for all users of rights of way, whether on foot or on four wheels, but the use must be responsible, sustainable and appropriate. Our proposals will give clarity to users to enable that to happen.' Alun Michael
(re Faber-Maunsell report)

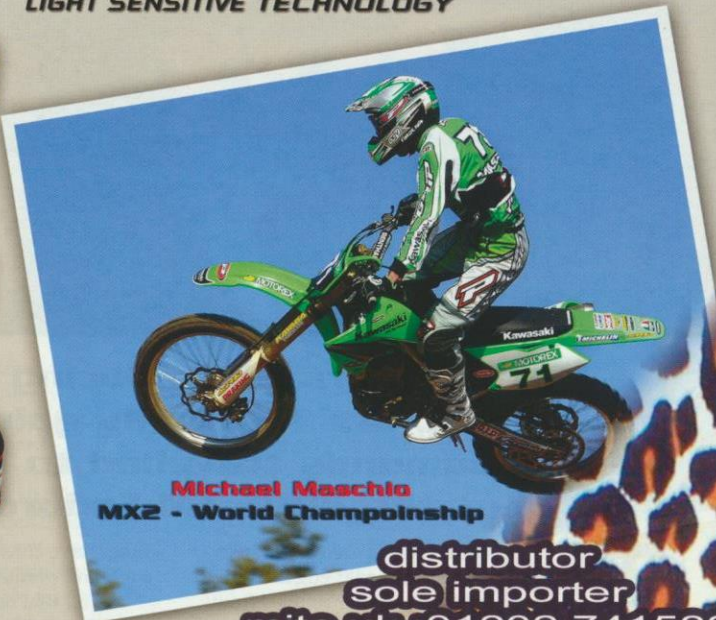


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Out of the Blue

After years of producing hard-core machinery, are TM finally going soft on us? Jonty Edmunds travelled to Ireland to try out the 2005 TM Enduro bikes...

TM enduro bikes are well known for being harder-edged than contemporary machines from other European manufacturers. This small Italian concern is famed for extracting impressive amounts of horsepower out of small two-stroke engines, and TM's 'factory replica' production

bikes have consistently placed the idea of high-end performance above ease of use.

But all that has changed for 2005 - at least according to the TM importers it has - the new improvements and modifications will 'allow less expert riders to take part in the TM Racing world'. The Pesaro-based factory has been

working hard to produce competitive, reliable and most-of all user friendly machinery which can be ridden by all standards of rider. It's a lesson which KTM has taken on board - and subsequently benefitted from, enormously.

For the 125, improvements have largely come about thanks to a new cylinder head profile. But a number of chassis changes across all the models (including altered geometry, a new swing-arm, redesigned linkage, new rear hub and rear spindle) have helped reduce the bike's overall weight by 2kg. Meantime TM's fire-breathing 250 stroker has benefitted from an increased crankshaft outer diameter to try and

tame the beast. So far so good.

As far as the four-strokes are concerned the main objective has been to improve reliability of the engines whilst at the same time achieving a smoother power curve, especially low down. A new cylinder head featuring closer set valves aims to improve gas flow and aid power delivery, while a new cam profile and altered ignition curve together with redesigned oil recovery channels for better oil circulation should all help make the bike more dependable. The 450 also features the revised frame geometry and footpeg location, like the two-strokes. Truth be told, up till now TM has had a hard time convincing enduro riders to take the four-strokes seriously. Partly because of the quality, availability and performance of the other European and Japanese thumpers, and partly because the early 400s *looked* a whole lot better than they rode. With the electric-start 450 they hope to change all that.

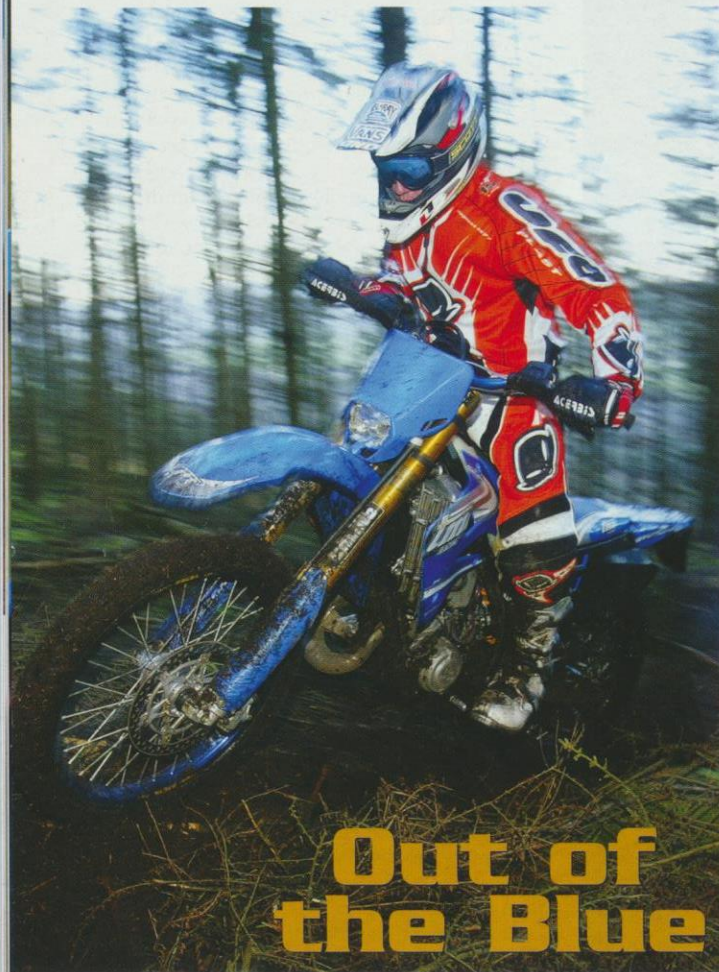
EN125: Small is Beautiful

Starting with the 125, it soon became apparent that TM's efforts to make the bike more rider friendly by giving it more bottom and mid-range power were more than just PR hype. The bike had a noticeably better, and easier to use power delivery, but that wasn't the first thing I noticed.

The first thing that struck me about the 125cc enduro bike (something I later found is shared by the entire TM enduro range) is the length, or rather lack of it, of the gear selector. It's a good two to three centimetres shorter than most other bikes at a guess, so as not to foul the lighting generator. And this makes gear selection trickier than it should be.

The second thing that struck me was the open-ness of the cockpit area. With seemingly oodles of fresh air between my knees and the underside of the handlebars, the bike offered an extremely comfortable riding position when standing, something most production bikes don't often manage for a six-foot-plus rider.

The motor delivered exactly what TM promised - more low-end power - without losing any of the top-end strength for which the bike is rightly famed. This new bottom-end meant it was extremely enjoyable to ride at low speeds - for example when flicking between trees or in and out of tight turns - where the TM's power could be relied upon to arrive without having to wait an age. And the bike was also extremely responsive. This despite the bitterly cold weather making the jetting just a little too crisp at times.



Out of the Blue

The way in which the 125 handled was also impressive. With the Ohlins suspension (which in the past has felt overly harsh) willing to soak up smaller tree roots and bumps just as it easily as larger bumps, the bike felt extremely composed at all times. With the chassis being very forgiving it allowed for an extremely relaxed ride at all speeds and it remained both manoeuvrable and agile at all times.

Complimenting both the motor and the way in which the bike handled, the bike's controls were also very 'user friendly'. With an incredibly powerful front brake, light and responsive clutch action and a strong rear brake, the bike stopped, accelerated and built revs as and when asked.



Above: Ohlins suspension appears on first impressions to be slightly more supple for this year. Which along with the other chassis and engine changes have turned the EN125 into a blinding little enduro bike...



Mini digital speed is neat but slightly tricky to read...



EN250 may be a touch smoother for 2005 but it still feels absolutely brutal to ride...



Like all their bikes TM's EN250 looks absolutely drop-dead gorgeous...

EN250: Meet the New Boss...

While TM has delivered exactly what it promised as far as their 125cc enduro bike is concerned, the same can't really be said for the 250. Granted the '05 model does seem to have a slightly smoother power delivery than in previous years but it is still an extremely potent motor - much too powerful for my liking.

And rather like Husqvarna's quarter-litre powerplant, you get the impression that TM's 250cc engine feels very dated now - and in that respect quite different to a Japanese, or modern European motor (Gasser or KTM). In fact from the moment you fire the TM into life it feels less refined, incredibly raw and, (not to put too fine a point on it) extremely bloody powerful.

And despite the fact that the power delivery may be smoother than in previous years, the sheer overwhelming explosion of brute force really mitigates against any minor improvements in delivery. From the minute the throttle is turned the bike just rips, which makes it nowhere near the easiest of the 250s to ride.

In slower going the sheer strength of the power means that the bike wants to get away from you all the time. Even trying to pull a high gear to tame the power (something you could argue most riders have

Out of the Blue

EN450 looks the part...



to do on any modern day 250) results in the bike accelerating extremely briskly. Starting strongly and remaining strong right up until the moment you decide to back off, there's only one way to really ride the TM250 and that's fast!

On open, less technical going, the bike remained both well mannered and (thankfully) reasonably easy to ride. Oh, and very, very fast. But in the tighter, twistier, rooty and rutted going it proved a bit of a handful. With the instant hit of power constantly causing it to surge forwards. Even when pulling a high gear, the bike would arrive at an obstacle fractionally earlier than anticipated. Not a huge problem when faced with just one hazard, but when crossing a section of slippery tree roots and stumps, before I'd had time to fully correct the first lunge the bike would charge forwards again. Something that resulted in the TM bossing me around rather than the other way around.

But the biggest problem I found with the sheer strength of the 250's power delivery was the fact that it had the effect of unsettling the whole bike. In a strange way it feels as if the TM 250's pulse is much stronger than most other 250cc enduro bikes: giving at times, the feel of a much older air-cooled two-stroke engine in the way that the lump goes 'donk, donk, donk...' as it ticks over.

While I'm sure there are riders that will like, or even embrace, the motor's very raw feel, in my opinion the power unbalanced the way in which the bike handled. Bikes with less power always handle better than those with more, and I simply didn't feel totally in control.

As with the 125 the 250 had a very open feel to the cockpit with great brakes and a smooth, albeit firmer, clutch action.

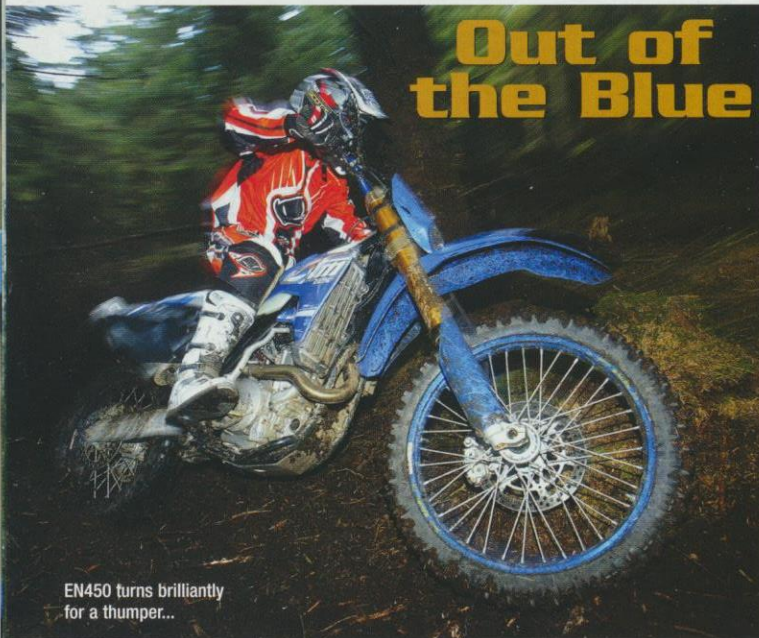
EN450: Leccy Thump

Having only ever ridden TM's 250cc four-stroke enduro offering (and not their earlier 400), a bike that I was anything but impressed with, I wasn't sure what to expect from their DOHC 450cc thumper. Whilst hoping that I wouldn't be disappointed, I was preparing for the worst but needn't have been. In fact I found I was pleasantly surprised.

Physically almost identical to the two-strokes inasmuch as the bike also had a very open cockpit and felt reasonably light, the 450's power delivery and rideability were the two aspects which surprised me most.

The best way to describe the 450's power delivery would be to say that it is a little bit more motocrossy than an EXC. Not exactly what you would want for a 450cc woods machine, but

Out of the Blue



EN450 turns brilliantly for a thumper...

third seemed too big a jump. Gaining a few teeth on the rear sprocket would almost certainly have given a smoother ride.

Thankfully the way in which the 450 handled also surprised me. Not feeling big or bulky (the bike doesn't look like the smallest of 450s) the TM stopped, turned, started on the button and remained stable at both high and low speeds all the time I rode it.

With the gold Ohlins suspension doing a good job of keeping the bike in a straight line - just as it did for the 125, the package of suspension, chassis and motor gelled together well. Feeling very much like a firmer version of the 125, the 450's suspension gave great feedback over both

bigger and smaller bumps and obstacles. And the brakes were every bit as good as the two-stroke's.

Two Out Of Three Ain't Bad...

With a 125cc woods machine that has much improved bottom end power, and a 450 which is surprisingly easy to ride, it's TM's quarter-litre stroker that is the weak link of the three... or should that be the strong link of the three?

The Italian marque's eighth-litre machine is pretty hard to fault. Mixing a great chassis and suspension package with an easy to use motor the bike will now sit as comfortably in the hands of 'less expert riders' (TM's words not mine) as it will Expert standard riders and above.

The 250 is still an extremely powerful machine and despite the power having been smoothed off slightly the sheer strength of it left me a little daunted. Clubman riders should look elsewhere.

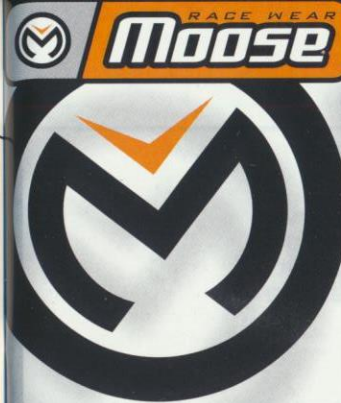
Which only leaves the new 450 which will no doubt surprise those who ride it. Well built but not quite as refined as the more popular 450s (only to be expected of a small volume manufacturer), the TM blends a sure chassis and supple suspension with a rider friendly motor.

So have TM gone all soft on us..? Yes, but only a little bit!

pretty much exactly what you would expect from TM. The bike builds revs a little quicker than a KTM (which in itself is pretty revvy), but not so quickly as to make the bike feel like an out-and-out MXer. The power in each gear was smooth, relatively strong but quite short-lived, meaning that you end up doing a lot more gear-shifting than on other 450cc enduro bikes.

The motor felt as if it runs slightly less flywheel and/or crank weight than the likes of an EXC, which made it a little livelier when accelerating, and less chuggable when riding slowly through technical stuff. But what impressed the most about the bike's power was its linearity, which allowed you to accelerate around corners without it pushing the front. Whereas some four-strokes have a tendency to push the front from under the rider when accelerating in a corner, the TM holds its line remarkably well with a nicely planted front end.

Surprised by the ease with which I could use the bike's power, a few gearing and carburetion changes would, I feel, have improved the bike's rideability further. With the short and relatively sharp powerband meaning that I was often higher in the rev-range in second gear than I would have liked when riding on the more technical sections of the test loop, shifting to



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CHRIS EVANS REFLECTS ON THE TRAGEDY OF THIS YEAR'S DAKAR RALLYE...

It is the day after the end of the Dakar and I wish I had another week before I had to write this. So much has happened and my emotions are so mixed that I haven't had time to make sense of it all - if indeed you can ever make sense of such a race. One thing I'm sure of is that it was the most ill-fated Dakar I have worked on in a very long time.

Obviously the low point was the death of two competitors including Dakar veteran Fabrizio Meoni. At times like this there is always a tendency to roll out the clichés, but in Fabrizio's case the eulogies are all true. He started his professional career relatively late and perhaps for this reason retained his intense passion for rallye-raid. He saw himself more as an amateur that got lucky, than as a professional racer. It meant that he was never afraid to say what he thought and wore his heart on his sleeve. For this, his kindness and his immense presence he was universally loved and respected in the bivouac. In all the rallies I have worked on, not once did I ever hear a bad word said against him. And in such a high-pressure environment I can tell you that is pretty unique.

Fabrizio's death, and that of the Spanish privateer Jose Manuel Perez, weren't the only negative aspects of the 2005 Dakar. We never saw the sun until we finally arrived in Senegal, and that

made the toughest race in the world a whole lot harder. We had sand-storms almost the entire time we were in Mauritania, visibility was atrocious and the sand rendered unusually soft. This was in part responsible for the large number of competitors who ran out of petrol on the Zouérat-Tichit stage and the decimation of the UK and Irish entry who dropped like flies from that point on. Electrical problems, sticking chokes and cracking swinging arms on the 2005 KTM customer bikes didn't exactly help either.

Now all that can be done is to look at solutions for the future. When two of the world's best riders (Meoni and Saint) die within three months of each other, then you know something is wrong. Both were on the verge of retiring and maybe one conclusion to be drawn is that when you race at that level if your commitment or ability starts to wane, then you should stop immediately. Neither Richard Saint's nor Fabrizio's crashes were at high speed, so the finger can't be directly pointed at the huge power of their 660s. Both however happened just after refuelling and big bikes need to carry a lot of fuel, so maybe it is time to look at limiting engine capacity to 450cc. Or perhaps increase the number of fuel stops. A choice of smaller, ready to race machines would be good news for the privateers, few of whom are really at ease on the big KTM Rallye bike that makes up the majority of the entry.

But nothing is simple in desert racing. At yesterday's KTM press conference the Austrian manufacturer argued that capping cubic capacity

would cause costs to spiral, for the simple reason that big, unstressed singles need a lot less looking after than high-revving mini-thumpers. And any of you out there who run one of the new breed of four-stroke enduro bikes will know what they are talking about. Increasing fuel stops would have a similar effect, as dumping large quantities of petrol in the middle of nowhere is a logistically complicated and costly process.

Another problem that needs addressing is the uneasy cohabitation between factory riders and privateers. Just how do you make the same race sufficiently challenging for the first group, while at the same time giving others a reasonable chance of finishing? KTM called for an open debate between all concerned parties concerning these and many other issues. Afterwards stating that while they would continue to support privateers, they added that the future of their works teams depended on the outcome of this discussion.

If there was much that was negative about the 2005 Dakar, there were, thank God, a few positive elements. The organisers showed their capacity to react rapidly to difficult circumstances. They managed to get fuel to many of the competitors stranded in the Zouérat-Tichit stage, despite aircraft and helicopters being grounded by almost zero visibility. They managed to feed 1500 people just one hour after the bivouac went up in flames and they managed to air-lift over 100 motorcycles and riders 700km between Kiffa and Bamako in just one day, after the factory riders refused to ride the stage following Fabrizio's death. Nothing either should be taken away from Cyril Despres' victory, achieved in very difficult circumstances. He and Fabrizio had made a promise to win the Dakar in memory of their team mate Richard Saint and Cyril made the agonising decision to continue and try and keep that promise - despite the loss of his close friend and mentor.

Of course both the organisers and Cyril are professionals, so some, especially those who have

'WHEN TWO OF THE WORLD'S BEST RIDERS DIE WITHIN THREE MONTHS OF EACH OTHER, THEN YOU KNOW SOMETHING IS WRONG'

never been on a rallye-raid, might argue that they were just doing their job. Not so the amateurs, and it is to them I take my hat off. Brit entrants (and mates of TBM) Clive Town and Patsy Quick displayed simply unbelievable composure when stuck three days out in the desert.

Contrary to all my pre-race predictions, bike journalist Alex Hearn showed Hemingway levels of grace under pressure and a degree of ability and determination probably even he didn't know he possessed. As did Irishman Gary Innis who was cruelly forced out with a broken femur just a couple of days before the end. And once again Mick Extance proved that he has the ability to be right up there among the top privateers. They and all the steadily growing 'Anglo' community were mightily impressive, but if I had to single out just one person for limitless praise it would be the indomitable Simon Pavey.

Riding a barge of a bike and sporting a freshly broken wrist, he laughed and joked his way across the Sahara, only occasionally allowing you a fleeting glimpse of the extreme pain and fatigue that he was suffering.

Bizarrely, as the rallye got tougher and tougher so the number of e-mails I received from people wanting to sign up for next year increased. Sitting at home in front of the telly, most clearly didn't have the slightest inkling of what they were getting themselves into. With five Dakars behind him (and three finishes), Pavey most definitely does, so potential entrants take heed of what he has to say on the subject.

'Although in terms of ability I am on the limit of what is required, the riding isn't the hard bit, it is everything else. You need a bit of luck, but you also need to want it very, very badly. The three times I finished it was because I was prepared to crawl on my hands and knees across broken glass to get there.'

And the way he said it, you knew that for once he wasn't joking...

COMPLETELY RUTTED



Something's been troubling me recently, and I'm not referring to the gout, the accelerated hair-loss or numerous other inevitabilities of the ageing process. In fact it wasn't until my 'richly deserved' holiday recovering from the horror that is Xmas that the precise nature of my nagging discomfort revealed itself. And when I tell you that this sojourn was on a sparsely populated Caribbean Island

MARK WILLIAMS RECKONS SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL...

you might stifle your sneers when you learn that it rained every other day and the mosquito population relied on me and the Blonde for their personal blood transfusion service.

However one instructive, nay positive effect of this interlude was that it reminded me of the virtues of small and inexpensive trailbikes which for those island inhabitants who couldn't afford Suzuki Jeeps seemed to provide core personal transport. Ancient Kawa and Suzi 100-125cc trailies were all over the place, zipping up and down the dirt roads with their helmetless riders and one or even *two* passengers grinning from ear to ear... as well they might be.

See, since I returned to our dirty little game three years ago, what had been missing from all the trailrides I'd been on were bikes of 125cc and below. In fact only once during that time had I been accompanied by anyone on anything less than 250cc - Vic Lodge on his XL200 in last June's DTR since you ask. And the significance of this? Well there are of course a few eighth-litre trailies still available on the market, indeed Honda

and Yamaha are selling 'em by the bucketload, albeit largely to CBT-hungry youngsters who'll rarely, if ever, point them at the dirt... And will almost certainly move onto something else once they've passed their test.

It would be tempting to add that if more of these neophytes used their XRs and DTs for the purpose for which they were at least nominally intended, then trailriding as whole would be all the richer for it, and TBM might finally be able to dispense with the Nescafe and buy an espresso machine. But given our over-arching problems with RoW and public antipathy towards us as a breed, it mightn't be too controversial to suggest that we don't need any more ill-equipped and possibly irresponsible youngsters swelling the ranks.

But whilst we're on the subject of being ill-equipped, one might also argue that we've all become a little too demanding in terms of what constitutes off-road fun, let alone competence, and that 125cc trailies, or even those of lower capacities, are all you really need to enjoy yourself. Certainly anyone over 40 with an interest in enduros will remember the 50, 80 and 100cc Hercules, Sachs, Jawa and Capriolo buzz-bombs that performed so heroically at all levels of the sport during the late Sixties and Seventies. And though occasionally dismissed (in those pre-PC days) as 'handicap specials' by certain commentators - and indeed riders - when they first appeared, these bikes soon confounded the sceptics when they began outperforming far bigger bikes.

Who, for example, could forget the infamous Brick brothers giant-killing performances in the late 70s aboard their

80 and 125cc Fantics, or the fact that the 1964 Welsh Two-Day was won by Dave Barret on an 80cc Suzuki, the '86 event by N Rowlands on Kawasaki of similar capacity and the 87 event by a 125cc Suzuki? (And His Melbership will doubtless not let me omit his triumphant performance in the 2002 Cambrian Rally on a 50cc Furia).

I even joined the downsizing trend myself on a Beta 125 Enduro which I campaigned in a couple of events way back when, although in truth I was physically too big to really enjoy it and uncomfortable with the relentless revs which the reed-valve-free motor required to get it anywhere in a hurry. (And we'll look over the fact that I bent the forks in the 1978 Beacons Enduro). However before getting too sidetracked into the flat-out competitive capabilities of these mighty mites, let's not ignore the indisputable fact that given the right gearing and a minimum of five cogs in the 'box, a well set-up tiddler can go where most bigger bikes go with the added advantage of being light enough to pick up and carry under your arm.

Oh alright, for once in my life I'm exaggerating, but there is definitely a distinct benefit in riding a bike that doesn't wear you out with its weight, and that's just another virtue these lightweights have as domestic trailriding tools. In fact the Yam and Honda are porkier than they might otherwise have been had they been designed primarily for the dirt rather than the tarmac, but in both cases it's possible to ditch a good deal of extraneous gubbins in order to make 'em more wieldy off-road.

There are other merits worth mentioning quite apart from their highly bearable lightness of being. The cost of insurance isn't something that most of us worry unduly about, but mine seems to get higher every year - despite the No Claims Bonuses I'm forever awarded and the difference between insuring my own TT-250 and, say, a DT125 of similar vintage is a not inconsiderable £67... And probably much more for a youngster. Fuel, rubber wear and other consumables are likely to be lower compared to those for a bigger banger

MARK WILLIAMS

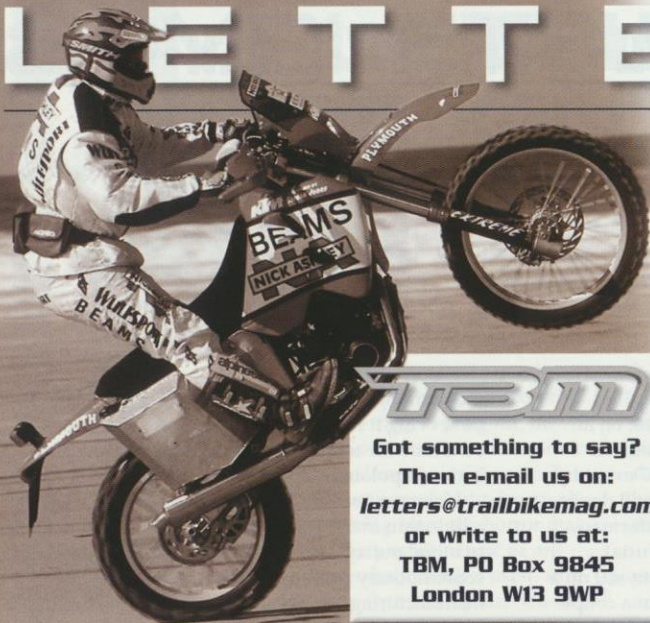
'IT WOULD BE TEMPTING TO ADD THAT IF THESE NEWCOMERS USED THEIR XRS AND DTs FOR THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH THEY WERE AT LEAST NOMINALLY INTENDED, THEN TRAILRIDING AS A WHOLE WOULD BE ALL THE RICHER FOR IT...'

too, although I will agree that since you're likely to be revving it harder, engine wear could be greater on a mile-for-mile basis, especially if maintenance isn't scrupulously attended to.

However I realise my argument starts to wear a little thin in the wallet department when it comes to initial outlay. For as a cursory glance through contemporary price lists underlines, the cost of manufacturing a serious 125cc dirtbike isn't that much (if any) less than that of a 250, 400 or even a 500cc machine. (Which, incidentally, is probably why Gas-Gas don't export the smaller versions of their excellent 250 Pampera).

However European brands like AJP and Motorhispania both offer decent enough 125cc trailies at around the £2500 mark, and Oxfordshire clubman Mike Hodges even successfully races a bog-stock AJP in enduros. And although perhaps not primarily designed for the rigours of the rough-stuff, there are also any number of sub-125cc trailbikes currently available from Taiwan, Malaysia and all points east at knock-down prices, especially if you're willing to take your chances and buy one straight from the crate via various eBay entrepreneurs. Trouble is some of 'em look as if they might bend rather too easily if you did have a big tumble. But at anywhere from £895 for a K-Road XT125 to £1500 for the Hongdou GY125 you could probably cheaply replace the bits that weren't up to snuff with stronger, more appropriate items.

Scoff at this small-is-all-you-need strategy if you will, but I can't honestly believe that an anonymous brand from China means that its products are any less capable in the hands of the average trailrider than, say, a 20 year-old Hondzuki (on which its engine may very well have been based anyway). And the only thing that's changed about trailriding since then is that we tend to ride faster and more furiously, which means that by just lowering your expectations a notch or two, you could still have a whole heap of fun with something smaller between your legs... In fact you could even save enough money on the deal to finance a Caribbean holiday...



TBM
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Then e-mail us on:
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London W13 9WP

Fighting Talk

Dear TBM

What a load of bowlax! Mark Williams's attitude of nostalgia and harking back to the 'good old days' in his January



Mark Williams: Always courting controversy. This time with his choice of T-shirt...

column is precisely why we are unable to mount a serious opposition to Alun Michael's attack.

If Mark thinks that us all riding XL250s, or whatever he views as proper trail bikes, will make a blind bit of difference to either Alun Michael or the militant Rambliars he is seriously misguided. There is a set of even more traditional riders who think we should all wear wax cotton, open-face helmets and ride good old British iron.

However it is the simple fact that they have two wheels and they are not on tarmac that makes them unpopular with our opponents.

In fact, I suspect that our most active opponents would like to make having only two wheels illegal everywhere, much like that ridiculous woman with the teeth that appears on reality TV with all the other has-beens.

We need to embrace all legal trail users regardless of the bike they ride or garish clothing they wear and we need the TRF to modernise so as to attract the majority that are not members. That way we can perhaps grow to a viable pressure group with funding for legal and political challenges to keep our rights.

Suggesting that we should not reap the benefits of motorcycle development is one of the most ridiculous views I have ever heard. Just because someone rides a modern 500 does not mean they behave like a job when out on the trails. Having a modern powerful bike with good suspension is a pleasure. Even if it's not used to its potential on a trail it comes into its own on road sections, in rallies, or blasting round a hare and hounds.

Maybe Mark can afford a bike for every occasion but many of us cannot. I ride a 300 smoker, which I chose for enduros and I would also dearly love a dedicated trail bike and a decent rally bike, but alas I cannot afford it.

If a trail has vehicular rights it is for all legal vehicles operated within the law, not just ones Mark Williams approves of. The idea that we should all conform to a particular conservative view

of one group of people is pretty much why the Rambliars want us banned entirely (although they would never admit their bigotry and so hide it beneath specious arguments of damage to the countryside).

Strangely, they view cars and tarmac roads as no threat to the countryside yet a rut and a bit of mud are the work of the devil. The only thing we should do to appease those opposed to us is have quiet exhausts as befitting all road legal vehicles, be they on trail or tarmac.

I take it for granted that we should drive with due care for other users and in return they should be considerate to us.

Ian Packer
via email

You're quite right Ian, we agree with you. One of the reasons we employ Mark Williams as a columnist is in order to be controversial. Obviously in this case he's done his job...

Hip Op

Hi TBM guys and lady

Whilst waiting in the Royal Bolton hospital to have both my hips drilled (a lot worse than it sounds, but some of your crew seem a bit squeamish so I won't go into too much detail... 24v corded drill and a 10mm drill). And in case you're wondering, no, I didn't fall off anything!

Anyway, I was looking to

renew my subscription but couldn't find a form in issues 111 and 112. So my point is (eventually a collective sigh rings out) - when will the TBM website go live so I can order online? Or is the form still in the mag? By the way, great mag and nice logo.

Dave Marsden
via email

Dave, our website *should* be up and running by the time you read this. Check out www.trailbikemag.com

Added Value

Dear Si

Firstly, fantastic work on TBM, a veritable lifeline to enduro and trail fans in this country, recommended to myself - as a convert from the road - by a surprising amount of friendly people. This is a culture shock for someone who's spent far too long in the road race paddocks of the land!

The reason for my mail to your good-self is that I read with interest in the December issue letters section a letter from a Gerald Edwards suggesting that a quality documented restoration project of a trail bike would make a great feature - something I wholeheartedly agree with.

I'm currently in the process of trying to start a company that will renovate, customise or build anything interesting with two wheels. So, I'd like to make you an offer - I will

research, build and document the 'full Monty' rebuild of your chosen bike.

The only cost to you would be the parts required to finish the job. The labour would be free... in exchange for some advertising space in the mag.

Griff Woolley
via email

Doesn't sound like it's free to us Griff - seeing as you want to swap it for advertising. Listen mate, thanks for the offer, but TBM's advertising and editorial are kept completely separate...

Out of Africa

Dear TBM

I live in Zambia and visit family in the UK once every two years and make it a priority to get hold of TBM as I really enjoy the quality of the coverage in the magazine.

I always return back to Zambia with a copy, which then circulates in the off-road biking circle there and just wanted to let you know that the mag is thought of very highly there. I am currently a Zambian national MX and off-road champion and race both a CRF450 Honda and a KTM525. Keep up the good work!

David Reeve, Zambia
via email

Thanks David. It's actually quite nice to know that TBM is thought of 'very highly' in Africa...

Go Green

Dear TBM

I have been riding motorcycles for 29 years on the road and also play at mountain biking, but with advancing years and a need to do something different I thought it might be a good idea to combine the two and try my hand at green laning.

These off road bikes you guys ride seem to be a totally different beast to what I'm used to. I couldn't believe it when I heard people talking about changing the oil every ride or three hours etc.

This is where the advice bit comes in. I'm looking for a bike that I can go green laning on, bearing in mind I may have to ride to some start points. I also want to use it as a run-around, when I don't need to use my GS. I also don't want something that I'm going to quickly grow out of.

I am not going to compete, not yet anyway. I'm not afraid of regular maintenance work; in fact I quite enjoy it. So far I have considered an XR400, a DR-Z400S and a WR400/426/450 and have £2750 to spend.

Geoff Booth
via email

PS This is the first time I have bought TBM. Great mag.

Geoff, elsewhere in this issue you should find a test of the

DR-Z400E v KTM 400EXC. A road legal DR-Z will certainly fit the bill, though a secondhand EXC is more capable off-road. And you'll enjoy yourself with the regular maintenance..!

Hot on the Trail

Dear TBM

Recently, I went on a tour to Cyprus with some mates, organised by Richard Reast from Exclaim Tours.

As promised there was a good mix of riding and culture (though I still think Richard is the only one who can see the snakes...)

I remember stating in my booking email that we were experienced riders (ahem!) and could the tour be made a little bit more technical. The reply was 'no problem' and a new schedule was sent which included less mileage, more technical terrain and a day trials riding. A little unsure of trials riding I went along with it as the other two from our party, Gareth and Steve, who used to compete in their younger days, were bouncing at the thought.

On arrival, though I forgot to tell Richard the flight number, we were welcomed and driven straight to our digs high in the Trudos Mountains. The bikes were literally brand new and the ones that weren't, were in very good condition. They were re-fuelled and set-up by Richard's dad, who entertained us with stories from back in the day,

reminding us of how easy we've got it these days.

Day one and I thought 'my God'. When I said experienced I hardly expected to find the only river on the island and then see my KTM525 laying at the bottom of it, in a country that hadn't seen rain for six months - Richard made sure that we were riding in true Welsh weather conditions! A good hour of wrestling and laughing got us all through and onto lunch.

Day two was much the same but without passing the same point twice, very enjoyable, but then came day three, the trials day. I had never been on one before and it was like riding a BMX. Chris, the Cypriot trials champion, brought along three nearly new Gas Gas 280 machines and was very helpful and patient, explaining to me that there was no need to hold the throttle wide open and launch at everything in sight.

We set up a taped-off course and spent the morning practicing and the afternoon riding along an old mine path - I would recommend this to everyone.

Day four was the trip down from the Trudos Mountains to the beach, which was, for the most part, light tarmac and off-road work, then onto a sandy motocross track which really tested all our abilities.

After relaxing and jet skiing for the next day, day six was the final blast, which included another sand MX track - for anyone who has

not ridden in sand before this is a must. Then on to a lap of the military base, which also included a huge sand playground, finished off with a long trek across cliff tops exploring new areas. All in all, a week to remember and a very big thanks to Richard and family.

Neil Avery, South Wales
via email

Sounds good Neil, Mark Williams' Doing The Rounds was from Cyprus this month...

Riveting Stuff

Dear TBM

In a recent issue of your magazine I read a letter from an owner of a CCM 404 whose engine had died, and had asked if this would be covered under warranty. Well, depending on what the cause is, he may be in luck.

Being a 404 owner myself and having been through an ordeal with my dealer I thought I would detail a few points for other owners. It would appear that the CCM 404 has a series of rectification kits that you need to make sure are present. None of these were official recalls from the factory even though one is a potentially engine-blowing problem.

1 - Check the derestriction rectification kit has been applied. This entails removing a stop screw and replacement of the engine side carburetor rubber. (The

original has a restricted passageway).

2 - Check the airbox drain tube rectification kit (with one-way valve) has been fitted. Originally the airbox did not have a drain tube so water ran straight through to the carb. It is also a good idea to tape up the gap at the rear fender joint to reduce the amount of water that gets through to the airbox.

3 - Check the airbox rivets rectification kit has been applied, replacing the original open-ended rivets with closed rivets. This is the main cause of engines blowing on the 404 as the rivet ends drop into the airbox, go through the carb and have a jolly good time destroying both the valves and the top end.

4 - Check for the jets rectification kit. The DR-Z engine was originally dropped into the frame as it arrived from Suzuki. However, with the different exhaust system the standard jets (pilot and main) are not correct. I got mine from Allen's Performance and they make a world of difference.

5 - Check the rear subframe bolts are tightened correctly. Many of these were sent out hand tight, causing the rear

subframe to drop off somewhere down the lanes.

6 - Check you have been given the additional front sprocket (14T) and case protector with your bike.

7 - Check you have rear alignment markings on your swinging arm.

There are also other problems with the speedo, and I have heard of bent fork internals direct from the factory. Then, of course there are the additional things to make the DR-Z lump a little more robust, like the fitting of case protectors as outlined in December's issue and the fitting of a stainless output shaft spacer.

I heard about these issues



Crasher Cornish 'rectifying' a CCM yesterday.!

LETTERS

To Protect and Serve

with the 404 after the firm went under. It turned out that only the derestriction had been done on my bike. My dealer refused to admit that my VIN number was on any CCM listings. However, I could ring four other dealers who identified my bike on all the lists. After my dealer refused to do anything, I got trading standards involved and refused the bike as not fit for the purpose it was bought.

It was quickly taken back and fixed, and as a goodwill gesture they fitted the stainless steel output shaft spacer. Unfortunately they didn't refit the inner seal, inventing a DR-Z automatic chainlube system. Dummies!

Anyway, back to the original chap's letter. I suspect he has a rivet problem. If he can show that the engine had ceased due to a rivet dropping into the engine then his dealer is liable, as they have not applied a known rectification kit. Remember it is the dealer, not CCM, who sold the bike.

Throughout all of my wranglings there has been one company that has acted above and beyond the call of duty, supplying endless advice and even sending me the odd rectification kit free of charge, even though my bike was nothing to do with them. Haines Motorcycles in Cinderford, I thank you.

Dear TBM

I've always been a firm believer in 'credit where credit is due'. So firstly I would just like to say that your magazine is now the only one I buy - I really can't be bothered with the others any more.

Secondly I would like to tell you about the excellent service I received from the kind people at Knox. I bought an all-in-one armoured shirt last year at the dirt bike show. This December I noticed that the hard amour had broken on the arm. I phoned Knox

and they agreed to exchange it without any fuss, even though it had just passed the one-year warranty period.

I sent it back on Wednesday and got a new one back on the Friday. If only all companies could be that committed in providing a great service and an excellent product. I can thoroughly recommend the Knox Cross Shirt - it looks good, fits great and is pretty easy to get on and off (unlike some cheaper suits). Best of all is that it really does a good job of protecting you in the event of a tumble.

John Muizelaar
via email



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LETTERS

Big Event

Dear TBM

I've just started riding off-road (hence buying the mag) after years of road riding and racing but although it's totally cool its difficult to get into.

Where are all these events in your mag and how do you get in touch with the organisers? I've done a local event but they seem to be just muddy bog affairs - I would like to do proper enduro or rally events, please help.

Ian Baddeley
via email

Ian, if you're new to the sport the best way to find out about these bigger events is to keep

reading the mag and you'll get a feel for what's coming up and when. There's no secret to it, most of the events run annually. Alternatively, try logging onto our new website at trailbikemag.com. Although it's only just coming on-line, there's an events section there which will hopefully carry more and more info about forthcoming events...

Down Memory Lanes

Dear TBM

Could we have more on trail bikes please? The use of green lanes is not just for all the enduro crowd to practice on. I've been riding green lanes since the Fifties, still at it but getting a bit old really, but I'm sure many people like myself enjoy off-road riding

for the touring and scenic countryside elements.

Mark Williams does a good job (Doing the Rounds) but nothing like what I feel we need. I'm sure people would like to know where to ride and of course, where not to. The green lanes we have left should be listed and made known to your readers, so as joining the TRF is not the only option available (nothing against the TRF).

We need to have map references so we can avoid trespassing, getting lost etc. I know lots of people do ride-outs, but I for one do not wish to pay the amount they charge. So I would like to see more write-ups in TBM from all the keen green lane groups who put on their own runs, so we can enjoy the story and be able to make use of lots of hitherto unknown lanes.

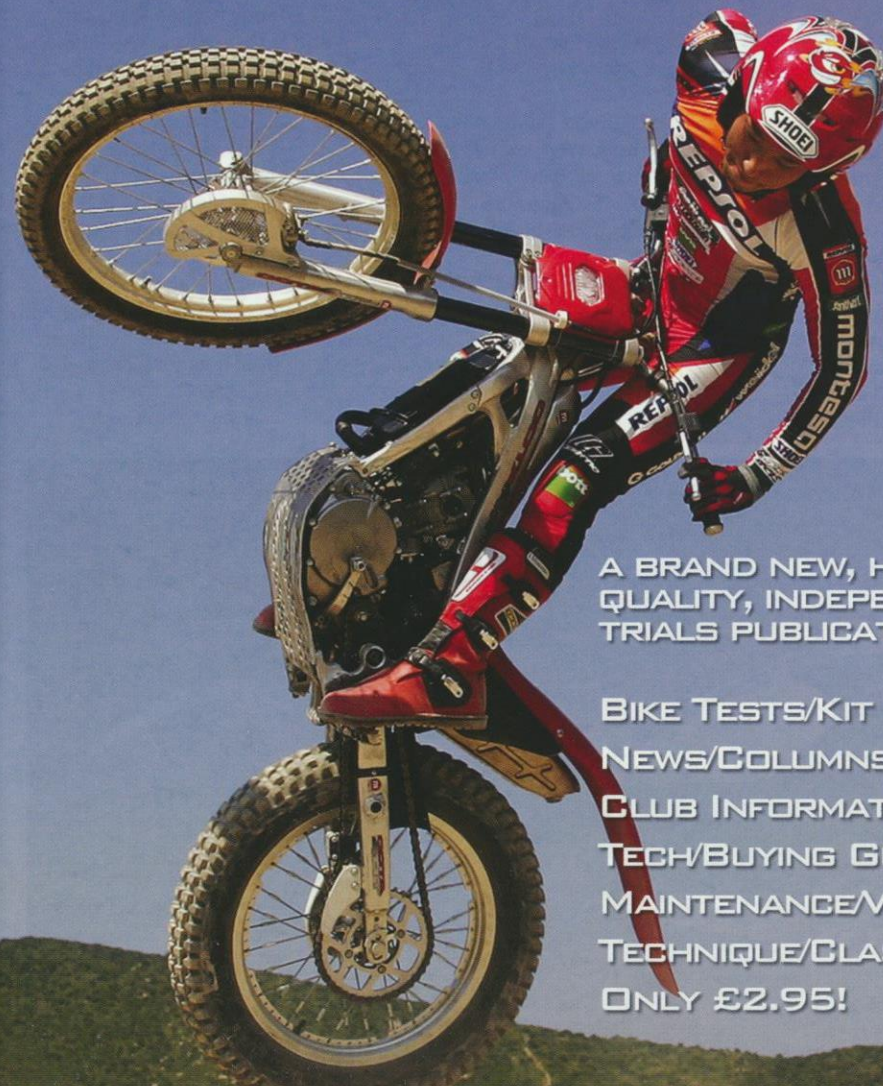
I would be most pleased to see more touring green laners out there using what's left of the RoWs.

Pete Smith
Wirral, Cheshire

Fair point Pete, though surely it's more a case of *how* you ride, rather than *what* you ride on the lanes. In the past we've published a number of Rough Guides, which detailed rides (including OS info) around a particular area. Unfortunately the RoW situation around the country is constantly changing which makes publishing articles on the subject much more tricky right now. However it's something we're working on...

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LETTERS

Craig Bushell
Sale, Cheshire

an early Nineties Serow with,
I believe, an electrical fault.

Without going into full detail, the bike starts first button, ticks over forever and will run to one-third throttle. Thereafter it runs like a dog, and is driving me crackers.

1. Does anyone out there have diagnostic equipment to test the CDI unit?

2. Is anyone out there breaking a Serow with the electrical side complete, including generator?

As far as I am aware Yamaha produced three different generators and four or five different CDI units with differing connectors for the Serow.

Is anyone willing, who

PS I've been reading your mag for some time now - excellent job.

PPS Don't small capacity thumpers run out of steam?

Only if you fail to keep the boiler topped up with sufficient Nutty-Slack. If you're a beginner Craig, then opt for the TT-R.

Serow Sorrow

Dear TBM

Can your readership help me from this 'Black Hole'? I have

Small Wonders

Dear TBM

I am considering buying a trail/enduro bike for green laning in the near future, and have a £4-5k budget.

I've not done very much off-roading before except for the odd dirt lane on a KMX200 some years ago. What about the Gas Gas EC250 or Yamaha TT-R250? I'm only five foot six inches tall with a 29inch inside leg, although I've ridden a friend's XR400 and that seemed okay. Please help!



Yamaha's TTR250: A great green laner for off-road novices...



Electrickery: Can you help Carl Bancroft with his CDI problem..?

may have the same system, to let me try their CDI unit on my bike, should it be compatible, to help prove my theory?

I will happily go out and purchase a new CDI at £280 plus VAT when I have proven satisfactorily my unit is the root cause.

Anyone with information or offers of help please call 07977 240412 or 01527 876364.

Carl Bancroft
via email

The Right Connections

Dear TBM

I find it hard to find suitable accommodation for groups of trail bikers. I can recommend some we have stayed at, as I'm sure every trail rider can. But we want to hear about them!

How about a forum for recommended biker-friendly accommodation? I guess everyone wants a drying room, secure parking, nice bunkhouse settings, big food portions etc - I'm sure that these places do exist and we want to find them.

Daniel Ilott
Poole, Dorset

Funny you should say that Daniel because our new website has a button marked FORUM. Unfortunately at the time of writing it doesn't actually do anything when you press it, but hey-ho I'm sure it will in time. Eventually. Anyway log onto www.trailbikemag.com and find out more...



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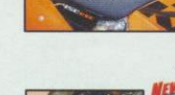


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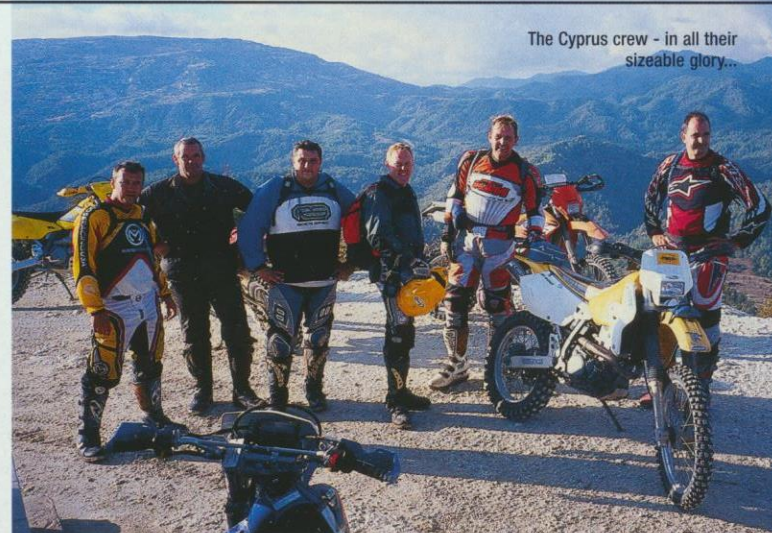


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The Cyprus crew - in all their sizeable glory...



Island in the fun

Mark Williams heads off to 'Do The Rounds' in the sunnier climes of Cyprus...

With downpours in Devon and drizzle in the Dales, I can't deny that after the last couple of Rounds I was getting pretty hacked-off with the British climate, to the point where I really didn't want to do another one until Springtime brought at least the promise of precipitation-free riding. It's not exactly that I'm a fair-weather biker - although there are those in

my local TRF group who might argue with that - but there's a big difference between riding for so-called pleasure in dark, dank weather and having to do it and take photos at the same time, photos that you know are going to be excoriated by the snooty professionals at TBM Towers. But the one thing that stopped me from throwing in (as opposed to carrying along) the

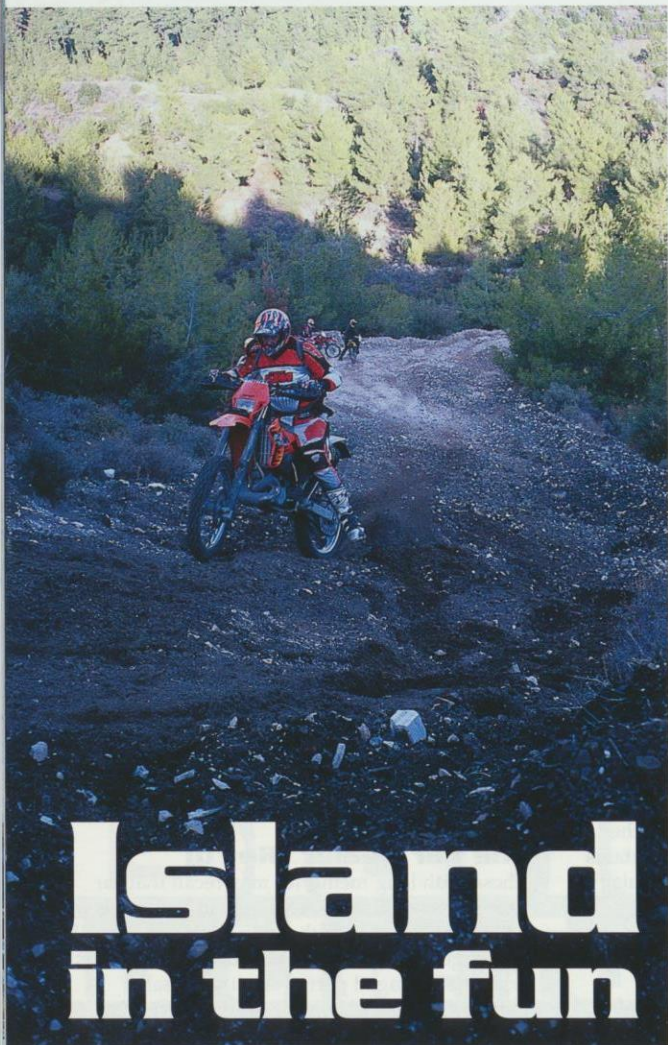
DTR towel for a few wintry months was a longstanding invitation to go trail riding in Cyprus. Not only had I been reliably assured that temperatures on the island would be in at least the low 20s in late Nov/early December, but the Olympus Mountains offered spectacular scenery and miles and miles of engaging trail riding unbroken by tarmac and unfettered by RoW issues. All of which I'm relieved to say

turned out to be true. But I'm getting a little ahead of myself here, for I should first explain that my trip to Cyprus was courtesy of the South Coast Motorcycle Club, a 50 or 60 strong group who enjoy riding both on- and off-road and who are mainly, though not exclusively, drawn from the British armed services stationed in the Greek half of the island. Admittedly this fact alone gave me some pause for thought as I neared the end of a perfectly delightful four-hour British Airways flight into Larnaca, because as well as the usual drawback

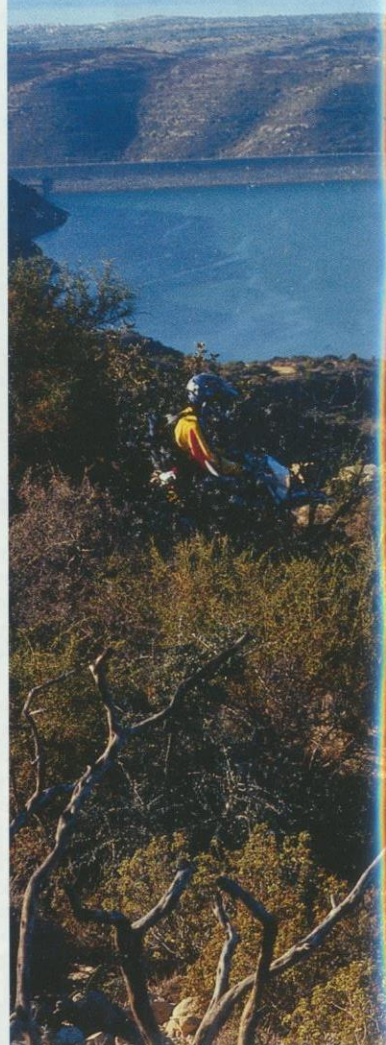
of riding with guys who know where they're going (whereas I don't), this lot would be hideously young and fit (whereas I'm patently not). Moreover I would be riding a machine I've never ridden before, let alone on alien territory, a Honda XR400R. 'Ah well,' I reasoned to myself as I downed the last of the Smirnoff miniatures, 'what the hell, it'll be an experience.' And indeed it was. Which brings me to those who would bear the weighty responsibility for it.

The Car Dealer (Ret'd)
Those with long memories may recall that car dealers have figured extensively in the annals of TBM's DTR, but in truth Andy Wills was actually in charge of whole legions of such tradepersons when he managed part of Audi's UK sales network. However he very cannily gave that up when his delightful solicitor wife took up a post working for the military administration in Cyprus. And now he has a pretty damn idyllic life looking after their young son, doing odd jobs and going trail riding a lot on his 2003 XR400. For chaperoning me around and putting me up during my stay Andy, is clearly a top bloke.

The Man With No Name
Refusing to divulge his real moniker, the man known only as 'Setch' remains a man of mystery, possibly because he's a senior Army electrical engineer. He's also a bit of a hero aboard a fiery old KTM 380EXC - that's a 'stroker in case you



Island in the fun



weren't aware - and led us along at such a spirited pace that he often had time to stop, dismount and take embarrassing snaps of yours truly. Except when he got a puncture or almost ran out of fuel.

Communicator's Breakdown

Another Katoom rider - this time aboard an equally, er... venerable 450EXC, Rob Baines also had his share of mechanical woes. Although as a civilian 'working in communications' (everything's a bit secret on this pervasively

military island), he was admirably restrained in telling us all about them.

The All Purpose Spannerman

Poor old Steve Murell had just taken on the unenviable task of maintaining the Club's rental bikes. Most of these are Honda City Flies (Flies?), but because his full-time gig is as an RAF airframe technician, he had to feverishly service the XR400 I was kindly lent the night before I arrived. Naturally his own bike, a DR-Z400E, was damn near immaculate.

Handy Andy

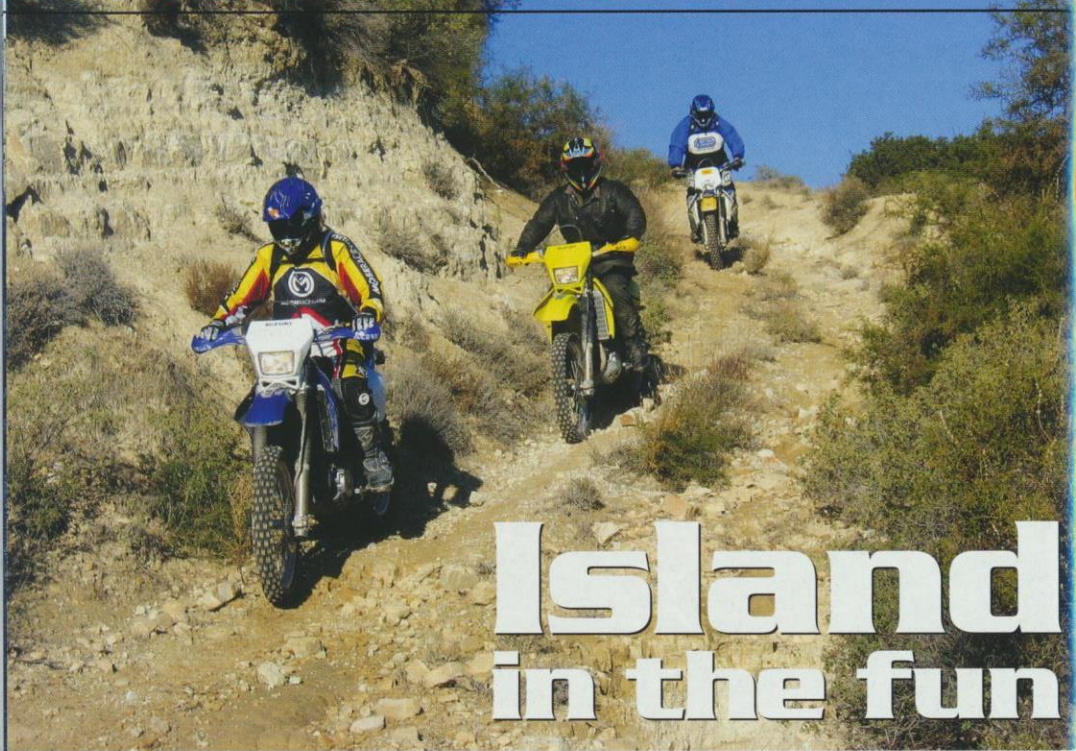
Yes, it's a cheap shot, but Andy Shell does seem to be a bit of a bit of a generalist, doing a bit of this, a bit of that, but mainly working part-time in the primary school on the Episkopi base, although he is an ex-RAF man. He rides what looked like a brand-spanking new DR-Z400S.

The Elder Statesman

Jokes about Paul Jackson being the pensioner of our happy band also gave me a little advance consolation when Steve, Andy W and I were

having supper the previous evening, until I met him and learnt I was some ten years older than him! What's more, although the newest recruit to this happy band, he was the impervious butt of such ageist jokes, but there were several times that day when I wished I'd been riding his blue DR-Z400S... and riding it as well as he did.

However when we met up, seven strong, at the filling station in Episkopi under impossibly blue skies on a gloriously sunny morning, I was feeling anything but apprehensive. Brief introductions over, and after the odd jibe as



Island in the fun

Setch filled up his auxiliary 1-litre fuel bottles to stave off his 380's voracious thirst (and this despite having recently fitted an 11-litre tank), we set off north and within a few hundred yards were under the island's only motorway and into the boondocks. Or at least that's what they seemed like to me, but in fact it was the flood-plain of the River Kouris which is normally dry as a bone unless it's rained a lot recently... which I soon learnt it had. The track we took meandered its way along the wide valley, suddenly turning from loose, rocky surface into six, seven even eight inches-worth of unavoidable stream. Good fun actually, and an undemanding introduction to my unfamiliar Honda.

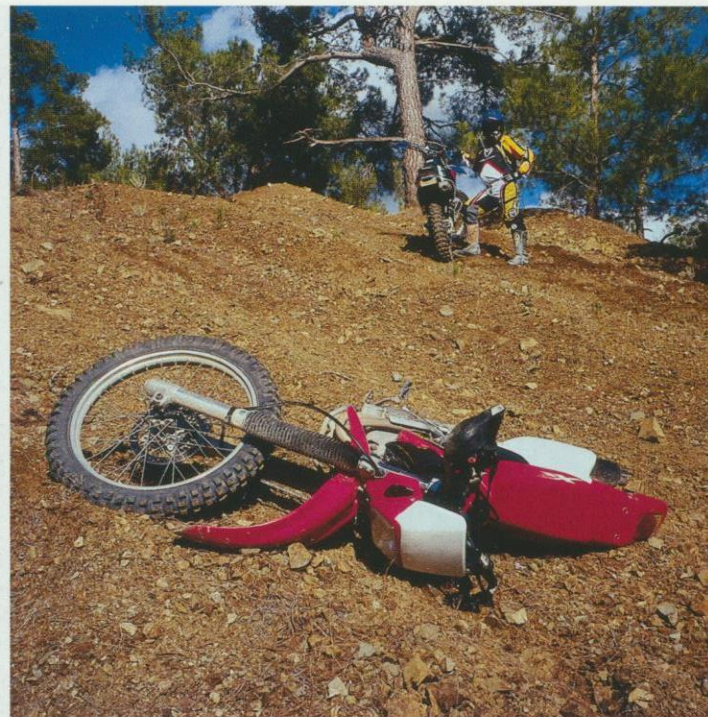
Iron Gift Horse

Ubiquitous as they are, I'd never actually ridden the 400cc member of the redoubtable XR clan, which made the Cypriot caper all the more attractive. I kind of expected it to be a bit like my old XT350 and, despite its more modern and slightly torquier engine, in many respects it was. Quicker steering though, even a bit skittish if you didn't take a firm hand with it and, as I'd



Keep smiling, Mark... It makes people wonder what you've been up to...

discover to my embarrassing cost, not as willing to fire up when it was hot, bothered or unceremoniously dropped. The stock, low-rise bars also meant an uncomfortable, cramp-inducing crouch for my 6'2in frame when standing long on the 'pegs... but hey, I wasn't about to look a gift horse in the gob.



at the front anchor as I tried to pick my way at a manageable speed, but after a while in order to avoid stalling and sliding I just had to let it run away with me and steer as best I could. And at the end of many hundreds of metres hanging on and hanging in, I was relieved to find myself cruising towards... well a JCB parked diagonally across our narrow path.

G'day Digger

Actually the slope had considerably levelled off by then, but it was a little odd to find that the only way forward was to elbow our way through the narrow arc of its digger arm. It occurred to me that this was the sort of impediment that bloody-minded British farmers might plant to 'stop those

And as we snaked up the slabby, boulder-strewn track above what soon revealed itself as the mighty Kouris Dam, I was impressed with the XR's appetite for inclines. Much of the time I was riding behind Andy W on his own XR400, and suitably inspired by his apparently easy execution, I simply copied his lines... just to be on the safe side. When we eventually reached the 475m summit I wasn't too out of puff, and even if I had been it would have been offset by the stunning views south and west over the prong-tailed reservoir.

What goes up, must of course come down and, oh yes, that reminds me of another of my XR's pécadillos, it's virtual lack of a rear anchor. Yes of course, being a 2000 model - and unlike my ancient XT - it did actually have a rear disc, but the half inch wide groove in it meant that the pad simply had little to grip on. I'd noticed this lack of retardation when trying to kick the back end out round tight corners, and I really noticed it when descending the narrow, rocky gully that zig-zagged steeply down towards the base of the reservoir. Sure, I could use the Honda's not inconsiderable engine-braking, and the odd dab

blasted trailriders'. But when I taxed Paul on the subjects of the RoW problems they faced in Cyprus, he simply laughed and said the driver had probably simply left it there whilst he went for a coffee. 'We don't have problems with the locals,' I was regularly informed during my brief visit, and it was true that we were greeted by a smile and a wave virtually whenever we came across anyone else using the island's trails... even those carrying shotguns!

Anyway, once we'd got to the bottom of the hillside we rode around one half of the fishtail at the reservoir's base to a church long-ruined by the waters that had flooded the ancient settlement of Khalassa, which was now just half-submerged: an eerie sight.

And at this point I should explain that the landscape we'd been riding through thus far was pretty impressive, if pretty uniform: hard, stony white scrubland peppered with hardy, if stunted bushes and small trees. So as we continued riding north along what was now a fast-running Kouris on its way to feed the reservoir, the vegetation grew taller and lusher and when we suddenly turned left through a clearing I wasn't entirely

surprised to find myself elbowing my way through dense cane fronds before dropping suddenly into a deep ford. Slippery, water-worn rock slabs made the exit a tad tricky but we all got through okay with a bit of a splashing, although somewhere shortly thereafter Setch did suffer the first real setback of the day when he copped a rear puncture (at least it wasn't me this time).

Electing to fill the tube with foam, he was soon back in the saddle though and shepherding us along a track known as 'shotgun alley'. Fairly obvious really, since the wild boar naturally gravitated towards the well-irrigated valley to forage for food. And we did in fact see several small men with large guns out hunting as we continued north, happily none of them were pointed at us... but then I'm thinking of Britain again.



Apparently most days are like this...

Island in the fun

Adrenaline-fuelled Amnesia

To be perfectly honest the next few miles, like much of the day's ride, went by in something of a blur. Not so much because Setch was leading us at a cracking pace (which he was), or that concentrating on keeping up along unfamiliar tracks prevented me from taking in the scenery (which it didn't, well only a bit), but unlike riding in Britain the scenery changed far less abruptly and, as I mentioned way back, the trails we were riding are punctuated far less often by the tarmac that obliges you to stop and take stock and recall where you've just been. Oh, and for that matter there are absolutely no gates. Hurrah!

But the truth of it is that although they travel through the most magnificent mountains and rolling woodland valleys, tracks that go on and on for miles and miles, varying very gradually from hard, red earth to loose white stone, aren't so easily memorised.

What I certainly do remember well from the morning is skittling through a small vineyard that

someone appeared to've planted directly across the trail before we finally hit our first road in some 15 miles and stopped in the tiny mountain village of Trimiklini. And having valiantly led us the last few miles with a virtually flat tyre, Setch just had to fit a fresh tube... and the rest of us just had to avail ourselves of a cold drink at a convenient roadside taverna.

Suitably refreshed and re-tyred, we then embarked on what was for me the best leg of our trip, blatting along the incredibly twisty tracks up into and through the pines of the Kakogyros Forest, then west through the Troddos Forest for some 15 more miles before hitting a rather incongruous trout farm north of Pano Platres where we stopped for what I felt was, if not a well deserved, then certainly a very welcome lunch.

And a damn fine Afelia and potatoes it was too, served with the sort of friendly efficiency I was already warming to in Cyprus, and at a ludicrously low price: less than four quid for two

courses, diet coke and coffee... with delicious pastries thrown in for free just 'cause we were a helluva nice bunch... Or maybe because there were seven of us lurching there in the off-season.

Even the petrol we fed our bikes with before we left the village was almost half the price it is just had to avail ourselves of a cold drink at a convenient roadside taverna. So I have to say Cyprus is a bargain as well as beautiful riding country... But just as I was starting to feel thoroughly smug about my choice of Rounds this month, Setch warned me that we had 'a few steep hills ahead of us.' And he wasn't kidding.

Off and Kicking

After some more engaging, energetic zig-zagging along what I guess the Italians and Spanish would call 'white roads' Rob, who was now leading the pack, halted and pointed to the wide band of loose rock and earth that cut through the pines to our right. Sorry, the words 'bloody steep' were absent from that description, and whilst

normally you'd take a second gear run at such an intimidating ascent, here there just wasn't room. So following the examples of those brave souls before me, I gunned it in first and changed up a hundred yards later whilst picking an awkward path through the loose ruts. But I lacked sufficient momentum to reach the peak and dropped the XR having just about avoided looping it after booting back down into bottom.

Setch and Andy S (who was actually behind me), helped right the bike which was too awkwardly placed to even try and kickstart, and we manhandled the damn thing sideways and into a flatter gully where after a dozen or more failed attempts, Setch took over from my exhausted self and managed to start it.

And from there I walked it to the brow of the hill... Only to find it wasn't a brow, merely a short plateau before the next section of the killer hill... which I soon learnt, would according to a local tradition that commemorates such pratfalls, henceforth be know as 'Mark's Hill'.

DOING THE ROUNDS

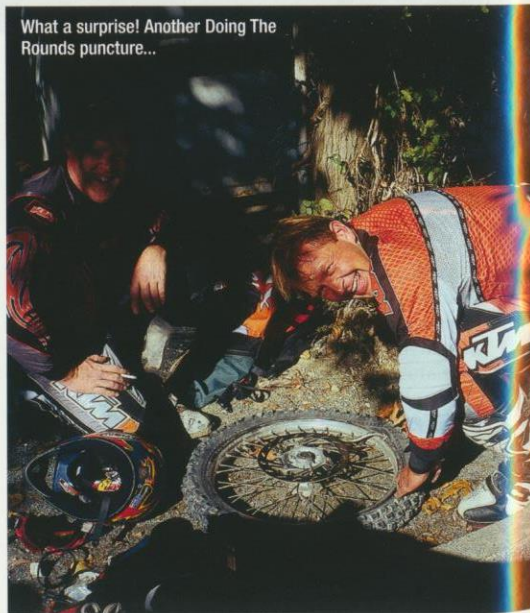


Island in the fun

And then I managed the second leg of the climb with something approaching dignity, if completely bereft of style. It was the first of several monster fire-break hills, all loosely surfaced and variously stoned, eventually leading to a fire-watch post 767m up Peravasa which offered stunning views in every direction. But of course with a severely dicky rear brake it was inevitable that I'd eventually lose the plot travelling in a downward direction. In fact I managed to stay upright until the hill that Setch warned me 'had a sharp left turn at the end which if you miss it, means a six foot drop.'

So off I went, trying to keep from stalling or going too fast and pretty much out of control when I saw the bank at right angles to the bottom of what would soon be christened 'Mark's Hill #2'. Solution? Step off the bike at the last possible minute, at which point it hit the bank and bounced back on top of my prone form. Damage? Well a slightly sprained wrist, bruised left hand, arm and right knee for me and bent gear lever for the Honda. Not for the first (or last) time that day was I glad that I'd bought a set of body armour at

What a surprise! Another Doing The Rounds puncture...



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DOING THE ROUNDS

Stony loose-surfaced climbs reminded Mark of Wales. Well, Wales in the sunshine...



Island in the fun

Dirt Rider Expo, but this time I was truly shaken, especially when having got down to the track behind the alleged six foot drop, I noted it was more like 26 foot!

Just Like Wales

The lads were extremely solicitous about my condition and Andy S even provided some industrial strength painkillers which I swallowed whilst they sorted the gear lever. Mercifully, and partly because we were already behind our rather ambitious 170km schedule thanks to my pratfalls, Setch's puncture and attempts at photography, there would be no more Terminator-style firebreaks and so we set off along some more dry, twisty tracks southwest and into verdant woodland that resembled nothing less than my favourite Welsh forests.

This was the prelude to several quick river crossings - all completed without mishap - ending at the impressively medieval Kelephos Bridge where, yet again, I managed to loop the Honda trying to mount a steep bank just beyond the water. Even more bruised and battered, and my wounded left hand now having to deal with an increasingly obstinate clutch cable, I consoled myself that at least I still had a working clutch - whereas poor Andy S had lost his some hours earlier. (I later learnt that the XR's cable snapped

the day after I left). Fortunately much of the rest of the trip was along fast, flat valley bottoms, rather like the one the run began with but with less water, and a good old scamper it was as we chased the fading light towards home.

In this endeavour we also had to take in rather more road than the boys had planned, but at least the landscape still stunned in the fast setting sun, and we managed a few amusing diversions, including a series of twisty, cobbled steps and another hairpin descent down a narrow, rock-filled gully. By now tired, aching and feeling my pathetic old age, I had to stop halfway down to give my sore hand a break from the bucking bars, but just a few minutes later I happily found myself back in the lee of the motorway, just a mile from Andy W's home, a hot shower and a remedial cup of tea.

In fact a couple of hours later and with a couple more painkillers inside me, I felt suitably invigorated by the day's adventures and utterly up for a suitably boisterous farewell meal at the Episkopi Village Inn: a fine end to a great day's riding, and one I'd love to take up the lads' invitation to repeat... Assuming both brakes are working and I'm a little fitter!

Special thanks to all concerned for their warm hospitality... Hope to see you all again!

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400cc trail bikes are among the most popular bikes out on the lanes of the UK. But is a secondhand trailie the bargain it first appears? With the aid of a second-hand Suzuki DR-Z400E and a new KTM 400EXC, TBM investigates...



FOUR Tops

STORY: SI MELBER. PICS: JAMES BARNICORT





FOUR Tops

I could never quite understand the mentality behind the sort of souped-up shopping trolleys you see cruising the pizza-parlours of provincial towns after dark. You know the sorts of cars I mean: Vauxhall Novas with 42in alloy wheels, and Citroen Saxos with undercup-board lighting. Perhaps it's because I hail from an age when modifying your motor meant bolting on a brace of big-bore SU carbs and spending all night trying to get the bloody things balanced in order to improve the engine's performance. Or perhaps I just don't suit Burberry.

These days nobody cares about a car's performance - just so long as it looks good under neon, and sounds 'phat'. This of course means

lowering the bodyshell four feet and installing six kilowatts of in-car X-Box so that the 1.4L motor can barely drag its own ass along.

And by the time you take into account the cost of four alloy wheels at a grand apiece and a quarter of a million quid's worth of DVD recorder, suddenly your cute little district-nurse runabout costs slightly more than a tidy Porsche Boxster.

Weird thing is that the same sort of rules apply to trail bikes - albeit to a lesser extent - as I'll go on to explain in this test. Not that we ever test trail bikes any more, according to some of your letters...

Letters Prey

'Hey, how come you guys never test trail bikes any more?'

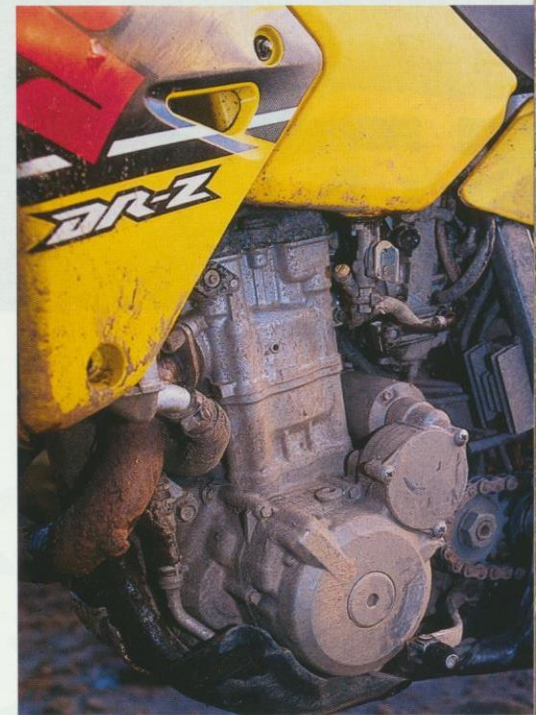
It's a common enough question at TBM, and one which crops up from time to time when readers visit our stand at the end of year dirt bike show. But when we question the 'questioners' and ask them what they mean by a 'trailie' and what sort of bike they ride, invariably they reply with something like 'a Suzuki DR-Z400E' or 'Honda XR400R'. Neither of which are actually sold as road-legal 'trail bikes'.

Of course it really depends on how you define the term trail bike. For instance, is a trailie simply a street-and-dirt dual-purpose machine (something like a Yamaha TT-R250 for example)? Or is it a bike which is a bit too long-in-the-tooth to be used for racing any

more (eg a Honda XR400R)? Or alternatively, is it - as seems to be much more common these days - a bike that gets used on the trail but which has been designed predominantly with racing in mind - step forward all the enduro bikes?

Because invariably when we go trail riding we find ourselves in the company of riders on bikes like the Gasser EC300, KTM 525EXC and Yamaha WR426F - rather than say a DT175MX. The aforementioned group of which make damn fine trailies - but strictly speaking would all be classified as enduro bikes.

Now this doesn't bother us in the slightest. We subscribe to the school of thought whereby as long as your bike is road-legal and quiet, then





FOUR Tops

it doesn't really matter what you choose to ride on the trail. It's more a case of how you ride that counts. And naturally enough, with the huge growth in the number of enduro bikes now available (in particular ones which come fully homologated and road-ready), then many riders have turned to these for use on the trail. And that of course - as if it needed pointing out - is why so many of the tests in TBM feature enduro bikes. Because so many of you guys and girls choose to ride the things. Doh!

Nevertheless, bikes like the XR4 and DR-ZE are still bought in significant numbers every year - both new and secondhand - (though the XR is no longer a current model) and both are very

common out on the trail. Part of this is down to the fact that no matter how reliable European bikes have become over the past few years, when it comes to buying dirt bikes (and especially secondhand ones), the peace of mind and cost-savings offered by buying Japanese are sufficient to tempt all but the most well-heeled of trail riders.

So we wondered how a regular affordable secondhand 400 like the DR-Z400E (plucked straight from a dealer's showroom), would fare against a box-fresh KTM 400EXC? Do you need five-and-a-half grand's worth of European dirt digger to have fun on the trail, when £2995 or thereabouts will get you onto the lanes with a good, solid 2002 DR-ZE? What does your extra cash buy you? And how far apart are these two when it comes to taking them both green laning?

Peaks and Troughs

Staffordshire-based dealers DK Off Road were good enough to loan us a tidy '02 DR-Z for the purpose of this test and as we've elected to run a long-term KTM 400EXC in 2005, this seemed like as good a time as any to begin its evaluation.

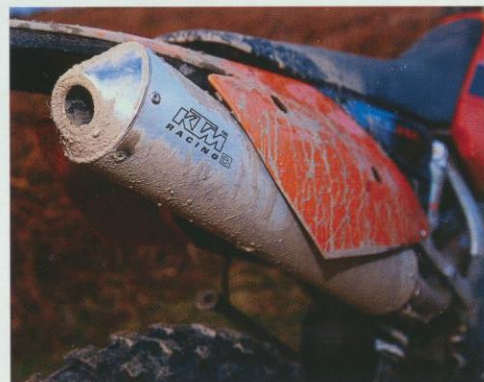
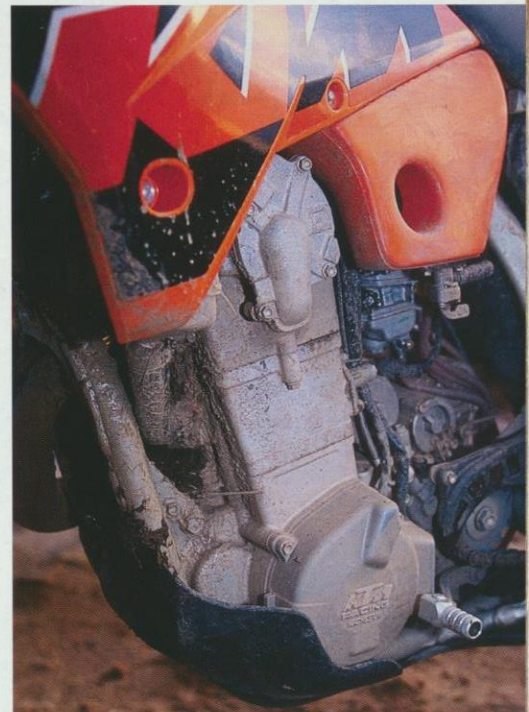
So that was the bikes all sorted, all we needed now was a place to ride them. The answer came courtesy of some of the lads from the Peak District TRF. A quick phonecall elicited the info that there were indeed a few trail riders with a bit of spare time on their hands (midweek) who'd be delighted to show us around their patch.

And a suitable plan was hatched. Thanks lads.

The Hardware

Despite the ready availability of more competent machinery on the secondhand market, Suzuki's DR-Z400E is still one of the most popular 'trail bikes' in the country. They're as common as a Gatso-generated speeding fine - I guarantee that nearly every trail rider will have had one in their time. Despite the creeping orange tide, there are actually more DR-Z400s out there than either the KTM 400 or 450 put together. Technologically-speaking, it may be stuck in a time-warped, but there's nothing fundamentally wrong with that.

When the DR-Z was first launched in 2000 it



FOUR Tops



was hailed as something of a trail riding revolution (not least by us), although in fairness the bike it replaced (the elderly DR350), had by then lost all its teeth and moved to Bournemouth in order to breed budgerigars and see out its days sucking on Werthers Originals.

Suddenly, along came this wizzo-looking, bright yellow, DOHC, liquid-cooled, electric-start Japanese, four-stroke dirt bike at the right sort of money - it's not surprising that riders began voting with their extended finance. Remember this was before KTM's new generation of four-strokes had got more popular than Jordan. Back then your choice was between riding a DR-Z or walking the dog down your nearest green lane.

That the new water-cooled 'Z-model' improved upon the old air-cooled bike in virtually every key area (except strangely enough, weight) wasn't in question. Although even back then we had our reservations about the bike's chassis being able to handle the engine's prodigious output. But there was never any doubt in our minds that Suzuki had created one of the all-time-great trail bike engines. There still isn't.

But if the Suzook's wonderfully torquey lump is its coup-de-grace, the chassis and suspension are surely its bete noir. Well, that and the fact that as supplied, the ZE lacks any of the legal necessities required for a life on the lanes. Naturally enough our bike had been taxed and registered and an aftermarket speedo plonked atop the aftermarket alloy bars. But as to where the horn or reflector were located - well, that remains a mystery to this day.

Suzuki DR-Z400E: Splendid Isolation

The road out of Cromford - our meeting point for the day - was smooth and relatively traffic-free, and under a clear but cold sky I was happy to reacquaint myself with Suzuki's 'trail bike'. After a bump-start to get it running (the ignition had been left on overnight, and there's no kickstart), the DR-Z rumbled out of town with a mellifluous bellow emanating from its silencer.

Ah yes, one of the Z-E's less palatable traits was the fact that as supplied from Suzuki they came without any form of baffle in the muffler! Sure enough, the bike's previous keeper had done what any responsible law-abiding owner would have done and fitted the bike with an aftermarket straight-through full-race system from Arrow. Nice one, Beethoven.

Once on the move the Suzuki quickly reminded me of all the reasons why there are still so many DR-Z fanatics out there. The Z's engine is creamier than a pint of Guinness poured from a blender: it's amazingly linear

and the bottom-end feels like its powered by a Mack truck. This makes it incredibly easy to ride. There's no powerband as such, just an unending wave of steadily increasing power and torque.

Roll on the throttle and the Suzuki responds, accelerating briskly through a meaty mid-range and into a very healthy top-end. Despite its DOHC configuration, the Suzuki lump has a much more pronounced flywheel-effect than the snappier SOHC KTM engine - gaining revs more slowly and without any steps in the power-curve. This in turn means that you can feel (and use) every one of the Suzuki's power pulses to maximum effect, and this helps make the DR-Z simple to ride on the dirt.

The ZE never catches you out or feels like it could get the better of you if you accidentally give it a big handful at the wrong moment. On the contrary, the whole feel of the bike is well contained - contained within its limiting factors of suspension and handling. I know we go on about this with the DR-Z, and in fairness, it's not something you particularly realise until you hop between bikes and discover just how much more capable is the EXC's chassis set-up. Because in truth, the DR-Z handles fine; there are no nasty

SECOND OPINION: BARNI

There are times in life when it's much better to just bite the bullet, put your hand in your pocket and shell-out for something, rather than trying to save a few quid. And this is definitely one of those times..!

Unfortunately for the DR-Z, I started the day aboard the Katosh, and swapping between the two was like being moved from the best table in the restaurant, to the one between the kitchen and the door to the toilets..!

The riding position on the EXC is nigh-on perfect, and mixed with great suspension and that overall feeling of quality it's just such a good bike. The DR-Z has arguably the more rider-friendly motor, and it's definitely the more stable machine. But with that stability comes an overwhelming feeling of bulk, and even though I found the Suzook easier to ride up the loose rocky climbs, the EXC still got me to the top feet-up... and quicker.

To me, shelling-out on the KTM makes sense. You may need to spend more initially, but you're buying a complete package. The DR-ZE however felt more like an unfinished project. And you what they end up costing...

quirks or bendy frames to get excited about. And the suspension does a better than adequate job of soaking up the hits - particularly at the front - although the rear feels a little 'dead' in its action.

But what happens when you ride the DR-Z is that you find a pace at which everything feels comfortable and then stick to it. Not that this is a particularly slow speed by the way - the Z is more than happy to gallop along the average rock-infested Derbyshire byway at a decent enough clip. But then you come to a rock-step, pot-holed lane or some downhill cross-track ruts and you're forced to slow right down in order to keep everything under control (and keep your feet on the pegs). Hit one of these hazards at any sort of speed and the next thing you'll see is the back of your boots as they fly over your head.

In fairness, the DR-ZE feels like a fantastic big-soft-duvet of a trail bike - one which you'd doubtless have a lot of fun green laning on. Principally because the Suzuki's motor is beyond reproach and there's an effortless amount of chug available to get you up and over various obstacles, whenever you need it. What's more, the suspension works well enough for the majority of situations, the Nissin brakes are fine, and the steering - for the most-part - is incredibly stable. Just occasionally it suffers from a slight 'twitch' when you clout a rock or drop into a hole unexpectedly, but it always comes back into line. Even the seat is comfortable enough for a full day in the saddle - while the ten litre tank holds more than enough juice for a reasonable ride between Mars Bars.

And on the road the DR-ZE makes just as much sense. It is finely balanced, comfortably stable, plenty quick enough and great fun to ride. It'll keep the other 400s in sight and is only really limited by its lack of a sixth ratio. No, the problem with the DR-Z comes down to just one thing. The KTM.

KTM 400EXC: Small Ones Are More Juicy

When KTM relaunched the 400cc version of their EXC enduro bike just over a year ago I have to admit that I was one of the people who couldn't quite see the point. After all, KTM already had a fantastic middleweight (in the form of the long-stroke 450EXC) in its range which is not only torquier, and more powerful, but I reckon easier to ride than the short-stroke 400.

But launch it they did, amid factory claims that some European 'hobby riders' had reported back to their dealers that they felt intimidated by the extra oomph of the 450 and would like to see the 400 returned to the range. KTM duly obliged and accordingly the 400 has gone on to sell fairly well

in various markets. Of course no specific enduro class exists for 400s anymore (though obviously they can compete against more powerful 450s), so people buying 400s have got to be trail riders.

And certainly KTM UK see it being used as a trail bike, first and foremost - even though like all KTMs it's more than capable of being raced. That the bike is well specified as standard will come as absolutely no surprise to anyone, particularly TBM readers. Barely an issue of the mag goes by without an orange bike of one sort or another popping up between the pages, and the message must have got through by now. Besides, KTM have gone on to become best-sellers in the UK dirt bike market, so you already know the score.

Anyway that means that the 400 gets a full compliment of road-going equipment (including indicators and digi speedo) on top of a healthy list of high-end standard kit such as braceless bars, hydraulic clutch etc. Just as importantly from the point of view of this test however, is that KTM's design is frankly an age apart from the Suzuki. It has superb suspension which can cope with the roughest of terrain, a lithe and nimble chassis which can change direction quicker than a woman driver, and a motor far stronger at the top-end than the already good Suzuki.

To be honest the engine isn't the important bit because the Suzuki can hold its own in any comparison with even the most modern thumpers. No, the bit that matters is in the handling and riding position.

Let's start with the fact that the KTM feels at least ten, but possibly 15kg lighter than the DR-Z. That means that it's marginally less planted, but heaps more agile when it comes to picking a route up or down a hazard. Think about changing direction and it's as good as done on the KTM. The difference is enormous.

The bike's slimline dimensions probably won't appeal to all trail riders - particularly if you haven't ridden a KTM before. Unlike with racing where there are distinct advantages to narrowness, on the trail (where you end up sitting down a lot more of the time) a narrow seat can just feel uncomfortable. And sure enough a saddle carved from Austrian granite doesn't help. Nor will an 8L tank keep you occupied for more than about three hours - though it's pretty standard fare these days. However the KTM more than makes up for this gentle set-back with a riding position which is nigh-on perfect. You sit behind an upright pair of braceless Maguras which are multi-adjustable, and everything - even down to the specification of the orange grips - appears to have been thought through by an Austrian with a slide-rule.

The pegs are broad, the shoulder position just right and the riding position - whether seated or standing - feels perfectly balanced.

What's more our KTM 'left-clicked' its way through its six-speed gearbox (one more than on the DR-Z) like a demonic internet surfer. Gear-changes have never felt so easy.

If I've got a complaint with the KTM it's that the Brembo brakes can be a bit indifferent (but

you already knew that), and that the engine is almost too powerful for this application. Wind it on and the 400EXC will take your breath away with its turn of speed. Of course, I realise that this is a bit like saying I'd like to go back to buying petrol with coupons because it conjures up a more romantic time, but you get my drift.

But the reason why I like the KTM best of all - and the reason why frankly it wins this test



FOUR Tops

Four Tops

hands down, is that you don't have to do anything at all to it. Just fill it with fuel and go.

The Suzuki on the other hand... Well although it's nearly two-and-a-half grand cheaper - it really needs to be. This bike actually performed beautifully - I've got no complaints there. But look a little closer and you'll see that it needs a new chain (and probably sprockets), a set of handguards, a bashplate, and I guess a new set of brake pucks wouldn't go amiss. Then there's the kit which you may want to fit in order to bring it up to proper road standards. Factor in the cost of a new exhaust system and you won't be short of three and a half grand - and you've still only got a three-year-old Suzuki.

Given that a brand new DR-ZE only costs about 600 notes more (£4099) but on top of which you've still got to add all the aforementioned kit (with the exception of the chain and sprockets, but including a set of alloy handlebars), and soon you won't be far short of the price tag KTM are asking for their 400EXC.

I know it may seem like a stretch to get from three grand to five-and-a-bit for the new Katosh, but actually I'm just trying to point out that what might at first be the cheaper option - can actually end up costing you more in the long-run. Particularly once depreciation and running costs are factored into the equation.

Because as great as the Suzuki DR-Z400E feels on the lanes (and ridden in isolation it does feel extremely competent), it's frankly no match for a piece of kit as handy as a KTM400. And while it may be stretching a point to call the KTM 400EXC the Porsche Boxster of the trail bike world, the fact remains that no matter how much cash you throw at a secondhand DR-Z400E, you're still going to end up with the same thing - a tarted-up Citroen Saxo...

Huge thanks to Tony, Rob, and Paul from Derbyshire TRF for service above and beyond the call of duty, and for remaining ever cheerful whilst stuck on a freezing hillside waiting for the sun to come out!

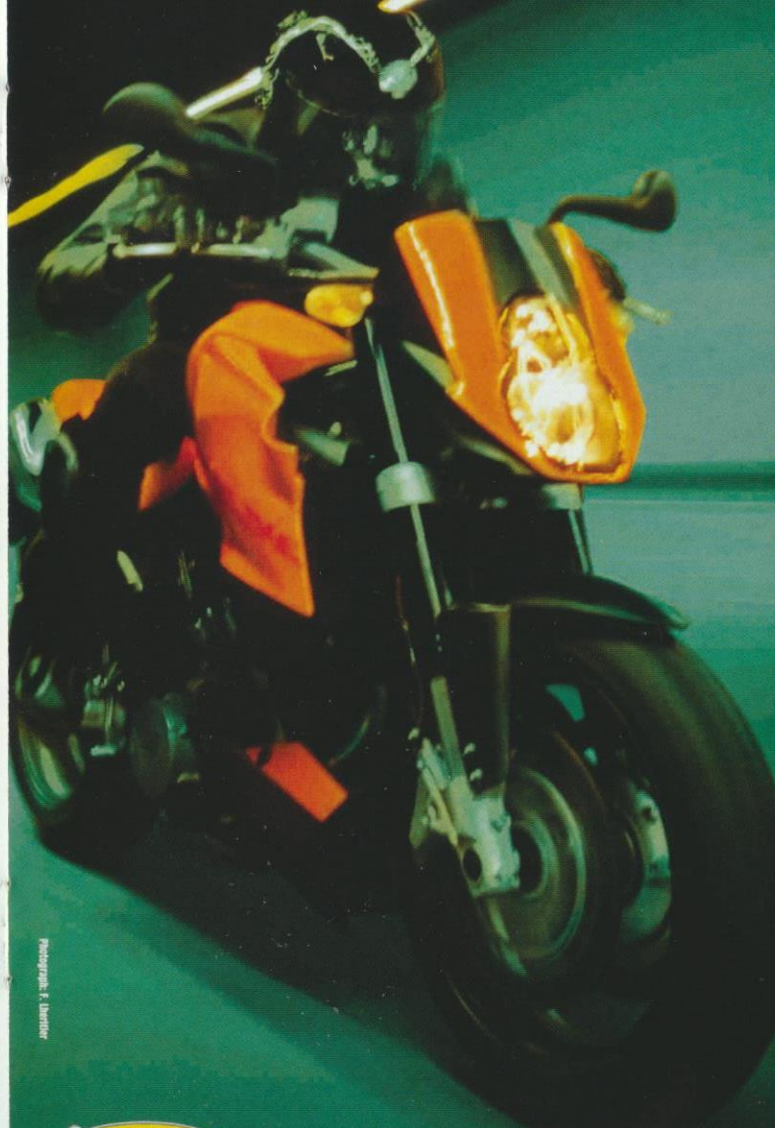
A big thank you to DK Off Road (01782 338700) for the loan of the DR-Z400E. You can see DK's huge range of trail, enduro and MX bikes at their giant Newcastle Under Lyme showroom. And last, but by no means least, thanks to Dave Plummer of KTM UK for his usual sterling service!

KTM 400EXC

Price:	£5395 + OTR
Engine:	Electric-start, liquid-cooled, SOHC, four-valve
Displacement:	398cc
Bore & stroke:	89 x 64mm
Transmission:	6-speed
Frame:	Cro-moly single-double cradle
Front susp:	48mm USD WP, 300mm travel
Rear susp:	WP PDS shock, 335mm travel
Front brake:	260mm disc, Brembo twin-piston caliper
Rear brake:	220mm disc, Brembo single-piston caliper
Seat height:	925mm
Wheelbase:	1481mm
Fuel capacity:	8L
Ground clear:	380mm
Weight:	129kg (wet)

SUZUKI DR-Z400E

Price:	£4099 (new), £2995 (S/H 2002 model)
Engine:	Electric-start, liquid-cooled, DOHC, four-valve
Displacement:	398cc
Bore & stroke:	90 x 62.6mm
Transmission:	5-speed
Frame:	Steel double cradle
Front susp:	49mm conventional
Rear susp:	Linkage-type shock
Front brake:	250mm disc, Nissin twin-piston caliper
Rear brake:	220mm disc, single-piston caliper
Seat height:	945mm
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Ground clear:	325mm
Weight:	137kg (wet)



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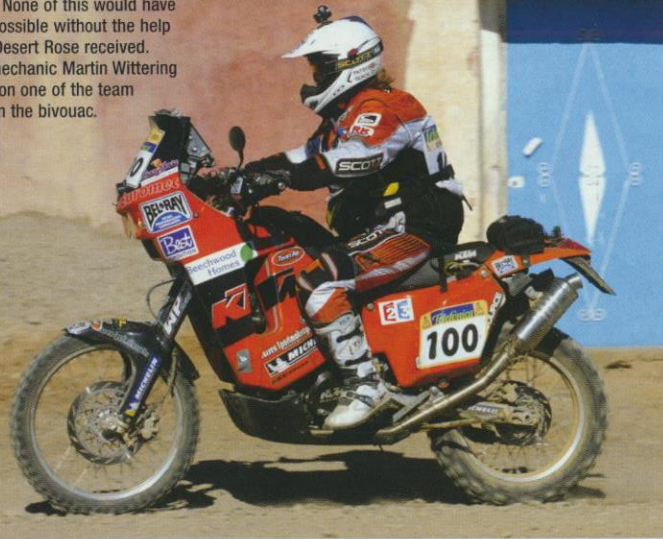


DAKAR:

Three times... a lady

The 2005 Barcelona-Dakar was not a happy one for the majority of British entrants including Team Desert Rose's Patsy Quick. Here she sums up her feelings on this year's event, and describes in her own words the disappointment of a third unsuccessful Dakar...

Below: None of this would have been possible without the help Team Desert Rose received. Here mechanic Martin Wittering works on one of the team bikes in the bivouac.



After Fabrizio Meoni's death, all the Gauloises Team rode with the Italian rider's name on their machines. This is RSA's Alfie Cox negotiating a water hole. He went on to finish third...



DAKAR:

Three times... a lady

This year's Dakar lived up to its reputation as the toughest motor-sport endurance race in the world by testing competitors physically, mentally and emotionally to the limit. Although the race was slightly shorter in length and duration, it was very

intense with more emphasis placed on navigation - with a return to tougher (no-assistance) marathon days. In the middle of all this the race suffered the sad loss of two riders, which tends to traumatise all the other competitors and force some of them to question why the hell they're there in the first place.

Ready For Anything

Anyway, let me start at the beginning. Everything for Team Desert Rose started well, both Clive 'Zippy' Town and myself felt really on top of things both physically and mentally and without doubt felt that this was to be 'our year'. We had worked hard all year on our training, our fitness

and the dreaded 'sponsorship train'.

All we needed now was a little bit of luck!!

Zippy was using his trusty 2004 KTM 660 Rallye bike, whilst KTM UK had once again been fantastic and come up with new '05 Rallye model for me. Unfortunately what we didn't know at the time was that this was one of a batch of faulty production bikes that were to give KTM many headaches during the rally. Riders, including me, were complaining of batteries going flat and at first they thought that it was a problem with the new Sentinel warning system now fitted to all bikes (see last month's Anatomy of a Rallye bike), but as these were disconnected and batteries began to boil over, KTM flew in a whole new

set of batteries and regulators.

All of this was being resolved as we rode the long boring road sections down through Spain and northern Morocco to Rabat, and these continued when the first special in Morocco was cancelled due to fog and another 600k's of bum-numbing liaison was ridden. It's amazing how many positions you can find on a saddle that was never meant to be sat on for long. At least with the 660 you can tramp on, unlike the numerous 450 riders we passed who were being very careful not to blow a motor.

Stage five and our first proper African stage. The day went well, perhaps a little slower than I would have liked but my recently mended

DAKAR:

Three times... a lady



broken wrist was complaining about the rocky going and we noticed several riders had already been caught out by the conditions, so steady was the word.

Stage six is where the Dakar really picks up the pace with our arrival in Mauritania. Marking up our road book that night, we knew that this was going to be a testing day for our navigation and it was also to be the start of the dunes! Zippy and I had a great day; we rode really well, at just the right speed, which is important to get right in sand. Neither of us had any difficulties in the dunes, which were already proving difficult for some of the riders, and thanks to Zippy's excellent navigation we made good time. It had been an ideal shakedown for what was to come.

The drama of the day was about to unfold in the bivouac that night as we lined up for food.

C'mon Baby Light My Fire

After a day's riding we were hungry enough to eat a scabby donkey and its saddle, but all thoughts of food went west when the catering marquee burst into flames and the fire quickly began to spread. The other Brits: Clive, Alex, Si and I grabbed all our gear and legged it to safety. Everyone stood there not believing what they were seeing. Fortunately nobody was hurt and soon enough the hunger returned. Amazingly the catering guys had hot food served up within 90 minutes of the fire!

Stage seven Zouerat to Tichit was a new piste



that the organisers had found. The day started to go wrong early on, and by the time we reached the first CP at 256km my battery had gone flat and the bike was using twice as much fuel as Clive's. I had run out of fuel four times already. We managed to rob a battery from a broken bike on the sweeper truck but could find

no reason as to why the bike was using so much fuel. All this had taken up precious daylight time, which is very hard to make up in the dark.

Between CP1 and CP2 I had one of those one-minute-you're-riding-and-the-next-you're-somersaulting-through-the-air moments. Zippy who witnessed my massive 'off' definitely thought that I was going to need hospital treatment afterwards. I was a bit dazed but we were both pleasantly surprised to find that I was okay and even the bike, apart from twisted yokes, was ready to carry on although the engine was definitely not running well.

As darkness fell the battery we had acquired held out well and I was just running with the Xenon light on and everything else turned off.

The thought of riding without any lights at all was not one that I particularly liked. We reached CP2 at around 9pm where we were informed by the race director that due to the difficulties everyone was having on that stage that we had 24 hours from the beginning of our start time to complete the section. This gave Zippy and I until 8.45am next morning. 'No problem' we thought, 'just carry on at a steady pace'. We weren't suffering from fatigue, we had a quick break and with a 'limited refuel' (which was all the organisers would allow us!) we set off.

'Hello, is that Technical Support?'

40k's into the special I hit a dune and the bike stopped and would not restart - resulting in another failed battery. We were convinced that the carb was at fault and decided to strip it down in the middle of a sandstorm! Using the satellite phone we made an SOS call to Tony at Sussex Sport Motorcycles, this has to be customer service at its best. He spent half the night talking us through the various possibilities, but by 4am we had now flattened Clive's bike's battery and all we could do was wait for help. We knew from the road book that we were roughly in the middle



DAKAR:

Three times... a lady

of the 3km-wide track and assumed that the sweeper truck would be along at some point. Clive's bike was positioned to be easily seen whilst we continued to work on mine.

By lunchtime no sweeper truck had arrived, I managed to call the emergency number in Paris (it's printed on our race bracelets) and gave them our GPS points; they said that the organiser's truck was still 200km behind us. In the middle of the afternoon a spotter plane started to circle overhead and we made sure that they could see our race numbers. The next we knew was that two small parachutes with bags attached were dropped. We picked them up to find food, water and survival blankets. Clive and I looked at each other - without having to say a word we knew

that we were going to be there for quite a while.

As night fell we made a small camp on a high point a little way off from the bikes. Clive set up the light sticks and our emergency-flashing torch around the 'camp'. Our 'camp' consisted of nothing more than a hole dug behind a lump of camel grass! We wrapped ourselves in the foil survival blankets and settled down to another cold night in the desert.

You're In The Army Now

Suddenly, someone kicked my legs, and there were men shouting 'Moto, Moto' who woke me up. I looked up to see soldiers with AK47s and Zippy was shouting, 'What's happening, are we being kidnapped?' It is quite common for bandits to roam this part of the desert, so it wasn't an unreasonable question. When you can't speak the language you can only go by your reaction and quickly I realised that these were Mauritanian soldiers who had come to rescue us. They manhandled the two bikes into two pick-ups and we climbed into the back of the third. They made no concession for the fact that we were in the back hanging on for grim death as they



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After three nights out in the desert the strain begins to show



I've often said that I quite fancy doing the Dakar in a truck but ours had no race seats, no harnesses and no roll cage. We spent 13 hours being bounced around the cab and hanging on as our driver managed to hit every camel grass lump he could find!

Not long after setting off we found a Dutch crew in a 4x4 who were waiting for their assistance vehicle to turn up, then shortly after that, Schlessler's assistance truck which had a broken radiator. The commander would not carry on until all the vehicles were fixed, so

another night was spent under the stars. Strange, but nice, how in difficult situations all different nations help each other out. Tents and sleeping bags were provided by the French, the food by the Americans, and the safety of the whole group provided by the Mauritians. The next morning the commander decided that the two race trucks were okay to stay together until fixed and we had another day of off-piste trucking until we finally arrived in Atar that evening.

Our bikes were unloaded and the three of us had a meeting with the race director, with TBM's Chris Evans on hand as ever to translate. But all to no avail, we were out of the race.

So it wasn't to be 'Third time lucky' for me... and if Zippy (bless him) had been a bit more selfish he could have left me and perhaps made it all the way to Dakar.

Back to the Future

Would I do it again? Yes and No. Although I've never finished the Dakar I still manage to attract lots of media coverage to repay my sponsors and I'm sure that they would be more than happy to have their products promoted if I were to try yet again. But because the Dakar requires such a huge amount of luck I find it very difficult to keep asking guys like Bunny Best (Best Demolition), Peter and Hanna Crew (Euromec) and Bob Parker (Beechwood Homes) for the substantial amounts of cash that it requires to do the race.

It is the Everest of motorcycling sport and despite my tales of injury and woe I hope that in some strange way I've inspired others to have a go at the maddest race on the planet...

DAKAR:

Three times... a lady

roared off across the desert. At the camp we were hustled into a tent and told 'woman lay there, man there', whereupon they gave us a mattress each and some blankets. Mint tea was served and they cooked up some rice, both of which went down very well.

The next morning we communicated by drawing in the sand and one of the lieutenants spoke a few words of English. We then understood that there was a French rider stuck out in the desert very near to where we had been camped. Off went a truck with a few soldiers and returned with a very cross and frightened Frenchman. He also spoke English so through him we could communicate with the 'commander' and find out what was going to happen to us. The commander's plan was to get us all, including an assistance race truck that had run out of diesel, back to Atar. We set off that afternoon with the three bikes in the back of an old Mercedes army lorry and the three riders squeezed in the front. To the rear was the now refuelled assistance lorry and in the lead the 'commander' in his pick-up truck with 'Jolly Hassam' the radio operator sitting in the back, shouting into his set most of the time.

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7	45	TF	12-03
8	42		12-48
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11	45	TF	2-19
12	42		3-04
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TIME

Gentlemen Please

STORY & PICS: JONTY EDMUNDS

Proper enduros require the use of a time-card, though some riders are put off by the thought of having to use this innocuous little piece of paper. Well fear not, as TBM guides you through the much-misunderstood time-card...

time, the process of filling in and using a time-card can be a daunting one. It needn't be. Time-cards vary in appearance from event to event and country to country, but the principle is almost always the same.

Filling In Time

Clarity and correctness are the two things that always need to be remembered when filling in a time-card - calculate twice, fill in once! Always remember that it is a rider's responsibility to check their times are correct on their time-card, so don't blame anyone other than yourself if you do find they're wrong when it's too late.

Okay, so what goes onto the time-card? The information you'll need is usually clearly displayed when you sign-on (where you'll have been given your 'card') and generally takes the form of a list of 'check-time-allowances' that's written in minutes.

This information (when added to your start time), will tell you the exact time you're due to clock-in at each check. Make sure you copy down the information that is pertinent to *your* class, and note which time schedule the event is being run on (normally schedule A if the weather is fine, or B if forest roads are dusty or it's been raining heavily). Time schedules can change on the morning of the event, though the slower B-schedule is rarely used unless the conditions are particularly bad.

Always work out your times on a piece of paper such as the back of the event programme before filling in your time-card, and if possible check them against another rider on your minute - just to be on the safe side. Although it sounds simple enough to add your permitted time for each check to your start time, remember that you're dealing in multiples of 60mins so ensure that your maths is correct.

When you are confident that your times are correct, fill in your time-card, preferably in ballpoint pen. Don't worry if the pen doesn't write too well on the plastic - it's like writing on carbon paper - so your times *will* be recorded. Also make sure that your number, class, start time and name are clearly filled in. But beware, if you fill out your time-card incorrectly you might find yourself being penalised, even if you clock in on time at every check. I'll explain why...

At the end of an event, the timekeepers will normally run an eye over your time-card to see if you have incurred any penalties. If you haven't, your card will likely be added to the 'clean on time' pile. However, if there are any differences between your 'due in' time and your official 'clock in' time it will appear as though you've either clocked in early or dropped time.

Despite the recent rise in popularity of Cross-Country and Hare 'n' Hound style events in the UK, many riders still believe that the ultimate day's off-roading comes by entering a time-card enduro. The time-card itself is little more than a plastic-covered piece of paper allowing event officials to keep a record of the time that competitors clock into each of the day's check points. But more than that, the time-card dictates the speed and degree of difficulty of each of the competitive checks. The time-card is the sole responsibility of the competitor. Altering or obliterating it, or failure to stick to the organiser's time schedule, will result in penalties or exclusion.

For those new to off-roading, be it youngsters from an MX background, trials or green laners venturing into enduro competition for the first



TIME
Gentlemen Please

See those yellow flags in the background? Once you pass those, then you're officially in the checkpoint and your time will be noted...



Although the clocks at each check should be easy to see (and synchronised), carrying a watch set to the same time as the course clocks makes things a lot easier should you run into any problems. This way you can tell whether or not you need to up your pace, especially when used in conjunction with a trip computer. Make sure that your service crew have the 'official' time set on their watches too. That way when you're stopped 200 metres away from the clock in a refueling check you can judge your 'pit-stop' accordingly.

Keepin' it Safe

During an event, the time-card is *your* responsibility. Not your service crew's, wife's, girlfriend's or mate's - yours. Lose it and you will receive a 60 second penalty, which will ruin your result no matter where you would have finished in your class. At World and European Championship events it doesn't really matter if you lose your time-card (no penalties are handed out to those who misplace them as most events hand out a new card at the start of every lap), but in Britain it still matters.

Before You Start

Now that you've filled in your time-card, what else do you need to do? Well, two things which will make your life a lot easier are having a digital watch strapped around your bar-pad, synchronised exactly to the event clocks, and having a copy of the times you're due in at each check clearly visible somewhere on your bar-pad or front fender.

Most people attach the times to their bike by writing them in permanent marker onto a piece of duct tape and sticking this to the bar pad. It's a good idea to also mark which checks include a special test or refueling stop. To do this, simply mark 'ST' for special test or 'F' for fuel. When working out your times, keep an eye out for those checks that don't allow you much time - these are the 'tight' checks where you'll have to get a move on. If the organisers give information on the type of terrain you're likely to be riding, crosscheck it with the distance and the length of time you have to ride it. For instance, if a check is 100-percent off-road, 17 miles in length, and you only have 26 minutes to ride it, then you're going to need to get your skates on. Mark these on your times with 'TC', for tight check obviously..!



When you've worked out your times, write them on a piece of duct tape and stick it to your bar pad...

But before you can lose your card, make sure you've got it with you when you leave the start! Many a time-card has been left on the passenger seat of a van or in a trouser pocket, the mistake only being realised when the rider has got to the first check. Before an event, placing your goggles on your helmet and then placing your time-card under the strap is as good a place as any to keep it safe once filled in. You're not going to start an enduro without your helmet are you?

Deciding where to keep your time-card safe during an event is entirely up to you, but there are three places that seem to be favoured above all others - in a bum-bag, a jacket pocket, or attached to the front brake master cylinder.

The once popular seat-covers that featured a time-card-holding pouch are now rarely used, so most top riders keep their time-cards attached to their front brake master cylinder. Held in place by a thick rubber band (made from an old inner tube) wrapped around the master cylinder and fastened with a couple of zip-ties, this keeps a card secure and, if the card is folded inwards, clean as well. Preferred by many riders because it is quick and hassle-free, most time-check staff will happily roll up your time-card for you and



The pros keep their time-cards on top of the front-brake reservoir - held in place by a rubber band cut from an old inner-tube and lifted up by a cable-tie...



European events are often slightly different in detail but the principles remain the same...



British time-clocks are usually a bit easier to see...

insert it under the inner tube. Faced with a tight check, the few seconds that can be saved getting your time-card put away quickly can be the difference between staying on time... or not. While the difference in time between putting a time-card in your bum bag or attaching it to your bars is pretty minimal, the crucial thing is to get away from the check first so you don't waste precious seconds stuck behind riders on your minute who might be slower than you. The down-side to keeping a time-card attached to your master cylinder is that you run the risk of a stick or

branch catching it and pulling it out without you realising, though in truth, this is pretty rare! The second most popular place to keep a time-card is in your bum-bag. As you already carry tools, drink, rag, tobacco etc in the bag around your waist, it makes perfect sense to store your time-card in there as well. With most bum bags having side pouches ideally suited to storing a time-card, their only drawback is that wearing gloves, helmet and goggles things can get a bit awkward, which could result in the pocket not being properly closed. You'll also

inside, and riding off without it. Sure, putting a time-card in a bum-bag or a jacket pocket is more secure, but the fact that you will never leave a check without your bike makes attaching your time-card to the bars the safer option.

When you get to a time-check you'll notice several things. Firstly, a white flag on the course tells you that the time-check is a couple of hundred metres away. Further on there'll be a yellow flag 20 metres from the timing clock. You clock-in automatically as soon as you pass this flag. Even if the clock ticks over before your card is marked, you will be given the time from when you entered the time-check. Sometimes there'll be a group of riders awaiting their minute, and everyone usually parks-up as close to the check as possible. Ensure that you don't inadvertently pass the flag, as once you've crossed that line the timekeepers will note down your time, even if you hurriedly reverse back out...

Though not used in every enduro, a route check (secret check-point) ensures that riders aren't cutting the course. Marked with blue flags, you must stop at these in order to get your time-card marked (or hole-punched).

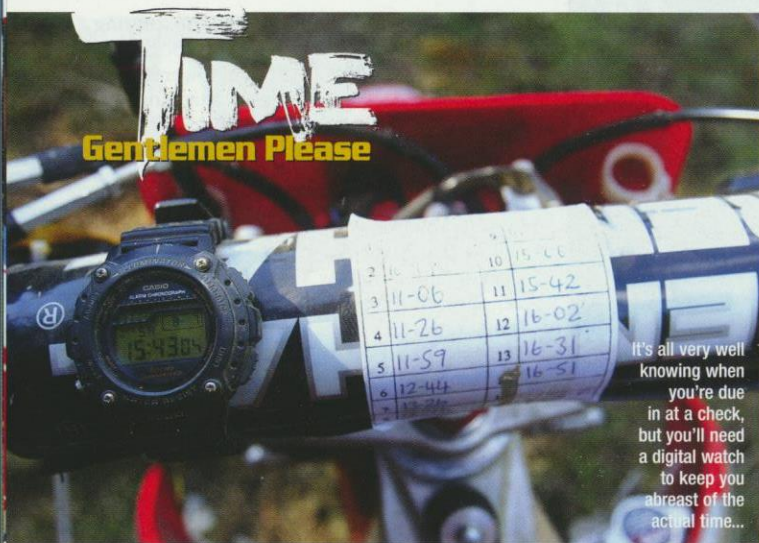
When Things Go Wrong

When things go wrong, for instance you have a mechanical problem which results in you arriving late at a check, there are a number of things to remember. The first is that you're going to have to recalculate your times! Not so long ago you were able to clock-in one minute early and one minute late without penalty. Not any more. Clocking-in early will see you penalised 60 points for every minute you clock-in ahead of your time. However, there are two instances where you can/should clock-in early. The first of these is at the final check of the event where you can clock in as early as you like - doing what's known as going 'straight in'. The only other time you should consider clocking-in early is if you are likely to get to the final check more than an hour late. Any rider running more than 60mins late at the final check will be recorded as a DNF (Did Not Finish), having 'houred-out'. In WEC events, you're only allowed to run 30mins late, and in much the same way that we've adopted their three capacity classes, here in the UK we too may soon 'half-hour-out'.

So if you're fairly sure that you're going to hour-out later on then get through the check as early as possible. By clocking-in early you'll pick up penalties but at least you'll stand a better chance of being classed as a finisher - it is not 60mins worth of penalties, but being 60mins late that will see you disqualified. If you are close to houring-out it's safe to say that you probably

need to remember that it's in there when you go rummaging for your emergency choccy bar. Again, most check staff will assist you in putting your time-card away, providing you give them clear and polite instructions, and say thank you!

Despite most enduro jackets coming fitted with a clear plastic-fronted pocket designed for carrying a time-card, think before using any of your jacket pockets. Not because the pocket might come undone but because you run the risk of taking off your jacket (or even just the sleeves), forgetting your time-card is safely tucked away



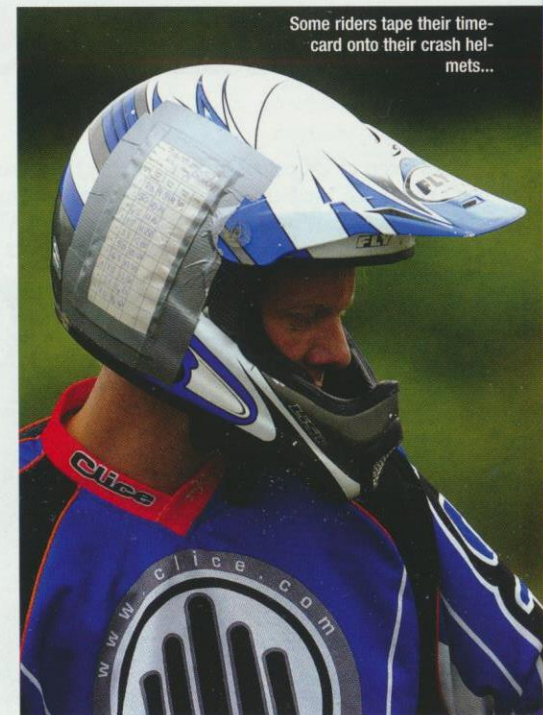
It's all very well knowing when you're due in at a check, but you'll need a digital watch to keep you abreast of the actual time...

won't be featuring at the sharp end of the results. But, in extreme conditions (like those which faced many of the Clubmen on day one of last year's Hafren Enduro), finishing 56 minutes late when the majority of your classmates fail to finish might just see you pick up an award. To finish first, first you've got to finish!

Clocking-in late is also undesirable, though you can arrive at a time-check (other than the start check) up to one-minute after your due time without incurring any penalty. This is known as a rider's Late

Arrival Allowance (LAA) or 'using your minute'. However, when you are late, you must remain 'late' at all of the checks throughout the day. So if you were just one minute late at one of the checks you must add one minute to all of your other check-in times. Assuming you then get into the remaining checks on time you won't pick up any penalties. If you're 17mins late, then you add 17mins to your times, though because of your LAA you are only penalised for 16 minutes. Whatever you do, *do not* ignore your lost time and clock in at the next check at the original time. If you do you'll only incur more penalties.

It's possible that you'll be stopped for a noise test during an event, which means that you'll stop for ten minutes. You will now be recorded as ten minutes late, though this will be without penalty. Don't forget to adjust your check-in times accordingly! If a noise test is carried out during a slack check it's easy to forget to carry those minutes, and riders have been



Some riders tape their time-card onto their crash helmets...

What The ACU Rule-Book Says

The official line on time-card do's and don'ts...

Time and Route checks: Time-cards and route-cards for the first day's run MUST be issued at the preliminary examination [usually signing-on]. For a 2-day event, time-cards MUST be issued after day one has been completed. Only riders will be responsible for getting their cards stamped/marked at route checks. Failure to do so, or intent to deceive the organisers by altering or obliterating these cards, or using another rider's card will lead to exclusion.

Time schedules will show the time that a rider is allowed between time-checks.

Loss of time-card/route-card will incur a penalty.

A rider who misses a time-/route-check or arrives from the wrong direction will be excluded.

Indication of time-checks: The time-checks will be indicated by a white flag placed 200 metres and a yellow flag 20 metres before the control. The flags will be placed so that they are at all times clearly visible to the riders. Official time should be visible to the rider at yellow flag.

Procedure at Time-checks: After a rider has passed the yellow flag with his motorcycle he must immediately present his time-card.

Riders stopping between the yellow flag and

the time-check will be given the time indicated on the clock when they passed the yellow flag. The arrival time at a check is the time the rider passes the yellow flag.

A rider may pass the final check of the day early, without penalty.

At each time-check the official is obliged to mark each rider's time-card with the arrival time and keep a backup checklist showing all riders' arrival times.

Late Arrival Allowance (LAA): A rider is permitted to arrive at any time-check, other than the 'start' time-check up to one full minute after his due time without penalty. This allowance is designed to cover normal delays and is called the 'Late Arrival Allowance'. Riders who are at any time-check more than one minute late will be penalised 60 points (seconds) per minute in excess of the LAA according to the time indicated on the official clock.

Calculation of Time Penalties: Each section between time-checks constitutes a test in itself. Riders who exceed the time permitted, including any LAA if applicable, between one time-check and the next will be penalised 60 points (seconds) per minute late arrival according to the time registered by the clock when they clock in.

Time Limit: A rider who arrives at a time-check more than 60 minutes after their

original starting time for a day's run, plus the time allowed for travel between each time-check passed is automatically excluded. The LAA of one minute cannot be applied in such cases.

Restart: In an event of more than one day, a rider who fails to be classified as a finisher or who fails to come to the start line on any day, may restart the following day under the following condition: Within one hour of the scheduled finishing time of the last rider for that day, the rider must inform the Secretary of the Meeting of the intention to restart the following day.

Route Checks: In addition to having his time-card stamped/marked at all time-checks, the rider must produce his time-card for marking when called upon by the Official-In-Charge of any official route-check. Such route-checks, which may or may not be marked on the route-card will be indicated by blue flags placed on either side of the road approximately 20m before the route-check. Any rider with an unmarked time-card may be excluded.

Exclusion: Missing a time-check/route-check or special test.

Late arrival at the time-check 60 minutes over the scheduled time.

Entering time-/route-check from the wrong direction. Or altering a time-card [where a timekeeper has marked it].

known to clock-in back on their original time and receive 600 penalty points, ten minutes worth, for being early.

It's well worth having a pen and some dry paper tucked away inside your bum-bag just in case you do lose time, as well as a copy of your check-times just in case the ones attached to your bar pad/mudguard become unreadable. Also, try and ask a rider running ten minutes-or-so in front of you (if you meet up at a slack check) if they can notify your service crew that you are running 'X'-minutes late and ask that your crew work out your new times. When you are tired, wet and hungry figuring out your new times isn't easy, but check with them that the message relayed was correctly - 13 sounds just like the 30 from under a crash helmet. Make sure you get a copy of your new times written out on a piece of duct tape and stick it to your bar pad or front mud-guard. This way you are much less likely to forget about the fact that you are running late.

Time Out

Hopefully now the prospect of a time-card event seems a little less daunting and you'll be fully prepared for a 'real enduro'. There's certainly more mental effort involved than in a hare 'n' hounds, but they're more enjoyable and hugely rewarding. So what are you waiting for...?

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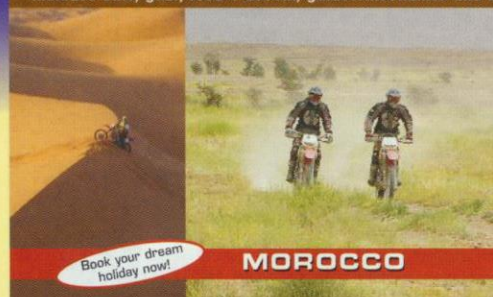
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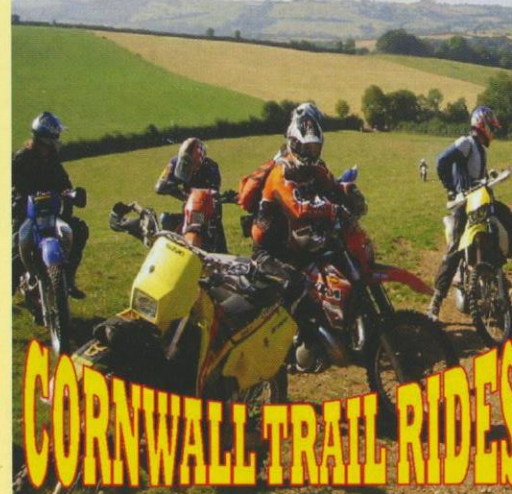


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ALL AGOG



Kenny's Titanium Pack goggles appear to offer pretty good value for money. The goggles feature a biomorphically-designed frame (or so it says here), a built-in nose and cheek roost guard, multi-layered face foam, double-glazed lenses, embroidered (silicone-backed) strap, goggle bag and ten free tear-offs. All good stuff. On the downside there's a large central (eyebrow) vent backed by open-cell foam, which in our opinion, could easily allow the ingress of dust and would need to be taped up. Nevertheless, for those who like to look a little different the Kennys offer a good value alternative. Colours are red, blue, silver and they cost £29.95 from MotoGear on 01536 526460.

PACK IT IN

Fox isn't a name normally associated with enduro but the famous motocross concern are looking to change that, releasing more and more trail 'n' enduro-related products.

The Deluxe Toolpack is the bum-bag in their range, and they've clearly done their homework as it also looks pretty good too.

Opening the main compartment you get a clear document pocket, elasticated loops to hold your tools, a key hook and a small zipped pocket just right for holding some cash.

On the main body of the bag, there's a further large zipped pocket, with ample room for a spare pair of goggles and gloves. The padded waist strap gets two more small pockets and for ease of use all of the zips come with pull-strings.

What's more, to prevent it from moving around whilst riding, the back of the bag is covered with a non-slip coating.

If you're looking to carry the kitchen sink in your bum-bag then there are more capacious products out there, but Fox's offering will easily swallow your enduro essentials. The Toolpack looks to be good value at £28.25 and comes in 'one-colour-suits-all' gunmetal grey. Call Fox Europe on 0191 487 6100 for full details.



WATER JACKET

Every year around this time, the environmentalists jump on their soapboxes to tell us that global warming is making winter warmer, but wetter. Well, if that's the case then you'll be needing a jacket that's waterproof and breathable, rather than warm and bulky. So the new Aqua Jacket from CORE should be just the job.

With a hi-tech 'Thro-Tex' lining, the jacket is claimed to be both 100 percent waterproof and breathable, with a velcro storm-flap helping keep the elements out of the full-length zip front. The cordura construction looks to be pretty hard-wearing, plus it comes with reflective piping and two outer (velcro- and zip-fastened) pockets to take care of your wallet and keys.

Having tried the jacket for ourselves, we were impressed at how comfortable it felt, and how well it fitted over body armour. Sadly, the velcro cuff fastening proved awkward, but overall the Aqua worked really well on our day's trail riding.

The jacket is available in sizes M-XXL and in three colour schemes - red (more of a burgundy, really)/black/grey, blue/black/grey, or black/grey/black. But best of all, it costs just £80 - a bit of a bargain for this type of kit. For more info phone CORE on 01686 412157.

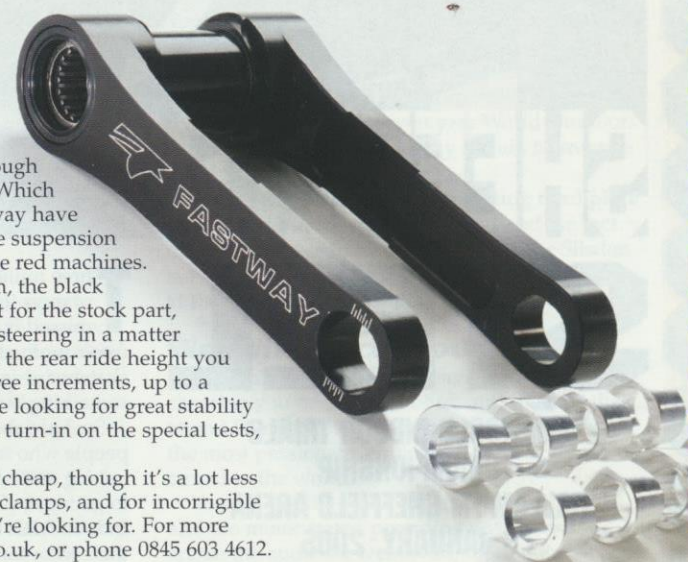


MISSING LINK

Personally, we reckon that Honda CRFs handle pretty well already, though they're not as fast-turning as some. Which is why US hardware company Fastway have brought out this neat little adjustable suspension link kit to quicken the steering on the red machines.

Hewn from 6061 grade aluminium, the black anodised link is a direct replacement for the stock part, and allows you to sharpen-up your steering in a matter of minutes. By using spacers to alter the rear ride height you can adjust the bike's rake in 0.3 degree increments, up to a maximum of 1.5 degrees. So if you're looking for great stability on the fire-roads, then lightning-fast turn-in on the special tests, this could be the product for you.

At £164.99 it isn't what you'd call cheap, though it's a lot less than you'd pay for adjustable triple clamps, and for incorrigible fiddlers it could be just the part you're looking for. For more details click onto ultimatepursuits.co.uk, or phone 0845 603 4612.



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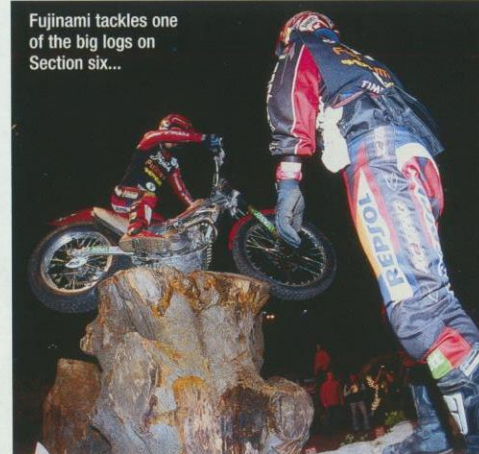
Three million of us tuned in to watch a bunch of guys 'Jump Britain' recently. In case you missed it, these pioneers of the new urban free-running sport 'Parkour' showed off their skateboard-inspired moves that resembled something out of the Matrix movies.

So, how about... 'Jump Sheffield'? If all those people who sat entranced in front of their TVs oohing and aahing at pseudo-skater boys were to get an eyeful of the first round of the 2005 Indoor Trials Championship, it would blow their Nike trainers off.

It's A Kind Of Magic

Now in its tenth year, Sheffield has become the number one indoor trials event, and it all started with an unforgettable opening night back in 1996. Who could have ever predicted the legendary Spanish trials rider Jordi Tarres being blown away by a teenage Dougie Lampkin and failing to even make the final?

This is the kind of magic that keeps 8000 fans returning year after year on a Saturday night in the middle of winter to the compact Hallam FM Arena for an up close and personal experience to



Fujinami tackles one of the big logs on Section six...

WORDS: MEL FALCONER; PICS: SI MELBER

savour the world's best feet-up merchants tackling almost impossible obstacles.

Don't Stop Me Now

This year had always promised to be even more exciting with the debut of the new four-stroke Montesa. Just about everybody in the trials world has been waiting to see how well the thumpers would perform in the white heat of competition against the two-strokes.

And none more so than seven-times world outdoor and five-times world indoor champ Dougie Lampkin. As the undisputed 'King of Sheffield' Dougie has clocked up an impressive eight victories here, only losing out to ex-Beta rider Albert Cabestany in 2003, when an unfortunate misfire in the dying moments of the final race denied him the win.

This was Dougie's first outing aboard the new (and very stock) Montesa 4RT and the pressure was on, especially after a not so brilliant 2004 season which saw his seven year World Outdoor Championship reign ended by Honda team-mate Takahisa Fujinami.

Add to this his rather disappointing third place in the World Indoor series last year and the fact his Montesa was fresh out of the box, the Silsden lad certainly had a lot more to prove than usual at the Sheffield Arena.

We Will Rock You

However, the advantage of having a home crowd cheering you on is a big bonus, and the fans that attend Sheffield every year are probably about the most passionate, enthusiastic and up-for-it crowd in the world.

Vocal is not the word - as the lights dimmed and the music started pounding out across the arena, the audience went wild, tooting their



'Skipping' the Light Fantastic: Dougie Does the Double!

Cabestany makes a leap of faith...



sneaked-in air horns as the British champ made his grand entrance riding around the concourse.

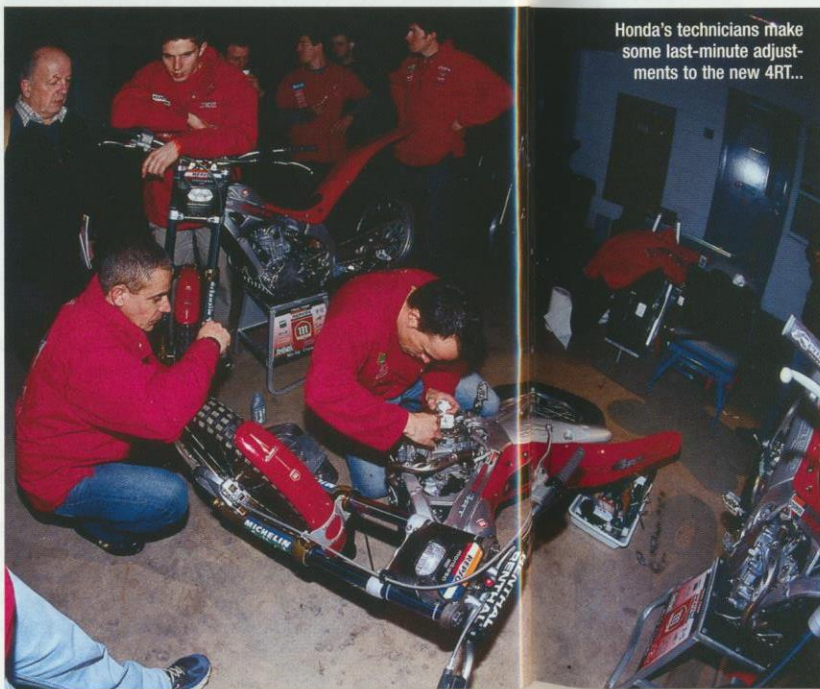
The reception was almost as loud for the other six riders - Dougie's team-mate and new outdoor champion 'Fujigas' also on a Mont 4RT, newly signed Sherco pilot Albert Cabestany, Barcelona boy Marc Frexia, also aboard the four-stroke Montesa, plus youngster Jeroni Fajardo and wildcard Polish newcomer Tadeusz Blazusiak, both riding Gassers.

And of course, reigning indoor champ Adam Raga on his Gas Gas Pro. Starting the season under the guidance of the great Jordi Tarres, could Raga even the score against Dougie?

Play The Game

As usual veteran course designer - Dougie's dad Martin Lampkin - had put together an extremely challenging and original nine obstacles, plus a daunting quarter pipe and a new spectacular four-bar high jump.

As soon as the cheering had died down, the show began with a qualifying lap, with all seven riders attempting the nine observed sections. First section was the PJ Oils bottles, followed by



Honda's technicians make some last-minute adjustments to the new 4RT...

a steep red wooden slatted up 'n' over obstacle. Third and fourth hazards were some high, wobbly cable drums spliced together and then an incredibly tricky four-skip section.

Next were some boxes with difficult jump manoeuvres between them, and number six was a technical looking log section that was being touted as particularly suitable for the new thumpers. Section seven was the giant Michelin Tyres that looked as if they had come straight off a space rocket transporter, with the

eighth obstacle being a collection of sleepers arranged into a steep slope with rocks attached on top of them at spaced intervals. The final hurdle was an intimidating rocky step climb, with the lap ending as soon as both tyres touched down at the top.

It's A Hard Life

Wild card rider, four times Polish champ 'Taddy' Blazusiak got the show on the road with a gutsy 'section tester' display, although obstacles four to eight proved too much for the 21-year-old, recording 'fives' on all of them.

Entering his first full indoor season, baby-faced Jeroni Fajardo had a fantastic clean first three sections, but as with Taddy, the tricky skip and boxes hazards were a jump too far for him.

Last year wasn't the best for fiery Catalan Marc Frexia, placing fifth in both the indoor and outdoor world championships. Being first out on one of the new four-stroke Monts, he didn't seem to fare any better than the stokers tackling the by now notorious sections four and five.

2002 world indoor champ Cabestany made his first competitive appearance since joining Sherco



recently and his fluid riding style and stunning throttle control was awe-inspiring to watch. With just 14 marks lost, this impressive display set the benchmark for the top three riders.

Under Pressure

In response, odds-on favourite Raga started his indoor title defence strongly on his special factory Gasser with his customary smoothness, clearing the first four sections and only dabbing once on the skips, the only rider not to five it all night, drawing an awed silence from the crowd.

The arena atmosphere was soon fully charged again as Dougie came out on his Mont. Knowing he had to get a good result to make it into the final, unfortunately the pressure seemed to take its toll and he fived four sections on the trot - not the kind of performance expected from the King of Sheffield.

Now it was all down to Fujigas. After deliberately fiving the two most difficult sections (four and five) in order to save time, he unluckily fived section seven by bouncing clean out of it



To the victors...
the spoils!

accidentally after leaping 12 feet from the top of the sleepers, but he still managed to snatch the last place in the final ahead of Dougie with just 30 seconds to spare.

With just the high jump and quarter pipe race to go, all hopes for Dougie to claw back some points were lost as he knocked the top bar off the jump, but he did manage to beat Fujigas soundly in the race, a small consolation.

For the first time in history the British champ had failed to make the final, but Dougie, in true showman style, bravely bade farewell to his home crowd with a lap of honour.

The Show Must Go On

With their man out, the fans were in more sombre mood as the final kicked off, and to make things even more difficult for the three finalists, the obstacles had to be ridden in the opposite direction. Just a minute was allowed to complete each section, with riders' penalised one mark for every additional 30 seconds over (or part of).

Starting in reverse order of qualification, Fujigas was at a slight disadvantage as he hadn't had the luxury of seeing anyone else do it. But the Japanese rider, famed for his balls-out approach, showed he had calmed down as he steadily took the final's only four-stroke through the first three sections losing just eight marks. Raga put on an equally impressive performance with just seven marks dropped, but Cabestany had quite a bad start, fiving all three sections.

All that changed in section four, the infamous skip hazard. To everybody's surprise, Raga dabbed twice, Fuji fived it but Cabestany cleared it, putting him right back in the running.

We Are The Champions

At the halfway stage Raga was leading with 14 points, with just a single point separating second place Fujigas on 19 and Cabestany on 20. Onto the quarter pipe races and the new Mont 4RT managed to beat both the stokers convincingly, giving Fuji a two-point lead on Cabestany.

Sections eight and nine were where the trial was decided. With Raga and Fuji fiving them both, Cabestany staged a late comeback with his almost flawless technique, only dabbing once throughout to snatch second place from Fuji. Sadly, it was a case of too little too late as the superbly balanced Sherco pilot sacrificed three marks on time, costing him the win he so thoroughly deserved.

So it was victory to Raga and the Gas Gas team and with just the high-jump to go, Fujigas was determined to go out with a bang as he treated the crowd to a big feet-off-the-pegs jump in true freestyle fashion.

Yet again, Sheffield provided the kind of seat-edge, nail-biting action that only it can. And in a strange twist of fate - which Dougie must have found ironic - this time it was the Spaniard getting all the glory and the Brit looking on from the sidelines...

RESULTS: QUALIFICATION LAP

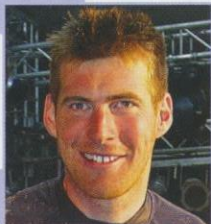
1	ADAM RAGA (SPAIN)	11
2	ALBERT CABESTANY (SPAIN)	16
3	TAKAHISA FUJINAMI (JAPAN)	20
4	DOUGIE LAMPKIN (UK)	22
5	MARC FREIXA (SPAIN)	27
6	JERONI FAJARDO (SPAIN)	29
7	TADEUSZ BLAZUSIAK (POLAND)	32

FINAL

1	ADAM RAGA	27
2	ALBERT CABESTANY	30
3	TAKAHISA FUJINAMI	33

INDOOR WTC 2005

21 JANUARY	MARSEILLE, FRANCE
28 JANUARY	TOULOUSE, FRANCE
4 FEBRUARY	GRANADA, SPAIN
6 FEBRUARY	BARCELONA, SPAIN
12 FEBRUARY	ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA
19 FEBRUARY	MILAN, ITALY
26 FEBRUARY	LISBON, PORTUGAL
5 MARCH	ROME, ITALY
12 MARCH	BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA
19 MARCH	BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND
26 MARCH	GELSENKIRCHEN, GERMANY



SPEED

'THE DEATH OF FELLOW RIDERS IS SOMETHING I DON'T REALLY DWELL OVER TOO MUCH FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, SADLY IT CAN HAPPEN TO ANY OF US, AS WE ALL KNOW THE RISKS WE TAKE'

T

he off-season is a funny time of year, especially for a rider like myself. As one busy season draws to a close, the break over Christmas is something I really look forward to from about September onwards. The chance to spend some quality time at home, away from airports, hire cars and the WEC, is needed to recharge batteries before the new season arrives. No matter how relaxing I imagine it being it never seems to work out that way.

Firstly, switching off, *completely*

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

switching off, is all but impossible for me to do. Despite my best intentions there's always a massive long list of things to do, both bike and house related, that make it impossible to completely switch off. But the biggest reason I find it hard to down-tools and chill out is because I'm aware, like most top WEC riders are, that the new season is never too far away. While resting after a busy season is an important part of preparing for the next, knowing that you really need to be completely bike-fit and ready to race for early March means that quality down-time doesn't really exist. Not for me anyway.

2005 looks set to be one hell of a busy year, which is why I haven't been too worried about spending loads of time practicing on my four-stroke. Not just yet anyway. Over Christmas I spent more time on my trials bike, messing around with friends and just keeping myself tuned into riding a bike - trials, motocross or enduro. With the weather not being that good on the

Island, though, I've only been on my enduro bike a few times. Like I said there's plenty of time to get ready for the first race of the WEC, which starts in April, a month later than last year.

While I have some tests planned with the Farioli KTM team in Spain and possibly Italy in February I will still do the majority of my training and riding at home, on the tracks that I know well. Riding in Spain early in the season is good for a number of reasons - namely better weather, which allows you to get out on your bike more - but I personally feel that a track that you know well, even if it is a little bit muddy, is better. What I have found when riding in places like Spain is that unless you spend a lot of time in one training area, and go back to that exact same place the following year, you can't compare the way you were riding 12 months ago to the way you are riding now. Back home on the Island, on the tracks I've been timing myself around for years, I can.

The time I've spent riding on my enduro bike has been on my 250, in preparation for the extreme Hell's Gate in Italy and The Tough One, a new extreme Hare Scramble event being run by the Wirral Off-Road Club. Having been unable to ride a bike over Christmas last year because of the operation I had on my back, it made me realise that while you have to be mentally preparing yourself for the start of the BEC and WEC from early January you don't need to go overboard with the on-bike training. Hell's Gate is an extremely physical race and I managed to win it last year thinking that I would struggle with bike fitness, so I know that this year I should be all right... I hope! By the time you're reading this I'll know... one way or the other.

In fact by the time you get to read this I will have actually made two trips to Italy - the first being an indoor enduro held in Genoa. The indoor will be the third of its kind that I've competed in during the last five months, and my first official ride as a Farioli KTM rider. I'll be riding both events on a 250cc two-stroke and I'm really looking forward to them. After those races and The Tough One are done I'll be getting started with the 500cc thumper, which is due to arrive any time soon.

After the Hell's Gate event I'm expecting to stay in either Italy or travel to Spain to do some testing with the team. The beauty of not switching bikes or classes for '05 is that I know pretty much what my bike will be like. Having had suspension and motor tests at the end of last year, all that is really left to do is test a few small things like triple clamp offset, which shouldn't take too long to do. The WP technicians have been busy from the start of the year until early February with the Dakar, so they should be on hand at the test should any of us, that's Marko Tarkkala, Samuli Aro, Alex Botturi, Ivan Cervantes, Petteri Pohjamo and Alex Belometti, need to make adjustments to the settings we finalised at the end of '04.

It wouldn't be right of me to mention the Dakar and not comment on the sad loss of the two KTM riders. Only knowing Fabrizio, he handed me my trophy on the Hell's Gate podium last year, his death so soon after that of Richard Sainct's is pretty hard to believe, especially as they were both such experienced rally riders. Just like with the TT, rider deaths seem to come along in small groups. The death of fellow motorcycle riders is something that I don't really dwell over too much for obvious reasons, and as sad as it is it can happen to any of us as we all know the risks we take. I think growing up and living on the Island, where riders regularly get killed in the TT, makes me see motorcycling tragedies slightly differently



Fond memories: Meoni presented Knighter with his trophy at last year's Hell's Gate...

to many. While the death of a rider is always hard to come to terms with and rocks the industry, as a motorcycle racer you simply have to get on with the racing.

On a brighter note I take my hat off to Cyril Despres, who won this year's Dakar, and the two British riders that finished it, Mick Extance and Si Pavey. Following the event on TV each night it looked pretty tough this year. Cyril rode extremely well through what must have been a very difficult event for him. Hopefully I'll have won an event or two by the time I write my next column... fingers crossed.

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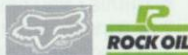
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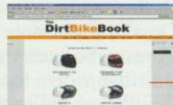
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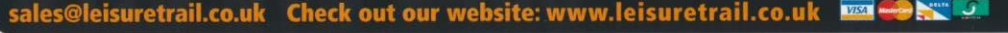
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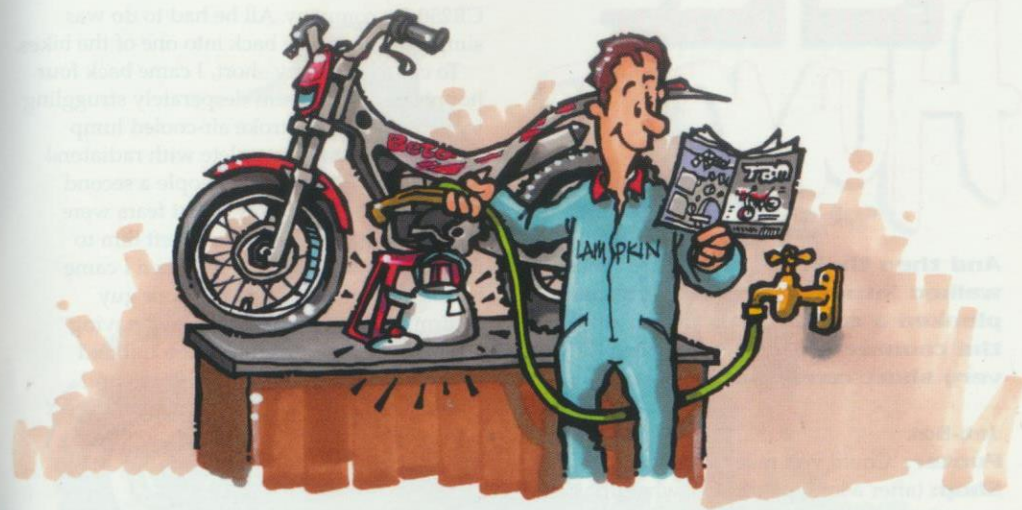
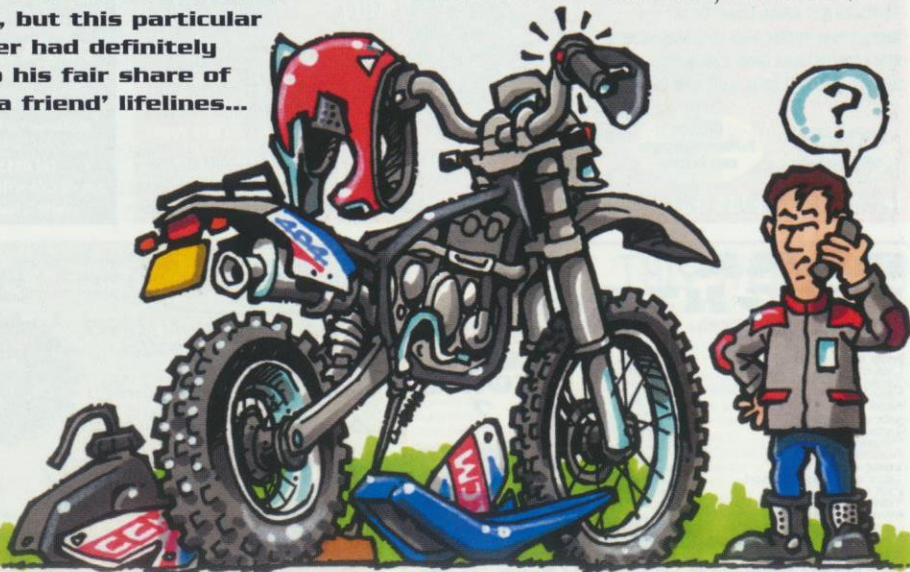
Good Dealer Humour

There's nowt as queer as folk and the off-road community is certainly no exception! TBM managed to persuade a selection of dealers to dish the dirt on some of their more clueless clientele...

One of the many roles a responsible, upstanding member of the dirtbike dealer fraternity gladly fulfils is that of trusted adviser to the less educated masses, but this particular customer had definitely used up his fair share of 'phone a friend' lifelines...

Killing Time

'Having bought a CCM 404 off us about a year ago, there wasn't a day that went by without the proud owner calling us with 'serious' maintenance calls - how to adjust the chain,



lockwire the grips, you know the sort of thing.

Then one Saturday, another emergency call came in - the guy had gone out for a ride, stopped for lunch, then when he returned to his trusty steed, it refused point-blank to start, no matter what he tried.

After two fruitless hours of telephone diagnostics, in desperation he decided to call the AA out. Half an hour later and a very sheepish customer called back. It turns out that the AA car patrolman who came to his assistance - whose bike knowledge amounted to the fact they have two wheels and go fast - managed to miraculously fix the CCM.

And the problem? Yep, the kill switch had been left flicked to the OFF position - our sentiments exactly...'

And then there's times when you just can't help profiting from other people's mistakes...

Bang On The Money

'One of our shop regulars bought a brand new CCM 404 from us and just couldn't wait to go out and get dirty. Despite all our warnings about waiting for a sumpguard to come in before going riding, and even though it was only a two-day wait for one to arrive, out he went.

Of course, the first thing he ran into was a rather hard rock-step, where he promptly

smacked the water pump casing straight onto the rocks and wrecked it.

So, instead of waiting and paying about £85 for a basher, he ended up shelling out the best part of £250 on the requisite guard, new case and our blood, sweat and tears (of laughter).'

Ian Cooper, Haines & Co

Now, it's common knowledge dealers love their customers dearly - depending on how much they spend of course - but at what point do they max out their credibility limit?

Still Waters Run Deep

'A guy came in and bought a spanking new Beta REV3 trialler. A couple of weeks after, in came the bike with the owner complaining it didn't run and claiming it hadn't turned a wheel. Oh, and could we fix it please because of course it's still under warranty?

A bit perplexed, we nonetheless agreed to take a look and get it sorted. No sooner had we got it up on the bench than we discovered that the engine had water in it - and not just a little bit! This bike was full to the brim with Yorkshire's finest mountain spring water.

On informing the owner, he promptly denied all knowledge, said he'd never ridden it and then accused *us* of putting the water in there. So, like the waters of the Red Sea, we parted company very quickly...'

Good Dealer Humour

And then there's the punter who walked into the shop and casually plonked a carburettor down on the counter - here's how the very short conversation went...

Jet-Set

Punter: 'Could you re-jet this please?'

Shop: (after a long pause) 'So, what do you want putting in there then?'

Punter: 'I dunno... just want it re-jetted mate. You're the expert.'

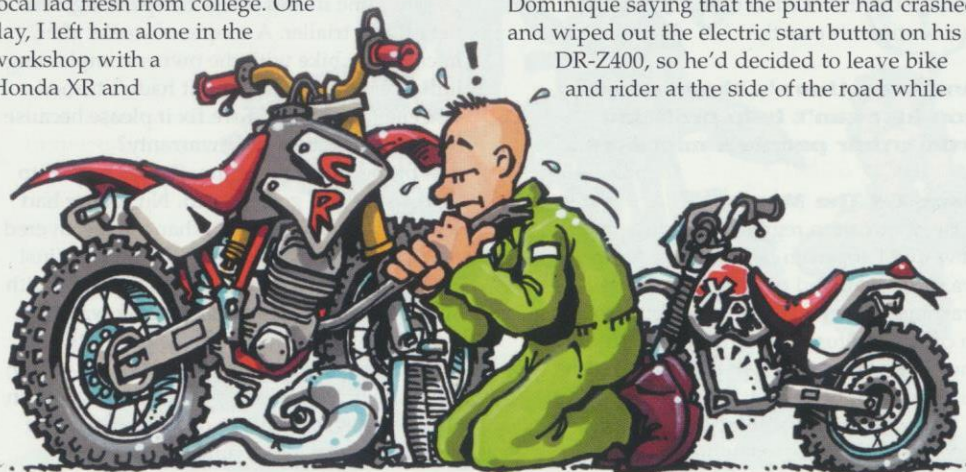
Shop: (eyes rolling heavenwards, offering a silent prayer to the ceiling) 'That much is patently obvious...'

John Lampkin, John Lampkin Imports

Here's a heart-warming tale for all those of you out there who have ever doubted your own mechanical abilities...

A Perfect Fit

'A long time ago, I thought I'd do the right thing and so hired a young local lad fresh from college. One day, I left him alone in the workshop with a Honda XR and



CR250 for company. All he had to do was simply fit an engine back into one of the bikes.

To cut a long story short, I came back four hours later to find him desperately struggling to wedge the four-stroke air-cooled lump into the CR frame, complete with radiators!

Now, I'm all for giving people a second bite at the cherry but my worst fears were confirmed when once again, I left him to fend for himself for a while. When I came back from lunch, I found the poor guy squirming on the workshop floor, having spent the best part of two hours trapped under a bike that had fallen off its stand. Needless to say, I sadly had to let him go...'

Steve Plain, Steve Plain Motorcycles

Possibly one of the worst things that can happen on one of your own trail riding holidays is losing a paying punter, especially in foreign climes under bizarre circumstances...

One of Our Dirtbikers Is Missing

'I was standing outside a café, trying not to get stressed out by the fact that my faithful sweeper Dominique and a punter still hadn't turned up, when the phone rang. In slightly exasperated tones Dominique informed me that the punter in question had lost his bum-bag, with his passport in it, and that they were going back to try and find it.

Half an hour later I got another call from Dominique saying that the punter had crashed and wiped out the electric start button on his DR-Z400, so he'd decided to leave bike and rider at the side of the road while



he pressed on. As it was getting dark, I decided to jump in the van and go to where the punter was parked up, and wait for Dominique to return.

Eventually I got to the rendezvous point, only to discover that there was nobody there. One hour later Dominique rocked up triumphantly with the bum-bag but still no punter. It was now pitch black in the forest and I was, for once, a touch concerned.

We were both completely baffled by the punter's disappearance, as according to Dominique, he was very tired and couldn't start the bike. So with no idea of where he was we started discussing the pros and cons of declaring a 'Plan Rouge', which basically involves helicopters, tracker dogs and a big fat bill. I was just about to make the call when the punter suddenly just walked out of the forest with no bike!

After having berated him soundly for his impromptu disappearing act I finally got round to asking him just where in the hell his bike was. It turned out that before he'd lost his bum-bag he had taken a wrong turning in the woods, and knowing Dominique would

only search for the 'bag along the road-booked route, had managed to bump-start his bike and go off to where he thought he had previously got lost.

Predictably, he had then lost his way yet again, got stuck in a gully, stalled his bike and had been unable to start it again.

It took another hour to find the bike in the dark and then it had to be towed out of the gully and all the way to the road. Sitting in the van driving back to the hotel, I couldn't help but ask my customer why he had behaved in such a bizarre manner.

Somewhat sheepishly, he confessed that not only did his bum-bag have his passport in it but also some vital medicine, which he had to take every morning and every night without fail.

He didn't tell me exactly what would happen if he didn't take his medication but I got the distinct impression the consequences of not taking it were about the same as a werewolf glimpsing a full moon, which may go some way in explaining his incredibly erratic behaviour..!'

Chris Evans, Sport Adventure

Good Dealer Humour

If you have kids (a situation I imagine most of you haven't been able to avoid, rather like irate ramblers on a trail), then you'll know just how many silly situations they regularly get themselves into. Now while this may be an endearing quality in your progeny, it definitely isn't in grown men - especially when shiny new dirtbikes and rock steps are involved...

On Rocky Ground

'Buying a bike is always a big expense but even more so when you run trail riding tours, so we were really chuffed when we bought not one, but three brand new Honda XR400s about two years ago.

So, first time out with all three bikes plus punters and the going was deliberately nice 'n' easy, as we didn't want to push anything or anybody too hard to start with. Even so, it was soon obvious that one client was taking a bit longer to 'get into the groove'.

Encountering the first obstacle of the day, a small rock step, which in reality was nothing more than a slight incline, I told the group all they had to have to get up it was a 'little momentum'.

One by one, everybody manages to scramble up and over no problem until there's only the slightly slower gentleman left.

To shouts of encouragement, he set off at a leisurely pace, and to my sheer horror somehow manages to loop his mint XR on the rock and lunches the entire back-end! Nothing escaped damage - fender, lights and exhaust were trashed and he even managed to shift the whole rear subframe over.

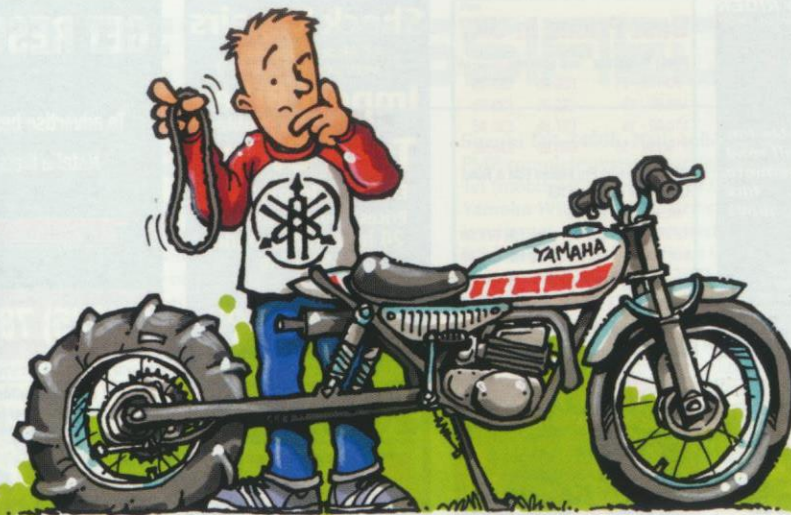
His response when asked what the hell happened? 'I haven't been on a bike in eight years since the last time I had a nasty accident...'

Whatever you do to earn a crust, there are some occupations where a certain level of fitness is not just useful but fairly essential, say firefighting for instance. However, wrestling cats down from trees all day clearly wasn't enough of a workout for this particular Fireman Sam...

If You Can't Take The Heat...

'Another day, another trail ride and this time we had a burly bald, Mancunian fireman aboard his own CCM 604. He was an ex-sportsbike rider who clearly didn't feel like a complete man unless he had the biggest, grunniest bike to go 'off the blacktop' with.

After dropping the CCM around 20 times in one morning, the guy was seriously beginning to hate how heavy his macho machine was,



and to top it off, the bike's exhaust has started to crack badly.

When we stopped for lunch, the can snapped off completely, so it had to be bungeed to the back of the bike. But when the bloke took his helmet off, he was so hot his entire head was steaming and his face looked as if he'd got sunstroke, it was so red!

Ten minutes later and the fire still hadn't abated, so he took his knackered body and exhaust home, saying 'I can't take it anymore, I need to get back onto a road'.

I can only hope that there weren't any serious fires in Manchester that night, 'cos he barely had the energy to put his boots on...!'

Boyd Emmerich, Overlander Trail Tours

For most people, fitting a new chain and sprockets is normally a pretty straightforward affair, but sadly not for one Yamaha TY80 owner...

King Of The Swingers

'Back when I was a nipper, I remember a customer phoning up and asking for a chain and sprocket kit for his TY80 trials bike. No problem, out it went. A couple of days later and he called again, saying the chain was too short!

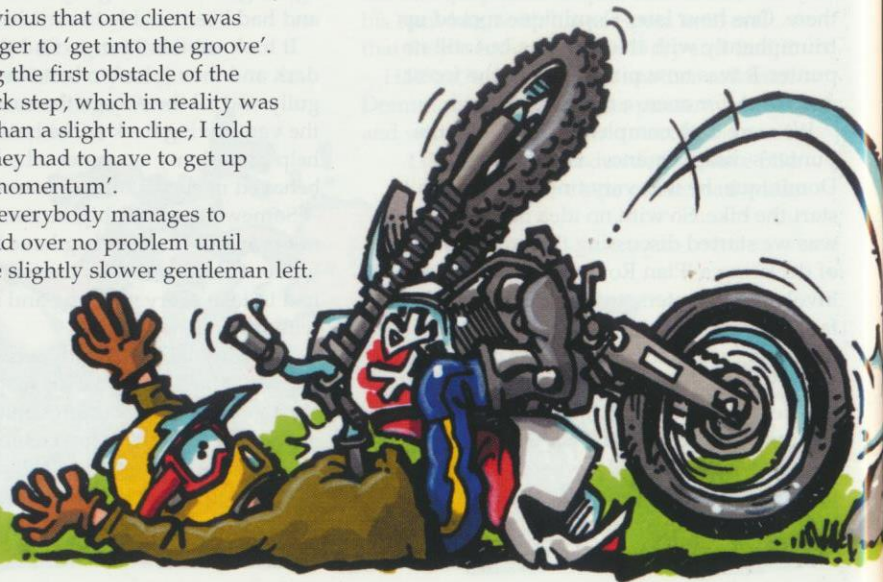
Perplexed, we checked the order (my mum did them back then, and she wasn't one to make a mistake), and everything was correct. We sent him another kit out anyway, just in case.

Low and behold, the same bloke rings up again pretty angry and insists that the chain won't fit. After exhaustive questioning, it turns out that the chain is indeed too short. Because the idiot had lengthened his swing-arm by two inches..!'


John 'Shirty' Shirt, Gas Gas

TBM would like to thank everyone who supplied material for this feature for daring to tell all...

Next month: In the interests of fairness, the finger of fun is pointed squarely at us humble hacks...read it and weep!



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Tel (mobile) 07900 206634 or 01438 869407 (Herts)
Honda CRF250X, 2004, road reg'd, taxed, one lady
owner, only 200 gentle miles, UK bike, excellent
standard cond, only mods Acerbis barkbusters and
a Panoram Endurance speedo, complete with Honda
manual and parts book, a few spares, you won't find
a better one, £4100 ono. Tel (mobile) 07714 568551 or
01895 239757 (Middx)

BMW F650GS, X-reg, 12000 miles, Touratech rally
bike, BMW service history, Renthals, WP suspension,
dual seat, see Dec issue's Doing the Rounds, £4500
ono. Tel 01677 470623 (N Yorks)

Suzuki SP370, genuine 2200 miles, dry stored since
1983, swap for smaller modern trail bike, cash either
way. Tel 01453 836575 (Gloucs)

Cagiva Supercity, V-reg, engine rebuild etc, £1400.
Tel 07752 888216 (London)

KTM 400EXC, 2002, green lane use, steering damper,
sumpguard, £2950. Tel 01953 883735 (Norfolk)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 51-reg, Renthals, CRD exhaust,
frame/sumpguards, Trailtech, spares, £2500 or exchange
KTM 200EXC(GS) autolube, with cash adjustment.
Tel (mobile) 07801 208493 or 01202 603377 (Dorset)

Gas Gas EC200, 2000, full engine rebuild Feb '04,
new seat cover/graphics/headlight, barkbusters,
fully serviced, great all-rounder, £1750.
Tel 07775 624008 (Devon)

Honda XR250, 02-reg, taxed, 1800 miles, new
plastics/tyres/chain, handguards, DEP silencer,
bashplate, Renthals, braided hoses, £2750 ono.
Tel 01883 340925 (Surrey)

Yamaha WR426F, 2003, Renthals, new c+s, YZ450 cam,
Arrow pipe, new tyres, spare plastics, £3000.
Tel 01376 563117 (Essex)

KTM 450EXC, 2004, 52 hour's trail/fun use only, very
well maintained, £300 worth of extras, best offer
nearest £4400, no dreamers. Tel (mobile) 07742 934570
or 01235 862933 (Oxon)

Yamaha YZ426F, 2002, T&T, road legal, new tyres/c+s
etc, light trail use only, £3250 ono. Tel (mobile) 07799
762214 or 01709 325169 (S Yorks)

Kawasaki KLE250 Super Sherpa, 2000, T&T, new
tyres/battery, really smart little trail bike, £1795.
Tel 01997 421911 (Scotland)

Yamaha WR426F, 02-reg, taxed, full road kit,
sump/frame/handguards, new tyres/Renthal c+s,
well looked after, £3000 ono. Tel 07708 359670 (Essex)

KTM 400EXC, 2000, fully serviced, ready to race,
brushguards, new rear tyre/seat cover, service
manual, video, quick sale, £2200. Tel 07880 707605
(Northants)

KTM 400EXC, 2002, T&T, bashplate, handguards,
clutchsaver, exceptional cond, £3050.
Tel 01789 294460 (Warks)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2001, believed under 500 miles,
FMF complete system, handguards, £2500 no offers.
Tel (mobile) 07813 849686 or 01306 500580 (Surrey)

Yamaha WR250F, 2003, elec start, many spare parts,
lovely motor, always serviced, good clean bike, £3000.
Tel (mobile) 07813 849686 or 01306 500580 (Surrey)

Suzuki RM250 enduro, 2003, lights, 15L tank, new
everything, just serviced, green lane use only, £2500
ono. Tel 02476 502735 (W Mids)

KTM 450EXC, 2004 model, 03-reg, 51 hours' use,
loads of extras, mainly green lane use, exc cond,
£3900 ono. Tel 01782 851485 (Staffs)

Kawasaki KDX200, 1998, R-reg, T&T, FMF pipe,
Renthals, spares inc tyres/standard exhaust/unused
c+s, good cond, £1750. Tel 01386 858552 (Worcs)

Suzuki DR-Z400, blue, 4000 miles, good cond, £2795
or deal for late Pampera. Tel 01342 312734 (W Sussex)

Cagiva Elephant 900, 1993, Lucky Strike colours,
MoT, good cond, £1850 ovno or may deal on
Yamaha WR400F. Tel (mobile) 07979 461943
or 01435 863445 (Sussex)

CCM 404DS, nine months old, 850 miles, light use,
must sell hence £3485 or may p/x classic trials bike.
Tel 01323 761566 (Sussex)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 51-reg, CRD exhaust, Pro-Tapers,
Trailtech computer, wave discs, rad/frame/
sumpguards, barkbusters, £2650. Tel 07944 112625
(Tyne & Wear)

Honda XR250R, B-reg, MoT, new tyres/sprockets,
not overly tall so suit first timer or lady rider, owner
retiring, £750 ono. Tel 01664 823957 (Leics)

Honda XR650R, X-reg, MoT, 3500 road miles, make
superb supernoto superb cond, £2350 or exchange for
TT600R, XR600, DR650 etc. Tel 01296 688185 (Bucks)

BSA Metisse trail bike, brand new rep, great British
trail bike, exchange for good B40 trials.
Tel 01874 730364 (Powys)

Triumph Pre-65 Trials cub, alloy petrol/oil tanks,
alloy rims, cap discharge ignition, usual trials mods,
£1150. Tel 01372 274561 (Surrey)

Honda XR250R, 1999, totally original, new tyres, vgc,
ill health forces sale, £1750. Tel 02380 848531 (Hants)

KTM 450EXC, 2003, road use, sumpguard, spares,
exc cond, £3850 or p/x newer 525EXC.
Tel 01947 880255 (N Yorks)

Honda XL250RC Mono, 1984, T&T, new c+s, good
cond for year, can email pics. Tel 01245 420108 (Essex)

Yamaha Serow, 1996, T&T, Renthals, barkbusters, new
c+s, vgc, £1650 ono. Tel 01594 528200 (Gloucs)

CCM 604DS, 2001, 51-reg, 2500 miles, enduro and
SM wheels, race and standard cans, immaculate
cond, £3500 ono. Tel (mobile) 07867 538640
or 01535 674685 (W Yorks)

KTM Adventure R, 1999, T-reg, T&T, 8800 miles, FSH,
new tyres, vgc, £2700 ono. Tel (mobile) 07710 782442
or (home) 01805 625463 (Devon)

Kawasaki KDX200, 1997, R-reg, MoT, ideal green
laner/enduro, phone for more details, £1425 ono
or may p/x. Tel 01772 749948 (Lancs)

Chinese XL125 copy by Hongdou, 2003, learner legal,

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

much powder-coating and mods for green laning, vgc but dented tank, £750. Tel 01772 792231 (Lancs)

Husqvarna WR250, 1991, T&T, newish c+s, good cond. Tel Steve on 01582 462496 (Herts)

KTM 450EXC, '04 model, 54-reg, 10 hours' light use, cooling fan, handguards, bashplate, some spares, £4400 ono. Tel Steve on 01708 857004 (Essex)

KTM 200EXC, Sept 2000, T&T, new FMF pipe and sumpguard, clutchguard, £1795. Tel (mobile) 07768 445473 or 0114 410361 (Derbys)

Honda XR650R, 2001, CRD sumpguard, Akrapovic, new c+s, Renthals, plus Talon/gold Excel SM wheels and 320mm disc, £3250. Tel 07766 770408 (Worcs)

Yamaha WR250F, 2004 model, 2300 miles, frameguards, new tyres, green lane use only, £3600. Tel 07050 149920 (Kent)

Honda CRM250 mkII, T&T, low miles, Renthals, alloy bashplate, brushguards, DEP system, looks and rides great, can email pics, £1200. Tel (mobile) 07890 404252 or 01535 663958 (Yorks)

KTM 525EXC, 2003, UK bike, 1200 miles, hand/sumpguards, minimal off-road use, exc cond, plus road wheels, £4250. Tel 07717 677567 (Warks)

Yamaha TTR250, 1993, T&T, elec start, new c+s/tyres/bearings, CRD stainless exhaust, ideal green laner, very reliable, exc cond, £1795 ovno. Tel (mobile) 01604 791798 or 07747 783080 (Northants)

Honda CRF100, 2004, bombproof mini thumper, hardly used, exc cond, real bargain, £1450. Tel (mobile) 01604 791798 or 07747 783080 (Northants)

KTM 625SXC enduro, 2003 model, low miles, road use only, immaculate cond, also have Talon SM wheels etc if required, £3750 ono. Tel (mobile) 07816 104607 or 01305 826670 (Dorset)

Gas Gas Pampera 250, 2002, one owner, 2000 miles, Renthals, £1800. Tel (mobile) 07976 833682 or 01386 761169 (Worcs)

Honda XR400R, 2002, 2000 miles, Renthals, skidplate, frameguards, spare wheels/tyres, spares, good cond, £2600. Tel (mobile) 07976 833682 or 01386 761169 (Worcs)

Yamaha Serow, 1999, blue/white, T&T, only 6000km, disc brakes, road use only, tubeless rear, exc cond, any trial, £1950. Tel 01209 831969 (Cornwall)

Husqvarna WR250 enduro, 2002, only covered 800km, green lane use only, as new, £2600. Tel 07785 990021 (Hants)

Gas Gas Raga replica 280cc trial bikes, magnesium parts, one of only 300 made, immaculate cond, £2600. Tel (mobile) 07799 797736 or 01235 848420 (Oxon)

Suzuki DR125, converted to field bike, ideal for first bike, £425. Tel 01438 224525 (Herts)

CCM 604E Sport, 2001, 51-reg, silver, only 875 miles, WP suspension, almost showroom cond, £2500. Tel 01491 834059 (Oxon)

Honda XR250L, 1999, silver/white, T&T, elec start, new tyres, green laned only, standard bike, exc cond, £1950 ono. Tel 07976 367324 (Lancs)

Suzuki DR250 Djebel, P-reg, T&T, sump/brushguards, rear rack and toolpack, new tyres/c+s, does 210 miles to a tank, good cond, can email pics, £1300.

Tel 01535 663958 (Yorks)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2001, T&T, elec start, recent c+s/tyres, vgc, £2350 ono. Tel (mobile) 07787 961711 or 01209 831651 (Cornwall)

Yamaha WR450F, 53-reg, full road kit, CRD bashplate, FMF Q-pipe, handguards, spares, too much to list, £4200 or available with supermoto kit for £4600. Tel 01268 457540 (Essex)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2000, W-reg, very light use, Fatbars, Q-pipe, bashplate, new c+s, injury forces sale, £2150. Tel 01268 746104 (Essex)

Gas Gas TXT 200 Pro trials bike, 2004, yellow, one lady owner, immaculate cond. Tel 01494 711132 (Bucks)

Honda XR200, 1995, T&T, owned last eight years, ideal first trailie, very forgiving, ultra reliable, rebuilt in 2002, camouflaged for stealth TRFer, £1050. Tel 01477 534425 (Cheshire)

Honda XR185, 1985, twin-shock, stored since 1994, bit tatty but solid engine/exhaust, garage clearout, £750. Tel 01477 534425 (Cheshire)

Aprilia Pegaso 650, 2000, X-reg, silver, low miles, new c+s, topbox, great cond, fab bike, £1900 ono. Tel 02920 693768 (Cardiff)

TM 250E two-stroke, Nov 2000, X-reg, T&T, Ohlins, new plastics, exc cond, £2000. Tel 07946 706590 (Bristol)

Gas Gas TXT 280 Pro trials bike, 2003, full service inc c+s, light use only, any trial, £2200 or may p/x for four-stroke. Tel (mobile) 07786 082516 or 01924 469564 (W Yorks)

TM 125 enduro, 2001, T&T, two previous keepers, some spares, in A1 cond, call for details, £1950 ono. Tel 01273 464381 (W Sussex)

Honda CRM250 AR, 1999, black/red, T&T, only 3000km, sump/handguards, exc original cond, £2650. Tel 01430 828533 (Yorks)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 51-reg, T&T, stainless road legal pipe, lights, trail ridden only, usual scuffs, never raced, very reliable, £2399. Tel 01225 752518 (Wilts)

Honda CRM250 mkII, 1991, white, T&T, not used off-road, MPH speedo, genuine original bike in exc cond. Tel 0117 956 8253 (Bristol)

Honda CRM250R mkl, white, T&T, owned for three years, wide pegs, barkbusters, Renthals, £1050. Tel (mobile) 07941 828414 or 01332 677070 (Derbys)

KTM 400EXC, April 2004, taxed, low miles, handguards, bashplate, exc cond, reluctant sale, £4100 ovno. Tel 01405 818896 (S Yorks)

KTM 450EXC, 2005 model, six and a half hours' use, never raced or crashed, as new cond, £5000. Tel 07769 974320 (Fife)

KTM 400EXC, 2002, little use, usual extras, recent c+s/tyres/brakes, vgc, family commitments force sale, £2950 ono. Tel 01633 872515 (Gwent)

Yamaha WR250F, eight months old, fully maintained, bashplate, Renthals, vgc, £3550. Tel 01582 872764 (Beds)

Yamaha YZ426F, 2001, new sprockets/clutch, very clean and tidy, must be seen, £1950 ono. Tel (mobile) 07977 497829 or 01443 710598 (Mid Glam)

Honda XR400R, 2000, W-reg, very low miles, used

off-road twice, nice standard bike, exc cond, bargain at £2400 ono. Tel 01892 852255 (E Sussex)

Honda CRF230, brand new, inc all lights, never been ridden, ready to register, £2850 ono. Tel (mobile) 07974 244950 or 01539 723432 (Cumbria)

Yamaha WR400F, 1999, W-reg, T&T, only 860 miles, one owner, showroom cond, £2650. Tel 01628 773315 (Berks)

Honda XR250R, 52-reg, 3000km, full road kit, handguards, new tyres/c+s/pads, good cond, £2350 ono. Tel 07903 723010 (Tyne & Wear)

Yamaha WR426F, 51-reg, T&T, Hot Wheels graphics, alloy hand/sumpguards, FMF exhaust, just serviced, exc cond, £2800 ono. Tel 01623 490076 (Notts)

KTM 450EXC, 2005, road reg'd, taxed, used once, £400 worth of extras, as new, save £1000 on cost of new, £4900 ono. Tel (mobile) 07787 522078 or 01732 762464 (Kent)

Yamaha WR400F, 2000, T&T, 3300km, new tyres, fully serviced, exc cond, bargain at £2350. Tel 01922 645326 (W Mids)

Yamaha WR450F, 2003, 750 trail miles, sump/frameguards, black Excel rims, Renthals, graphics, exc cond, genuine reason for sale, £3495 ono. Tel 01229 820716 (Cumbria)

Suzuki DR350SE, 1999, T&T, elec start, Renthals, very clean bike, FMF Q-pipe also available, £1800 ono. Tel 07973 479274 (Staffs)

Gas Gas Pampera 250, 2002, 02-reg, 900 miles, trail use only, good cond, £1750 ono. Tel 01252 678852 (Hants)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, taxed, 2500 miles, green lane use, MT21s, Renthals, inc all road parts, exc cond, £2700. Tel (mobile) 07818 693003 or 01484 546472 (W Yorks)

CCM 404E, 04-reg, taxed, 400 miles, black plastics, sumpguard, spare exhaust, hardly used, exc cond, £3600 ono. Tel (mobile) 07786 916526 or 01977 6 17528 (W Yorks)

Gas Gas EC300, 2002, blue, T&T, handguards, never raced, vgc, £2450 ono. Tel (mobile) 07969 47451(?) or 0117 965 6577 (Bristol)

Honda CRF250X, 2004, road reg'd, taxed, elec start, derestricted, well maintained, over 40s rider, vgc, £3950 ono. Tel (mobile) 07775 745430 or 01473 311791 (Suffolk)

Honda CRM250 mkII, 1991, T&T, DEP, frame/sumpguards, spare cables, recon suspension, light trail use, above average cond, £1500. Tel 07974 804371 (Cheshire)

Gas Gas EC250, 2004 model, very little use, immaculate cond, £3195 ono. Tel 01246 567556 (Derbys)

Gas Gas EC200, 2002, 52-reg, taxed, hand/sumpguards, recent c+s, some spares, well maintained, little use, vgc, £2200. Tel 01386 832111 (W Mids)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 52-reg, taxed, full lights, Renthals, sumpguard, one owner, £2650 ono. Tel 01495 272451 (Gwent)

Honda XR600, new in Jan 2004, White Bros exhaust system, black Excels, K-Tech suspension, CRD guards, SRC fork brace, 100w stator, £3650. Tel 01625 668966 (Cheshire)

Honda XR400R, 1999, T-reg, T&T, 5000km, brushguards, White Bros can, good cond, £1850. Tel (mobile) 07939 223940 or 01204 308619 (Lancs)

Honda CRF250X, April '04, digital speedo kit, new

tyres, totally standard, exc cond, £3750. Tel (mobile) 07860 394254 or 01865 300880 (Oxon)

Suzuki DR350, 1999, one owner, CRD system, immaculate Acerbis parts, can email pics, £2000 ono. Tel Jon on 01603 759508 (Norfolk)

Gas Gas Pampera 250, 2002 model, Y-reg, hand/sumpguards, well maintained, some spares available, mature rider, good cond, £1800 ono. Tel (mobile) 07850 435270 or 01276 20995 (Surrey)

Yamaha WR250F, June 2003, road reg'd, elec start, FMF pipe, Renthals, Acerbis brushguards, green lane use only, good cond, £3595. Tel 01205 722468 (Lincs)

Honda XL185S, 1979, blue model, road use only, very tidy, runs well, reluctant sale but need the space, offers around, £600. Tel 0121 476 0763 (Warks)

Honda XR400R, 1997, stainless FMF system, Werx graphics, clean and tidy example, bit smokey hence £1700 ono. Tel 07901 675675 (Staffs)

Suzuki DR350S, 1995, new discs/pads, White Bros can, no T&T, very reliable, good cond, £1100 ono. Tel (mobile) 07779 715259 or 01922 866383 (W Mids)

Honda XR250R, 2001, 51-reg, MoT, 3750km, Renthals, Acerbis 'guards, well maintained, mature owner, exc cond, £2050 ono. Tel 07985 720990 (Essex)

Honda CRF230, 2004, road reg'd, elec start, hardly used, exc cond, £2600. Tel 01604 891423 (Northants)

Yamaha WR250F, reg'd 2002, Renthals, hand/sumpguards, new rear tyre, green lane use, well maintained, very tidy bike, £2650 ono. Tel 01284 789588 (Suffolk)

Honda XL250R, 1993, MoT, vgc, £1250 ono. Tel (mobile) 07900 885250 or 01244 548747 (Flintshire)

Sherco 250 trials bike, 2004, brand new, unused, £2500. Tel 01988 500558 (Dumfries)

Honda XR650R SM, 2002, Talons, Akrapovic system, Renthals, CRD bashplate, off-road wheels, £3600 ono. Tel 07941 233845 (Worcs)

KTM 380EXC two-stroke, T&T, 1100 miles, little use, exc cond, £2650. Tel 07956 570572 (Herts)

Yamaha XT225 Serow, F-reg, T&T, elec start, £1050. Tel 07711 222700 (Powys)

Beta Alp 200, 03-reg, yellow, 6000km, road use only, alarmed, new rear tyre, £1950 no canvassers. Tel 01204 883659 (Lancs)

Husaberg FE400, 03 model, 52-reg, taxed, dual start, WP suspension, Excel rims, new c+s/pads, just serviced, green lane use only, possible clothing, £2995 ono. Tel 01792 519287 (W Glam)

Husaberg FE400, Nov 2002, 2100km, light use, exc cond, £2350 ono. Tel 01239 810246 (W Wales)

Yamaha XT600E, 2002, black, 3500 miles, Datatag, exc cond, £2450. Tel 01827 708740 (Staffs)

Honda NX650, 1996, black, T&T, 27000 miles, new pads/c+s/disc/cans, lady owner, history, £1550 ovno. Tel 020 8316 0891 (London)

Honda XL185S, 16000 miles, MoT, rebuilt wheels, new tyres/rear shocks/seat cover, £600 ono. Tel 01708 852387 (Essex)

Yamaha WR400F, 1999, road legal, T&T, 1600 miles, FMF pipe, huge amount of spares included, maintained to a high standard, exc cond, £2300. Tel 0117 962 9609 (Bristol)

Honda XR250R, 2000, V-reg, renthals, CRD bashplate, frameguards, regular oil change, all history/manuals etc, new MT21s, exc cond, £1950. Tel (mobile) 07831

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

359230 or 01296 651898 (Bucks)

KTM 250EXC 2T, 2003, Six Days special, new c+s, handguards, clutchsaver, well maintained, £2700 no timewasters. Tel (eves) 01242 514856 (Gloucs)
Honda XR250R, 2001, 4000km, green lane use only, new rear tyre, Werx graphics kit, vgc, £2500 ono. Tel 01522 789783 (Lincs)

Motorhispania Furia supermoto, 02-reg, T&T low miles, 70cc big-bore kit, USD forks, very clean, £1350. Tel 01795 661911 (Kent)

Yamaha TTR125, one year old, little use, suit 8 - 13 year old, exc cond, £995. Tel 01869 277699 (Oxon)

Kawasaki KDX220, 2000, well maintained, regular oil changes/servicing, light enduro use, good cond, ideal first bike, £1800 ono. Tel 01243 370406 (W Sussex)

KTM 400EXC, reg'd 2000, fully serviced with many new parts, ready to race, can email pics, £2000. Tel 07880 707605 (Northants)

KTM 625SXC enduro, '03 model, low miles, road use only, competition silencer, KTM bashplate, well maintained, immaculate cond, £3750 ono. Tel 01305 826670 (Dorset)

Yamaha WR426F, 2002, T&T, FMF Q-pipe, recent tyres/c+s, well maintained, good cond, £2950. Tel (mobile) 07761 823625 or 01235 527599 (Oxon)

Husaberg FE501, Sept 2003, road legal, well maintained, green lane use by TRFer, vgc, £3500 ono. Tel (mobile) 07790 689333 or 01623 871744 (Notts)

Suzuki DR400S, 1982, classic four-stroke trailie, MoT, original cond, £895. Tel (eves) 01453 882687 (Gloucs)

KTM 250EXC Racing, 2004, six months use only, handguards, bashplate, exc cond, £3400 ono. Tel 01638 510922 (Suffolk)

KTM 525EXC, 2003 model, one owner, green lane use only, well maintained, new c+s, extras, exc cond, £3800 ono. Tel 01332 741415 (Derbys)

Honda CRM250, MoT, recent Pirellis/o-ring c+s, handguards, vgc, £1350 ono. Tel 01730 821296 (Hants)

KTM 200EXC, 2003, new plastics, clock, clutchsaver, bashplate, brushguards, clean bike, £2550. Tel 01923 224162 (Herts)

Yamaha XT225 Serow, K-reg, T&T, 12000 miles, dual start, £1200. Tel 01428 604693 (Surrey)

Kawasaki KLE250 Super Sherpa, 2000, T&T, 6000 miles, new tyres/battery, hardly used since imported, very smart little bike, bargain at £1795. Tel 01997 421911 (Scotland)

Honda CRF250X, 2004, sump/rad/handguards, DEP enduro pipe, fully road legal, exc cond, £4200 ono. Tel 01226 718139 (S Yorks)

Yamaha WR250Z, 2000, new MoT, too many extras to list, call for full spec, £2150. Tel 07792 209432 (Dorset)

KTM 200EXC, 2004, taxed, 58 hours use, full KTM service history, Datatag, bashplate, fantastic machine, £3350. Tel Heinrich on 07887 645756 (London)

Yamaha WR450F, Oct 2003, taxed, road legal, elec start, Renthals, seat cover, great cond, £3950 ono. Tel 07976 512045 (Essex)

Suzuki DR350, T&T, elec start, R/D header, Viper pipe, recent c+s, spares, alloy bashplate, very good

overall cond, £1550 ono. Tel 01935 863684 (Somerset)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2003, one 50+ owner, Fatbars, CRD system, sumpguard, £3000 or exchange for Honda XR650R. Tel 01792 535738 (S Wales)

KTM 250EXC Racing, road reg'd, clutchsaver, sump/handguards, recent c+s, p/x considered, £2650 ono. Tel 01252 654722 (Hants)

Yamaha WR250F, 2004, 600 miles, mainly green lane/road use, meticulously run-in and maintained, £3875. Tel 07721 563407 (Surrey)

Suzuki DR-Z400SK2, yellow, 2600 miles, mint cond, £2600 ono, no scammers. Tel Mark on 01264 356654 (Hants)

Motese Cota 247cc, 1973, superb cond, display or trial, £1250 ono or p/x with cash either way for road reg'd green laner. Tel 01344 487035 (Berks)

Gas Gas EC300, 2003, 52-reg, taxed, 600 miles, handguards, exc cond, £2900 ono. Tel 01361 810488 (Berwickshire)

Kawasaki KDX200H4, 1998, R-reg, T&T, FMF pipe, Renthals, many spares including standard exhaust, tyres etc, good cond, £1750 ono. Tel 01386 858552 (Worcs)

KTM 200EXC(GS), 2002, autolube, taxed, 11L tank, spares, manuals, receipts, great enduro/trail bike, £2550 ono. Tel 01923 352828 (Herts)

Honda XR600, T&T, engine rebuild, USD forks, WP shock, red Excels, very smart bike, £2400 ono. Tel (mobile) 07811 411204 or 01452 540949 (Gloucs)

KTM 380EXC, 1999, engine rebuild, powder-coated frame, 13L tank plus standard, new plastics, new tyre, £1850. Tel (mobile) 07764 932888 or 01491 201839 (Oxon)

Honda CRM250 mkIII, 1994, yellow/purple, T&T, vgc, £1695 ono. Tel 01691 658447 (Shrops)

KTM 400EXC, 2002, road reg'd, taxed, sump/handguards, clutchsaver, well maintained, £3050. Tel 01789 294460 (Warks)

WANTED

Wanted riding partners required for trip to Russia, planned for May '05, ideally suited to big trail bikes, for vodka, women and adventure, phone for details. Tel 07974 548120 (Devon)

Wanted Kawasaki KMX200 parts, all parts wanted, would consider complete bike. Tel 01432 350605 (Hereford)

Wanted fairing parts and other plastics for 1991 XTZ660, red/white/silver. Tel 01634 730334 (Kent)

Wanted by a skint teenager, Honda CRM mkII or III forks, shock with lower linkage, or a rolling chassis. Tel 01235 831420 (Oxon)

Wanted Yamaha Serow, prefer dual start version, anything considered. Tel 01895 624554 (Middx)

Wanted Suzuki TS and DR125 parts, anything considered, preferably from early model. Tel 07708 658302 (Gwent)

Wanted 200SX/EXC barrel and lighting kit, 2003.

Tel 0161 448 9022 (Lancs)

Wanted KTM 450/525EXC, 2003/04 model, exchange for Husaberg FE400, '03 model, dual start, WP, Excels, just serviced, green laned only, or take £2995. Tel 01792 519287 (W Glam)

Wanted Honda TLR200, any cond, any year, or parts, WHY, willing to travel, cash waiting. Tel 01527 876364 (Worcs)

Wanted steering damper for XR400R. Also CRD/rally bashplate, electronic roadbook reader and trip. Tel 01229 580631 (Cumbria)

Wanted supermoto wheels for CCM 404DS, anything considered. Tel (mobile) 07966 277158 or 01746 761943 (Shrops)

Wanted original headlight for 2000 XR250/400. Plus aftermarket silencer. Tel (mobile) 07887 751869 or 01189 782759 (Berks)

Wanted KTM or Talon off-road wheels for 2005 model KTM. Also steering damper and large tank for same. Tel (07831 838333 or 0114 250 8508 (S Yorks)

Wanted parts for 1985 XT600Z, cylinder head, cam cover, cam. Plus racks and dented 28L tank, and maps of North Africa. Tel (mobile) 07796 365630 or 01564 794549 (Warks)

Wanted standard suspension links for DR-Z, not lowering links, willing to swap or buy. Tel Mark on (mobile) 07753 861876 or 01264 356654 (Hants)

Wanted front pipe for KTM 200EXC, standard or aftermarket. Tel (mobile) 07960 288776 or 01604 781348 (Northants)

SPARES

Talon rear wheel for RMX, secondhand but okay. Alan Green tailpipe, 1992 tailpipe, and 1991 KDX250 tailpipe, offers. Tel 01524 734674 (Lancs)

Standard white tank for DR350S, £40. Also DEP tailpipe, as new, £50. Tel 01527 402444 (Worcs)

Copies of TBM, issues 68-95, 97-103, 105-110, free to good home but buyer pays p&p. Tel 07766 115494 (London)

Parts for Honda XL1000V, Corbin seat, high screen and tank cover, £100 or will split. Tel (mobile) 07732 771293 or 01257 263137 (Lancs)

Bike trailer, will carry two large dirtbikes, very light, good cond, £125 no offers. Tel (mobile) 07732 771293 or 01257 263137 (Lancs)

FMF Powercore system for KTM 520/525EXC, WP shock spring and Racing seat, all as new, £300. Tel 01873 880549 (Monmouth)

KTM LC4 SXC silencer, £85. Duke mirrors, £20. Duke bar-end weights, £10. LC4 stainless chainguard, £10. KTM rally bracket, £25. Tel 07717 093228 (Worcs)

Fox Pilot helmet, red/white/black, size large, exc cond, £100 ono. Tel 01747 861983 (Wilts)

Copies of TBM, issues 50-109, great info on routes/products/services/tests etc, exc cond, best offer takes them. Tel 01747 861983 (Wilts)

Michelin Sirac trail tyres, 90/90x21 and 4.60x18, done 20 miles, best offer. Also trials helmet, size small, white with black peak, only worn twice, as new, £25. Tel 01600 715883 (Gwent)

Thor Phase MX pants, 34in waist, orange/grey, worn twice, immaculate cond, cost £65, sell for £35.

Tel: 01600 715883 (Gwent)

White Bros E-series silencer for Yamaha WR400/426, link pipe, £110 ono. Tel 07793 525205 (N Yorks)

Rino Racing enduro silencer to fit YZ/WR400/426, full stainless steel, very light, vgc, £120 ono. Tel 01229 885662 (Cumbria)

CRD sumpguard to fit DR-Z400, mint, £45 plus postage. Tel 01202 540685 (Dorset)

Doma exhaust system for 2003 KTM 200EXC, front pipe slightly dented, tailpipe as new, £95 ono. Tel (mobile) 07940 538299 or 01260 224577 (Cheshire)

Akrapovic Ti header to fit KTM 250EXC Racing, as new cond, cost £370, sell for £140. Tel 01246 567556 (Derbys)

Talon rear wheel to fit Beta Alp 4.0, complete with disc etc, £150. FMF exhaust, £75. CRD bashplate, £35. All in immaculate cond. Tel 01935 425566 (Dorset)

YZ250 rear hub and new 19in Excel rim. Tel 0161 448 9022 (Lancs)

CRD Absolute Performance system for DR-Z400S, used once, as new, inc all instructions, cost £350, bargain at £195. Tel 07752 805805 (Cheshire)

Honda XR200 new rod big-end bottom-end. XL125 6-speed new rod big-end bottom-end. Rebores XL185 barrel, piston, many other parts available. Tel 01793 337571 (Wilts)

Two-bike trailer, alloy, front jockey wheel, fitted lights, used twice, cost £425, sell for £280 ono. Tel 07985 720990 (Essex)

XL250 forks, 23in front wheel. DR125S spares, inc frame, forks, engine parts. XT250 motors. Raider bits, XL125 equivalent engine, ballrace camshaft, complete. Tel 01202 514344 (Dorset)

Off-road wheels for CCM 404, complete, brand new, unused, £350. Tel Jonesy on (mobile) 07792 111759 or (daytime) 01748 826912 (N Yorks)

R100GS parts, tank, fairing with bull-bar, handguards, bars, seat, front caliper, all immaculate cond, ring for prices. Tel 07876 657898 (Herts)

Acerbis 23L tank for Yamaha XT600E, white, £125. Also rear rack for same, £40. Tel 01827 708740 (Staffs)

Kliponoff single-bike trailer, 10in wheels, six mounting points, galvanised frame, folding ramp with integral lights, the best you can buy, £250. Tel 01296 651898 (Bucks)

CRM250 mkII piston kit, unused, still boxed, £60. Tel 01252 654722 (Hants)

Leo Vince exhaust for Suzuki DR650SE, Titanium Performance system, as new, still boxed, cost over £300, will accept £150. Tel 0161 788 8744 (Lancs)

Trail wheel kit for CCM 644, wheels, tyres, discs, sprockets, speedo drive, stand, all brand new. Also standard and race cans, £450 ono all in. Tel 01634 813125 (Kent)

CDI unit for Kawasaki KLR250, new and unused, £281 new, sell for £85. Tel 01935 863684 (Somerset)

Standard cat and silencer for BMW R1150GS Adventure, £150 ono. Also front and rear shocks, only 1500 miles, offers. Tel 07830 288080 (Essex)

Forks and shock for Suzuki DR-Z400, bike fitted with Ohlins from new hence parts as new, £250 ono. Also unused wheels, with tyres and discs, £250 ono. Talon lowering link, £25. K&N filter, £25. Plus other DR-Z bits. Tel 07830 288080 (Essex)

